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VOLUME II

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PEDRO PAEZ'S  
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1622

VOLUME II

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# CONTENTS

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## VOLUME II

### BOOK III

Which reports some histories of emperors of Ethiopia, with the missions that fathers of the Society undertook to this empire at the time of each of them

1. Which reports the history of Emperor Amd Ceôn or, by another name, Gâbra Mazcâl 000
2. Which gives the history of Emperor David, who later titled himself Onâg Çaguêd, his baptismal name being Lebena Denguîl 000
3. Which deals with Emperor Claudius, who on succeeding to the empire titled himself Atanâf Çagued 000
4. Which deals with the mission on which Father Patriarch Dom Joam Nunes Barreto of the Society of Jesus, with twelve fathers of the same company, were sent by Pope Paul IV to Ethiopia for the reduction of its people 000
5. 000
6. Which reports the history of Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd as the books of Ethiopia tell it 000
7. Which explains how Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd behaved towards Father Patriarch Dom André de Oviedo and other fathers and towards the Portuguese and Catholics 000
8. On how, by means of a brief, Pope Pius V commanded Father Patriarch Dom André de Oviedo to leave Ethiopia and go to China and Japan 000
9. Which explains how unjustifiably Friar Luiz de Urreta judged the brief by Pope Pius V that we have reported to be subreptitious 000
10. Which deals with the hardships that Father Patriarch André de Oviedo suffered after the death of Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd, and some things that Our Lord God revealed to him 000
11. On the death and burial of Father Patriarch Dom André de Oviedo 000
12. On the life that five members of the Society who came with Father Patriarch Dom André de Oviedo led in Ethiopia and on the death that they died 000
13. Which reports the history of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd as told by the books of Ethiopia 000
14. Which continues the history of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd 000
15. Which deals with the mission that Father António Monserrate and Father Pedro Páez of the Society of Jesus undertook from Goa to Ethiopia, and some things that happened to them at the beginning of their journey 000
16. On how, once the ships bound for the Strait of Mecca had sailed, we took another route to continue our journey, and how after many misfortunes they captured us 000
17. On how, after many misfortunes at sea, the Moors captured us 000

18. On how they took us to the Moorish king and what happened to us on the journey and on our arrival	000
19. On how they took us to the Turks and on the interrogation that they gave us when we reached them	000
20. On how, after the pasha had given us our freedom, a heathen from India had us seized again, and on the hardships that we suffered	000
21. Which deals with the hardships that the Turks gave us because of the ransom	000
22. On how Father Abraham de Georgis was sent to Ethiopia and on the journey was captured and martyred by the Turks	000

#### BOOK IV

Which deals with the last three emperors that there have been in it until today and with the missions that the fathers of the Society have undertaken to this empire during their time

1. Which reports some matters of Emperors Za Denguîl and Iacob	000
2. On how a priest from the seminary that the fathers of the Society have in Goa was sent to Ethiopia, and what he did here	000
3. On how I, Father Pedro Páez, entered Ethiopia and on some things that happened to me on the journey	000
4. On how they seized Emperor Iacob and gave the empire to his cousin Za Denguîl, and on some things that he did that summer	000
5. Which reports some things that happened in Fremonâ while the emperor was at war	000
6. On how I went with the viceroy of Tigrê to where the emperor was and how well he received me and our affairs	000
7. On how the emperor decided to give obedience to the holy Roman Church and wrote to the supreme pontiff and His Majesty King Philip	000
8. On how I took my leave of the emperor to go to another land, and how the treason that had been plotted against him was discovered	000
9. On how the emperor gave battle against the rebels, and was defeated and killed	000
10. On how Fathers Antonio Fernandez and Francisco Antonio de Angelis entered Ethiopia, and what happened to them on the journey	000
11. On how Abeitahûn Suzniôs proclaimed himself emperor in Gojâm and, after the governors of the empire had accepted him as such, they abandoned him again because Emperor Iacob came	000
12. On how Father Luís de Azevedo and Father Lourenço Romano came to Ethiopia	000
13. On how three of us fathers went to where Emperor Iacob was, and on the hopes that he gave of reducing his empire to the holy Roman Church	000
14. On how the emperor and empress reprimanded the viceroy of Tigrê for what he had done to the Catholics and commanded him to return all the property	000
15. On how Suz{e}niôs slew Emperor Iacob on the field and became lord of the empire	000
16. Which begins to report the history of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd and the difficulties that he had as a boy, as told by his books	000
17. Which continues the history of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, and the difficulties that he had until he began to present himself as emperor	000

CONTENTS

---

18. Which continues the history of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd and explains how he became absolute lord of the empire	000
19. Which continues the history of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, and reports the journey that he made to Tegrê	000
20. In which the history of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd is continued and how he finally pacified his empire with the death and banishment of those who were troubling it	000
21. Which reports some of the things that Emperor Seltân Çaguêd has ordained and done in the last two years for the good of our holy faith	000
22. On the uprisings and deaths that occurred in the kingdom of Gojâm for the keeping of the Sabbath, and what the emperor did about this	000
23. On how well Emperor Seltân Çaguêd acted towards the fathers the first time that they visited him, and how he gave them lands for their headquarters	000
24. On how Emperor Seltân Çaguêd {{f. 485}} decided to write to the Supreme Pontiff and to His Majesty	000
25. Which deals with the uprisings that occurred in Ethiopia as soon as Emperor Seltân Çaguêd seized the empire	000
26. On how the emperor went to Tigrê, and what happened to him on that journey	000
27. On some things that Viceroy Amçala Christôs did after the emperor left Tigrê	000
28. On how Erâz Cela Christôs, the emperor's brother, was reduced to our holy faith and took a father with him to the kingdom of Gojâm	000
29. On how His Majesty King Philip wrote to the emperor of Ethiopia and then to Pope Paul V, and what he replied	000
30. On how Father Antonio Fernandez set off from Dambiâ for the kingdom of Gojâm and from there to that of Nareâ, and what happened to him on the journey	000
31. How Father Antonio Fernandez went to where the governor of Nareâ was, and what happened to him until he left the kingdom	000
32. How Father Antonio Fernandez left the kingdom of Nareâ and went to that of Zenyero, and from there to the land of Cambât	000
33. Which deals with the adversities and hardships that the father had in Cambât, and how later a Moor tried to kill him	000
34. On how Father Antonio Fernandez left Alabâ for Dambiâ, and on the perils and hardships that he faced on the journey	000
35. Which deals with the efforts that the emperor made to bring back the three Portuguese who had remained in Alicô the Moor's power	000
36. Which reports some letters that Pope Paul V and King Philip wrote to the emperor of Ethiopia and those in which he replied	000
37. On how the second residence that we have in the kingdom of Gojâm was started	000
HISTORICAL GLOSSARY	000
BIBLIOGRAPHY	000
INDEX	000



{{[f. 315]} <[f. 258/248]><sup>1</sup>

## BOOK III

WHICH REPORTS SOME HISTORIES OF EMPERORS OF  
ETHIOPIA, WITH THE MISSIONS THAT FATHERS OF  
THE SOCIETY UNDERTOOK TO THIS EMPIRE AT THE  
TIME OF EACH OF THEM

<sup>1</sup> BPB, MS 778: folio 257v/247v is blank.

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## CHAPTER I

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### Which reports the history of Emperor Amd Ceôn or, by another name, Gâbra Mazcâl

There have been so many emperors in Ethiopia – and I do not mean at the time when they were heathens, but after they received the Old Law, which was at the time of Queen Saba and Menilehêc, her son by Solomon (which they consider to be beyond doubt, as we said in chapter 2 of the first book), and they maintain the line and generation of Menilehêc to this day, as they also affirm, and therefore among themselves they have never given up this name of Israelites and sons of David – that they might have written many long books of their histories. Nonetheless, hardly anything about the early ones can now be found other than what we said in chapters 2 and 5 of the first book, either because of the little application and diligence that these Ethiopians have in writing histories, or because the ones they had written have been lost in the continual wars that they have had with the Moors, Turks and heathens, who at times have taken the greater part of the empire from them and who still occupy many lands today. As a result, although I have made many enquiries and asked many people, I have been unable to find – and nobody has been able to tell me – any information except about this Emperor Amd Ceôn and a few others, as I shall relate below. But it should be noted that this Amd Ceôn is not Emperor Naôd’s father, because that one only reigned for six months; instead, he was another, much earlier one who reigned for thirty years and was the father of Emperor Zêif Arâd.<sup>1</sup> I have only found a part of his history, which I shall report as his book tells it, not because it helps me in discussing the missions that fathers of the Society have undertaken to this empire, but so as to relay everything that I have found out about their emperors and about the wars and troubles they have had with the Moors.

{[f. 315v]} *In the eighteenth year of the reign of Amd Ceôn, who was called Gâbra Mazcâl when he was given the empire, Çabardîn rose against him, <[f. 258v/248v]> determined to rule over all Ethiopia. As he entered the land, he burnt many churches and killed many Christians and captured others and made them join his sect; and he appointed the great men as captains and distributed the lands of the empire among them, even though he did not rule over them, and he told them that all the churches should be turned into mosques for the Moors, and he would make the emperor of the Christians join his sect and would give him command as he would one of his princes, and he would make Empress Ian Manguêçahâ grind flour in a mill, and he would put his seat in Marâde, the land of his court. On hearing this, the emperor flew into a rage and sent word to him angrily, ‘They say this of you, and I do not*

<sup>1</sup> See Chronology of Ethiopian Monarchs.

*know if it is true, that you have burnt churches and killed Christians and captured others and made them join the sect of your father the Devil. Do you not know me, and do you not know what I did before, when your brother Acadin took a young slave who was called Teimbâi? I went with my army and, charging ahead of it with just seven horsemen, I attacked and killed many Moors through the virtue of my God, creator of the heavens and earth. When my army arrived, I destroyed the land of Ifât and took great riches of gold and silver and countless bolts of cloth, and then I sent my men to all the lands of Xâoa and they killed an infinite number of Moors and took great booty. When the Moors of many other lands learnt that I was alone, a great multitude of them came and surrounded me but, through the virtue of Christ, I defeated and killed them and their lord, who was your brother. I shall do the same to you and I shall destroy your land with God's help.'*

*When he heard this, that accursed man replied, 'I shall not go to you and I shall not be afraid if you come, because my army is much larger and better than yours and fights on horseback with bow and arrow, sword and lance. And if you come, may it be by a wide road, otherwise I shall go and seek you out.' Having said that, he gathered his captains and asked for their counsel. And one of them, a prophet of darkness, replied, 'The kingdom of the Christians is given to you; go and fight them, because you will defeat them and will reign in Sion.' And they all told him the same, so he gathered his men and divided them into three armies, one to go to the kingdom of Amharâ, another to that of Angôt and the third he would take to Xâoa, where the emperor was. Meanwhile, the emperor's servants came back to him with Çabardin's reply; he summoned his captains and told them to gather their men and then gave <[f. 259/249]> plenty of gold and silver {[f. 316]} and valuable robes to them all, from the great to the small, and commanded them to go and fight that accursed Çabardin, saying, 'May God give you strength and victory and come to your aid wherever you go.' They set off joyfully and in five days some of them reached the place where the enemy was preparing for war; others could not get there, since they had gone by a narrow path, but the first ones, although few in number, gave battle at once and defeated him. He fled, and although they gave chase until sunset they could not catch him. And so they returned and seized plenty of riches from his camp and killed many people, including women and children, and captured others, and then they moved on to another land because the stench of the dead was very bad, and they sent word to the emperor that victory was theirs but that Çabardin had escaped.*

*On hearing that that accursed man had escaped, the emperor went <straight> to the church and, embracing the corner of the altar, he said, 'O my Lord Jesus Christ, hear the petition of my heart and the prayer of Thy servant. Do not close the door of Thy mercy because of my sins, but send Thy holy angel to guide me and set me on the path to pursue this enemy, who has risen up against Thy sheep and against Thy holy name.' Having said that, he gave alms to the poor and ornaments to the churches. And he commanded many warriors, strong and experienced men, to march against Bgmêder because, although they were Christians, they had denied the faith of Christ. And he, with many more men, went to Doarô, the prince of which was called Hadarâ and pretended to be the emperor's friend, but was secretly conspiring with Çabardin to help each other against the emperor. The emperor went ahead and left the empress in Gazâ with her baggage train and some guards, and he went with the army to Zamareâ and killed many men and took plenty of booty. The next day, the emperor left his men without being seen and, with twenty-seven horsemen, rode for two days to carry out an attack and killed many people and captured a few, and then he turned back to his camp. In the meantime his men were searching for him*

in great anguish, until they came across him on the road as he was returning with much festivity.

Shortly afterwards the men who had defeated Çabardīn arrived. When the rebel heard that many men had joined the emperor, he was very afraid and sent a message to the empress saying, 'Lady, I have sinned by doing evil against my lord the emperor. It is better for me to fall into the hands of my lord <[f. 259v/249v]> than into other hands. I shall go to him so that he may do what he wishes with me.' The empress told the emperor all this and he replied, 'Send word to him that it matters little to me whether he comes or not; and if he goes off to some distant land, there too shall I pursue him, through God's virtue, and I shall not return until I have found him.' On hearing this reply, {[f. 316v]} he went and presented himself to the emperor at once, and the emperor said to him, 'Why have you done all that? You have given the presents that you used to bring to me to your servants so that they would fight against me; and you have taken from me the gold and silver that I would give to the poor and have seized it from them; and, worst of all, you intended to take the chair of my empire.' To which he replied with great fear, 'Do with me, lord, as you think best.' The great men said, 'A man who has burnt churches and killed so many Christians and made others become Moors and who wanted to scale the high peak of the imperial throne should not be allowed to live; and the emperor should not think that he has now come with a pure heart, but instead deceitfully and trusting in his fetishes.' And they went up to him and found them under his arm. And the emperor said to him, 'Have these fetishes perchance delivered you from my hands?' And he commanded them to seize him and to put chains on both his hands, but he did not want to kill him; he made his brother Guemaldīn king in his place and gave him valuable robes.

While the emperor was doing this, the Moors of Adel and Morā<sup>1</sup> conspired to fight him before he returned to his land. And they came at night and fell on some men that the emperor had sent to that area and killed a few of them. After that they captured a few at night and killed some more and took plenty of booty. But in the morning the emperor's men went after them and found them sharing out the goods, and they slaughtered them all; taking back their possessions, they returned with joy, because they had gained victory through the virtue of the Highest. After that, the great men asked the emperor to return to his land because winter was coming. The king of the Moors, Guemaldīn, giving him a large present, also begged him to return, saying, 'Lord, now that you have given me command, you may go without concern, for I shall do your will in all things. Besides, the land of the Moors is laid waste; it is better for you to return and leave it, so that they may work and pay you tribute.' The emperor replied with feeling, 'If I am bitten by dogs and wolves, an evil generation that does not believe in the Son of God, how can I return to my land? If I return without reaching Adel, may they say that my mother did not bear me, and henceforth let them call me a woman.' Having said that, he broke camp and left the land of <[f. 260/250]> Gaçâ. After he had marched for four days, countless Moors came from Adel, Morâ, Ficô and Zagumâ<sup>2</sup> and many other parts and fell upon the emperor's camp at night. He was awakened by the shouting and, rising in great haste, he armed himself and went forth on his horse and put the enemy to flight; then he returned, giving thanks to God for the mercy He had done him. But afterwards they came

<sup>1</sup> The kingdom of 'Adāl was located in southeastern Ethiopia; Morā was near Lake Awassā (Huntingford, *Historical Geography of Ethiopia*, pp. 91–2).

<sup>2</sup> Tigo and Paguma were also in the lowlands (Huntingford, *Historical Geography of Ethiopia*, p. 91).

back at night and, as before, the emperor went forth and put them to flight, but still they did not desist; rather, many more came back and attacked the camp at midnight with much shouting. As the emperor came forth, {[f. 317]} he said, 'My Lord Jesus Christ, deliver me from the hands of these enemies, just as David was delivered from the spear.' After saying that, he charged and fought extremely fiercely together with his men until he overcame them. Then one of them came up behind the emperor as if he was one of his own men and struck him a blow, cutting his robe and the sheath of his dagger but not doing him any other harm; the emperor turned at once and killed him with his spear. At this point, the enemy turned back upon the emperor's men who were still pursuing them and pressed them all very hard, but the emperor came to their aid and, riding his horse into the midst of his enemies, he put them to flight, and they went on slaughtering so many that the field was covered with dead bodies. And the emperor returned to his camp, giving thanks to God for the victory. The next day, his men brought back many weapons and robes.

The king broke camp and moved from that location to another better one and, gathering his men, he said to them, 'We once fought the people of the lands of Tigrê, Oagrâ, Gojâm, Damôt, Hadiâ and other parts, and, by God's will, we defeated them and took their kings and possessions. Therefore, do not now be afraid of these traitors, for God will fight for us. Have you not heard what these accursed Moors say: "When Christians kill us we become martyrs, and when we kill them we gain paradise"? That is why they offer themselves up to death so willingly, even though they do not know God. You, then, who know the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and have been baptized in Their name and sanctified in the blood of Christ, why are you afraid of these traitors? You used to show strong hearts to fight for me, so now be strong to fight for Christ; have no fear at all, for God will help you. I swear to you by the living God, the creator of heaven and earth, that winter or summer I shall not return to my land without destroying these traitors, through the virtue of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. Do not think that you will <[f. 260v/250v]> escape through fear, but rather through the firmness and courage of your hearts.' They all replied with one voice, 'May the emperor's will be done. We are ready for everything that he commands us to do.' The emperor gave them his blessing, saying, 'May the traitors' swords, spears and arrows not fall on you, but may yours enter their hearts and may God give you strength and victory.' And they all said, 'Amen. {Amen.}'

After that, the emperor began to march and, crossing the great river that they call Iâz, he encamped in the land of Morâ, where a woman came to him who had previously been captured by the Moors, and she said that the Moors were sure that when the sky turned red and it rained with a strong wind {[f. 317v]} it was a sign that they would destroy the Christians. And that day it happened that the sky turned red and it rained with such a strong wind that the emperor's tents were ripped apart and all the tents in the camp were blown down. Everyone was so afraid at this that the emperor had to issue a proclamation, saying, 'Be not frightened, Christian people, because this is just a sign that we will defeat them.' And that night, which was the feast of the apostles, the traitors came and surrounded the camp, and so the emperor went forth with his men and defeated them, with God's help. When he moved further on, they again attacked him by night, and the people shouted out, 'Where is the emperor? May he come and deliver us from these enemies.' When he heard this, he came out angrily, saying, 'How can you do this? It is the emperor who must call his men to fight, not the men who call the emperor! Fight hard!' And he went forth and, wading into the enemy, he put them to flight.

*At this time, a kadi<sup>1</sup> of the Moors, who was called Salé, rose up and made many kings and princes of several lands unite to fight the emperor, and among them was Guemaldin, whom the emperor had released from prison and made king in place of his brother Çabardin. He wrote to the king of Adel, saying, 'Behold, the king of the Christians has come along a narrow path and cannot turn back. Take my counsel and choose one of two options: give him presents and tribute; and if you prefer to do this, sell your women and children, and not even through this will servitude leave your houses for ever. Therefore, do as your wisdom tells you and gather your warriors, and I too shall go with many men on horseback and on foot, so that we may surround him and destroy all his people once and for all.' On hearing this, the king of Adel summoned all his men, and so many came that they were beyond count, at which he swelled with pride and said, <[f. 261/251]> 'I shall turn churches into mosques and I shall take their ornaments for my house, and share out the possessions of the king and his men among mine, and make the queen and his daughters grind flour. Let us fight at once, before the king of Ifât joins us, because the Christians' booty will not be enough for him and us.' And so he came with his men and surrounded the emperor, who was almost alone, because he had sent most of his foot and horse to fight in other lands; moreover, he was sick and had not eaten for seven days.*

*When the emperor's men saw the vast numbers of their enemies, who were like locusts, they were very afraid and said to the emperor, 'If all the people of Ethiopia, from the greatest to the least, gathered together, they could not fight these people.' When he heard this, he rose from his bed to go forth, but he fell back on it out of {[f. 318]} weakness. His servants came to his aid and helped him to rise and arm himself and they put him on his horse. As he went forth, the empress and his mother went after him, weeping and saying, 'Where are you going, lord? Have you the hands to draw your bow and hold a spear and shield, or the strength to mount your horse? How will you fight?' The emperor replied, 'I shall not die a woman's death, but that of a fighting man. Go back; do not follow me.' So he went on, placing his trust in God, his creator, who slays and raises up, punishes and forgives. Leaving the camp, he took up his position in the field. The women went on until they were in sight of him and Iân Mangueçâ, raising her eyes to heaven, said, 'O Lord God of Israel, holy King of kings and Lord of lords, there is no other king but Thee in the heavens and on earth. Thou, Lord, who didst deliver the people of Israel from the hand of the pharaoh and Susanna from the judges and Daniel from the lions' mouths, because Thou canst do everything, hear, Lord, Thy handmaiden's prayer. Didst Thou not perchance make Thy servant king? Has he taken anything that Thou didst not give him? Thou art He who gives and who takes away; do not deliver Thy servant into the hands of his enemies, dogs that do not know Thy holy name. Remember Thy flesh and blood and not the sins of Thy servant, for Thou dost not want the sinner to die but to be converted and live.' The old men and boys threw ash over their heads and cried out to heaven, saying, 'Lord, do not look at our faults, for we have sinned, but at the justice of those who have served Thee with purity. Placate Thy wrath and hasten to our aid, because we are Thy people and sheep of <[f. 261v/251v]> Thy flock.' The priests also wept, saying, 'Remember Thy blood, Lord, and do not deliver Thy sheep to the wolves, that the wolves may not boast and ask, "Where is your God in whom you put your trust?" O Lord God, Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, saviour of the soul and of the body, hear our prayer and do not destroy the flock that Thou didst redeem with the blood of Thy Son; remember His suffering and death.' The emperor too raised his hands to heaven, saying, 'Merciful God, mighty God, lover of men,*

<sup>1</sup> Judge who applies Islamic law with civil and spiritual authority.

*deliver Thy people and do not destroy it for my sins, but have pity on it through Thy great mercy, and do with me according to Thy holy will.'*

*Meanwhile, the traitors, as numerous as the sands of the sea, were drawing close and, once they had surrounded everything, not even the wild animals could find a path to escape and so they entered the emperor's camp, terrified by the enemy's roaring, which was like that of the sea when whipped up by furious winds and like thunder in the valleys. They came wielding their swords, brandishing their spears and drawing their bows. The emperor then said to his men, 'Be not afraid of these traitors, because God will help us and deliver us from their hands, for neither can the multitude win nor the few be defeated save through God's virtue.' {[f. 318v]} And he commanded them to attack; but as they began to fight they were unable to withstand the great force of the enemy, and so they turned and told the emperor to enter his compound and they would fight from there. Others were of the opinion that they should flee to where his men were. The emperor replied, 'If I leave my wife and children and the people that God entrusted to me, am I not leaving my Lord Jesus Christ? I shall not do such a thing. If He wishes to slay me, so be it, and if He delivers me, may it be according to His will.' Then his friends kissed his hands and face and they all ran away, leaving him alone. When the emperor saw that they were running away, he shouted after them, 'Where are you going? Do you perhaps think that you can reach your lands? Do you not remember me, who raised you and honoured you by giving you commands, gold and silver and valuable robes?' And he mounted his horse like a lion and told a servant of his to attack to the right of the enemy, which he did with great courage, taking with him five horsemen, and they began to break through their opponents; and the emperor charged to the left where the major force was, and arrows rained down on him <[f. 262/252]> and, as they tried to surround him, he hurled his spear with such force that it passed through two men as if they were one, and he broke through. The other six horsemen fell on the enemy's rear and thus they began to turn. The emperor's men then saw that the Moors were fleeing and they turned back; fighting fiercely, they routed them and cut down countless numbers into a pit that it seems God had made ready there. And the emperor dismounted from his horse and continued killing many of them, and when his right hand was tired he struck with his left. These Moors were strong men with ugly faces and very long hair, and they had the custom of tying themselves to one another with their cloths when they went into battle so that no one might run away, but even so Emperor Amd Ceón defeated and destroyed them, through the virtue of Christ, the Son of God.*

*When the emperor saw that many of them were escaping from him, he mounted his horse and went after them and ordered his men not to take any spoils but to leave it to the women. On coming across one man who was stripping a Moor, he wounded him, and thus the rest were afraid and did as he had commanded and continued the chase until sunset, slaughtering countless men. Since he had begun to fight an hour after midday, the emperor's hand had become so clenched that he could not open it, and they had to force it open to remove his spear. And the women collected the Moors' bedding and clothes and put them in the camp.*

*This was a feat that no emperor has ever performed in Ethiopia, and neither our fathers nor we ourselves have ever heard the like. God ordained that the emperor should have few men with him, so that He might manifest His power and divine wisdom and show that He gives victory to whomever He wishes, because Amd Ceón fought and God achieved victory, and they all gave Him many praises for putting out the fire that seemed that it would turn them to ash. And when the emperor returned, he went straight {[f. 319]} to the church and, prostrating himself on the floor in front of the altar, he said with many tears, 'Glory be to*

*Thee, my Lord Jesus Christ, with Thy merciful Father and Thy life-giving Holy Spirit, for Thou hast delivered me from the hands of my enemies and given me victory.’ And all the priests wept with joy, because previously it had seemed to them that the lamp of the world had already gone out. The empress too, when the emperor entered his tent, threw herself at his feet and kissed them, shedding many tears and saying, ‘Is it possible that my lord is alive? It is like a dream.’ The emperor made her stand up and stop weeping. At that moment, <[f. 262v/252v]> the men he had sent to other lands arrived back, and they all cast themselves at his feet, weeping and saying, ‘Woe is us, woe is us, for you raised us to die with you and we were not {present} <ready> at a time of such great danger.’ Rising to their feet, they gave thanks to God for having delivered him from such great danger and such a great multitude of enemies and for giving him victory.*

*The next day, the emperor went forth and wanted everyone, even the women, to go and see the marvels that God had brought about, and they found the king of the Moors, who was called Zabel, lying dead and the field strewn with bodies as with straw. And they brought back the king’s body and hung it at the camp gate, and everyone rejoiced and celebrated, giving thanks to God for the great mercies that He had done them, and the emperor said to them, ‘Truly, this was divine might, because if all the men of our lands had gathered together well armed, and these enemies were unarmed, it would seem that they would not be able to slay them all in many days; yet God, to whom nothing is impossible, destroyed them in such a short time, as you know, without remembering my sins, because He is merciful and a lover of mankind.’*

*After that, the emperor broke camp and went to Daôï, where he pitched his tents and sent out some captains with warriors, and they destroyed the land of Zaçâr and killed its lord, Abdalla, and many others, and returned with considerable booty. On another day they went to Abelgûï and also destroyed that land and brought back many captives. From there they moved camp to Talâg, a land of Adel, and three of that king’s sons who had escaped death came to the emperor and asked him to forgive them and they would obey him in every way. The emperor replied, ‘Since I am the lord of all this land, you and your father did to me something that men do not do. Instead of bringing me presents, you came to fight me in order to kill me and my men; but God, seeing the pride in your hearts, delivered you into my hands and repaid you according to your evil. I shall not let you go now, either, but instead I shall destroy all your land.’ They replied, ‘There is nobody who is lord of our land and of us other than God. When you came against us, we did not count you as warriors; and even if all the kings of the earth had come together, we should have fought them without any fear, because nobody could ever match us, except you alone. But now, lord, {[f. 319v]} placate your anger and do not destroy us completely. We shall ensure <[f. 263/253]> that all the remaining princes of the kingdom come to submit to whatever you command them.’ The emperor said, ‘If they wish, let them come, and if not, you will see later what I do, through the virtue of my God.’*

*They sent word at once to the great men of their kingdom and to the king of Hagerâ, saying, ‘Come and submit to the emperor, before he goes and destroys you and your women and children.’ On hearing this, the king of Hagerâ gathered his people and said to them, ‘Do not listen to the words of those boys, but let us fight hard against that man, because if the Christians kill us we are martyrs, and if we kill them we go to paradise.’ And so they all promised to die fighting without turning back, and he replied to the boys that they did not want to go to the emperor and that if he came to their land they would fight to the death.*



The boys told the emperor that the king of Haguera, the lord of ninety-nine princes, would not obey, and so he broke camp at once and, after crossing the large river called Ecuâ, stopped in a land called Maârmagû. The following day, he sent his men to the right and to the left, urging them strongly not to let that evil man escape; and he himself went forth with few men in the middle, and he found him ready to fight with all his men, as he had promised previously. And so the war that day was very intense, because even the {enemy}'s women fought like young men and threw countless stones. When the emperor saw the great strength of the enemy, he himself charged like a lion and shot an arrow, which hit the king of Haguera in the throat and passed right through. That arrogant man fell backwards and all his men fled, and the emperor with his men gave chase, killing even the women and children, so that only three of all those that had gathered there were left. With that, the emperor returned to his camp and gave praise to Christ Our Lord for having given him strength and victory.

Departing from there, the emperor went to Zaçoguê and commanded his men to destroy the Moors' mosques and burn their lands and crops and kill everyone they found, without sparing women or children; and they did so, through God's virtue. After that, he crossed the River Zarât and arrived in the land of Aratê, where he encamped. And there came to him some servants of his whom the people of that land had captured and cut off their ears and made them eunuchs. When the emperor <[f. 263v/253v]> saw them, he was very sad and asked them how they had been taken, and they answered that they had been going to cut wood and get provisions. The emperor then summoned some captains and told them that very early on the following day they should hide with their men and make an ambush on the left and on the right so that if any people of that land came there after he had left they should kill them. The emperor broke camp at dawn {[f. 320]} and marched off to the sound of all his instruments. Afterwards many people came and went into where he had had his camp, and the ones lying in ambush came out and killed them all and went off to the emperor. The next day he ordered another ambush, and again they killed many people. Then he went to Hargueâ, where he stayed for eight days, and he had a large enclosure made, where he left men in hiding and he left; and then so many people of the land came that they covered the plain, and, when they came close to the enclosure, the emperor's men suddenly rushed out and slaughtered a great many people and took many weapons and booty, and they cut off some people's ears and showed them to the emperor.

After that, the emperor marched on until he came to the land that is called Beculsôr and he set up his camp there. And he summoned the king of the Moors and told him to give him the Christians who had given up the faith during his reign and that of his brother, after he had given him command, or else he would put him in chains and lay waste to all the land and kill all the people, sparing nobody. On hearing this, the Moor was very afraid and sent word to all the lands, and they brought all those who had denied the faith – priests, deacons and soldiers. When they were standing in front of the emperor, he said to them, 'How could you deny Christ, the Son of God, creator of the heavens and earth, and join the sect of the Devil and abandon the grace of the baptism that you received from the Holy Spirit?' And they could find nothing to say in reply. Then the emperor, full of rage, commanded that they be flogged and had the sign of slaves put on their chests and shoulders and chains round their necks and wrists, out of zeal of the law of Christ. And then he told the king of the traitors to bring him all the Christians who still remained there. And he answered that his brother did not want to give them, so as to feign until the emperor left his land, but the emperor saw the evil in his heart, so he had him seized and the land destroyed, and he made his brother Naçaradin king.

<[f. 264/254]> *He departed thence and went on to the land of Baz, where he made his camp. And he sent his captains and they destroyed the land of Gued and killed the men and captured the women and brought back considerable plunder in the form of cattle. He then departed from that place, leaving many men in ambush at the foot of a mountain; and afterwards, when the people of Harlâ entered his camp, the ones who had been in ambush came out and killed them all and went to the emperor with great joy. After marching for five days, they reached the land of Delhoyâ and destroyed it, killing the men and capturing the women and children, because they had burnt many Christians, together with a great man that the emperor had placed there as captain. And he marched on for three days and arrived in the land of Dagú, and he destroyed it and took considerable booty. Then he sent out his men and they destroyed the land of Oorguêb, putting everyone to the sword, and they brought back many cattle and sheep. From there he marched on for four days and reached Doarô and destroyed all the land, killing many people and capturing women and children and countless cattle, because they had risen against him and killed many of his servants and stolen a large amount of gold {[f. 320v]} and very valuable robes from the emperor and empress. After that he reached the land of Bahalâ in three days, and there he seized the prince of Çarça, who was called Ioseph, because he had taken counsel against him with the people of Doarô; and he sent his men to this traitor's land and they destroyed it and brought back countless animals.*

*Having done all this, Emperor Amd Ceôn, through God's might, returned to his land with great joy, giving glory to God for having given him victory, and worshipping the Son who was his strength in war, and submitting to the Holy Spirit, who cast all things under his feet. Glory, worship and submission be to Him, and glorification to the name of the holy Trinity in the heavens and on earth, for ever and ever.<sup>1</sup>*

Up to here are words from his book, and it did not recount anything else at all.

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida used the translation made by Páez (see 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 5, pp. 225–37; and the Introduction, p. ??? [pdf 42], note ??? [3], above).

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## CHAPTER II

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Which gives the history of Emperor David, who later titled himself Onâg Çaguêd, his baptismal name being Lebena Denguil<sup>1</sup>

*Emperor Lebena Denguil began to reign at the age of twelve years <[f. 264v/254v]> and exercised himself in matters of weaponry, horse racing, archery and hunting wild and dangerous animals, for such is the custom of kings' sons until they learn how to govern the kingdom properly. Meanwhile, he governed the empire in the manner that his mother, Naôd Mogueçâ, commanded, with the counsel of Empress Helen,<sup>2</sup> because they knew how to govern and Helen especially knew the laws of the empire. But when he reached the age of twenty, the king of Adel, who was called Mahamêd, came with many men and brought the vizier<sup>3</sup> Mahafûd as captain general. When the emperor heard that those Moors were coming, he hurried off to encounter them and, on giving battle, defeated them and killed many men, with God's help. And the Moorish king's captain perished there too, although he himself escaped by fleeing. Soon afterwards, with the counsel of his lords, he decided to attack Adel, for it is the custom of victors to desire and seek to return to war, just as it is for the defeated to try to flee from it. Gathering many men, he entered the kingdom of Adel, burning many lands and destroying many fortresses, until he reached the land of Zancâr, where he destroyed the king's fortress and mosque, and nobody dared fight him because of the great fear they now had of him. Having captured many men and taken a large amount of booty, he returned to his land in peace.*

*After this, everything was peace and quiet with no robberies, shows of strength or injustices, until the eighteenth year of his emperorship; {[f. 321]} but at the end of this time there Ahamêd the son of Abrahîn<sup>4</sup> rose up in Adel. Since a boy he had always been strong and warlike in everything, and he became a man of war. And so he gathered many evil men and destroyed many lands and, even though some great men and their troops rose up against him, he defeated them many times, so they were all left worried and very afraid, and his fame spread through all the lands and everyone was very frightened, even the strongest Malaçai<sup>5</sup> Moors. At this time, Emperor Lebena Denguil was occupied in reading the Holy Scripture and in good exercises, debating and discussing matters with the doctors and wise men, by which means the Lord was preparing him to suffer patiently the trials and bitterness of the tribulation that he would have with the coming of Ahamêd the son of Abrahîn, whom they*

<sup>1</sup> See also Chronology of Ethiopian Monarchs.

<sup>2</sup> See Glossary (Helen/Elléni).

<sup>3</sup> From the Arabic *wazîr*, a councillor.

<sup>4</sup> See Glossary (Granh/Grāññ/Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhîm al-Ghāzi).

<sup>5</sup> The Islamized population of Adāl. *Malaçai* was the Portuguese form of the local word *malassaye*, from *'slamawi*, 'Islamized'.

called Granh. He, seeing how strong he had become, grew proud in his heart and resolved to destroy the Christians. <[f. 265/255]> He therefore left Adel with great arrogance and a large army and, entering the kingdom of Fatagâr, destroyed vast lands and captured many people.

On hearing this, Emperor Lebenâ Denguîl, who was in Amharâ visiting the burial places of his forefathers, which are Mecâna Celacê,<sup>1</sup> Atrône Ça Mariâm, Dêbra Negudguad and Getcemanî, commanded all the warriors of his empire to gather. And 3,000 men on horseback came, and so many foot soldiers that their number is not known. Setting off with this army, he encountered Granh the Moor in Xambrâ Corê and, seeing that the Moor's army was much smaller, because he had only 300 horse and incomparably fewer foot soldiers than the emperor, the emperor's men began to say, 'Why should we fight with sword and spear against so few men? Compared with us, they are just ants; we can get them off their horses without any weapons.' They said these presumptuous and arrogant words because they did not remember that part of Scripture, 'Quomodo persequeretur unus mille, et duo fugerent decem millia? Nonne ideo quia Deus suos vendidit eos, et Dominus conclusit illos?'<sup>2</sup> But God soon showed them that victory does not lie in the number of men because, when the emperor gave battle on 19th March, he was defeated and lost many men, and the Moor took many captives and many spoils. But even so the emperor did not lose hope that God would give him victory another day.

Two years later, the emperor commanded the best warriors that he had to gather. A countless number came to him at once, and he sent Deguelhân as captain-general with them to destroy the Moors of Adel. He did that so well that, {[f. 321v]} on entering those lands, he destroyed a large part of them like a ravaging fire and seized a great multitude of cattle and other livestock and many captives, including Cachên Abubâcar's mother, who was called Fâtîma. He left with all this booty and encamped his army in the kingdom of Cambât, where Cachên Abubâcar's mother said to him, 'Lord, what do you want me for? What good am I to you? If you do not let me go, my son will not rest until he takes me from your hands. He is very strong and restless and fleet of foot in order to shed blood. It may be that this victory of yours will turn to defeat and your joy to sadness.' As she said these words, Granh suddenly attacked them with many men, like a thunderbolt, so that they were put to flight without being able to take their arms or their horses. <[f. 265v/255v]> The Moor killed many of them and took all the booty that they were carrying, leaving nothing, not even Cachên Abubâcar's mother, whom he received with great honour. And they held great celebrations for their victory.

When two years had passed after this, Granh returned with a large army and, entering through Doarô, he subjugated all the people of that land without resistance, on account of the great fear that they had of his sword. Then the great men of the empire came to their aid – Erâz Taquelâ Iesus, Behêt Oadêd Esalamô, Erâz Oacên Çaguêd and many other powerful men – but the Moor defeated and routed them all. Moving on, he burnt Dêbra Libanôs, the burial place of Abba Taquelâ Haimanôt; then he burnt many churches in Doarô and Fatagâr and Xâoa. The next year he burnt churches in Amharâ and the emperors' burial places of Mecâna Çelacê and Atrône Çamariâm, and his strength grew so much that he

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (Mecâna Çelace/Makânâ Šellâsé).

<sup>2</sup> Deuteronomy 32:30, 'How should one pursue after a thousand, and two chase ten thousand? Was it not, because their God had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up?' Pâez added the second part of this verse, which was absent in the original Gê'ez text.

became lord of all the land from the sea of Aftâl to Adeconô (that is, Arquico), which God permitted in order to punish the Christians and to test their patience in their hardships, as He did to Job.

Some time later, Emperor Lebenâ Denguîl rested from the labours of this world and passed on to the one that God's mercy had kept for him. And he was buried in a church of Abba Arogaôî, which is called Dêbra Damô.<sup>1</sup>

Up to here are words from a book in which they recount some histories of emperors of Ethiopia. But it should be noted (as we have said already) that this name Lebenâ Denguîl, which means 'Incense of the Virgin', is his baptismal name; when they gave him the emperorship they called him David, and a few years later he gave up this name and titled himself Onâg Çaguêd. This emperor was not the son of Empress Helen, but of Naôd Mogueçâ, which means 'Naôd's Honour' or 'Majesty', because all the honour that she had came to her through her being the wife of Emperor Naôd and having that son by him. Empress {[f. 322]} Helen was not the wife of Emperor Naôd but of his father Emperor Bedâ Mariâm, and she never had children, for Emperor Naôd was illegitimate.<sup>2</sup>

From what we have reported, the reader may easily conclude whether Emperor David was as happy and fortunate as Friar Luiz de Urreta makes him, on page 354.<sup>3</sup> And here they do not recount how he spent a long time wandering through the wilderness, fleeing from one place to another, with many dangers and hardships, <[f. 266/256]> until he died in the kingdom of Tigrê, <in a> with his back against a mountain fastness called Damô, {where} and he was buried in the monastery on it.

While this emperor was a boy, some Portuguese came to Ethiopia, in particular Francisco Álvares,<sup>4</sup> the chaplain of D. Manoel of Portugal, and Dom Rodrigo de Lima, the ambassador, with twelve Portuguese accompanying them, in April 1520. They spent six years in these lands, where many things happened to them which Francisco Álvares himself reports at length in the *História Etiópica* that he printed, together with the letters which the emperor wrote to D. Manoel and King John, his son, and what Empress Helen had written while she was governing the empire,<sup>5</sup> so I feel it is unnecessary to dwell on them, but will pass on to matters that are not so well known in Europe.

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida used Páez's translation, splitting the narrative over two chs (3 and 4) of his bk III (see his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOL*, 5, pp. 253–4 and 263–5; and the Introduction, p. ???, note xx, above.)

<sup>2</sup> See Glossary (Helen/Elléni).

<sup>3</sup> Urreta, *Historia de la Etiopia*, bk I, ch. 32, entitled 'On the great kingdoms and lordships of the Prester John, on his many riches, tributes and revenues. Concerning the fierce wars that he has had with the Moorish and heathen kings, his neighbours', pp. 341–66.

<sup>4</sup> See Glossary (Francisco Álvares, Father).

<sup>5</sup> The letters from the Ethiopian monarch to the kings of Portugal were published in the second part of the *Verdadeira Informação*, chs 7 and 8, ff. 129v–133. See Glossary (Francisco Álvares, Father).

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## CHAPTER III

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Which deals with Emperor Claudius, who on succeeding to the empire titled himself Atanâf Çagued

*Glaudeôs, who when he was made emperor called himself Atanâf Çaguêd, began to reign when he was eighteen in the land of Damô, with counsel from Abba Cerça Denguil, the emperor's tutor, and from Abba Açarata Mariâm and Abba Samuel, and on the advice of the great men of the empire, such as Guelhân and Fanuêl. Four months after he came to the throne, he marched on Amîr Ozmân and, giving him battle, defeated him, but this victory was not perfect because the Moor then turned on him and routed him. And so he took the road towards Xâoa with great difficulty, taking with him no more than seventy or eighty people, and on arriving in Xâoa he overwintered twice in Guêndbarât. Leaving aside many things that happened to him at this time, we shall recount what happened in the third year of his emperorship, when God's spirit raised him up to preach freedom to the captives and to set free those who were suffering force. Then his empire began to rise like the house of David and the power {[f. 322v]} of the Moor to fall like the house of Saul, because it is God's custom often to change hands, making the victor become the vanquished, and the vanquished the victor. So he broke camp from where he had overwintered and took the road to Badlâ, over towards Begmêder. Hearing that he was <[f. 266v/256v]> coming, Cid Mahamed, Amîr Ozmân, Oacîr Muîd and Talilâ and nine other captains united against him with their men, all well versed and experienced in matters of war, 700 horse and so many foot that they were beyond count. Passing through Oagrâ, they came with great presumption and pride to where the emperor was, but his spirit was not broken to see the multitude of those men or the strength of their arms, because he had placed his hope in God, who casts down the proud and raises up the humble; and so, giving battle, he defeated them and celebrated victory, giving thanks to God for handing him the strong who trusted in their power and boasted of the vastness of their riches. After that, he went to Xoadâ, where his mother was, and she received him with great joy and contentment and held great celebrations for him, because she had already counted him among the dead.*

*At this time, Granb came from Ebedâ and, on arriving at Derazguê, he gathered the men who had escaped from the battle. When the emperor heard this, he left Xoadâ and came with a small number of men to Oindagâ, and there he pitched his camp. As it was so small, Granb thought nothing of it; and so he and his men sent him a message with words of great contempt and pride, like Senaquerib, but the emperor replied humbly, placing himself in the hand of God. The Moor then commanded his army to rise up with great fury, roaring like a lion, and the multitude of men covered all the land, and the emperor and his captains hurried out to encounter them with great joy. Swiftly taking a hill, they then charged down on the Moors, some with spears and shields, others with harquebuses, and with God's help they routed them*

and killed Granh and cut off the head of him who had cut off the heads of many strong men, and they put it in the dirt and ash in front of the camp and they all gave glory to God, saying with one voice, 'Truly, God is great and great is His strength.' And the emperor, with further humility added to that which he had in his heart, said, 'It was neither with my sword nor with my spear that I gained this gift, which was not granted to my father, but God gave it in order to show His might and greatness and my baseness and <[f. 267/257]> weakness. Nor is this empire mine, but His, and so He will give it to whomsoever He wishes.' And he commanded that all the princes and great men engrave {[f. 323]} on their helmets and swords: 'He who trusts in God, Emperor Atanâf Çaguêd, son of Emperor Onâg Çaguêd.'

After God gave them this great victory over Granh, there was {much} <great> peace and quiet until the nineteenth year of his emperorship when, while he was in Ôye in a large fortress, news arrived that Nur, who was then oazîr, which means 'governor of the kingdom,' the son of Muyabîd, was coming from the kingdom of Adel with 1,700 cavalry and many foot soldiers. The emperor therefore summoned his counsellors and asked them for their advice; they replied that he should gather all the warriors of the empire to go and fight. But on hearing this, the emperor very angrily said, 'Shall I perchance wait for those who are far away, while churches are being burnt and Christians captured? I would rather my blood were shed with that of the Christians that is being shed than wait for those who are so far away.' And so he hastened his departure and went forth to encounter the Moor, without wishing to listen to all those who were telling him that he would die. And on encountering him on Maundy Thursday,<sup>1</sup> he joined battle, which at first was keenly contested. While Glaudeôs was fighting valiantly, he was surrounded by twenty horsemen, who speared him in the side and he fell dead; and they cut off his head and took it to their lord. With the emperor dead, all his army scattered, and many renowned monks and many warriors died.

Up to here are words from a book containing the history of Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd, the brother of this Emperor Atanâf Çaguêd, and the writer says there that in another book (which I have been unable to find) this story is told at greater length.<sup>2</sup> In truth, many things about this emperor are lacking, including everything that the Portuguese did to help him, which we briefly recounted at the end of the first book when we dealt with Dom Cristóvão da Gama<sup>3</sup> and his soldiers, who arrived in Ethiopia at the time of this emperor. I shall therefore only note here in passing that he fought in the province of Oagrâ with the Moorish captains that the author names not before he joined his mother, but afterwards, when he took with <[f. 267v/257v]> him the Portuguese who had escaped from the rout of Dom Cristóvão, as we said in chapter 35 in the first book. Nor would he have dared fight those captains, let alone Granh, if he had not had the Portuguese with him. Indeed, if the Portuguese had not come soon he would have lost the empire entirely, because there was already very little left for the Moors to take in order to be lords of it all when Dom Cristóvão da Gama arrived.

Furthermore, the case of the Moor Nur who came from Adel is told {[f. 323v]} very much in passing, because (as I was told by an old man who is now dead, who was called

<sup>1</sup> Thursday in Holy Week.

<sup>2</sup> This is the only known version of an unabridged chronicle of Emperor Galâwdêwos. Manuel de Almeida used the text translated by Páez in his bk III, ch. 7 (see , 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 5, pp. 269–70; and the Introduction, p. ???, note ???, above).

<sup>3</sup> See Glossary (Cristóvão da Gama).

*Erâz* Oald Christôs and was the greatest lord in Ethiopia at the time of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd), while Emperor Claudius was in the kingdom of Ôye, the Moor Nur sent spies to see how strong he was and what he was doing, and on their return they said that he had many men and was occupying himself in festivities, and that in his court it was all singing and dancing, eating and drinking wine to excess. On hearing this, the Moor called his chief officers and, telling them what was happening, made them swear not to drink wine under any circumstances (for even though their Mohammed commands them not to drink, that does not stop them), and at the same time he exhorted them to fast and to pray, together with the rest of the men, and in this they persevered for a long time. Later he sent his spies again, and they found the emperor and his men as before, with music and festivities, eating and drinking in excess; so the Moor gathered his captains and told them, 'It is now time for us to go against this man, because God has delivered him into our hands.' And so he departed from his land straight away with 1,700 cavalry and many foot soldiers. When the emperor heard that he was coming, he went out to encounter him with many cavalry and foot soldiers. Meeting him on a broad plain in March 1559, he gave battle on Maundy Thursday and was routed and killed as his History says here, and the Moors took many riches and captives. And when they were about to celebrate their victory, Nur mounted an ass with an old saddle. His captains saw this and asked why he was doing such a thing, having achieved such a great victory; they urged him to mount the best of five very fine horses that he had seized, which had all belonged to the emperor personally. He replied to them that he had not achieved that victory through his own strength, but that God, no less, had given it to him. Therefore, in recognition of this, he would not ride a horse, showing pomp and splendour, but that humble ass instead. That is something truly notable and all the more worthy of consideration since the one who did that had less knowledge of God. When <[f. 268/258]> the celebrations ended, the great men asked him to release them from the oath that he had imposed on them not to drink wine, since the war was now over. But he refused outright to do so; instead, he obliged them to swear again that they would not drink any for three years, in acknowledgment of what he owed God for the remarkable victory that He had given him, because his army had been incomparably smaller than the emperor's.

I was told all this about the Moor Nur by the lord I named above and by a very old monk who {[f. 324]} was already sixteen when these events took place and was constantly at the court of this Emperor Claudius. I have been unable to find anything else about him other than what I have mentioned here and what I said at the end of the first book, when dealing with the Portuguese who came with Dom Cristóvão da Gama. I shall therefore go on to deal with the missions that the fathers of the Society of Jesus undertook to this empire at the time of this emperor, and some things that happened to him and his successors.



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## CHAPTER IV

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Which deals with the mission on which Father Patriarch Dom Joam Nunes Barreto<sup>1</sup> of the Society of Jesus, with twelve fathers<sup>2</sup> of the same company, were sent by Pope Paul IV to Ethiopia for the reduction of its people

After the Portuguese had discovered the Prester John's<sup>3</sup> kingdoms and lordships and had begun to have commerce and communication with them via India, Emperor David, who later called himself Onâg Çaguêd, and D. Manoel of Portugal thereby came to develop a great friendship with each other and visited each other through their ambassadors. By this means, the emperor came to have more understanding and knowledge of the matters of the Roman Church because, even though he and all or most of his kingdoms were Christian, they had had neither communication nor commerce with the Roman Church for many hundreds of years. This was both because of the vast distance between them over seas and lands populated by barbarous nations that were enemies of our holy faith, and because the people of this empire considered the patriarch of Alexandria to be their head in matters of religion, and they turned to him for the rule of their faith, which could not avoid being full of many errors since it came from such an impure source, which is so distant from the clear source and true head and obedience <[f. 268v/258v]> of the Apostolic See. In addition, alongside baptism, the *Abexins* observe many things from the Law of Moses and Judaism, as we stated in book 2. But Emperor David was instructed and enlightened in these errors by the Portuguese who came to this land and by means of everything else that D. Manoel did in this respect, and he came to write and send his ambassador to the pope, who was Clement VII at the time, giving him obedience and acknowledging him as supreme pastor and head {[f. 324v]} of the universal Church and, as such, he asked him, since he was the master of all, to send him fathers and masters to teach him what they were obliged to know of the holy Christian faith and religion. He also wrote to D. Manoel, asking him to intervene on his behalf with the supreme pontiff on such a just and holy matter. He wrote the same to his son, D. Joam III, after he learnt that D. Manoel had died. King John inherited not only the kingdom but also his zeal for the holy faith, and soon afterwards he received further letters from Emperor Claudius, who had by then succeeded his father, Emperor David, and called himself Atanâf Çaguêd and also commanded that the same obedience be given to the Apostolic See. D. Joam

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (João Nunes Barreto).

<sup>2</sup> See Glossary (First Jesuit mission).

<sup>3</sup> See Glossary (Prester John).

duly performed his offices in this matter, intervening with the pope, who at the time was Julius III and afterwards Paul IV. The latter was informed about everything and, considering the importance of the matter, decided to make Father Joam Nunes of the Society of Jesus patriarch of this empire (and he did so), giving him considerable powers, and at the same time he appointed Fathers Belchior Carneiro, who was also Portuguese, and André de Oviedo, a Spaniard, who at the time was the rector of the College of Naples, as bishops to accompany him and succeed him in the patriarchate.

[But even though it was a great joy and contentment for them to be appointed to such a glorious mission, they regretted and refused the honours so strongly that the supreme pontiff had to command them to accept them; so, bowing their heads in holy obedience, Father Belchior Carneiro and Father André de Oviedo left Italy for Portugal. They arrived safely in Lisbon, where Father Joam Nunes Barreto was with the other fathers who were to accompany him.]

{...the fathers...} [When all the fathers who were to go to Ethiopia were gathered in Lisbon, waiting only for the apostolic letters to consecrate <[f. 269/259]> the patriarch and the two bishops, the time arrived for the ships to sail for India. Seeing that the letters were delayed and the ships could not wait, D. Joam took the fathers' advice and ordered that Father Belchior Carneiro should embark and go on ahead to Goa with some fathers of the Society to prepare things for the journey to Ethiopia, until such time as the patriarch could go. And he wrote] to the viceroy of India, who at the time was Dom Pedro Mascarenhas, to send an ambassador from Goa to Emperor Atanâf Çaguêd in order to check his spirit and disposition again and to forewarn him of the arrival of the father patriarch and his companions. The viceroy did so, sending an honourable man by the name of Diogo Dias and with him a father of our Society, a very learned and prudent man of many virtues called Master Gonçalo Rodrigues and, as his companion, Brother Fulgêncio Freire, a noble man of great understanding and experience. They left Goa on 7th February 1555. This measure was very timely because, when they arrived in this empire, they found this Emperor Atanâf Çaguêd changed and very different from the impression they had had in Portugal and from what he in his letters had promised. Because Father Master Gonçalo Rodrigues himself recounts everything that they went through with him in a letter that he wrote from Goa, after returning from Ethiopia, to the fathers of the Society in Portugal on 13th September 1556, I shall put it here in the manner in which it is reported in the *Annual Report for 1607 and 1608*, folio {281} <181>,<sup>3</sup> by Father Fernão Guerreiro of our Society. I mainly follow him on the details of this mission by Father Patriarch Dom Joam Nunes Barreto and his companions, because not only is he a very precise man in his histories, and a man of great authority, but he also had in his possession the originals of this letter and of others that Father Bishop André de Oviedo and his companions wrote on this matter, together with other information on it.

{[f. 325]} Father Master Gonçalo Rodrigues thus says in his letter, beginning with his arrival at court:

<sup>1</sup> The following section in square brackets is written in the left-hand margin of folio 324v in ARSI, MS Goa 42. Its position in the main body of the text is indicated by a symbol.

<sup>2</sup> These are the only legible words in a line and a half of text in ARSI, MS Goa 42 that has been struck through. The following text in square brackets is written in the left-hand margin and its position in the main body indicated by a symbol.

<sup>3</sup> ARSI, MS Goa 42 gives the correct reference (f. 281).

On 17th May, we arrived at the place where the king of Ethiopia was, and we found him on a plain with a large number of tents erected around him, and he sent word that he would receive Diogo Dias and us at the same time. We went to speak to him on the second day. [f. 269v/259v] He was sitting on a divan with some curtains over it in a carpeted tent draped with silk. Diogo Dias gave him the letters and he had them read out, with all the Portuguese present. In them, our lord the king said to him that in a year's time he would send him a man from his household with a certain number of religious men of holy life and proven doctrine. At this he appeared to be very confused, and he was so lukewarm about this business that, when we spoke to him, he did not give us a straight answer. And so we took our leave of him and returned to our tents. Two or three days later he left to go and see a grandmother of his some eight or ten days' journey away, and we were left on the plain, without shelter, without having anyone to address a word to us on his behalf. However, an honourable Portuguese came to our rescue at this time of need and took us to some settlements of his that were two or three leagues from there, where he put us up in his own house and he returned to the king. We remained here for about a month, which the king spent on his journey. During this time, I composed a treatise on the errors of Ethiopia and the truth of our holy faith to present to the king, and while I was here I heard from a Portuguese who was very close to him that he did not want the fathers and said that he had no need of them, and he had even less desire to give obedience to the holy Roman Church. And everyone kept telling me that some great men of the kingdom used to say that they would rather be subjects of the Moors than change their customs and adopt ours. Therefore, I was further confirmed in giving him in writing everything that I might have preached to him in words if I had known the language, so that from the response he gave me I might clearly understand his true intention, which had been concealed for so long. And so, when he returned from his journey, we went to his camp, where the Portuguese whom we found there put us up, for he no longer remembered us at all from that first time that he saw us. Because the treatise that I had written was in Portuguese and necessarily, for him to see it, it had to be translated into Chaldean, I wrote him a letter asking him to give me two learned monks to translate some truths of our faith into Chaldean for me, {[f. 325v]} in order to show him how wrong all the people of his kingdoms were to call us who [f. 270/260] follow the Roman Church heretics and worse than Moors. And I learnt that they have a book that they call the *Adultério de Frangues*,<sup>1</sup> written by the schismatics and heretics of Alexandria, whence they take their abunas, whom they obey and for whom they pay tribute to the Turks. In this book they condemn the Chalcedonian Council,<sup>2</sup> saying that it made four persons in the holy Trinity, together with many other errors that they falsely impute to us. I therefore asked the king for this book as well, but he would not give it to me, but rather became very indignant that we knew what it contained. He just gave us the monks but, after we had begun to translate the treatise, the monks refused to touch it, either because the king had secretly commanded them not to or because of the fear that they had of him. So the Portuguese captain had to go and ask for them again and again and eventually, through {divine} favour <of the Portuguese>, an honourable Portuguese who knew the language well ended up acting as interpreter on my behalf. However, as a good scribe was needed to copy out the paper and transfer it into good handwriting, we also asked him for one and he granted one, but then he sent another very angry message telling us to give him back his monk at once and, if we liked,

<sup>1</sup> Literally *Adultery of Franks*. See Glossary (*Abû Ferâgi/Adultério de Frangues*).

<sup>2</sup> See Glossary (Council of Chalcedon).

we could show him the paper as it was, or else we should no longer carry on with that business. It was therefore necessary to show it to him as it was, so that he could not invent any more excuses. He set the day for it, which was 20th August, and on that day we, the Portuguese captain and seven or eight others went to the king's compound, which is like a hedge, and to his house, which is very mediocre despite being the best in Ethiopia, where he was sitting on a divan. After the customary courtesies, as I began to make a short speech explaining to him why I had come, he interrupted me and switched to something else, like an armed man parrying the strokes with which I was trying to touch him. I gave him the treatise that I had produced in Chaldean, which he began to read, and then, simmering with anger, he began to spit out the poison that he had been concealing, saying that I had asked him for permission and for monks to translate the truth of our faith and that there I was not doing that, but rather I was attributing errors to those who did not have them, and that it was not right for me, a simple cleric, to be doing that, but instead it was for bishops and great prelates and the pope to do. I replied that it was true that I was a poor man, but what was written there was evangelical truths and sacred councils, and His Highness should listen to them and not to me. He told me that I was imputing to them many [f. 270v/260v] things that they did not hold. I replied that His Highness was not erring in his faith, but that his people were, that everything that I was giving him in writing was true, and to prove it he should summon {[f. 326]} his monks and scholars to come before him and I would show him very clearly that all or most of them held those errors that I was pointing out to him in writing. He said that he did not want a disputation, for they had been in that faith for a thousand years or more and that disputations were for heathens. Since this faith of his was a thousand years or more old, he said, how could it be that nobody had ever done what I had done and told him that he was wrong? I answered that Our Lord sometimes permitted such things because of the sins of men, but that he should give thanks to God for visiting him with the evangelical truth during his time. To that he said that the Catholic Church had been divided into four chairs, and that they had obeyed one of them since the beginning. I answered that it was true, but that formerly they had all obeyed the Roman pontiff, who was over all like His Highness in his kingdom; however, since the three chairs had separated from obedience to Rome, therefore all those who obeyed these three were schismatics; His Highness should look at the paper that I was putting before him and in it he would find the answer to everything that he was asking me, and he should beware of falling into that which the prophet said: 'Noluit intelligere ut bene ageret.'<sup>1</sup> Finally, when many arguments had been made on both sides, with the Portuguese present, I told him through the captain that what I was seeking in that written paper that I had given him was to know his intent as regards giving obedience to the Roman pontiff and receiving the scholars and religious men that the king of Portugal, his brother, wished to send to him, because if he did not want them and did not wish to obey, there was no reason for them to come to his kingdom; His Highness should see whether he wanted to give obedience, as he had given it and sent it to His Holiness in that letter. To that he replied that he had religious men and scholars in his kingdom and therefore he had no need of those of the king of Portugal, and he certainly had never given obedience to the Roman pontiff, for the obedience that Gaspar de Magalhães had taken had not been given by him, but an Arab monk, who had translated his letters to the king of Portugal, had made a mistake and had not understood them. ~~<Therefore, seeing his deliberation>~~ Finally, he concluded that he only wished to obey the patriarch of Alexandria,

<sup>1</sup> Psalms 35:4 [36:3], 'He would not understand that he might do well.'

whom he had always obeyed. Therefore, seeing his deliberation and obstinacy, I took my leave of him. When he was alone [f. 271/261] with the Portuguese captain, he began to praise me as a great scholar and was very surprised that I was so young yet knew so much. I heard that he had read the treatise that I had given him in Chaldean and never put it down, but showed it to his mother and brothers and the most important people in the kingdom. And because his abuna knew what I intended, he had threatened {[f. 326v]} to excommunicate anyone who read my writings. They told me that the king had sent to him the next day for permission to read them but, because he had denied him it, he insulted him, calling him a heretic Moor who read the Qur'ān of Mohammed and prevented anyone from reading such a holy text as that, written by such excellent Christians; however, since he had been sent to his kingdom to be the prelate and abuna, he should reply to what a poor cleric, with no dignified position, was proposing to him. To that the abuna replied that he did not want a disputation with me, because he had only come to his kingdom to give orders. All this time, people at court were talking about nothing else, and some of the king's household showed that they were inclined to our side, while others, principally in the queen's household, were maintaining their errors. The king therefore decided, with his ministers, to summon their scholarly monks, who are held here to be {men} of a holy life, to consult them on this matter of faith. The king had my treatise copied out, but I feared that they might remove some passages to which he objected, such as where I spoke of Pope Leo and Dioscorus, the patriarch of Alexandria,<sup>1</sup> whom they hold to be a saint, while they consider Pope Leo to be accursed and excommunicated and have such great hatred of him that they cannot bear to hear him mentioned. They thus repudiate the holy Chalcedonian Council, because they say that it erred in the faith and it unjustly condemned Saint Dioscorus (as they call him); they do not accept its definitions and they have been separated from obedience to Rome ever since, like the people of Alexandria, who for 1,067 years have also been included in the heresy of Sergius, Paul and Pyrrhus, which was repudiated at the Sixth Synod of Constantinople, and that of Eutyches, which places a single will in Christ.

When the time came when it seemed that the king would give me the reply that he had agreed to give me when I gave him the treatise, I went to ask him for it. He sent word to me that an ambassador sent by his father to Portugal spent ten years there without his business being dispatched;<sup>2</sup> I therefore realised that all this was guile and that he was extremely worried that I would return to the coast where our fleet was about to come for us, since he feared that I might be able to uncover his vices. When the time arrived for me to set off for Baroa, I went [f. 271v/261v] to take my leave of him, but he sent word to me that such a great man as I was who had come for the purpose for which I had come could not be dispatched as quickly as that, and where could I go where I would be of more use than in confessing these Portuguese? However, he said, since I wanted to leave, I should give him one more month to reply to me and, if he had not done so by then, I should consider myself free to go.

A few days after this, the king struck camp and moved to another place two days' journey away. We went with him as well and spent the Saturday and Sunday on a plain, where {[f. 327]} we set up an altar under a tent and said Mass on those days. Three monks came to see me here, one of them a scholar, and they had come wanting to meet me and discuss matters of faith with me. The scholar started the conversation by saying that he thought everything about us was fine, except for the fact that we did not keep the Sabbath and that we ate pork

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (Leo I, Pope; and Dioscorus I).

<sup>2</sup> A reference to the embassy made by Şaggā Za Āb. See Glossary (Çagā Za Ab/Şaggā Za Āb).

and have. And during his speech he vomited many of the errors of faith that they hold, which were that when they died their souls could not go straight to see the divine essence, but went to the earthly paradise; that the Holy Spirit did not proceed from the Son, but just from the Father; that the Son, in his manhood, was equal to the Father; that they did not go to hell to remain there for ever, unlike the Moors and infidels, but the souls of bad Christians only remained there until they had purged all their sins and ultimately all those who had been baptized would be saved – which he proved with the words of Christ Our Lord, ‘Qui {crediderit} <crīdidit> et baptizatus fuerit, salvus erit.’<sup>1</sup> I replied to all these errors of his, explaining to him through reasoning and the Scriptures that the contrary was true, and he was so pleased with it that he whispered in my ear, so that the other monks, who were idiots, could not hear him, that that was the truth and he would keep it so in his heart.

When the time that the king had asked me to wait for his reply had passed, I went to ask him for it and also for permission to leave. He told me that I should leave anyway and that, as regards the fathers that the king of Portugal wanted to send to him, he had already arranged for a man in Maçuâ to receive them, because he wanted to hear them. With that, I took my leave of him and came away via some settlements of Portuguese, where I confessed them and their families and married some that were living in sin with Abexim women, first reducing these women to our holy faith, including a princess who was the emperor’s close kinswoman. And because the churches of this [f. 272/262] land (apart from being schismatic) do not have altars suited to our use, we always carried with us a portable altar on which we would celebrate Mass.

Up to here are words from Father Gonçalo Rodrigues’s letter on the subject of the faith and religion that he found among the *Habexins* and King Atanâf Çaguêd, who was previously called Claudius. After he had left the court and was on his way to Debaroâ, an honourable Portuguese called Afonço de França wrote him a letter in which, after telling him many experiences that he had had with the emperor regarding matters of our holy faith, he concluded by saying: ‘From which I understand that the king would rather be a vassal of the Moors, like the Dioscorian peoples, which are those of Alexandria and Egypt, than give any such obedience to the holy pontiff, and he never wished to reveal this truth before to Your Reverence so as not to make you so disconsolate that you might desist from performing the duties required of your office.’<sup>2</sup>

{[f. 327v]} While Father Master Gonçalo was in this empire of Ethiopia, which was from May 1555 to August ’56, {the Father Patriarch left Portugal for India} Father Joam Nunes Barreto was consecrated in Portugal as the patriarch of Ethiopia and Father André de Oviedo as bishop to be his coadjutor and to succeed him in the patriarchate if he died first.<sup>3</sup> And they left for India with their companion fathers, three of whom did not arrive because the ship on which they were coming was lost. The patriarch and the rest of them

<sup>1</sup> Mark 16:16, ‘He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved’ (‘*crīdidit*’ is a copyist’s error in BPB, MS 778).

<sup>2</sup> Guerreiro, ‘Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia’, f. 281 *et seq.* / pp. 305 *et seq.* Manuel de Almeida also transcribed this letter, but added a passage in the middle (see ‘Historia de Ethiopia a alta’, Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 5, pp. 358–62 and 364–7).

<sup>3</sup> Bull of Julius III, Rome, 24 January 1554 (Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 10, pp. 39–41). Pope Paul IV (1555–1559) later wrote a letter to the Ethiopian king, dated March 1556, mentioning the appointment of the patriarch and the two bishops and informing him that these dignitaries of the Catholic Church were going to Ethiopia (Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 10, pp. 52–5). See Guerreiro, ‘Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia’, f. 286v, p. 313.

arrived in Goa, where they found Father Master Gonçalo, who had returned from the Prester John a short while before. From him they learnt what was happening and how different the emperor was as regards receiving the patriarch and fathers from what D. Joam had thought in Portugal. There were many consultations both of the patriarch with the fathers and of the viceroy with the members of his council and with the fathers themselves regarding what to do about the patriarch's journey to this empire, because they felt that it would be a slight to the authority of the pope and the apostolic Holy See for such a great dignitary to come on his behalf to a schismatic emperor and not to be received by him in a fitting manner, and the emperor was also making a serious insult to the king of Portugal, who had mediated with the pope at his request and had organised this very apostolic mission, at great expense to his exchequer. They therefore agreed that Patriarch Dom João Nunes should suspend his journey and stay in Goa, and in the meantime Father Bishop André de Oviedo should come on ahead to Ethiopia with five companions so that, <[f. 272v/262v]> depending on what he found and how he was received by the emperor, he could advise India, and then they could decide on whether the patriarch would come or stay. The patriarch wrote all this to D. Joam III on 1st December 1560,<sup>1</sup> in a long letter now kept by the fathers of the Society in Portugal. But, before we deal with the arrival of Father Bishop Dom André de Oviedo, it is appropriate to mention here how Friar Luiz de Urreta recounts what we have said so far about this mission by Father Patriarch Dom João Nunes and his companions, so that the reader may see how far he is from what actually happened.

After recounting at length how this mission was organized, he continues on page 203 *et seq.* with these words:

*Having received the blessing of the Supreme Pontiff Paul IV and that of their holy Father Ignatius, all thirteen departed in company from Rome and, after arriving with great joy and health in Spain, they journeyed to Portugal, where D. Joam fêted them. Once everything was ready they departed and, sailing over the broad ocean on course to their land, after many dangers, risks and perils they arrived in Ethiopia and made port in Arquico. From there they set off for Emperor Claudius's court, and although this mission was in vain and all of them saw their hopes frustrated, even so they were graciously received by Emperor Claudius, who respected the person of the Patriarch as apostolic nuncio {[f. 328]} and all the other priests as befitted their virtue and holiness. However, he was offended to see that, without a word of explanation and without asking his permission or forewarning him, the king of Portugal should send him a patriarch and bishops to his land as if he were some infidel or schismatic, despite the fact that he had his college of Saint Stephen in Rome, where many of his vassals lived, and that he was a son of the Church and already had an apostolic nuncio, who, according to briefs from supreme pontiffs since Eugene IV, is the oldest archbishop. The fathers and the patriarch showed their mandates and apostolic bulls, which were accepted, and, placing them on their heads, they obeyed them. But there was then a confrontation that was so serious that it convulsed the whole empire; the reason was that the patriarch ordered two things: one that there should be no more married priests, and the other that people should pay tithes on all*

<sup>1</sup> The letter to which Páez is referring was written on 1 December 1556 (Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 10, pp. 68–78). Guerreiro, on whose work Páez is basing his account, gives 1 December 1560 as the date of the letter (Guerreiro, 'Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia', f. 287, p. 313).

their produce to the Church, at which the clergy and all the lay people were so angry that, with a 'tolle tolle,'<sup>1</sup> they went to the emperor saying that they were taking away their ancient customs and introducing new ones. Seeing so much confusion in his land, <[f. 273/263]> the Prester John commanded that the fathers stop doing that, but they did not obey him at all. These confrontations were succeeded by other differences, which the fathers thought were in the service of God but which the Ethiopians regarded as very onerous, and all their complaints went to the emperor. And as he was not moved by pious affection and on the other hand did not have the patience of Job, the fiery pepper of his wrath made him so angry that he went beyond the bounds with the good patriarch and his companions, and he said some words to them in which he vomited the poison that was burning in his breast.

These differences that were occurring at court with the emperor gave rise throughout the empire to whispers and muttering which spread from mouth to mouth, growing all the time, and the land was filled with outcry and mutiny that turned people's spirits against the holy fathers. Finally, after much hectoring and fencing with words, the mandate that they had brought was addressed, and the oldest archbishop, who was the apostolic nuncio, complained of the wrong that was being done to him, and that they were removing his mandate, which had been granted by Clement VII, without the pope's authorization. The other prelates, bishops and archbishops sided with the archbishop. When the Prester John saw that schism in his land, he began to complain about the king of Portugal for having so poorly informed the supreme pontiff, and he concluded that the fathers should not make use of their mandate until the apostolic See {[f. 328v]} had been informed of everything. With these differences, the patriarch, who was an old man approaching the sunset of his life, grew more weary than his strength could bear, and they were not used to the climate of the land, and so they decided to leave Ethiopia. They were helped in this determination by being Portuguese and wanting to be among their own people, because this nation is exceedingly besotted with their own land and the company of their own compatriots, and any other country soon becomes tiresome to them, and the whole world, in their view, cannot compare with Portugal. And they embarked for Goa. But Father André de Oviedo did not want to leave Ethiopia, saying that obedience obliged him to stay in that land and he would remain there until his death.<sup>2</sup>

This, in brief, is what Friar Luiz de Urreta says, and is very different from what really happened, as we saw above, because neither the father patriarch nor all the other fathers of this mission left Rome together, but just some of them did; nor <[f. 273v/263v]> did they all leave Lisbon for Ethiopia together, but Father Belchior Carneiro went with some in 1555 and the patriarch with Bishop André de Oviedo and the others went the following year; nor did they arrive together in one ship, but in several; nor did they all arrive in {Goa} <Rome>,<sup>3</sup> for some were lost on the voyage; nor did they come directly to Ethiopia and the port of Arquico, but to India and Goa; nor did they all leave Goa for Ethiopia, but just Father Bishop Dom André de Oviedo with five companions, the father patriarch staying behind with Father Bishop Belchior Carneiro and the others, who never entered Ethiopia or even saw it. Therefore, he was not correct in saying that Father Patriarch Dom

<sup>1</sup> John 19:15, 'Away with him; away with him.'

<sup>2</sup> Urreta, *Historia de la Etiopia*, excerpts (with several omissions) from bk I, ch. 21, pp. 203–10. [Páez quotes this passage in Spanish]

<sup>3</sup> Obviously a slip by the copyist of BPB, MS 778.



João Nunes with all his other companions reached the port of Arquico and from there went to the court of Emperor Claudius, who graciously received them and respected the person of the patriarch, despite being offended to see that, without a word of explanation and without first asking his permission, the king of Portugal was sending him a patriarch and bishops to his land as if he were some infidel or schismatic. And even though they had come, Emperor Claudius could not have shown those feelings about the king of Portugal's not having advised him in advance, because that was why Diogo Dias came here with Father Gonçalo Rodrigues of our Society, as mentioned in his letter, to advise him on behalf of the king of Portugal that the father patriarch, bishops and fathers were coming and to learn whether he wanted them to come, to which he replied that they could come and that he had already posted a man in Maçuâ to receive them. Nor did it happen that the patriarch and fathers showed their mandates and apostolic bullae, and put them on their heads and obeyed them, nor that the patriarch {[f. 329]} ordered the clergy not to marry and the people to pay tithes to the Church. And the oldest archbishop could not have complained that they were taking away his mandate as apostolic nuncio, nor could the other bishops and archbishops have backed him, because, as we have already said several times, there are no archbishops or bishops in Ethiopia other than the one who comes to them from Alexandria, whom they call *abuna*. Finally, to conclude in a word, I say that hardly any of all the words that the author says here are faithful to what really happened.

It is very clear to see from this how poorly the author has obeyed the rules and laws of history here, since the first rule (as Tullius says in book 2 <[f. 274/264]> of *De Orationes*<sup>1</sup>) is not to say anything that is false or even to allow the chance that there might be such a suspicion, and Lucian, in the book *Quomodo sit scribenda historia*,<sup>2</sup> therefore very rightly condemns the historian who, when he writes, is not fully informed about the words, persons, events and places relevant to history. For lack of this, Friar Luiz de Urreta is wrong about so many things here, and what condemns him most is his reporting of certain things that greatly damage the credit and honour of such a great king as D. Joam III of Portugal, by saying that he informed the supreme pontiff poorly about the situation in Ethiopia; he also said other things showing extreme dishonour and discredit to the worthy patriarch and the other bishops and fathers of the Society, such as that when they arrived at court they convulsed the whole empire – clergy and lay people – by ordering that the clergy should not marry and that the people should pay tithes to the Church, and that these confrontations were succeeded by other differences that the Ethiopians considered very onerous, and with that the land was filled with outcry and mutiny, and they all came with a *'tolle tolle'* to the emperor saying that they were taking away their ancient customs and introducing new ones. Even if he is saying this as part of a narrative, he had a duty to find out the truth first before publishing such falsehoods to the world as if they were true, to the detriment of the honour of such great personages. In fact, neither Father Patriarch Dom Joam Nunes Barreto, nor Father Bishop Dom Belchior Carneiro, nor some other fathers who were their companions entered Ethiopia or ever saw it, as we have already said, and so everything that he recounts here was based on a false premise. And if they had entered the country, they would not have returned as he says they did, because it

<sup>1</sup> *M. Tullis Ciceronis Orationes*, Rome, 1531, f. 24v.

<sup>2</sup> Lucian of Samosata, 'The Way to Write History'.

is not the custom of the fathers of the Society who, through obedience, exile themselves from their motherlands and colleges where they have been raised and go to India, China, Japan and any other similar missions and parts of the world, to go there just to return to Portugal, but instead they go to die there; if anyone does return, it is on religious business, and when it is over they return to their mission and live in it and serve God until they die.

{[f. 329v]} As for his remarks about the Portuguese nation, that they are so besotted with their own land and the company of their own compatriots that any other country soon becomes tiresome to them, and they do not become used to the climate and airs of the land, we need not expend any more words to prove how groundlessly <[f. 274v/264v]> he ascribes this remark to them, since that nation's deeds are clearly showing the world the opposite, which is that if there is a people that does not mind leaving its own country and is least concerned about climates to which it is not accustomed, it is the Portuguese. Which nation, other than the Portuguese, has undertaken such long, arduous and difficult voyages in undiscovered regions, through seas and climates so different from its own? Which people has discovered lands so remote and distant from its own? Who has pacified and tamed more barbarous and unknown nations than the Portuguese, and reduced many of them to our holy Catholic faith through their help, example and doctrine? Evidence of this is the colonies that they have in Africa and Asia, below the equinoctial line and torrid zone, all along the Guinea coast, from Cape Verde to the kingdoms of Congo and Angola and, passing the Cape of Good Hope, in Mozambique, Sofala and throughout the great kingdom of Monomotapa, the coast of Malindi, Mombasa and Ethiopia, and throughout the East Indies to Pegu, Siam, Malacca, Moluccas, Cambodia, China and Japan, all lands that are very different from those in which they were born. And no less false is what he infers from that premise, that because they were Portuguese and wanted to be back with their own people, Father Patriarch Dom João Nunes and Father Bishop Dom Belchior Carneiro and other fathers of the Society left Ethiopia and returned to Goa, because of all the people on this mission, only Father Bishop André de Oviedo and five fathers of the Society entered Ethiopia, and they all died there, as we shall see later.

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## CHAPTER V

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### On the arrival of Father Bishop Dom André de Oviedo in Ethiopia and what happened with Emperor Claudius

Once the viceroy of India had agreed with the members of his council and the fathers of the Society in Goa that Father Patriarch Dom João Nunes should stay there for the time being, as we said above, and that Father Bishop André de Oviedo should come, the father bishop prepared for the journey and the viceroy gave four *fustas*, the captain-general of which was called Manoel Trabaços de Figueiredo. And, {[f. 330]} once everything was ready, he embarked on 16th February 1557, bringing with him five fathers of the Society, who were Father Superior Manoel Fernandez and Fathers Gonçalo Gualdamez, Gonçalo Cardoso, Antonio Fernandez and Francisco Lopes, all Portuguese except Father Gualdamez, who was Spanish. After a successful voyage, they arrived <[f. 275/265]> at the port of Maçuã on 17th March, but they did not disembark on the island itself, which is very close to the mainland, but some distance away, since they found on the island a Turkish pasha with 500 fighting men, who had come with the intention of conquering Ethiopia. For that reason, the father bishop hurried inland at once on the 19th, taking the fathers and some Portuguese from the fleet who wished to accompany them to serve God. The next day they met four of the Portuguese who were already in Ethiopia, who were called Francisco Jacome, Luís Custódio, António Lopes de Oliveira and António de Sampaio, who were waiting in case a fleet came from India. After that they travelled slowly and on the 25th reached Debarôã, a large town which is the usual residence of the *bahâr nagâx*, who governs those lands almost as far as the sea. On hearing that the father bishop was coming, he came a long way out of the town to meet him, together with many men on foot and on horseback, and he paid him many courtesies. When they arrived at the town, the common people showed their enormous pleasure and joy and kissed the father bishop's hand with great shows of devotion, and the *bahâr nagâx* gave him very good lodgings. Since the father bishop thought it would be good to advise the emperor of his arrival, he at once wrote him a letter which, as I have found it here in his own hand, I shall put here.

*Letter from Father Bishop Dom André de Oviedo to Emperor Claudius*

*May the heavenly Father with his consubstantial and eternal Son and the consoling Spirit, one single God and three persons, be with Your Highness always with the abundance of His divine gifts, and thanks be given so that in everything His most holy will may be known and followed, as Christ Our Lord said in Saint John, 4: 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me.'<sup>1</sup> And thus he taught us to ask for it through Saint Matthew, saying, 'Fiat voluntas*

<sup>1</sup> John 4:34.

tua.<sup>1</sup> *After the very Catholic and enlightened king of Portugal, D. Joam III, procured with His Holiness the coming of the patriarch and his companions to Ethiopia, moved not by temporal interests but by the zeal of the Lord God* {[f. 330v]} *and love for Your Highness, and incurring great expenditure with it, as Your Highness can be further informed, we arrived last year in India, where the Patriarch remains awaiting Your Highness's royal will in order to more gently serve it in Christ* <[f. 275v/265v]> *Our Lord. And therefore, he felt that I and some religious of the Society of Jesus should come in advance, and he gave me, as his coadjutor ordained by His Holiness, his mandate and powers for this purpose. Thus we have arrived in the kingdoms of Your Highness as far as Debaroâ, where we have been well received by the bahâr nagâx, in the good company of Francisco Jacome and other Portuguese who have come here with us. We have come to serve Our Lord and Your Highness and, as soon as we can, with divine favour, we shall set off for Your Highness; may Our Lord keep your royal person and state for His greater service and honour. Amen. From Debaroâ, on 26th March 1557.*<sup>2</sup>

The father bishop and his companions stayed in Debaroâ until 20th April. During this time, they performed the offices of Holy Week and Easter with as much splendour as they could, and on Good Friday they held a solemn procession from our church to the local ones, in order to unite with them more and gain their goodwill. In those days they visited our church with such great devotion and love that the fathers were much edified. The father bishop confirmed many slaves of the Portuguese who were there and the fathers heard many confessions, some of them many years old. The *bahâr nagâx* and other great men often visited the father bishop and each time he explained to them the truth of our holy faith and the obligation they had to obey the holy Roman Church. But it was to little avail, as Father Manoel Fernandez states in a letter he wrote in 1562 to Father Diego Lainez, who was the general of our Society at the time, and Father Fernão Guerreiro includes it in the *Annual Report for 1607 and 1608*, folio 294.<sup>3</sup> In it he advises him of the arrival of the father bishop in Ethiopia and of the course of his journey to the emperor, and so I shall report his very words so that the reader may better know what happened, beginning at the time when they left Debaroâ, which he relates thus:

*We left Debaroâ for the king's court and camp and, during our journey, which took us fifty days, we would stop on Sundays, when there would be Mass and preaching and doctrine for the boys. And many of our companions, who were fifteen Portuguese with many of their families, confessed and took communion. And it was more than a small pleasure to us to see that in the mountains and wilds of Ethiopia we could find something of our own, with many people attending and taking the sacraments. We stopped on the road for several days because, the deeper we went into the country, {[f. 331]} the more <[f. 276/266]> Portuguese came out to confess, and some also to marry their concubines; and there were so many confessions and so many people that the father bishop confirmed that it was a great consolation to us. Almost eight days' journey before reaching the king, His Highness sent one of the great men of his household to visit the father bishop, and he brought a large number of mules for our baggage.*

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 6:10, 'Thy will be done.'

<sup>2</sup> Manuel de Almeida also transcribed this letter by Andrés de ('Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 5, pp. 371–2). [Páez transcribes this letter in Spanish]

<sup>3</sup> Guerreiro, 'Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia', ff. 295–6, pp. 322–4; Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 10, pp. 146–56. The letter, dated 29 July 1562, was signed by Manuel Fernandes, Gonçalo Cardoso and Francisco Lopes.

*As we continued our journey, a day before reaching the place where the king had his camp, a message arrived that we should stop until we received his command. Two days later he sent it and, when we came almost to within a warning shot of the camp, there came another message from the king that we should pitch our tents; since many Portuguese were accompanying us, the tents looked very impressive when they were erected. We stayed there that night, and the next day at noon a large number of the king's kinsfolk and noblemen of his household, well adorned and on good horses, came to the father bishop's tent. Two high-ranking persons entered it and gave him a message from the king that he was summoning him. We went at once and His Highness was on top of his house, with his mother and brothers, looking out. We arrived and, although it was not the custom, he wanted us all to enter his first courtyard on horseback, while he was in the inner one watching everything. After remaining like that for a while, he commanded that we should dismount and enter the second courtyard, where his living tent was. And there he made us wait for a while longer, while he looked at us from among some silk cloths. On either side of the door to his tent there was a large number of elders and noble persons with staves in their hands, all carefully ordered, and while everyone was very still and quiet, two of his servants came out of his tent, one of them Bahâr Nagâx Isaac. Having bowed decently to the bishop, they took us to the king, who received him with humility and love. After some speeches, the bishop gave him the letters from the governor of India and from our patriarch and others, and the king, taking them, began at once to show his displeasure at the matters of his reduction, from which he was so far as Rome is from Ethiopia. But since he was noble and discreet and friendly towards the Portuguese, he concealed his displeasure, although not to the extent that he did not give clear indications of his real feelings and perfidy. However, he always behaved very temperately towards the bishop and for as long as he lived he treated him in such a way that nobody dared to show him any disrespect. <[f. 276v/266v]> In our provisioning he went to great lengths, {[f. 331v]} because by nature he was very liberal and generous, principally with regard to the king of Portugal, to whom he acknowledged that he was greatly indebted. He was so human and so concerned about the difficulties that the father bishop was fearing that, when he was about to fight the Moors in the battle in which he died, he said, 'Poor bishop, what will become of him if I die?' Claudius was a person of such character (apart from his perfidy) that I am quite sure that no man in all his kingdom was wiser or more suited to being king than he. He was very accustomed to Portuguese ways, and he had so many compliments for the bishop in matters of friendship that, despite all his obstinacy, we were always in hope of something good. And Your Paternity may believe that Claudius was indeed the right person to be king of Ethiopia because, in everything else, apart from his perfidy, he was very different from the customs of his vassals.*

Up to here are words from the letter by Father Manoel Fernandez, in which one can see how {far} <different> Emperor Claudius was from obeying the Roman Church, in which he was aided by his mother and counsellors, who were all very opposed to our holy faith and were so set in the ways of their fathers that they swore by them as by Saint Paul.<sup>1</sup> Because of this, and because the emperor said on seeing the letters that the father bishop gave him that never had such an important embassy or person come to him and therefore it was not appropriate for him to give a reply without first taking counsel, Father Bishop

<sup>1</sup> Páez is perhaps referring to the episode when part of the Jewish community accused Paul of breaking the law and he was imprisoned (Acts:21).

Dom André de Oviedo decided to give him something written in the local language, so that he might better understand the embassy, and to urge him not to be swayed by the advice of his mother, kinsfolk and friends, if it might divert him from what he should do for his salvation. And because I have found all these texts that the father bishop gave to the emperor in his own handwriting, I shall transcribe them here in his own words.

*Highest and most powerful Emperor,*

*People who hold positions or offices can speak in two ways: one with regard to themselves, and the other with regard to matters of their positions; and although with regard to themselves they should be humble and in adversity patient, like Our Lord in His life and death, yet with regard to their offices, or embassy, they must express the truth without regard for human persons, as Christ did when answering for the honour of His Father who had sent Him. In the present <[f. 277/267]> document, in which I shall speak to Your Highness on behalf {[f. 332]} of my position, I shall express the truth of what I understand, although Your Highness may already, from the letters and information that you have received, be well informed about our coming. That is to say, I come from Rome, sent by His Holiness to be coadjutor of the patriarch who remains in India, from whom I bring his powers and authority, in addition to that which His Holiness gave me in order to help him, as is stated in the bulls that I bring, which Your Highness may see. However, I have seen fit in the present document to give the reasons for my coming on the Pope's behalf and to explain the intent that moved him to send to your kingdoms the patriarch with two coadjutor bishops and other scholarly religious of virtuous life from the Society of Jesus.*

*When His Holiness sends a patriarch or legate to certain kingdoms, he does not seek lands or lordships from them, nor can he sell such dignities, lest he fall into simony; rather, his principal desire is the good of their souls, as Christ commanded him in Saint John 21: 'Pasce oves meas.'<sup>1</sup> And it has been so in this case, where for the service of Our Lord and the spiritual good of these kingdoms His Holiness has done Your Highness this benefit without any other temporal interest, moved to do so because of the great love that he has for Your Highness. And the Christian princes and kings there, of whom there are many in great number, think likewise and they highly esteem Your Highness's affairs and the greatness of your estate, and they all have great fondness for Your Highness. In addition to this love that His Holiness has for Your Highness, he was moved to do this because of the desires and willingness that he understood there were for these kingdoms to benefit; and Your Highness should note that the motives that were understood to exist here are very serious ones and should not be broken between such persons.*

*In the first place, your father the king wrote a letter to the pope, a transcript of which I saw in Rome, in which he recognized His Holiness as the vicar of Christ and asked him to send scholars. In addition to this, the king of Portugal, who is a very truthful person, said, as I heard from his own mouth, that Your Highness had written to him that your father the king had commanded you only to take an abuna or patriarch from Rome; and, besides, it was heard there and it is very well known in these kingdoms that Your Highness openly gave obedience to Rome and, although it was at a time of war, even so Dom Joam Bermudes<sup>2</sup> remained in the patriarchate for a period of three years after the victory, and Your Highness <[f. 277v/267v]>*

<sup>1</sup> John 21:17, 'Feed my sheep.'

<sup>2</sup> See Glossary (João Bermudes).

*gave him his lands. Therefore, even if His Holiness were asking Your Highness for something of yours, in view of his good intent and the many reasons that he had for sending this mission, with hardships and dangers for our {[f. 332v]} persons, Your Highness should be pleased with it, and all the more so since he is not asking for anything of yours and is unselfishly sending you, to your kingdom, the greatest powers and spiritual graces that in my view anyone has in all Christendom today, and in the bulls that he has given he calls Your Highness his 'very beloved son' and names you 'illustrious emperor of Ethiopia.' May Your Highness now give me the reply that I beg of you on behalf of His Holiness, so that I may determine what I should do; and if Your Highness has some difficulty in matters of the faith, command that scholars of your kingdoms gather in congregation and I, on behalf of Our Lord, shall reply to the difficulties, because, since Christ's faith is just one – as Saint Paul says in Ephesians 4: 'Unus Deus, una fides, unum baptisma'<sup>1</sup> – there is no reason for there to be diversity in it among Christians, but everyone should think the same in matters of the faith, and nobody should hold anything contrary to Christ's Gospel. And if they feel that we are wrong in anything and tell us what is right according to the gospel truth and the Universal Councils of the Church, we are prepared to follow the truth; and if they see that we are not wrong, they must follow the truth of the faith in one conformity, according to what Saint Paul says in 1st Corinthians 1: 'Ut id ipsum dicatis omnes et non sint in vobis schismata,'<sup>2</sup> and not imitate the customs of their forefathers if they are contrary to the truth, because it is Christ Our Lord, who is Truth itself, who will judge us and give us punishment or glory, and not our fathers. The same holds if, once the truth is known, one does not accept it because of the customs of one's forefathers, if they are contrary to the truth; when Christ Our Lord preached the doctrine of His truth, had the heathens and pagans who were converted not accepted it with the excuse that the customs of their fathers were different, they would never have received Christ, which would have been their perdition. And one must not leave the truth once it is known, out of shame and fear of the world, because Christ says in Saint Luke 9: 'Qui me erubuerit et meus sermones, hunc filius hominis erubescet, cum venerit in majestate sua';<sup>3</sup> and David says in Psalm {94} <49>: 'Hodie si vocem eius audieritis nolite obdurare corda vestra, sicut in exacerbatione, secundum diem ten<[f. 278/268]> tacionis in deserto; in quibus tentaverunt me patres vestri, quibus iuravi in ira mea, si introibunt in requiem meam.'<sup>4</sup>*

*Therefore Your Highness should see that it is imperative to take good counsel in a matter of such importance, and that all your peoples depend on Your Highness and Our Lord will hold you to account for their souls; and bad counsel generally causes severe harm, as appears in the counsel of Roboam, in 3 Kings 12. For that reason Jacob said of Simeon, 'Vessels of iniquity. Let not my soul go into their counsel', Genesis 49;<sup>5</sup> and David in Psalm 82, 'They have taken a malicious counsel against thy people';<sup>6</sup> and Isaiah 9 says, 'The wise counsellors of {[f. 333]}*

<sup>1</sup> Ephesians 4:5, 'One Lord, one faith, one baptism.'

<sup>2</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:10, '[I beseech you ...] that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no schisms among you.'

<sup>3</sup> Luke 9:26, 'For he that shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him the Son of man shall be ashamed, when he shall come in his majesty.'

<sup>4</sup> Psalm 94[95]:8–9, 11 'Today if you shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts: As in the provocation, according to the day of temptation in the wilderness: where your fathers tempted me [...] so I swore in my wrath that they shall not enter into my rest.' The writer has slightly misquoted these verses from the Vulgate.

<sup>5</sup> Genesis 49:5–6.

<sup>6</sup> Psalm 82[83]:4.

*Pharao have given foolish counsel*;<sup>1</sup> and therefore Solomon advises, in Ecclesiasticus 7, 'Be in peace with many, but let one of a thousand be thy counsellor';<sup>2</sup> and David, Psalm 1, 'Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly.'<sup>3</sup> Kinsfolk and friends are generally not good counsellors in spiritual matters, as Christ Our Lord said to Saint Peter, in Matthew 16, 'Flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee';<sup>4</sup> and the prophet Micheas, 7, says, 'A man's enemies are they of his own household';<sup>5</sup> and Christ says through Saint Matthew 10, 'Do not think that I came to send peace upon earth: I came not to send peace, but the sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And as a man's enemies shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me';<sup>6</sup> and through Saint Luke 12 He says, 'Think ye, that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, no; but separation. For there shall be from henceforth five in one house divided: three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against his father, the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother, the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law';<sup>7</sup> and in Luke 14, Christ says, 'If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.'<sup>8</sup> Whence one can understand to what extent friends and kinsfolk are generally contrary to spiritual things, for Christ says that a man's enemies shall be they of his own household, and that He came to set people at variance against one another, and that anyone who does not hate his father and mother, in these cases, cannot be His disciple. And He had declared this teaching of His previously, for example when, without taking <[f. 278v/268v]> counsel with His sacred mother, who certainly would not have counselled Him badly, He stayed behind debating in the temple and, knowing that His mother must have been feeling great anxiety for the three days that she had been seeking Him, when she found Him and told Him of her anxiety, He replied, 'How is it that you sought me? Did you not know, that I must be about my father's business?'<sup>9</sup> By this example He explains to us that, in order to do God's business, we are not obliged to ask for counsel from our friends, kinsfolk or parents, and even less so when they prevent what is good for us, because then He commands that we must hate them. May Our Lord give in all matters good and true counsel to Your Highness, and grace that you may always do His most holy will and afterwards enjoy His holy glory. Amen. On 22nd June 1557.<sup>10</sup>

After the father bishop gave this to the emperor in writing, {[f. 333v]} he tried very hard in private conversations to make him understand the matters of our holy faith and to

<sup>1</sup> The reference should be to Isaiah 19:11.

<sup>2</sup> The reference should be to Ecclesiasticus 6:6.

<sup>3</sup> Psalm 1:1.

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 16:17.

<sup>5</sup> Micheas [Micah] 7:6.

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 10:34–37.

<sup>7</sup> Luke 12:51–53.

<sup>8</sup> Luke 14:26.

<sup>9</sup> Luke 2:49.

<sup>10</sup> [Páez transcribes this letter in Spanish] Manuel de Almeida also copied this letter ('Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 5, pp. 377–80).



show him the obligation he had to give obedience to the holy Roman Church. And because the emperor showed through his replies that he was not satisfied with the matters of our holy faith, the father bishop worked hard for him to summon his scholars to gather together and hold a disputation in his presence on everything on which there was controversy, and he granted it, albeit reluctantly. Since Father Manoel Fernandez relates what happened on this subject in the letter that we began to report above, I shall continue it here in his own words, so as to provide an eye-witness account of it, as follows:

*Since the controversies on the matters of faith had begun between him (scilicet the emperor)<sup>1</sup> and the bishop, the bishop begged him to listen with his scholars, and he did so. And there were often disputes in his presence, and all his scholars appeared ignorant compared with him. He himself always took charge, and he defended his follies with such vehemence that he often gave the bishop trouble. And although by divine grace the bishop always had the last word with him and all the others, they however would jeer and shout that they had won, so that everything he said was in vain. Therefore, as the father bishop could see how little progress he was making in this matter, he took all the main subjects and points of their errors and set out to write upon them, and later he presented these documents to him, to which the king replied by writing other documents on these, resolving at the same time that he would not obey Rome. <[f. 279/269]> And, after he had stated this abundantly and shown his displeasure with the bishop and said publicly that he would not accept the First Council of Ephesus, which the bishop was urging him to embrace, but instead only the customs and faith of his forefathers, the bishop took his leave of him determined (saltem ad tempus)<sup>2</sup> to make room for his displeasure. The king gave these very clear indications of his real feelings at the end of December '58, and directly in the following January of '59 the bishop took his leave of him, and shortly afterwards, in the month of February, there arrived in this land the Moors that here they call 'Malaçães'<sup>3</sup> (who are perhaps the Amalecites), and in the month of March that year, on the Thursday of Holy Week, the king encountered them and his men fled from him and left him on the field, where the wretched man died and, with him, our captain with eighteen Portuguese, and the victory of the Moors was so {[f. 334]} unexpected that their captain, attributing it to his God, dismounted from his horse and celebrated the triumph of his victory riding an ass.<sup>4</sup>*

Up to here is part of the letter by Father Manoel Fernandez. That the monks tried by jeering and shouting to cover up the truth of our holy faith which the father bishop was proving to them is something that I was also told recently by an old monk, one of the greatest scholars that there are in Ethiopia today, who is called *Abba Za Manoel*, and he now confesses with us and takes communion openly without fear of anyone. When I happened to be talking to him about those disputations, this man told me that when the monks and scholars that the emperor had assembled to dispute with the father bishop saw that they were unable to give an answer to the reasoning and authorities from Scripture

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

<sup>2</sup> Latin: 'at least for the time being'.

<sup>3</sup> See p. ???, note ??? above.

<sup>4</sup> Páez transcribed parts of this letter in bk I, ch. 11, and bk II, ch. 7. Manuel de Almeida also copied this letter ('Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 5, pp. 381–2).

that the bishop was putting to them, they met in council to see what they would do and they agreed that, whenever the father bishop stated something, some of them would reply, 'That should not be understood in that way, but rather as our interpreters explain it. What we defend is the truth and our books prove it'; while the others would shout out, 'It is true; it is true; we have won; we have won.' And that is what they did from then onwards whenever they met, and so they would interrupt whatever the father bishop was saying without letting him continue his reasoning and without trying to answer the passage from Scripture.

I also found the following words in an Ethiopian book that deals with these same disputes that the father bishop had in the presence of Emperor Claudius:

*In the 17th year of the reign of Glaudeos, the sons of Japheth entered Ethiopia from the direction of the sea; and the patriarch of the <[f. 279v/269v]> Portuguese came with clerics and deacons and a few Portuguese, and he arrived at Emperor Glaudeos's camp at the beginning of winter. And the reason for his coming was to put a stain on the true faith that came to Ethiopia from Alexandria, and to manifest and praise the evil faith that proceeded from Rome, boasting by saying 'Our Father Peter', not knowing that mighty God on high can raise sons of Peter from the rocks of the forefathers. But the emperor, when disputing with these wise Portuguese, defeated and shamed them for the lack and diminution of their faith and reviled their corrupt customs by making songs against them, in which he showed spiritual words taken from the apostles and prophets; and when they called Leo blessed, {[f. 334v]} he praised Dioscorus; and when they boasted of the chair of Peter, he boasted of the Mount of Olives on which Our Lord stayed in Jerusalem, where He was crucified and buried, because these places are of the one who occupies the chair of Mark, the master of Nobâ and Sobâ and Ethiopia.<sup>1</sup>*

All these are words from the book; they and those of Father Manoel Fernandez, together with what we reported in the previous chapter from Father Master Gonçalo Rodrigues, clearly show how far Emperor Claudius was from obeying the Roman Church and following its holy doctrine. That is why Father Bishop Dom André de Oviedo, in a sentence that I have, signed by his own hand, which we mentioned in the second book, chapter...<sup>2</sup> – after reporting some things, including that it had been proclaimed the previous year that nobody should enter our church on pain of death – says, 'We therefore define and by sentence declare that the people of Ethiopia in common, great and small and scholars and others of the people, do not wish to obey the holy Church of Rome',<sup>3</sup> etc. Although he does not name Emperor Claudius here, this may be understood to refer principally to him, because the proclamation that the *Habexins* should not enter our church on pain of death could only have been issued at his command, and the father

<sup>1</sup> See Conzelman, *Chronique de Galâudêwos*, chs 54 and 55. Páez has retained the spirit of the text although he does not translate it in full. Later the chronicle says that in 1559 'the discussions between the Jacobites and the Melchites, who are the Franks, [were] revived, but they were quite different from the earlier discussions.' (ibid., ch. 74, p. 169). Almeida also used the same passage ('Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 5, pp. 382–3). See Glossary (*Confessio fidei*). The source cited here is not a book that recounts the disputations, however, but the king's official chronicle.

<sup>2</sup> Bk II, ch. 7. The writer left a space in the manuscript for the chapter number but must have forgotten to fill it in.

<sup>3</sup> Páez quotes this sentence in Spanish.

bishop would not have stated that people great and small refused obedience to the Roman Church and held many errors of faith, as he recounts there, if the emperor had wanted to obey and accept its doctrine, for he was still alive at that time, because the father bishop published this sentence in our church on 2nd February 1559 and he was killed shortly afterwards in March, not in battle with the king of Borno, nor with victory falling to him, as Friar Luiz de Urreta claims on page 215,<sup>1</sup> but in battle with the Moors of Adel, as we saw above in chapter 3. And he was no less badly informed in what he says there, that he died with all the sacraments, like a good Christian <[f. 280/270]> and very Catholic son of the Church, because what we have said shows and proves the very opposite. Consequently, Joam Balthesar's authentic papers and confirmed proof in which, as he says on page 211,<sup>2</sup> he found these things that he writes have as much authority as the others in which he found the fables that we have seen so far in the course of this *History*.

On the following page, 212, he tells some stories to confirm that Emperor Claudius was very Catholic and obedient to the Roman Church. One is that he reformed a convent of 5,000 nuns who used to go out of the nunnery to wherever they {liked} <like lived> without keeping {[f. 335]} enclosure, and he obliged them to keep it, because the most reverend general of the Order of Preachers, to which he says the nuns belong, had so commanded; but he is mistaken, because in the lands over which the Prester John rules there are no monks or nuns of Saint Dominic, and the local nuns do not keep enclosure: each one lives in her house and goes where she pleases, without anyone questioning her about this, as we said at the end of the second book. Another is that some heretic hermits under the name of Saint Augustine entered Ethiopia, and he sent to Rome for the rule of Saint Augustine and made them profess it and, as well as professing, he made them swear to obey the Roman Church, and that to this day they swear this oath on the hands of the priors of Alleluia and Plurimanos monasteries; and some who were obstinate in their errors – *scilicet* that the Holy Spirit does not proceed from the Son, that there is no purgatory, that the saints do not see God until Judgment Day, etc. – he had put to the lions, and others he commanded be buried alive. This too is a fable, because, apart from the fact that there is no recollection that there have ever been monks of Saint Augustine in these lands, as we also saw at the end of the second book, if the emperor himself did not want to obey the Roman Church, he would hardly have tried to make the monks who entered his land swear to obey it, and if he had put all those who held these errors to the lions or buried them alive, there would be very few people left in Ethiopia, even among the monks from the monasteries that he mentions, because nearly all of them at that time held those same errors, and many of them still hold them today. And so we shall leave the affairs of Emperor Claudius and move on to deal with those of Minâs, his brother, who succeeded him as emperor, and with what Father Bishop Dom André de Oviedo went through with him.

<sup>1</sup> Urreta, *Historia de la Etiopia*, bk I, ch. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Urreta, *Historia de la Etiopia*, bk I, ch. 21.

Which reports the history of Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd as the books of Ethiopia tell it

*The baptismal name of this emperor was Minâs, which means 'Faithful', but when they gave him the empire they called him Adamâs Çaguêd. He was raised and taught well in the house of his father, Lebena Denguil, but, God permitting, he fell into the hands of the Moor Granh, who captured him. While he was a captive, the people of the camp loved him dearly, and therefore some captains told Granh that it was necessary to think carefully what to do with that son of the emperor, because many of the people in his camp were Christians, and those that had become Moors had done so out of fear, and so the hearts of both the latter {[f. 335v]} and the others were with him, and they would therefore undoubtedly raise him as emperor. On hearing this, Granh was disturbed, like Herod when the wise men asked about the king of the Jews. He assembled his counsellors, told them what he had heard and asked what they thought; they all answered that he should show no mercy towards him but kill him, because otherwise he would never have peace. He later told his wife what they had counselled him, but she, who always defended him, replied that he should not do such a thing but should instead be good to him, since he was the emperor's son, so that God would be good to his own son, and, if he wanted to calm his heart, he should marry him to a daughter that they had. And she gave him so many reasons that he decided to do so. But while they were preparing the necessary things for the wedding, a Moor by the name of Xafêr-Din went to him and said, 'Did you perhaps wish to give your honour to the stranger and deliver the kingdom to its owner? If you give him your daughter, it will seem to the people in the camp that you have given up your empire to him and everyone will leave you and go off to him. And then you will regret this, but you will not be able to go back and recover what you have given up willingly.' Then Granh said, 'So what do you think will be best?' To which he replied, 'You see that the Portuguese have come, and you cannot fight them without Turks. I think it would be best for you to send this boy as a present to the pasha of Zebîd, asking him to send you some fighting men to help you.' Granh also thought so, and therefore he stopped the wedding that he was preparing and sent him to the pasha in the charge of one of the <[f. 281/271]> great men of his camp, together with two of his cousins, who were both called Lâc Mariâm, whom he had previously made eunuchs. When he left the camp, everybody was very sad, and especially the household of Granh's wife, Delombarâ, wept and wailed because she loved him dearly. On the journey he fell sick with such a high fever that it seemed he would die, but not even this made those who were taking him have any pity on him, but rather they made him travel as fast as possible by changing camels. And one day his camel walked faster than usual since it was very thirsty, and, going ahead of the people who were taking*

him, he turned onto another road by chance and was lost for six days, and on the seventh he again came across those bad people from whom he had been separated.

On reaching the sea, they embarked him for Zebid. When they made landfall, they took him to the pasha together with his two cousins, and the pasha esteemed the present greatly and wrote at once to Sultan Solimân, saying, 'The participant of our law, the Moor of Adel who has conquered the land of Habêx, has {[f. 336]} sent me a son of the emperor, a worthy present for your honour and power. What do you command that I do with him?' And he replied that he should guard him very well, but treat him well and not allow anyone to molest him, and he did exactly as his lord commanded him.

At this time, the empire under Glaudeôs began to grow strong and fought Granh with the help of the Portuguese, and by the might of God he defeated him and captured his son, although his wife escaped, and it was divine permission because by this means the Lord wished to release the one who was captive. And so it moved the heart of Dêlombârâ, and she sent a message to Empress Çabelâ Oenguêl that, if she would give her back her son, she would in exchange ensure the return of hers, who was being held by the pasha of Zebid. The empress was delighted at this and answered that she would give him back, and so Granh's wife wrote to the pasha, imploring him to rescue her son in that manner, since they were of one and the same Law. But the pasha did not dare do so without asking his lord Sultan Solimân, who replied that he should give him back, because the one who was imprisoned was a son of his Law. With this reply, the pasha sent word that he would give <[f. 281v/271v]> back the emperor's son in exchange for Granh's son, but that they had to add 10,000 cruzados. On hearing this, Empress Çabelâ Oenguêl was overjoyed and very content and at once arranged to gather what he demanded, and she sent it together with Granh's son under strong guard. The pasha also sent Minâs and his two {sons} <cousins> by boat with seventy Turkish guards. And both parties met at sea, near Maçuâ, and they all swore to keep the agreement without using any force at all. And so the vessels came together and the Turks delivered the emperor's son with his two cousins, and the Christians gave Granh's son with the gold. And they returned to land with much celebration and rejoicing, giving thanks to God for having delivered him from captivity, where he had been for three years in the power of the Turks and two and a half with Granh. Then the principal lords of the kingdom of Tigrê gathered and, with a great retinue, took him to his mother Çabelâ Oenguêl, who was in the province of Oagrâ, in Aibâ. When she heard that he was coming, she commanded with incredible joy and contentment that his tents should be erected and richly decorated inside, and that all the principal lords and great men should go and welcome him. When he came close, many monks and priests also went out, vested and bearing crosses and thuribles. They took him to his mother the empress's house, where she was waiting for him, and when he came in she threw {[f. 336v]} her arms around his neck, shedding many tears of joy and contentment, and his sisters then did the same, embracing him many times. Then the empress commanded that the monks and those who were accompanying him should be put up in the tents and that everyone there should be splendidly regaled with food and drink, saying, 'Eat, celebrate and rejoice, because this son of mine was dead and has been raised up; he was lost and has been found. But let this joy of yours not be with the coldness of heathens, but rather rejoicing fervently in God who has come to our aid.' And she ordered that great celebrations be held continuously for seven days, and she sent a message at once with the greatest haste to Emperor Glaudeôs, her son, telling him that his brother had returned, at which he rejoiced so much as if he had risen from the grave.

Three years after this, the empress went to Ôye, where <[f. 282/272]> Glaudeôs was, taking Minâs and his sisters with her. When she arrived, all the great men of the empire came out to receive her and as they entered the emperor's house he gave them a great welcome, both because he had been away from his mother for a long time and, especially, to see his brother. And they were both always very united and loved each other, because neither ambition nor the envy that usually arises from the desire to reign came between them. A few years later they decided that Minâs should marry, when the abuna was Petrôs, who succeeded Iosâb. And the empress commanded that they should say the Prayer of Taclil for Minâs and his companion, as the masters of the Church ordained, to make them of one body through this prayer; and so they had great love for each other and God blessed them with sons and daughters.

Some time later there came the death of Glaudeôs, and it was sorely felt and lamented by everyone, because they loved him very much. While his mother was still very sad and weeping, the great men called Minâs to place him on the chair of the empire. But he did not reply at once, nor did he seem very desirous of the empire, but instead he said, 'It is not fit for me to sit on a chair of such greatness and honour.' However, they obliged him to do so and gave him the name Adamâs Çaguêd, with great celebration. This was in the kingdom of Gojâm, in the land called Mangesta Çamayât (scilicet 'Kingdom of the Heavens').<sup>1</sup> And, on the counsel of the great men, he came at once to Dambiâ and made his seat in Çadâ, leaving Captain Hamelmâl to fight Nur, the Moor. The emperor began at once to make laws and ordinances for the government of his empire, about which the great men secretly murmured amongst themselves. When the winter was over, he commanded his warriors to assemble and the viceroy of Tigrê to come with his men in order to fight the Jews who were in the province {[f. 337]} of Cemên, where he went and fought for some time. And he decided to stay there for a long time, but the great men made him desist from continuing the war, saying that the time had not yet come to defeat the Jews, and so he returned to Dambiâ and overwintered in Anfarâz.

In the second year of his reign, an evil man called Baliguerâd<sup>2</sup> resolved to kill him and, entering the emperor's tent at night with a slave of his, he found the lamp alight and <[f. 282v/272v]> saw that the emperor and empress were asleep, with a slave on either side of the bed. Taking very careful note first of where the emperor was, he put out the lamp and went to spear him, but he missed and struck between him and the empress; at that the emperor woke and got up, shouting. He tried to strike him a second time and again missed. Meanwhile, his slave, who had entered with him, killed one of the emperor's slaves and wounded the other, and at that they fled. But they were recognized from a sword that they had dropped there and were later caught, and one of them was hanged and the other stoned.

After this, the emperor went to Orôr, and Isaac stayed behind on the excuse of being sick, as did Caflô, who said that his daughter was getting married, but that was just so they could raise Tascâro, his brother's son, as emperor, as they had conspired with Dadeganâ. Since the emperor had some fears on the journey, he sent a message to Isaac commanding him come anyway without making excuses about being sick. He said that he would go and set off at once, but he tricked the emperor's servant and persuaded him to go a different way, because so many people together would not be able to find enough to eat, and thus he went freely to his land of Tigrê. And Caflô with other great men raised Tascâro as emperor, as they had

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

<sup>2</sup> *Bâli garâd*: the title of the governor of Bâli, a southern region partly bounded by the River Wâbi Šaballé.

conspired. On hearing this, the emperor decided not to turn back and fight Tascâro but to continue with great haste to Isaac, who was the foundation stone of this evil, and he sent Zara Ioannes on ahead with many warriors. Isaac was about to fight him but, on learning that the emperor was coming behind, he fled through Sirêi as far as Adembô, where he waited for the emperor and gave him battle, in which he was routed and escaped with great difficulty, and they killed one of his sons and captured another. Then the emperor left Isaac and turned back to fight Tascâro and those who had raised him. He arrived at Gubâi,<sup>1</sup> where they were, on Thursday, 2nd July 1561, and wanted to pitch his tents so as to sleep that night without fighting, since it was already late, but they very arrogantly said, 'Why should we let him pitch camp in front of us, as if we were afraid of him?' And so they drew up in order ready to fight, {[f. 337v]} holding the emperor in scant regard because they trusted in the multitude of horses that they had and the strength of the Portuguese who had joined them. When the emperor saw their determination, <[f. 283/273]> he put his squadrons in order and, giving battle, routed the rebels and slaughtered many of them. The next day Tascâro and Ioannes were caught and taken to the emperor. He did not pay them as their crimes deserved, but instead had pity on them and gave glory to God for having delivered his enemies to him. This was in the third year of his emperorship.

The emperor spent that winter in Gubâi and, when it was over, the spirit of the Devil entered Isaac's heart and he made friends with Zemur Pasha, and they swore to help each other and be united until death. And Isaac raised as emperor Marcos, a young boy, the son of Jacob, Emperor Minâs's brother. When the emperor heard his, he flew into a rage and, gathering his men, went to Tigrê, without wanting to take counsel from the great men who told him that he could not fight someone who had so many arquebuses and bombards. Isaac heard that the emperor was on his way and left Aççum, where he had been, and went with the pasha to Emdertâ, and there he encountered the emperor. They gave battle, and the emperor was defeated, fled to Oâg, and entered Atrôn Za Mariâm, where he stayed for a while. There the ones who had escaped from the war gathered to him, together with other great men who came from Xaoa, and he commanded that they prepare many weapons and machines of war, as he was determined to fight Zemûr Pasha again once winter was over. He did not know that God had not granted that he should achieve victory over the Turks, but was keeping it for his son. And so he went forth with great splendour and many warriors and took the road towards Tigrê, but on arriving at Colô he fell sick with malignant fever and paid the tribute of the nature of men, dying on 10th February 1563.<sup>2</sup>

Up to here are words from the book of Ethiopia in which I found this history, and it does not recount anything else at all; indeed, it would not be possible to find anything

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (Gubâi/Gubâ'ê).

<sup>2</sup> Páez forgot to adjust the date to the Julian calendar that was in use prior to the Gregorian reform of 1582, and so did not subtract 10 days from the result of converting the Ethiopian date to the Gregorian date (he also miscalculated it by one day). Minas died on 5th *Yakâtît* 1555 according to the Ethiopian calendar, or 30th January 1563 according to the Julian, in Kol'e a small town in Tegray. [Páez also miscalculated the date on which Minas arrived in Gubâ'ê, since 2 July 1561 was not a Thursday in either the Julian or the extrapolated Gregorian calendar] Apart from Páez's translation of this narrative of the main events in Minas's reign, which Almeida used in ch. 10 of his bk IV ('Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 5, pp. 387–92), it has also been published by F. M. Esteves Pereira based on the British Museum manuscript, with Almeida's version as an appendix (Pereira, *Historia de Minás. Además Sagad rei de Ethiopia*), and more recently by Manfred Kropp (Kropp, 'Die Geschichte des Lebnä Dengel, Claudius und Minas', pp. 39–62).

else good to say about him, though there would be no lack of bad things, particularly if they wished to deal with the perverse manner and nature that he had, which was more like that of a Turk than of a Christian. For in those three years that he spent among the Turks he picked up their manners so that, abandoning the benevolence befitting such a high-ranking person, he showed himself to be inhuman and cruel like them, and he commonly dishonoured everybody in the Turkish language with very vulgar words, as the Turks generally do. He became so intractable and harsh with the great men of the empire that they could not put up with him and so rebelled against him; {[f. 338]} the one they put up as emperor (as this history says) <[f. 283v/273v]> was Tascâro, the son of Iacob, the late brother of this Adamâs Çaguêd. The reader should not think that I am going too far in saying that having abandoned the benevolence of a Christian prince he showed himself to be inhuman and cruel like a Turk, because for someone whose heart led him to abandon Christ's holy faith and become a Moor it is not much that it should also lead him to be cruel. Father Manoel Fernandez of our Society and three other fathers, his companions, wrote that he had become a Moor in a letter that they wrote from Ethiopia to Rome in 1562, to Father Diego Lainez, who was the general of our Society at the time,<sup>1</sup> and it seems that one may also deduce it from what his history says at the beginning, that after the Moor Granh had had him in his power for more than two years he was going to marry him to his daughter, and when he was preparing the wedding another Moor, called Xafêrdin, stopped him, because if he had not become a Moor, Granh would not have given his daughter to be his wife. But the fact is that, either while he was with Granh or after he was taken to the Turks, he certainly become a Moor, because the fathers would not have written such a serious thing to Rome or anywhere else if they had not been very sure of it.

As for what the writer of his History says, that when they brought Tascâro to him after the battle as a captive he did not punish him as he deserved but rather took pity on him, it is true that he did not kill him then, but after keeping him for some time on a high mountain under close guard, he commanded them to kill him and throw him off the cliff. Some farmers in the field saw him fall and thought it was some animal that had slipped and fallen, and out of curiosity they went to look, and when they realized it was Tascâro they called others and buried him; but that cost them dear, because the blame was put on them straight away and they were punished by having their farms taken away. He showed no less cruelty to some Portuguese who were found with Tascâro when the battle took place; indeed, he showed much more, because they had thrown Tascâro off the cliff after he was dead, but after some of the Portuguese had been kept prisoner on a mountain for a long time they were hacked to death with little axes, and others (so they say) were thrown off the cliffs alive and were smashed to pieces, except one who survived, who they say was Spanish and called Juan Alonso, and the next day, after sunrise, some people came and found him on his knees with his hands together, praying; they shouted and many more gathered and, while he did not move from his praying position, they came with sticks <[f. 284/274]> and beat him over the head, knocked him down and finished him off there. We shall report many other cruelties that this {good} emperor commanded to be done to some people who were reduced to our holy faith below, when we show how opposed he was to it, {[f. 338v]} from which it will be seen more clearly how different he

<sup>1</sup> This is the letter partly transcribed in the previous chapter (see Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 10, pp. 146–56).



was from what Friar Luiz de Urreta depicts on page 218,<sup>1</sup> where he says that Prester John Adamâs was a gentle, affable, benign man with a nature like soft, polished wax.

On the first journey that his History says here that he made to Tigrê in pursuit of Isaac, three fathers went with him and, since the path was rough and narrow and there were many men, they were having great difficulty, so they asked him for leave to go a little way ahead, and he granted it. But later he commanded a captain called Zara Ioannes, with many warriors, to pursue Isaac as fast as possible; the captain came across the fathers in their tent half a day's journey from the camp and took their mules and all the belongings they had, including a large amount of gold that the Portuguese had given them to look after. After much pleading, he left them two <very> poor mules on which they were carrying their baggage, and these only to take them to the emperor's camp, where they went straight away, thinking that, since they had gone that short distance ahead with his leave, he would command that their belongings be returned. But it was not so, because they only got back those three mules,<sup>2</sup> the tent and some other trifles of little value; the emperor took the gold, and his men took the mules and the rest of their belongings.

The second time that he went to Tigrê was even worse for the fathers, because at that time he had already had Father Bishop Dom André de Oviedo brought back from a mountain to which he had been banished<sup>3</sup> and commanded that he should come to the camp, together with the other fathers. But they were held like prisoners, because they were not allowed to go any distance away, however little, and they could not pitch their tents except where he commanded. And on the day when he gave battle to Isaac and the Turks, which was on 20th April 1562, he was routed at once in the first encounter after hardly any fighting, and each of the fathers fled to wherever he could, but the father bishop remained in the middle of the field with two or three boys, the sons of Portuguese, who were accompanying him, and they have now recounted all this to me. Kneeling down, he <[f. 284v/274v]> stayed there praying for a long time, with the boys sitting behind him with the mule, and although that place was open and higher than the rest of the field, the Turks passed by them hither and thither, killing and capturing the men who were fleeing, without even coming to take the mule, so it seems that Our Lord delivered them because of the holy bishop's prayer. Once all Isaac's Turks and *Habexins* had gone past them in the pursuit, he stood up from his prayer and said to the boys, 'The fathers have been captured, but it will not matter.' Mounting the mule, they went on to Isaac's camp, since he had been good friends with him for a long time. About half a league before they arrived, they came across a *Habexim* soldier who very arrogantly told the father bishop to dismount, which he did at once, and as the boys were beginning to get restless {[f. 339]} he told them to leave him. The soldier mounted the mule and went off with it, and the bishop walked to Isaac's tents. They found that the enemy Turks and *Habexins* had captured the fathers, but afterwards, at the request of the Portuguese who were there, Isaac had them released and the chalice returned; they rescued the other things as they could. The next day the soldier came back with the father bishop's mule and, throwing himself at his feet, begged his forgiveness for what he had done, and he said that God had punished him because, when

<sup>1</sup> Urreta, *Historia de la Etiopia*, bk I, ch. 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Sic*. Only two mules were mentioned earlier in the paragraph.

<sup>3</sup> Father Andrés de Oviedo had been banished there in the company of Father Francisco Lopes and some converts to Catholicism for some six to seven months in 1562.

he arrived home with the mule, his wife and the two children that he had had died all of a sudden. He begged him dearly to plead with God for him, because he still feared further punishment, but the father bishop told him not to be afraid, for no more would come.

This is what I thought I should say here briefly about the history of Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd. Now we shall say what happened to the Portuguese, and principally Father Bishop Dom André de Oviedo, whom we shall henceforth call patriarch, because he was already patriarch when some of the things that we shall describe happened, because Father Patriarch Dom Joam Nunes Barreto had died in Goa.

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## CHAPTER VII

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### Which explains how Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd behaved towards Father Patriarch Dom André de Oviedo and other fathers and towards the Portuguese and Catholics

There can be no more certain information on this subject than that which <[f. 285/275]> the fathers themselves gave to Father Diego Lainez, the general of our Society at the time, in a letter that they wrote to him in Rome, via Cairo, in 1562. I shall therefore put the relevant part of it here in their own words, which are these:

*When Claudius died, since he left no son, he was succeeded in the kingship by a brother of his, who, at the time when these kingdoms were rescued and freed from the power of the Moors by our Portuguese, was a captive in Arabia and had become a Moor. However, after Claudius his brother had recovered the kingdom at the expense of our men's blood, he ransomed him, and so it may be said with a great deal of truth that he was ransomed more with Portuguese blood than with gold from the miserable captivity in which he was being held. But the gratitude that was found in him was that, once he was king, he seemed to try to do nothing but consume and destroy this poor family of Catholics that he found in his land. King Claudius had given general leave that all local women who married Portuguese could, if they wished, follow the customs of {[f. 339v]} Rome, and so could all their slaves and family, which they did. The first thing that King Adamâs did, however, was to have a proclamation issued that no Habexim born in Ethiopia should enter the Portuguese churches, on pain of severe punishment. And it was quite astonishing that, although the land was full of enemies, he seemed to care about nothing so much as to annihilate our Church, and he said that his brother had only died because he had allowed the faith of Rome in his land. Matters reached such a point that he had a woman publicly flogged just for being a Catholic, and he seized two others from Portuguese for the same reason and took many children from these same Catholics, and many of the people who had previously followed our faith reverted for fear of his threats. And he did not stop at threats, but in the case of two Armenians who were living here and had been reduced, he commanded that one be banished and the other beheaded, since they would not revert. In addition, he did not stop taking from the Portuguese all their farms, lands and settlements, with which Claudius had rewarded them for the loyal services that they had rendered him. He seized the father bishop <[f. 285v/275v]> and held him prisoner for six months or more, and he threatened the rest of us fathers with having us burnt alive. And this good king did these and so many other things of this kind that to mention them all would require a long letter, because for all the time that he was at liberty to do so, he never stopped doing all the harm that he could to our Church and people. But, just as Our Lord God (as it*

seems) wished through him to punish the freedoms and liberties in which our people indulged in Ethiopia, so too He did not want him to escape without a scourging, and so it happened that, since he was intractable and inhuman with his own people as well, all the highest nobility and might of Ethiopia rebelled against him at the end of 1560 and proclaimed as king a bastard {youth} <son> of another elder brother of his who had already died; this youth was called Abeitahùn Tascâro. There gathered to him not only many of the most noble men in the kingdom, but also our captain with almost thirty Portuguese, and there were not more of them because the others were not there for it. When the king saw this gathering, he marched against the enemy whom he most feared, who was Bahâr Nagâx Isaac, a very notable person in matters of war and through whom these kingdoms were freed from great harm. He was in the coastal region negotiating business on which Tascâro had sent him, and even though he made the emperor flee in one encounter that he had with him, in the second the bahâr nagâx was defeated. And the main reason was that, as Adamâs went down to the coastal region, he feared that the Portuguese would come and the bahâr nagâx would bring them onto land to support Tascâro, but when he saw that the fair wind had arrived and they were not coming, he turned back at once in search of {[f. 340]} his nephew Tascâro himself and, on 2 July 1561, he fought him and captured him. Having got rid of him, he returned in January 1562. Because he was sure that some Portuguese would be coming from India, {the king} decided not to fight them, knowing that all his men were just waiting for that to desert him and join our side. He therefore did not want to go to Tigrê until he could be certain whether they were coming. Meanwhile, Bahâr Nagâx Isaac, who had escaped from the previous battle and was down near the sea, <[f. 286/276]> saw that our men were not coming from India and was afraid that the king might come down on him, so he made an alliance and friendship with the Turks, of whom I spoke previously, and added their forces to his. Fearing that Adamâs would kill his nephew Tascâro, whom he was holding prisoner (as indeed he did kill him), he and the others who were with him raised another more legitimate brother of Tascâro as king. Adamâs, however, seeing that the time for the Portuguese to come – which he feared – was passing, marched to Tigrê with many men against Bahâr Nagâx Isaac, even though he knew of the alliance he had made with the Turks. On 20th April 1562 he gave battle, but he was routed after hardly any fighting and without anyone dying, because he and his men took flight just through fear of the artillery, leaving their camps in the power of the enemy. Throughout all this time, we had been in the camp of King Adamâs, so afflicted and oppressed that we had not even the power to pitch our own tents save where he commanded. And on the day of the battle, we were all captured by the Turks and Habexins opposed to the king, and God did us the mercy of saving our lives through the Portuguese who were there, although with {enormous} <great> hardship on our part.<sup>1</sup>

Up to here are words from the fathers' letter, in which they express very little of all that they might have said about the wrongs and ill treatment that Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd meted out to them and to the father patriarch. At the beginning of the same letter, Father Manoel Fernandez, who was the mission superior, gives two reasons for this: first, he had hardly any hope that it might reach the hands of the father general of the Society; and

<sup>1</sup> The source of this excerpt, which Páez does not acknowledge, was a yearly letter published by Guerreiro in the 'Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia', ff. 296v–8v, pp. 325–7. This is the same letter that he began to transcribe in ch. 5 of this book (see Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 5, pp. 146–56).

secondly, he did not dare and it was not licit for him – indeed it would appear rash – to mention in the letter what he might have mentioned, because of the serious adversities and dangers that there were. To use his own words, he says: ‘It would be something so far beyond human hope for this letter to be given into the hands of Your Paternity that, besides other serious adversities, it will be a reason not to extend myself in it as much as Your Paternity might wish and I might desire; but the dangers are so great and of such a nature that it is not licit even to mention them, and it appears it would be rash if I were to report accurately all that I could and all that was really necessary.’ For these reasons, {[f. 340v]} the fathers failed to write down many <[f. 286v/276v]> of the things that the sons of the Portuguese later declared in an authentic instrument that the Most Reverend Dom Aleixo de Meneses, the archbishop of Goa at the time, had drawn up here in 1603, regarding their life and death. We shall give a brief report of these things in its very words:

*One of the witnesses then speaks as follows: Once the holy patriarch had reduced many heretics and many monks of this land through his doctrine, the emperor (scilicet Adamàs Çaguêd),<sup>1</sup> was angered at this and summoned him and reprehended him very indignantly, telling him, ‘Is it not enough to allow you to live in my lands and to give you leave to deal with and take care of your Portuguese, but instead you also want to have my monks and all my people follow you with your false doctrine? Take heed that henceforth you deal with no one but your own people and you do not teach your doctrine to my people.’ The holy man replied to this with great freedom of spirit, saying, ‘What I do is my office; I shall not on any grounds fail to carry it out and teach everyone who wants to hear the holy, true and Catholic faith from me, even if it costs me my {own} life.’ The evil emperor, on hearing these words, became so inflamed with rage and fury that, with great vexation, he called him many names and said many insults and {asked} why he had come with lies and falsehoods to teach his people, and he attacked him with such fury that he grabbed his clothes and ripped them, but then some noblemen of his stepped in, surprised at his behaviour, and said that it did not befit his majesty to treat a patriarch in that manner, so he let go of him. However, he very angrily commanded that he be banished together with Father Francisco Lopes, his companion, to some very high mountains that were so rough and barren that hardly anybody lived on them, and he commanded that they should not come down from there on pain of death and, to hurt them even more, he had the sacred chalice taken from them in order thereby to deprive them of the consolation and relief that they might have through the sacrosanct sacrifice of the Mass. The holy father and his companion received the sentence of banishment with great humility and patience, and during it they suffered great hardships day and night, with frequent hunger, thirst, heat, cold and lack of all necessities and, most of all, the danger of being killed by robbers at any time. Their home was a very poor little hut where they took shelter at night, and they spent six or seven months in this banishment. <[f. 287/277]> A lady of that land, a kinswoman of the emperor, went to visit them there and, on approaching the hut where the fathers lived, she seemed to see a brightness inside as if from the sun and moon, at which she was very astonished and frightened, so she went back without seeing them, but with such a high opinion of their holiness that, with much insistence, she made the emperor lift the banishment and {[f. 341]} allow them to come to a village; he granted that, but commanded that nobody should give them anything to eat or drink.*

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

*Another attester, who was an eye-witness and always accompanied the fathers, adds under oath that, when the emperor summoned the holy patriarch, everyone thought it was to have him killed, and that, when he reprehended him, he called him a traitor and deceiver and said that if he did not stop teaching his people he would have him beheaded. When the father replied, he said that he would not stop even if His Majesty commanded that he be killed or thrown to the lions, because he was ready for anything; and then he cast off his mantle and stood there just in his rochet and, with his hands and eyes raised to heaven, he offered his spirit to God and his body into the emperor's hands so that he might suffer for his confession and defence of the holy Catholic faith until his own blood was spilt. When the emperor saw this, even though he was still very furious, he said to him, 'So now would you die as a martyr at my hands? Get out of my sight!' And then he banished him with Father Francisco Lopes.*

*After the emperor had banished the holy father patriarch and his companion, he straight away commanded that all those who had been reduced to our holy faith should be seized, and he reprehended them harshly and threatened them with death if they did not go back. Some of them showed themselves to be very constant and protested that they would rather shed their blood than go back, at which the tyrant was so enraged that then and there, in front of himself and of many other people, he commanded that they be thrown to the lions, for four or five of them had been brought there ready for this. However, the ancient marvels that God worked through the holy martyrs of the early Church happened again here because, although the lions were wild and fierce, they remained quiet, without wanting to touch Christ's holy knights, at which the emperor and everyone else were amazed. And the witness who swore this was himself present at all of it.*

*After this, the emperor commanded that all Catholics who showed themselves to be constant in the faith should be banished together with <[f. 287v/277v]> the holy patriarch himself. And on the journey into banishment they suffered such extreme hunger through not having eaten for many days that they began to fall and faint out of pure weakness. While they were travelling beside a large river with the patriarch, they all sat down beside the water, and the holy patriarch's prayer there was as effective as that of Saint Gregory Thaumaturgus had been in ancient times in drying up a large lake to prevent discord between two brothers, because in this case, to remedy the needs of those faithful, the holy patriarch through his prayer dried up that large river in such a way that the great multitude {[f. 341v]} of fish that were left high and dry not only remedied their present {hunger} <need> but was also loaded onto mules for later. And then the river filled up again and began to flow as before, and the people were filled with much consolation and spirit to suffer all the discomforts of their banishment for Christ, until He saw fit that it should be lifted. And the same witness was present at this miracle.*

*On another occasion, the emperor himself summoned the holy patriarch and, addressing him with very harsh and cruel words, threatened that he would have him beheaded if he did not stop preaching to his people. But the holy man, who desired no less to be killed for this reason than the emperor desired to kill him, crossed his hands on his chest and bowed his head, meaning that he was giving it to him there. On seeing this the emperor was furious and took hold of his sword and, as he raised his arm in order to strike him with it, {while it was raised} before he could bring it down the sword fell out of his hand, at which he himself and everyone else who was present, including the witness who swore this, were amazed. The queen was there as well, and when she saw what was happening, she rose in great haste and embraced the holy <father> patriarch in order to protect him, surprised at the emperor's behaviour in treating such a holy man in that way. But although the evil emperor saw all this, he did not recover*

*from his malice but commanded that he should get out of his sight, and in secret he ordered him to be killed. And it would have happened, if some heretic lords who had learnt of it had not prevented it; greatly edified by his holiness, these lords then gave him more alms and attended to <[f. 288/278]> his needs. Another time, when the emperor was indignant that the holy man had reduced certain heretics, he commanded that he should leave his lands at once and take the Portuguese with him, but they should leave him their wives and children, because they were his captives; but they were taken to a place of banishment very far away, to which the tyrant sent them, where they suffered many hardships and necessities, although later he lifted it again.<sup>1</sup>*

This is what was said by some of the witnesses who testified in that instrument regarding the treatment that Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd gave to the holy <Father> Patriarch Dom André de Oviedo and the other fathers and Catholics, which was very different from what Friar Luiz de Urreta depicts in his *History*.

<sup>1</sup> Páez has taken this excerpt, without mentioning the source, from another annual letter published by Guerreiro in the 'Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia', ff. 299–300v, pp. 328–30.

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## CHAPTER VIII

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On how, by means of a brief, Pope Pius V commanded Father Patriarch Dom André de Oviedo to leave Ethiopia and go to China and Japan

{[f. 342]} When news arrived in Portugal that Emperor Claudius had died without any desire at all to obey the holy Roman Church, and that his brother Adamâs Çaguêd, who had succeeded him in the empire, was a bitter persecutor of those who professed our holy faith, and of the great hardships that he was causing to Father Patriarch André de Oviedo, and of the little yield that he was reaping in this land, because the people here and the emperors were stubbornly obstinate in their errors, and since King Sebastian of Portugal had, on the other hand, heard of the great yield that was being reaped in the conversion of heathens in the kingdoms of Japan, he judged on the basis of considerable mature counsel that Our Lord would be better served if the father patriarch left Ethiopia and moved on to Japan. He therefore wrote to the ambassador that he had in Rome and to the father general of our Society for both of them to negotiate it with His Holiness Pope Pius V, who, from the information that he also already had about what was happening in Ethiopia, readily came to the same counsel and opinion. And so on 2nd February 1566 he issued a brief to the father patriarch, which I shall put here, translated faithfully from Latin into common language.

*To Venerable Brother André de Oviedo, patriarch of Ethiopia*

*Venerable brother, salutations, etc. We have learnt from letters from our dearest son Dom Sebastian, <[f. 288v/278v]> the illustrious king of Portugal, written to his ambassador who resides in our court, and from other trustworthy persons that, whereas Your Paternity has been sent by this holy apostolic See to those parts of Ethiopia to reduce the peoples of it to knowledge of the orthodox faith and to the union of the Catholic Church, after having spent many years you have obtained no fruit despite all your work and pious industry, because of the hardness of these people's hearts and the obstinacy that they have in wanting to preserve their old errors, and that if you were sent to the island of Japan and to the province that they call China (which are populated by heathens), in which provinces the faith of Our Lord Jesus Christ is beginning to be received with great devotion, it might be hoped that with Our Lord's favour your work would be very profitable in those parts, since there is a great harvest in them but very few workers. Having heard this report, and moved by fraternal charity, we commiserate with you, seeing that you have been unable to gather the desired fruit of so many and such great labours and such a long pilgrimage. Therefore, since we find ourselves placed in this Holy See, albeit {[f. 342v]} undeservedly, and aware that we are indebted to everyone (and owing to the office that we hold) obliged to serve the honour and glory of God Almighty and to seek the*



*health of souls, saluting you with a brother's charity and having very great evidence of your pious zeal and the fondness that you have for propagating the Catholic religion, we exhort you in the Lord and, by virtue of holy obedience and in remission of your sins, we command that, when you can leave in safety and find it convenient to set sail, after receiving these letters of ours, you leave for the island of Japan and for China and there you preach the word of God according to the doctrine of the holy Roman Church, which is the mother and mistress of all the faithful, and you administer the sacraments that are proper to the pontifical office and you seek to gain for God as many souls as you can, trusting in the favour of His divine mercy. And so that you may better do so, through the apostolic authority that we hold we give you faculty and power to exercise the pontifical offices in those places and in any others in which you find yourself (providing that there is no proper and particular bishop in them). And in order that you may make use of all the faculties and indulgences that were granted to you by Pope Julius III of happy memory and other Roman pontiffs, our predecessors, in this kingdom <[f. 289/279]> of Ethiopia, and with the same authority, we grant you dispensation so that you may, with no scruple of conscience, live and remain in said places, if you have no further hope of being able to reduce the peoples of Ethiopia to the union of the Catholic faith, etc.<sup>1</sup>*

Up to here are words from the brief of Pope Pius V, and it reached the father patriarch's hands here in May of the year after it was issued. Then, in June, he responded to it in a letter to His Holiness, which, taken from the Latin into Portuguese, says:

*Most Blessed Father*

*In this year of 1567 I have received letters from India, from Saint Paul's College in Goa, in which there was a copy of a simple transcription of an apostolic brief from Your Holiness to me. Among other things that Your Holiness piously, devotedly and holily addressed in it, it contained these words: 'We exhort you in the Lord and, by virtue of holy obedience and remission of your sins, we command that, after you have received these letters, as soon as you can and you find a convenient opportunity to set sail, you leave for the island of Japan and kingdom of China'; and further on, in addition: 'With the same apostolic authority, we grant you dispensation so that (not having any further hope of reducing the Ethiopians to the {union} <reduction> of the Church) you may, {[f. 343]} with no scruple of {obedience} <conscience>, go and remain with those peoples.' As soon as I saw these apostolic letters as if they were the very originals, so I at once applied my spirit to obey Your Holiness's commands, because it is very worthy, just and healthy that we should always obey you in all parts, Holy Father, because in obeying you we obey Christ, the only Son of the Father, whose admirable and sovereign powers you hold on earth, and after Christ you are our head, father and master of all the Christian faithful, and all indulgence, order and power of the Church of Christ derives from you to others; and the same holy mother Roman Church (whose faith will never fail) also persists by virtue of your pontificate, because of the Apostolic See in which you preside; and this Church is the mother and mistress of all the Churches in the world and of Christ's faithful. And as regards your command for me to go to the island of Japan as soon as I find an opportunity to set sail, the lack of such excuses <[f. 289v/279v]> me, because I have no opportunity,*

<sup>1</sup> The brief *Ex litteris carissimi in Christo*, of 2 February 1566. This is an uncredited excerpt from another annual letter published by Guerreiro 'Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia', ff. 306v–7, pp. 336–7.

*nor can I safely embark, because although there are a thousand ships of Moors in the port of Maçuâ there is not one of Christians.*

*As for having better hope of reducing the people of Ethiopia to the Catholic Church, I certainly have if 500 or 600 Portuguese soldiers are sent from India to this land, as we have always hoped, in accordance with what was negotiated there before I came here. Having seen the king of Ethiopia's harshness, I not only hope but am certain that if these reinforcements come all Ethiopia will convert, including an uncountable multitude of heathens from many of its provinces, through which one may travel without crossing any sea; these heathens mostly appear to be simple and easy to convert and are not highly given over to idolatry. We have also heard that many others in other regions have asked the king of Ethiopia to make them Christians, which he has refused to do because of his temporal profits and because they capture many of them, and the Ethiopians think they cannot do so if they are Christians but can if they are not. The ones who are asking the king for this are those who live in Damut, which is a very large, vast region rich in gold; and it is said that on one side it reaches the lands of the King of Portugal, which they call Mozambique and Sofala. In addition, about three years ago some other heathens in a region by the name of Sinaxi (where very fine gold is also to be found) were negotiating with a prince, the king of Ethiopia's kinsman, who was making war on them, begging him to stop the war and they would pay him tribute and that, if he wanted them to become Christians, he should build them a church, to which he would not agree. And Moorish merchants, great numbers of whom live among the Christians, buy many of these heathens, mainly Damut, in Ethiopia every day and take them to the coast to sell to the Moors and Turks; {[f. 343v]} they all willingly become Christians and they weep when they reach the sea, and they are great and small, both men and women. And there are so many of them that I think more than 100,000 are sold to the Moors, and afterwards they too become Moors and, when they are outside Ethiopia, they become valiant soldiers and, together with the Saracens and Turks, make war on the Christians by land and sea, as we see from experience in <[f. 290/280]> India. And if 500 or 600 Portuguese come to this land, they will be able to prevent all these evils and this will also help better to preserve the state of India and the Christianity that there is in it, because if the Turks come first and make themselves lords of Ethiopia, they will be of great prejudice to India, because in this land there are many things that will be of great use to them for provisioning their galleys, such as slaves, victuals, iron, etc. And the king who previously persecuted our holy faith, together with some great men who were adherents of his, is now dead and a young son of his now reigns, albeit without full dominion on account of the many who had risen up against his father and denied him obedience, God permitting this through His rightful judgment that subjects shall not obey him who refuses to obey God or his superiors or especially the holy Roman Church. All those who have obstinately separated themselves from her have been lost and have been subjugated by infidels; these peoples are now all so debilitated by the hardships, wars and captivity that they have suffered under the Turks that it seems that they seek nothing more than to be able to live and keep their temporal possessions. And even though the aforesaid deceased king and other adherents of his and usually the monks as well have shown themselves to be more obstinate regarding the Catholic faith and have persecuted our Catholics, yet the ordinary people and many others show greater readiness to receive the truth of the faith, which, with God's favour, we seek to reveal and explain to them in these parts through preaching and public and private disputations and many writings against the errors of Ethiopia, translated into their language; and by these means the matters of the Catholic faith are quite well known*

to them, if they wish to receive them, and they attract many people, but they fear punishment or confusion or confiscation of their possessions. They therefore greatly desire the Portuguese to come, in order to have someone to defend them if they receive the faith, because they are weak, and many who have received it have again reverted from the truth either through fear or through weakness, although there are still many who persevere in it despite the opposition that they have suffered. And it is the common opinion of the Ethiopians that the Portuguese will come and that the faith will be all one. {[f. 344]} They also say (and we believe it <[f. 290v/280v]> to be true) that this kingdom, which is so divided and restless within itself, will never be able to have peace or order unless the Portuguese come, and so, if they come, even though it may be with the intention and purpose of using force on them, neither will the Catholics be scandalized (since there is no just cause for them to be), nor will the Ethiopians themselves. It seems that, if some Portuguese do come – even if they do not fight – their name alone will be sufficient for many people who have been constrained by fear to welcome them, because they regard them not as enemies but as friends. Had they come already, we personally think that obedience would undoubtedly have been given to the Roman Church in these parts, and that this will happen if they yet come; therefore, with their coming, we have great hope for the reduction of these lands to the {union of the} Catholic faith, with the conversion of large numbers of heathens, the number of whom I have not mentioned so as to avoid prolixity. We believe that the affairs of Ethiopia with respect to our holy Catholic faith (which Satan opposes so much) are of great moment and must not under any circumstances be left without support, even though they may appear difficult at first, because it is common knowledge that great things may only be achieved by means of great labours. And it may be that our holy mother Church today has few better missions and enterprises than this one in Ethiopia, where there now must be some 400 or 500 Catholics, or perhaps more, apart from those who, since we have been here, have died in the true faith and received the sacraments, and others, both men and women, that the Moors took captive and have been left scattered throughout Ethiopia because of the wars and poverty. However, here in these parts of the kingdom of Tigré, which is near the sea, there must be some 230 of us Catholics altogether in two small villages, which we have sought to build in the last two years because of the great harm and many losses that the Catholics have been suffering for many years, wandering from one place to another around Ethiopia. Now that we have them here together, we preach and administer the sacraments to them, and every day more people join us from various places, and others are waiting for the roads to become safe in order to be able to come to us. To abandon these people, Holy Father, would seem not to be humane, even if there were fewer of them, because if that good and most holy Shepherd who gave His soul for His sheep, Christ Our Lord, saw that just one was lost, He would not abandon it, but would go and <[f. 291/281]> look for it and bring it back on His shoulders; and He wants us all to do the same for love of Him and of our fellow men, and to succour the weak, while taking very solicitous and diligent care of everyone. And if all of us who {[f. 344v]} are here depart hence and the Catholics, even if no more than one or two, remain through no fault of their own – because not all can go, seeing that they are not all together, and there is no mechanism for this – what will Christ Our Lord, who died for everyone, say? And in order to confirm just one man – Saint Thomas – in the faith, He showed him the holes of His nails and let him feel them with his hands. And because all these people, Holy Father, belong to you, since you are the shepherd of all, feed them with the food of health and supply the necessary remedy by writing to the most serene king of Portugal about them, or by advising his ambassador at your court to do so. As for me

(I give Your Holiness my opinion), I would never suffer Ethiopia to be abandoned, but if, once everything has been fully considered, something else is ordered or the king of Portugal does not wish to send the reinforcements of soldiers that are requested for the common good, may Your Holiness write to him to send at least a large enough fleet to collect all the Catholics that are here – because if it is small, they say, it will not be sufficient to take them, and not just because of the Turks and Moors who are already in the port of Maçuâ and others that they may send by sea – so that, when we leave, at least these Catholics who have stayed here may not be lost by living among heretics and other infidels, especially if the heads and fathers of the families die or they have no priests because they have left or died, since they are mortal. And I ask Your Holiness to please inform me of what you decide on this matter. As far as I am concerned, Holy Father, I am ready by the grace of God to do your bidding, either staying as I am now in Ethiopia, or to go to Japan, or for Your Holiness to send me to the Turks, or to demote me from the patriarchal office in order to serve my fathers of the Society of Jesus or to serve Your Holiness in your kitchen or in any other ministry that you wish. And if Your Holiness thinks fit, I beg you to grant us some indulgences in remission of our sins. Vale Summe Pater, etc. From Ethiopia, 15th June 1567. Andrés, Patriarch of Ethiopia.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time he wrote another to D. Sebastiam, in which he says some of the things that are said in the letter to the pope, but even so, for the sake of greater certainty, we shall report them here in their entirety and in the same Castilian language in which he wrote it.

*May Our Lord God with His mighty {and merciful} hand keep and prosper <in every-thing> Your Highness in everything <[f. 291v/281v]> for many happy years and give you wisdom and strength, with His grace, to do His divine will in everything and to govern His peoples and kingdom in full justice, peace and charity, according to His divine consent. Amen.*

*In this year of 1567 we have received a letter from India with a transcription of one from Your Highness to me, and another with some letters {[f. 345]} from His Holiness in which he commands that, after I have received his letters, I should, as soon as I can safely embark, go to Japan and China and stay there, if there is no better hope of reducing these nations of Ethiopia to the union of the Catholic Church. As for my embarking, I have not yet been able to, because there has been no vessel. And the letter says that the viceroy of India wanted to send two fustas for this purpose and, since there are now Moors and Turks in Arquico and Maçuâ and others may arrive by sea, people commonly say that not even ten or twenty fustas could put in alone without a few bigger ships, even if they were only coming for one person. Yet there are many Catholics in Ethiopia, children and women and families that altogether may total up to 400 or 500, apart from many who are dead, having received the sacraments, and others that the Moors took captive; and most of those that I say there must be are scattered around the land, because of the revolts that there have been in the kingdom and because of their needs. Of all these, about 230 of us are together in this kingdom of Tigrê and we are expecting others who want to come and join us, if the weather and the roads allow them to. And a remedy must be provided for all these people so that they are not left unprotected. And if Your Highness wants me and the fathers to leave these lands and to go to Japan and these people remain among*

<sup>1</sup> This is an uncredited excerpt from another annual letter published by Guerreiro in the 'Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia', ff. 309–11v, pp. 339–42. It was repeated by Almeida ('Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 5, pp. 427–32). See also Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 10, pp. 215–20.

heretics and infidels without spiritual or temporal remedy, it is not justice. For this reason too it seems necessary for a large fleet to come, and all these people are calling for one; and I beg Your Highness to send for them – or at least for all those who are ready, so that they may not all be lost for the sake of the absent ones if they cannot all go – in the event that Your Highness decides not to send reinforcements to this land, for up to 500 or 600 men would be enough, and if they had come for all the years that we have been here, we are certain that obedience would have been given to Rome and order would have been brought to this kingdom for the good of the faith and service of Our Lord. And it is the general view of everyone <[f. 292/282]> that this enterprise in Ethiopia should not be abandoned by any means, because, although the people are obdurate and the kingdom is agitated and in turmoil with many wars and the Catholic Christians have been persecuted for their faith, yet the common people are much more pliant and the wars have calmed down. But the Moors on the one hand and the Turks on the other having left the land, and the king who persecuted our Church with other adherents of his now being dead, a son of his reigns who does not control the kingdom unopposed, and not everyone obeys him, although they speak better of him than of his father, and he has shown himself to be more friendly towards the Portuguese, and in general they want the Portuguese to come and are confident that they will come and that everybody's faith will be one; and they say that this kingdom cannot be brought to order <if the Portuguese do not come>, since they are divided among themselves and debilitated by the {[f. 345v]} wars, hardships and captivity that the Turks and Moors have brought upon them. And there are many lords who say that they will welcome the Portuguese if they come, among them Azmach Isaac, the bahâr nagâx, who is like the king in <the kingdom of> Tigrê, and a first cousin of King Atanâf Çaguêd, who has his lands in Tigrê and on Amba Çanêt, who is called Abeitahûn Ioannes, who has shown himself to be very fond of Your Highness, and in one altercation he said, 'I am the King of Portugal's servant', and he is a friend of the Portuguese and admits that the matters of our holy faith are true. Therefore, if some Portuguese do come, <even if they are not being requested and> even if it is not to impose force or punishment for their evils or for what they have done to our people, it seems that neither the Catholics nor the people here will be scandalized. And they will be even less so if they agree to take the {mountain} <land> that is held by the Jews, along with many lands that they have usurped from the Christians – for the king cannot go against them, since their land is very strong and he has few forces, especially now that the kingdom is not at peace – and it is not far from where we are now. And they say that 200 or 300 Portuguese would be enough to take it, together with local men who will join them, because they do not have guns to defend it; and they say that if Portuguese went up there with arquebuses and a few bombards, the whole of Turkey would not be able to harm them. There are many of these mountains, and <[f. 292v/282v]> these lands are very secure, especially the mountaintops, which are like extremely strong, large, naturally made fortresses. And they are very rich in mules and cows and livestock, and many crops, and honey in such quantity that they say that all the vessels from which they eat and drink – apart from the ones they put on the fire – are made of wax, because it is very cold there. And they also say that there is a mine of fine silver, apart from the wealth that these Jews have, for they say that they rebelled against the obedience that they had for the king not very many years ago, and they used to pay him tributes. And many sons of Portuguese and other Catholics who are scattered throughout Ethiopia could retreat up there and find safety for their souls and bodies, and if they all gathered together, making a body, they could be very strong and safe and be a fortress in Your Highness's name, one that was very strong and well

provisioned and rich, not needing any other revenue, and from there, without fighting – if they did not wish to – but gently and with kind words, they would make the whole land fear and tremble and bring in obedience to Rome in their manner, because it is in the middle of the kingdom, towards the lands of Tigrê and, on the other side, it comes to dominate Dambiâ, which is like a kingdom between the Christians and heathens, which lies below it. In addition, however, if some Portuguese came, they could live in other places very {[f. 346]} liberally and richly, and there is no lack of natural wealth and plenty of gold that is found in certain places, apart from what we have been told by some people who saw a tomb of kings in a certain church or monastery, which sounds astonishing. And the costs incurred with the fleet to bring the men could soon be doubly recovered, since so many souls would be saved and the Catholics who are here would be helped, and those who so desired and were ready for it could embark on the same fleet, and the men who arrived could be used to gather and recover the ones who have been dispersed. To allow these Catholics to be lost, without giving them a remedy when one is possible, does not befit Your Highness. And to send a fleet with men to enter the country seems safer for them and better for the souls of the land and for the service of Our Lord, because this enterprise in Ethiopia is not to be held as naught or to be abandoned lightly, and (in many people's opinion), looking at it dispassionately, <[f. 293/283]> it is one of the largest and of the greatest service to Our Lord that there are today in Christendom, and as such the Devil seeks to hinder it as much as he can by greatly increasing the hardships and difficulties and labours, especially at the beginning. And great things are not achieved without great labours, and it is a virtue for man to persevere in that which he has started. And to carry through the task that the king, your grandfather of glorious memory, started with great expense and great love for the Christian faith would result in much honour and glory for Your Highness. For Your Highness also to share with Christ the benefits and revenues that He has given you, by using them in his service so as to help bring reinforcements for the good of souls, may represent a larger crown for you in heaven; likewise, the reduction of these nations to the union of the Catholic Church, through Your Highness, will be a greater victory for you than the triumphs of Caesar. And also, if men were to come here from Your Highness for the good of souls and exaltation of the Catholic faith, it would help to preserve the state of India because, if Turks take control of these lands first, they could cause great damage to India, which is not far away, because of the resources that there are here of iron, slaves and victuals and other things to serve the galleys. If these lands are controlled by Christians, this is a way to cause damage to the Turks rather than receive it from them, if you would put men here to wage war on them, for the service and honour of Our Lord and His holy faith. And if Portuguese reinforcements came to these lands, it would be a great benefit, not only for the remedy of the Catholics and the conversion of these Christians to the true Catholic faith, which is a great benefit, but also for the conversion of many heathens, of whom there are countless numbers in Ethiopia over several large regions. Many of them have asked the king of Ethiopia {[f. 346v]} to become Christians, but he has not consented so as not to lose their tributes and the ability to capture them for their services, since the Habexins believe that they can do so as they are heathens, but they could not if they were Christians. And they say that the ones who were asking the king for this were the heathens of Damut, which is a vast land, where much of the gold that comes to the Christians here is found; and they say that there is plenty of ginger and cardamom and ivory and victuals and crops and livestock in abundance; and it is such a large land that <[f. 293v/283v]> they say that on one side it reaches as far as Sofala, where they trade with Portuguese by sea, and as a sign of this they say that a book of hours for prayer has come from

there, and also beads, which are some of the goods that they trade with them, and Portuguese take such things there and the people from here had seen them. A Portuguese who often went to Damôt with others, and who once went a long way into the country, told me that people said that they used to go to a river seven days' journey away where white men used to come, wearing beards and cloth garments and other things, who seemed to be Portuguese; and the local people had plenty of gold and they would easily become Christians if the king of Ethiopia so wanted. But the king says that he did not care to do so, so that they could attack and rob them since they were not Christians. In addition, in another heathen region called Sivaxi,<sup>1</sup> whence comes a great deal of fine gold that is found there, about three years ago now they offered to pay tributes to a kinsman of the mighty king or to become Christians if he would build them churches, so that he would not fight them or cause them harm, but he refused. And the Moorish merchants that live in this land buy countless heathens from various parts of Ethiopia every year and take them to the coast to sell to Turks and Moors, and when they reach the sea they weep and say that they would like to be Christians and they lose their souls when they become Moors; and later they become strong soldiers and make war and cause great damage to the Christians living among Turks and Moors, as can be seen from experience in Cambaya and other parts of India. And for love of these poor souls and to prevent so many evils, for this reason alone (if there were no other) the coming of Portuguese to Ethiopia would not be without profit and service of Our Lord, and all the more since there are many other things in which they could be of service to Our Lord and do good for many people with their coming, as I have said. All of which being well understood, I beg of Your Highness, that before you let go of Ethiopia, you take full and sound counsel and order that which you consider best in Our Lord. I for my part am ready, by the Lord's grace, to stay in Ethiopia and to go to Japan and wherever {[f. 347]} Your Highness and His Holiness send me. May Our Lord be with Your Highness always and in all things allow you to do His holy will, filling you with His divine grace and love. Amen. <[f. 294/284]> From Ethiopia, on 18th June 1567. Andreas Patriarcha.<sup>2</sup>

Up to here is the letter from the father patriarch to D. Sebastiam, in which it should be noted that the person that he says told him that there was plenty of gold in Damôt took this name Damôt very broadly, including within it also the kingdom that they call Nareâ, where the gold is, as some people do now when they do not speak very carefully, because Nareâ is properly not part of Damôt but a distinct kingdom. Friar Luiz de Urreta says some things in his *História Etiópica* against the authority and validity of the brief by His Holiness that we have reported, but we shall explain in the next chapter on what false information he based himself.

<sup>1</sup> In his transcription of the patriarch's letter to the pope, (p. ???, above), Páez spelt the name 'Sinaxi' correctly. The spelling 'Sivaxi' here seems to be a slip. The place name has not been identified.

<sup>2</sup> Páez quotes this excerpt from Guerreiro's 'Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia', but without mentioning the source that he used; see Guerreiro, 'Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia', ff. 311v–314, pp. 344–6. It was repeated by Almeida ('Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 5, pp. 433–8). See also Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 10, pp. 220–25. [Páez quotes this passage in Spanish]

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## CHAPTER IX

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Which explains how unjustifiably Friar Luiz de Urreta judged the brief by Pope Pius V that we have reported to be subreptitious<sup>1</sup>

Although the main thing that Friar Luiz de Urreta intends in his *História Etiópica* is to show that the emperors of Ethiopia and their vassals are not and never have been schismatic <Christians>, but instead are very obedient to the holy Roman Church, and to confirm it he sometimes reports that they always did Father Patriarch Dom André de Oviedo many honours and held him in great veneration, one could argue against it that, if it had been so, Pope Pius V would not have commanded the father patriarch in the brief that we mentioned above to leave Ethiopia and to go and preach in China and Japan, since (according to the information that he had) his doctrine was so badly received in Ethiopia and his work so fruitless on account of the Ethiopians' obstinacy in wanting to preserve their old errors. He responds to this objection in book 3, pages 613 and 614, as follows:

*To all this, which is the greatest battalion that they can bring against us, I shall reply very briefly and say that it is true that Pius V issued the aforesaid brief on the insistence of <[f. 294v/284v]> D. Sebastiam of Portugal, but it has no force at all and is subreptitious,<sup>2</sup> since the Supreme Pontiff was ill informed and what he was told was a very {[f. 347v]} long way from the jurisdiction and bounds of the truth. And D. Sebastiam was easily convinced that the story was true when it was not, but fable and malice instead, and he gave credence to what was a very false fabrication because he saw that they were writing it from Goa and people coming on the ships from India were saying it. And so that the reader may be corrected and satisfied, I shall set out briefly the whole course of this history.*

*In about 1555, more or less, many companies of Portuguese arrived in Ethiopia and were received with much love and affection by the Ethiopians, who saw that they were Christians and, what is more, Portuguese, with whom they had long had many confederations and alliances. These Portuguese were perfidious Jews not only by nation, lineage and descent but also in law, belief and ceremonies: in short, accursed apostates, who only showed themselves to be Christians in their external appearances and civil relations. After a few days – not many, because heresy and particularly Judaism cannot remain hidden for long without becoming apparent and showing its true character and flavour – in the end, since no impostor can last forever, and they thought that they were safe from the Inquisition, which is what they fear, they threw off their Christian mask and disguise and revealed that they were Jews in law, sect and ceremonies, in works, in deeds, in words and in customs. The Ethiopians were scandalized to*

<sup>1</sup> See above p. ???, n. ???.

<sup>2</sup> Obtained by misrepresentation.



see such a diabolical transformation of Christians into Jews. {Ethiopia was} <The Ethiopians were> convulsed and they gave permission for the priors of the Order of Saint Dominic, who are the ordinary inquisitors in those provinces, to seize them. The Portuguese Judaists received news of what was being prepared against them, as the Devil doubtless told them, because I am certain that all Jews these days are sorcerers <[f. 295/285]> and magicians and are in league with the Devil.<sup>1</sup> In the end, rather than see themselves in danger, they fled from Ethiopia. Some went to the kingdom of Borno, which is Moorish, and others took ship and ended up in Goa, where, to cover up their evil and apostasy, they fabricated endless evidence and falsehoods against the Ethiopians, saying that they were schismatics and that the Prester John was a cruel enemy of the Christian religion and that Father André de Oviedo was imprisoned and suffering great hardships in the gaols, all of which was utterly false, as was seen in the first book. When the other Portuguese heard this, they believed them, seeing that they affirmed it on great and solemn oaths. And not only did this reputation that the Jews had put about wing its way to Portugal, {{f. 348}} but D. Sebastiam received news of it and, giving credence to those who were arriving from India, he wrote a letter to His Holiness Pius V in which he informed him of what his vassals from Goa were saying and asked him to send a brief so that Father André de Oviedo could leave Ethiopia and go to preach in China and Japan. These were the grounds on which Pius V issued the brief that Ribadeneira has brought.<sup>2</sup>

Up to here are words of the author, in which there is nothing that is not false from start to finish, since the information on which he based himself was utterly false. In particular, there are two principal matters that he affirms here. The first is that D. Sebastiam misinformed the pope, since he had easily been convinced that what was in fact fable and malice was a true story, and thus gave credence to an utterly false fabrication, and for that reason the brief is subreptitious and invalid. The second is that this false and malicious information came from 300 Portuguese Jews, accursed apostates who in about 1555 arrived in Ethiopia, whence they fled because they were going to be seized as Jews, some going to Borno and others to Goa; there, to cover up their evil and apostasy, they told endless falsehoods, such as that the Ethiopians were schismatics, and the Prester John was a cruel enemy of the Christian religion, and Father André de Oviedo was imprisoned and suffering great hardships in gaol.

As for the first, I say that he should be more courteous in speaking of such a Christian, <[f. 295v/285v]> prudent and cautious king as D. Sebastiam and not describe him as a light-minded man, by saying that he was easily convinced that what was in fact fable and fabrication was a true story. He was convinced only by very sound information and on strong, consistent counsel, as was called for by the importance of the affair and the person of His Holiness, whom he was informing; this is clearly shown by the letter that the fathers {wrote} <sent> to Rome in 1562 and to which the Portuguese bore witness in the instrument drawn up in 1603, which we reported in chapter 7 above. No other reason was

<sup>1</sup> The original has 'tienen travaquenta con el demonio', which literally means 'have a dispute with the Devil'. The fact that Páez accepts Urreta's use of the expression, extending the meaning from 'dispute' to 'alliance', suggests that it was current at the time.

<sup>2</sup> Urreta, *Historia de la Etiopia*, excerpt (with omissions) from bk III, ch. 1, entitled 'Which contains a defence and apology of the Catholic faith and Christian religion that the Ethiopians have always kept, and which deals with the Christianity of the Christians of Asia and of all the provinces of the world', pp. 613–14. [Páez quotes this passage in Spanish] See Pedro de Ribadeneira, *Vida del P. Francisco de Borja*, bk II, ch. 3, pp. 132–4.

needed for this truth to be accepted beyond doubt than what the supreme pontiff states in his brief: that he was ordering the father patriarch to move to Japan not only on the basis of the information that D. Sebastiam had given him in his letters (even though that alone would have been more than sufficient), but also in view of information that he had already received from trustworthy persons, whom he rightly believed: '*Et ab aliis, quibus merito fidem habuimus.*'<sup>1</sup> Had Friar Luiz de Urreta taken that into consideration, he would not so easily have judged His Holiness's brief to be subreptitious.

What we are saying is also stated in the letters that the father patriarch wrote to the pope and to D. Sebastiam as soon {[f. 348v]} as the brief reached him, which we reported in the previous chapter. And at the same time, his companion fathers wrote about the same matter that was ordered in the brief in letters to the father general of the Society, and the Portuguese captain and those who were with him wrote to D. Sebastiam and to the governor of India, and none of them wrote anything at all contrary to the information that D. Sebastiam had given the pope when asking him to order the father patriarch to leave Ethiopia for Japan. And if there had been something contrary to it, the patriarch would have had an obligation to disabuse the pope and the king of being misinformed; in his letters to each of them, however, not only does he not do so, but in the letter to D. Sebastiam he ratifies the truth of that information that he had been given, saying, 'because, although the people are obdurate and the kingdom is agitated and in turmoil with many wars and the Catholic Christians have been persecuted for their faith, yet the common people are much more pliant and the wars have calmed down. And the king who persecuted our Church with other adherents of his now being dead, a son of his <[f. 296/286]> reigns.' And he writes almost the same to His Holiness, and he describes to both of them the drawbacks that he envisaged in carrying out the brief with his departure from Ethiopia, and he tries to convince them that Ethiopia should not be completely abandoned, even though it so rightly deserved to be, and that the only remedy for its reduction to the Roman Church was to send 500 or 600 Portuguese, and, if they did not come, a large fleet would be necessary to take to Goa not only him and the fathers but all the Catholics that there were here, because they would all be lost if they remained here among heretics without any priests. This, in brief, is what the patriarch says and requested in his letters, which leaves no doubt whatsoever that the information that D. Sebastiam gave the pope for him to issue that brief was perfectly correct and true.

Regarding the second matter, I say that I do not know how a religious man of such great authority and learning as indicated by the title of '*Presentado*'<sup>2</sup> had no scruple in writing and spreading around the world in a printed book such a great and false defamation as he publishes in it about the 300 Portuguese who, he claims, went to Ethiopia and were all Jews and accursed apostates – something that he could not have seen in any history, and such a thing is unheard-of anywhere in the world. And if he says that Joam Balthesar certified it to him (which he does not say here), in what theology did he find it said that he could publish such a serious defamation of a people {[f. 349]} as Catholic as the Portuguese are, just on the word of a wandering, unknown foreigner? However, leaving it

<sup>1</sup> 'And from other trustworthy persons.' Páez is quoting in Latin from the papal brief that he transcribed in the previous chapter in Guerreiro's Portuguese translation.

<sup>2</sup> The title of *presentado* or *apresentado* refers to Luís de Urreta's appointment to an ecclesiastical benefice, implying that he had a degree in theology and thus demonstrating his 'authority and learning'.

to the reader to resolve the case, I shall go on to show how far the author strayed from the path of truth and all reasonable bounds in speaking on this matter.

First of all, since the Portuguese discovered Ethiopia, no company of soldiers has entered it other than the 400 that Dom Cristóvão da Gama brought when he came to the aid of this country, since the Moors had taken control of nearly all of it. As we said in chapter 16 of the first book, the first Portuguese to <[f. 296v/286v]> discover Ethiopia and enter it was Pêro de Covilham, who had been sent by D. Joam II of Portugal on 7th May 1487; and next came another Portuguese called João Gomes and a cleric also called João, who are mentioned by Empress Helen in a letter that she wrote to D. Manoel of Portugal, and which Francisco Álvares mentions at the beginning of his *History*, and further on, on p. 94, he says that these two had been sent by Tristão da Cunha. In 1520 Francisco Álvares himself arrived in the company of Ambassador Dom Rodrigo de Lima and twelve Portuguese who were accompanying them, and they stayed in Ethiopia for six years. Then, in 1541, Dom Cristóvão da Gama came with 400 soldiers and recovered the empire. In 1555 Ambassador Diogo Diaz arrived, who had been sent by the viceroy of India, Dom Pedro Mascarenhas, and Father Master Gonçalo Rodrigues and his companion came with him. In March 1557, Father Bishop Dom André de Oviedo came with five members of the Society and a few Portuguese who wanted to accompany him in order to serve God, and I think there were fewer than ten of them. Lastly, we six fathers of the Society who are here now, and one more whom Our Lord has taken to Himself, arrived in 1603 and the two years after that and in 1620, and I do not think any other Portuguese have entered Ethiopia to this day.

One thing at least that is quite certain is that no companies of Portuguese soldiers have ever entered Ethiopia, other than the 400 that Dom Cristóvão da Gama brought, because, long before Friar Luiz de Urreta's *History* came into my hands, I had heard in letters from India about this slur that is made in it against the Portuguese, and so I asked many old men whether they had heard that any companies of Portuguese had entered Ethiopia in about 1555, as he says, or later. And they all replied that they had never heard it said that any had entered other than the 400 that Dom Cristóvão brought. I did not content myself with this <[f. 297/287]> enquiry but drew up a statement by many sworn witnesses, not just elderly Portuguese but honourable local men who were not of our Church, including {[f. 349v]} the greatest lord in Ethiopia, who is called *Abeitahûn* Bela Christôs, the emperor's cousin, who did me the favour of being willing to swear because of the familiarity I had with him. And they all without exception swore that no such soldiers had ever entered Ethiopia other than those who came with Dom Cristóvão da Gama, because, had they come, someone would have seen or spoken about them, for many of these men had, virtually ever since the time that the book mentions, been at the court of all the emperors that there have been until today.

It is certain, then, that there are no others to whom the author might be referring than the Portuguese who came with Dom Cristóvão da Gama. But who would dare impute to these men such a great slur and falsehood as to say that they were Jews and that, since they were going to be seized as such in Ethiopia, they fled to the kingdom of Borno and Goa? And who will not consider him soulless when they see the histories that deal with them and very rightly and truly exalt the valour and courage with which they fought the Moors in Ethiopia, the favours that they did for the Catholic faith and the great zeal for the honour of God with which they shed their blood in so many battles, in which most of

them lost their lives, {fighting} for our holy faith, as we said at the end of the first book? And of those who escaped, very few returned to India; all the rest died here, suffering many hardships, persecutions and confiscations of their possessions, for the sake of the holy faith, at the time when the ungrateful Emperor Adamâs Çaguèd was persecuting it, as we {have seen} <saw> above.

Friar Luiz de Urreta himself, in his first book, page 359,<sup>1</sup> where he deals specifically with Dom Cristóvão and his soldiers, says that there were 400 of them and that they arrived in the year 1541, and he relates the willingness and zeal with which they offered themselves for such a glorious enterprise and all its success, without finding any fault with them regarding their religion. I therefore believe it is quite certain that when <[f. 297v/287v]> he says here that 300 Portuguese Jews entered Ethiopia in about 1555 he is not speaking about Dom Cristóvão da Gama's men, but somebody put this lie into his head about another 300 having entered, like the other lie that we reported in chapter 16 in book 1, about the doctors of law that the king of Portugal sent to Ethiopia, as he claims on page 179,<sup>2</sup> and many others that we have seen in the course of this *History*. But this does not excuse him from his obligation to give satisfaction to the Portuguese, who have every right to be scandalized, for having published and authorized such a serious and false slur as being true.

The author says many other things in the same chapter, but if they were to be refuted in detail as they deserve it would require a lot of writing and more time than I have. {[f. 350]} However, in case the reader may think that they have some basis in fact if I leave them out completely, I shall give a brief summary of the ones that he puts on page 616<sup>3</sup> regarding this matter with which we have been dealing, which are as follows. When the Ethiopians who were in Saint Stephen's in Rome heard what was being said against the Christianity of their land, they dispatched one of their company with letters to Prester John Mena, informing him about everything that was happening, at which he was very angry and wrote at once, through his ambassador, to Goa and the king of Portugal and also to the supreme pontiff, Pius V, recounting the whole story reported above about the Portuguese {Jews}, and at the same time he wrote to many of the cardinals; and he made all the members of the Grand Council write with great submission that they were all Catholic Christians, sons of the Roman Church, and at the same time offering him their obedience once again and asking him to send the Council of Trent, and affirming that everything that was being said about Father André de Oviedo was false, but instead he was the president of the Latin Council and they revered him like a saint. The supreme pontiff and the cardinals were satisfied and sent the Council of Trent translated into the Ethiopic language, by which they govern themselves to this day. And the Prester John, mindful of the evil of the Portuguese Jews, made a law (which is still obeyed) that no Portuguese may enter Ethiopia without bringing written permission from the inquisitors in Lisbon, or from the Inquisition in Goa. And Alexander III, who succeeded Mena, thinking that his predecessor <[f. 298/288]> had been curt in sending just one ambassador, decided to send twenty-four – twelve priests and twelve knights – to offer Pius V obedience on his behalf and on that of the whole empire, but when they arrived in Rome

<sup>1</sup> Urreta, *Historia de la Etiopia*, bk I, ch. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Urreta, *Historia de la Etiopia*, bk I, ch. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Urreta, *Historia de la Etiopia*, bk III, ch. 1.

he had already died and Gregory XIII was governing the Church, and they gave their obedience to him.

This is what the author says, but there is nothing in it that is not mere fiction because, in addition to what we said above – that such Portuguese never came here, that the information that D. Sebastiam gave was not false, and that Emperor Minàs himself, whom he calls Mena, used to say that the reason why his brother, Emperor Claudius, had died was because he allowed the faith of Rome in Ethiopia – in addition to that, when he claims that the Ethiopians who were in Rome sent letters to Prester John Mena, that could only have taken place in the year when the brief was issued, which was in 1566 and, on account of the difficulties and delays that there are on the road by which the letters would come, no matter how fast they came they would not have arrived here until the following year of '67, when the brief arrived as well. How, then, could Emperor Mena have sent an ambassador to Goa {f. 350v} and to Portugal and have written to Rome and replied to the supreme pontiff when he had died three years before the brief was issued? Because this emperor that he calls Mena – who was actually called Minàs and, when he was given the emperorship, he titled himself Adamàs Çaguèd, as we saw above in his History – died in the year 1563, as is well known here. Pope Pius V was also elected much later, in {1566} <[...]>, I think.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, all the correspondence that he says passed between Pius V and Mena is a fable invented by the author, or by whoever informed him. Likewise, the letter that he mentions there, on page 578,<sup>2</sup> from Pius V to Mena could not have been for him and, what is more, the date is 1570. Apart from that, even if Emperor Minàs had been alive, how could he have performed offices with the pope and the king of Portugal, since he was such a capital enemy and persecutor of the Roman faith and of the Portuguese and Catholics, as we have shown above. In addition, where he affirms that Mena wrote to the pope that Father André de Oviedo was the president of the Latin Council, he is contradicting what he himself said in chapter 16<sup>3</sup> of book 1, because on page 192<sup>4</sup> he says that the emperor who, on Father André de Oviedo's insistence, first set up the Latin Council <[f. 298v/288v]> and made him president of it was Emperor Alexander III, and here on page 617<sup>5</sup> he says that this Alexander III succeeded Emperor Mena as emperor. Therefore he is manifestly contradicting himself by making Father André de Oviedo the president of the Latin Council during the time of Emperor Mena, when it had not yet been set up, since according to him the emperor who succeeded Mena set it up. Furthermore, as we showed in the first book, such a Latin Council has never existed in Ethiopia.

No less false is his claim that they govern themselves today in Ethiopia by the Council of Trent, because they do not even know the name, and they also say so many insulting things about the fathers of the Council of Chalcedon, as we saw in book 2. And no law has ever been passed that Portuguese may not enter Ethiopia without bringing written permission from the inquisitors in Lisbon or Goa, and there is no inquisition here and they do not know what it is. Also false is his claim that the emperor who succeeded Mena sent twenty-four ambassadors to Rome to offer the supreme pontiff obedience on his

<sup>1</sup> Pius V was indeed elected in 1566. The date was not inserted in BPB, MS 778.

<sup>2</sup> Urreta, *Historia de la Etiopia*, bk III, ch. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Páez is mistaken here; he means ch. 21.

<sup>4</sup> Urreta, *Historia de la Etiopia*, bk I, ch. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Urreta, *Historia de la Etiopia*, bk III, ch. 1.

behalf and on that of the whole empire; if any at all went there with such an embassy, they must have made it up in their own heads in order to gain favour and property, because I have made very careful enquiries to find out the truth about this by asking old men and a cousin of the emperor called *Abeitahûn* Bela Christôs, with whom the emperor was raised from the time he began to reign and whom he told all his secrets, and others who were always in his palace. And they all {[f. 351]} told me that they had never heard such a thing, and the emperor could not have sent an embassy of such great splendour with twelve priests and twelve knights without their knowing about it or seeing that they were absent from the empire. And that is true, because the people of Ethiopia are so little inclined to secrecy that even those to whom the emperor confides his secrets rarely keep them. And that emperor did not have the opportunity for it for many years, since he always had so many difficulties and was so poorly obeyed to begin with, as will be seen from his History, which we shall put later on, and from everything else that we say. And he was never so fond of the holy Church of Rome that he would have granted it obedience, for although in 1576 he sent a man to India with letters, it was only to ask for the Portuguese to come to his aid on account of the difficulties in which he saw himself. And the monk by the name of Taquela Mariâm who went to Rome did not say there what this emperor wanted, apart from some craftsmen that he needed. Therefore, as we have seen, everything that Friar Luis de Urreta said to show that the brief from Pius V was subreptitious was a fable invented by whoever informed him.

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<[f. 299/289]> CHAPTER X

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Which deals with the hardships that Father Patriarch André de Oviedo suffered after the death of Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd, and some things that Our Lord God revealed to him

Although most of what we will say in this chapter did not happen during the time of Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd but in that of his son Malâc Çaguêd, we shall nevertheless leave the history of the latter until afterwards so as not to interrupt the sequence of events concerning the father patriarch, but instead, by continuing them, to give some idea of the occupations that he had and the hardships and needs that he suffered after the death of Emperor Adamâs, until his own. These hardships and needs were many and very severe, because so were the divisions that existed in the empire, which was ablaze with civil wars for many years after the death of Adamâs Çaguêd, because those who had favoured him raised his eldest son in his place at once, whereas *Azmach* Isaac, the *bahâr nagâx*, and those on his side supported another whom they had raised up previously, who was still a boy, the brother of Tascâro, whom we mentioned above. Added to that, some Turks invaded at the same time and made their camp and fortress at Debaroâ, and from there they carried out many raids in the lands of Tigrê, robbing and killing everyone they came across. Therefore, the father patriarch with his {[f. 351v]} companions and some Portuguese, who were in Tigrê in a village that they call Fremonâ,<sup>1</sup> were always living with constant frights and anxieties, without finding anywhere that was safe. As everywhere was in such turmoil, even the local people would rob them of the little they had, and so the father patriarch lived in absolute poverty and destitution, as all those who knew him and some of those who accompanied him now testify, and as many letters from the fathers also declare. So as not to dwell on something that is so well known, I shall only relate here the beginning of one letter that Father Manoel Fernandez wrote to our College of Saint Paul in Goa on 3rd June 1566, and his words are as follows:

*Eighteen months ago, Father Cardoso and Brother Antonio Fernandez and I went into the interior to negotiate some souls and to see the Portuguese of those parts, since it was a long time since we had had news of them. We stayed there for nearly a year and a half, and thirteen days ago we came <[f. 299v/289v]> to join the father patriarch. And because of the many dangers that we had on the journey and the great hardships that His Paternity suffered here, when we saw each other again it was as if we had come from India. We found the father patriarch in such a poor and abject state that it hurts to see him. And now we are negotiating some*

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (Fremona/Fremonâ/Fremonâ/Mây Gwâgwâ).

yokes of oxen to see if by working the land we can remedy our poverty, for the Lord has wanted us to live among people from whom one cannot expect anything. Up to now we have never stopped dealing with matters of faith, partly in writing and partly by talking, but the {whole} kingdom is in such turmoil that the only thing one can hear now is people making their houses safe. The matters of obedience to the Roman Church have been entirely forgotten; the Habexins are extremely insensitive and stubborn, and it is amazing that the more God hurts them, the less they feel it and the more insensitive they become. For the last seven years, nothing else has happened in this kingdom but harsh and continual punishments that Our Lord God has meted out on them, as on the impenitent, and they feel it so little that they ask very dispassionately why, if they are such good Christians, God persecutes them so much. Turks, Moors, Gâlas, plague, continual wars without end, and they are insensitive to what Our Lord intends. Sometimes they do not fail to scourge us too.

After Amador left Debaroâ three years ago, two captains had a pitched battle there a few days later, almost within sight of Debaroâ, and the one who governs those parts was defeated. And when we saw ourselves safe and sound after that it was not a small mercy from Our Lord, even though we lost a great deal. The father patriarch had a mule that he rode; two youths in the household set out to make a fire that night, but the fire leapt out, burnt down the house and killed his mule. A few days later, in another lodging, a thief jumped on him at night in the house, {[f. 352]} stole his cloth cassock and two rochets, for he had no other vestment with which to authorise his poor state, and also took an ornament. In the end, in Ethiopia *satis est vivere*,<sup>1</sup> without hoping for anything else.

What I said just now is a matter of yesterday and the day before. In matters of faith, our truths are understood, but they are not accepted because these people are usually the most unscrupulous that could ever be seen. They may be confessing the truth and showing signs that they think it is very good, but if you <[f. 300/290]> try to press them to accept it, because without it they will go to hell, they say that they will receive it soon, when the Portuguese come, for otherwise they are afraid of the king and, if they die in the meantime, they will go to Paradise because they take the corban, which is the sacrament, and they do not eat meat that kills Moors, and with this they think they have gained seven paradises.<sup>2</sup>

Up to here are words from Father Manoel Fernandez. And the rest of the fathers {say} <said> in other letters that they Turks made many sorties from the fortress that they had in Debaroâ, which is three days' journey from the sea, and they once reached a village where a large part of the Portuguese and Catholics lived, near the one where the father patriarch was, and burnt it down. And Our Lord did not wish them to capture the people, because they fled before the Turks arrived, but they were tired of always being frightened and having to flee and so, to be free of such great hardships and dangers, they travelled many days inland to Dambiâ and other parts. And the father patriarch remained in the village of Fremonâ with a few others who wanted to stay with him, trusting in what he told them, that no harm would come to them there, because they had a high opinion of his holiness.

He always resided in Fremonâ from that time until he died. The life he led – as an uncle of the emperor used to say, despite being a schismatic – resembled that of the ancient great saints of the wilderness; and in truth he was not wrong, because he was like them in every

<sup>1</sup> It is enough to live.

<sup>2</sup> See Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 10, pp. 196–8.



way. The hut in which he lived was round and very narrow and had no divisions inside; its walls were made of stone and mud and so low that when I raised my hand I could almost reach the top of it. His clothes came to be so poor that he had no more than a coarse cloth with which to cover himself. The bread that he ate was made from an unsavoury red seed that is so small that I do not think there is anything like it in Spain; they call it *tef*<sup>1</sup> and it is more like food for birds than for men. I was once talking to Emperor Seltân Çaguêd about it and he told me that it could only be the seed of a grass that hunger originally forced the poor to eat, and then they started {[f. 352v]} sowing it and became accustomed to it. The delicacies that the holy man ate with this were herbs often just boiled in salted water, and crushed linseed, also just boiled in salted water.

<[f. 300v/290v]> Even though this food was so unsubstantial, he fasted almost all the time, and he exercised himself singularly in this virtue and in that of prayer since he knew how important they are and how the saints <always> {increasingly} made use of them to receive divine enlightenment, because as fasting mortifies the flesh it calms the passions, for if the passions are disturbed one can barely discern what God impresses on the soul, like the images of things in troubled, dark water. And since prayer is the most familiar conversation that one can have with God Himself on earth, in it God usually opens His heart to His believers (as good friends do), and thus He comforts them with the splendence of His own face, and fills with divine light the eyes of the spirit that come to discover in the treasures of {His infinite} <divine> wisdom that which His divine will most wants and expects of them in every particular. I am therefore certain that the soul of this blessed patriarch was so comforted and enlightened in prayer that the relics of the divine consolations and celestial pleasures that he always shared with the flesh were his main source of strength and relief to cope with the continual, severe hardships that he had until the end of his pilgrimage. His body and spirit were always in marvellous harmony with each other, so that the body, by being constant in service, did not greatly burden or trouble the spirit for the natural restoration and refreshment that were its due, and the spirit did not leave the body's reward so much to the other life that it did not communicate its own pleasures and give it a kind of expense allowance, with which it served without complaint and was content, each of them duly employing itself in honouring and glorifying the Lord everywhere and always and at every opportunity.

From that same light that the Lord had given him in his soul to understand what His divine will most wanted, he came to have such a compassionate and charitable heart towards the poor that he would give them everything that he could obtain, without being subject to the vain fears that we have of poverty, because he had proved very well that whatever can be experienced can also be endured. Even faithless poets have remarked how worthy of God are those who care little for wealth, for that is what a great philosopher (Seneca, Epistle 18) gave another to understand, when he said to his guest or friend that he should try to <[f. 301/291]> trample on wealth in order to make himself {worthy} <a friend> of God.<sup>2</sup> The father patriarch was very well aware of that, even though at one

<sup>1</sup> Amharic *tef*, *teff*; see note ??? on p. ???, above.

<sup>2</sup> 'For he alone is in kinship with God who has scorned wealth. Of course I do not forbid you to possess it, but I would have you reach the point at which you possess it dauntlessly; this can be accomplished only by persuading yourself that you can live happily without it as well as with it, and by regarding riches always as likely to elude you.' Seneca, 'Epistle XVIII', in *Ad Lucilium Epistulae morales*, I, p. 123.

point he had nothing left to give but an ox that he used to carry the church possessions from one {{f. 353}} place to another, and he had it killed and shared out. When a man told him that it was not a good idea to kill it, because he had such great need of it for the church, he replied, 'Son, let it be killed today and shared out among the poor, for tomorrow God will provide for us.' And that was what happened, because when a schismatic man heard of what he had done and the need in which he found himself, he was so moved by his great example that he at once sent him forty cattle, seventy local cloths, which are sometimes worth a *cruzado* each, and a large amount of grain, with which he remedied his needs and those of some poor people, as was his desire.

When a poor orphan girl came to him once to get married, and he had nothing left to give her for her marriage, he gave a mule that he used when he went on long journeys, and afterwards he would go on an ass and often on foot. And he reached such a state of poverty that he eventually had not even an alb<sup>1</sup> to wear to say Mass, and when the lord of that land heard that, he sent him some pieces of cloth, with which he made albs and also shared out among the poor, for he never kept anything of what he was given for himself, but shared it out at once among the poor. And he and the people who accompanied him (who were very few) made do with what they harvested from some lands that they worked, and when he had not even this to give to the poor, he himself would walk around the neighbouring villages or even some that were two days' journey away to beg and seek alms for them, and he would come back very content and joyful when he could bring them something. He was particularly compassionate with poor sick people, and he visited them frequently, helping them in every way he could, even if they were not Catholic. When one of them was sick with a contagious disease that was so disgusting that nobody, not even his relatives, would turn him in bed, the holy patriarch went to his house and set about serving him in every way with great charity and humility, feeding him with his hands, sweeping the rooms and washing his dirty clothes more diligently than a very loyal servant would have done. The sick man was so edified and touched by this that he came to the conclusion that the father could not be so bad to himself as to follow an evil doctrine when he was so good to others, especially <[f. 301v/291v]> him, who deserved it so little. And so he wished on purpose to hear what the father was teaching and, since he was a man of understanding and was schooled in the books of Ethiopia, he readily acknowledged the truth, abandoned his errors and was reduced to our holy faith.

Our Lord God also honoured this servant of his with the spirit of prophecy, revealing to him many things that were yet to happen. One of these was when Emperor Atanâf Çaguêd, also known as Claudius, was about to go to war against the Moors of Adel, who were invading his lands, burning churches and putting everyone they found to the sword, {{f. 353v}} and the father patriarch said to the Portuguese who were getting ready to accompany him that they should not go on that journey, because neither the emperor nor they would return. And although they all had a very high opinion of his holiness and feared what might happen, even so some of them would not give up going, since the gifts they were given were more compelling than the father's words, but it cost them their lives. Their loss proved the truth of the prophecy, because they all perished in the battle, {including the emperor himself,} as we saw above in {his History.} <the history of this emperor, who also lost his life in it.>

<sup>1</sup> Long white vestment that the priest wears over the cassock and amice to celebrate mass.

On another occasion, when he was in Tigrê in the camp of Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd, who was giving battle to a lord who had rebelled against him and had Turks with him, the emperor was defeated and the fathers each fled in whichever direction they could, as generally happens in such situations. The father patriarch remained there on the field of battle and knelt in prayer. When two or three young boys who were with him saw the Turks, they were very frightened and said, 'Lord, here come the Turks.' Without moving from his prayer, he answered, 'Be not afraid, for they will do you no harm.' And the Turks passed by very closely on either side, capturing and killing many men, but they did not approach them or the mule that they had. Once they had passed, the father stood up and said, 'The fathers have been captured, but it will not matter.' The boys were amazed, because it was a long time since they had scattered and they did not know where they had gone, so they were disturbed and asked, 'How did that happen?' He replied that they had fallen into the hands of the Turks, but they would do them no harm. And so it was, because, as we said above in chapter 6, after the Turks had captured them, that Christian lord who was with him and was a friend of the fathers asked the pasha for them, and he commanded that they should be handed over. The very boys who had been there with the father patriarch testified to this under oath in the instrument that was drawn up in 1603.

<[f. 302/292]> Furthermore, a Venetian nobleman who lived near the father patriarch in the village of Fremonâ affirmed that once, when he was leaving his house shortly after midnight, he saw a kind of very tall pillar of shining light above the father's house and, while he stayed there watching carefully for a long time, he came to the belief that Our Lord was visiting him through an angel. As he wanted to know what it was, he later went to the father and, finding him alone, said to him that he very much wanted His Lordship to tell him something, without hiding anything. He replied that he would do whatever he could to please him. So he asked him whether the Lord had consoled him that night in some way. The father tried to change the subject so as not to give a direct answer, but the Venetian, with a friend's confidence, pressed him so hard by revealing what he had seen that the father eventually told him that while he had been praying, begging {[f. 354]} God to have mercy on this people of Ethiopia and to give them remedy, He did him the favour of revealing what was going to happen later; although the Venetian insisted that he should tell him everything, he answered that he would not say any more. Divine clemency will want it to be their reduction to the holy Roman Church. We have great hopes of that, from the signs that they are giving in general and the numbers of people that are being reduced, although most of the monks and some lords and common people remain stubborn.

On another occasion, when the Catholics in Fremonâ, where he was then living, were very afraid and anguished because the Turks were coming close, killing and destroying everything, they went to their good shepherd to ask for his counsel and remedy, because neither were they safe there, nor did they have anywhere else to go. The father raised their spirits, urging them to place all their {trust} <hope> in God, and went off to say Mass for that need and for Our Lord to guide him in how he should counsel those poor Catholics. During Mass, he heard a voice telling him, 'Fremonâ will remain.' Therefore, when Mass was over, he calmed everyone and reassured them that they were in no danger, and that they should stay. And so it happened, because, when the Turks came to within half a league of the village, they left the broad, flat road that leads to it and took to some very narrow highland paths among very rugged mountains, thus making a detour round it, and

they burnt and razed all the other neighbouring villages even though they were very strong and well defended, and the father's village was left untouched, although the enemy passed very close by and it is on a bare hill in the middle of the plain. During another incursion that the Turks made later, they came along the same broad road that they had left before and went straight past the village itself, while the father patriarch and the <[f. 302v/292v]> Catholics were in it, but they did not enter it or cause any damage to its lands, though they laid waste all the others.

Our Lord delivered that village from the enemy not only while the father was alive, because of his prayers, but also because of his intercession after death. We are all certain of that, because heathen Gâlas often came, and still do now in our times, killing everyone they find with extraordinary cruelty, as they always do, and laying waste to the land, but they went right past the village and did not enter it or do any damage in its territory. And afterwards more than 3,000 – or, as some say, 8,000 – came and entered the kingdom of Tigrê; they were very sure of themselves both because there were so many of them and because the viceroy was not there, since the emperor had summoned him. And they encamped their army little more than a gunshot away from our village of Fremonâ. {[f. 354v]} The Catholics took shelter in a house that we made with a terrace roof, because of the continual danger we were in that they would use fire to put an end to our poverty and the books that we most valued, as happened many times to the former fathers, whose houses were roofed with straw. Some schismatic <friends and> neighbours also came since they felt safer there than in the mountain fastnesses where they could have taken shelter. Two fathers who were in the house at the time took them in with great charity and demonstrations of love and, when one of the Catholics said that that house could not be defended and that they had better go to a mountain fastness nearby, one of those neighbours reprehended him for having little faith and trust in the father patriarch, saying, 'When the houses were roofed with straw and had no fence, the father patriarch defended them with his prayers – them and the whole village – and now that they have terrace roofs, and we have come to them trusting in his intercession, will he abandon them? Do not speak like that and be not afraid, for no harm will come to us.' And so nobody else dared to say anything. And it was, without doubt, a spirit that Our Lord God put in his heart, through the intercession of the father patriarch, in order to show the other one that he should have more confidence in the intercession of the saints and to deliver them all, because if they had gone to the mountain where that man said and even insisted they should go, nobody could have escaped, since a large party of Gâlas lay in ambush at its foot waiting in case some people took shelter there.

The Gâlas kept their army there for seven days. And although captains were always making sorties with their men to raid all the lands around within one or two days' journey, killing many people, even those who were in very strong mountain fastnesses, and always bringing back large amounts of booty, <[f. 303/293]> they never did any harm to our village or entered it. Just four to six of them came to see the church that stands at the edge of the village, and one of them wanted to burn it down since it was roofed with straw, and so he went to fetch fire and set fire to it in the sight of our people, but it went out straight away, even though the straw was very dry. He went again to fetch fire and set fire to it, but the same thing happened as before. He was determined to burn it down, apparently taking it as a point of honour, and he set fire to it a third time without the straw catching; and as this blind barbarian (since he could not see that that was beyond anything natural) turned

to fetch more fire, as everyone thought, in order to carry out his sacrilegious intention, he fell and broke a leg, and so his companions carried him away, more than a little astonished at what had happened, and no others dared go there, until they all went away and the besieged people were free, giving thanks to God and {[f. 355]} attributing everything to the merits of the father patriarch who was buried in that church.

Our Lord God delivered that village from many other dangers through the intercession of His servant, as one may piously believe, and the more domestic the enemies were, the worse the dangers seemed, over and above the ones we have mentioned, because almost all the land supported them, even our own neighbours and people in another village that the emperor had given us there. The first one was a man who rose up saying that the empire belonged to him and, as these people love novelties, many went over to him straight away and, as a great lord who was with him told me later, the first thing that he was determined to do was to destroy us and the Catholics and to demolish our house. He started marching to our village at once with this in mind, but God did not allow him to fulfil his damned intention because, when he was just a day's march away from us, his own people seized him since they had fallen out with him, and they took him to the emperor, who commanded that they cut off his ears and nose like a thief's, because he was not from the royal house, and having done that they released him.

It was not long before another one rose up, in the kingdom of Tigrê again, saying that he was Emperor Iacob, who had escaped from the battle in which they said he had been killed (as in fact he was) by the emperor who is alive today. By means of this deception, he gathered countless people to him and established himself in Debaroâ. *Erâz* Cela Christôs, the emperor's brother, who was then the viceroy, came quickly and on giving him battle defeated him almost miraculously, because only the viceroy's servants and some Portuguese accompanying him actually fought, and altogether there were very few; the rest of his army <[f. 303v/293v]> wanted to go over to the insurgent, even though many of them knew that what he claimed was false. He escaped on his horse and rode round towards our village, while the viceroy stayed there since he thought he had gone into some mountains near where they had fought. And while he was searching for him there, more than 25,000 men joined him over here, as people who saw them say. Because the Portuguese were helping the viceroy and knew that the insurgent was not Iacob, whom they had known very well, he came at us in a great rage, determined to kill us all and raze our village, in which there would be no resistance at all, because there were only three of us fathers and some old Catholics and the wives of the Portuguese who fighting with the viceroy. On reaching a point half a league away from us, however, he learnt that one of the viceroy's captains with a few men was nearby in some mountains, and so he left the broad road {[f. 355v]} and went into the same area where the Turks had gone, as we said above, imagining that we could not escape from him. On reaching the captain, he defeated him and the captain fled, and since it was already very late he did not come on to us, although he ordered a Portuguese that they had captured there to be speared to death at once in front of his tent.

Even though we had been told that he was coming for us, we were determined not to leave the house, because the local people themselves would catch us at once and hand us over to him. At nightfall, however, a horseman who had escaped from the rout, whose name was Claudius, arrived and said that we should not remain there at all, but should very quickly gather up all the church property and leave at once, and he would guide us to

a safe place, because that tyrant would certainly come in the morning and we would lose everything, even if he left us our lives. However, we did not think that we should leave so many women, old men and boys, but we should die with them, keeping up their spirits and consoling them, but that good nobleman insisted so much that we should go and take everyone, and he would leave us somewhere safe. The Catholics and the wives of the Portuguese also insisted so strongly, weeping and saying that it was not a good idea to stay there and risk the discourtesies of the soldiers (who were all common people), that they forced us to follow his advice, even though we considered leaving to be quite risky since it was night and the roads were full of robbers, because of all the revolts and disturbances. So two fathers went with all those people and the church property and the other stayed in the house, so as not to completely abandon some old people and children who were not leaving the village, because <[f. 304/294]> they could not walk. After they had gone some two leagues, a band of robbers burst out of some bushes, but that nobleman put himself in front on his horse, with his spear at the ready, and when they recognized him they did not dare do them any harm. And so he went ahead, and the next day he put them all in a safe place.

When that nobleman had told us in the house that we should not stay there at all, the insurgent's spies were present without our noticing, because they were our neighbours. And they went to him at once in the night and told him that everyone had left and taken the property, and so he gave up coming, but in the morning he sent some captains and men with the order to burn down the village and not to leave one stone of our house standing. But as they were drawing very {[f. 356]} near, within sight of our house, they heard that the viceroy was coming, albeit some distance away. And the fear that came upon them all was so great, even though there were many of them and they knew very well that in the village there was only one father and a few old people (who had stayed since they could not move), that they did not dare go any further. One of those same captains recounted this later, and he was more than a little astonished at what had happened, because they could have destroyed everything very quickly and gone back; but they turned back there and then and, on reaching the insurgent, went with him to take up a position with their backs to a very strong mountain fastness. In the afternoon some spies arrived there, who had left the viceroy a very long way off, so he had it proclaimed {that they should all prepare} for the following day, and that he wanted to take them to a place where they would be well paid for the services they were doing him by collecting plenty of booty. He had in fact agreed with his counsellors that they should go very early to burn down our village and destroy our house. But the Lord, who was defending it, undid his counsel and prevented his accursed intention by instilling in his heart, as he was about to leave, no less fear than that which he had given to his captains the previous day, because news arrived that the viceroy had quickened his pace and was already getting close. Therefore, not only did he not dare come and do what he so much wanted to do, but he did not even dare remain at the foot of the mountain. So he climbed up to the top of it with all that large army, even though he was certain that the viceroy was not bringing even a tenth of the men that he had. When the viceroy arrived the next day, he pitched his camp on the plain near the mountain, but he was soon surrounded, because many local people came up behind him and they took the passes all round, so that they could not place their hopes in the speed of their horses, but just in the strength of their spears and swords

or, in other words, just in the divine mercy that always helped them. <[f. 304v/294v]> And it did indeed help them there, because as that enormous multitude came down from the mountain the next day with great pride and confidence, considering victory to be theirs already, they attacked in two places, which hurt the viceroy since it forced him to split his men so as not to lose all his baggage train while he was fighting. And so he sent a captain with some men to fight some who were already getting close to the tents, while he with his principal servants and Portuguese attacked the others, who were in far greater numbers, and a cruel, bloody battle was joined, both sides fighting so hard that for a long time victory was in doubt; eventually, however, the Lord gave it to the {[f. 356v]} viceroy through His infinite mercy and, as their opponents turned, they killed so many before they reached the mountain that the plain was covered with bodies, and the viceroy and his men were so tired that they could scarcely move.

When they tyrant saw such an unexpected thing happen, he did not dare remain there any longer and so he fled <the next day> by night down the other side of the mountain to some very strong fastnesses near the sea. And so we were left free of him, but the kingdom of Tigrê was not, for even afterwards he gave it a lot of trouble, which I shall not point out here so as not to depart too far from my intention, and since it concerns the history of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, which we shall report in book 4. I shall just say in passing that one year after the day when he wanted to enter our house to destroy it, his head did enter it as it was being taken to the viceroy, and God permitted that he who had desired so much evil and sought to do it there while he was alive should enter in that manner, dead.

I shall not fail to note what many people, including many who were not of our Church, have noted, which is that, although everyone knew how much he wanted to destroy that village and although the neighbours sometimes tried to do so in order to please him, no village in Tigrê remained as free from harm and without loss as that one. Once, a great man who lived about two leagues away from us gathered 800 men and sent word to other villages to come and help him destroy our house and burn the village, in which at the time there were only some old people and three fathers and the wives of the Portuguese, who were four days' journey away with the viceroy. But while he was waiting for more people, because he was not content with the 800, the viceroy heard what they wanted to do to us and came to our aid with his warriors post-haste. And he arrived on the same day when they were going to attack us, but the previous afternoon they had had news of his coming and had fled.

Another greater lord than this one later decided to do the same and to take us three fathers who were there as a present to the insurgent; but the viceroy – a man who had taken the place of the emperor's brother, who had <[f. 305/295]> died by then – was very sick and off his guard in a village a little more than a league away from us, so he decided to kill him on the way. To do so, he came at night with over 1,600 men, according to what I was told, and in such secrecy that, if a local man had not seen them and run ahead to tell the viceroy, they would have killed him lying in bed without any resistance. The viceroy did not even believe it, and so he had the man who had brought the news seized; however, when he realized that he really was telling the truth and that {[f. 357]} they would not take long to get there, he rose from his bed as best he could and called for his men, but only 300 could be found, because the rest were billeted elsewhere. And he wanted to go out into the field with these men to confront them, but the captain of the Portuguese,

who happened to be there with some of his men, said, 'Lord, it is not a good idea. It is almost midnight and the moon will soon be out; if we go into the field they will see how few we are and will fight with more spirit, and they will certainly beat us. It will be better if we stay close to these houses and, as soon as they come within range, we fire the few guns that we have' (there were six to eight of them) 'and attack at once.' He accepted this counsel and that is what they did, with the result that the enemy was seriously confused and very frightened, since they thought that it was a large army waiting for them on purpose, so they turned tail almost without fighting and many of them were killed, although their captain escaped. Some time later he was caught and beheaded. Had his luck held with the viceroy, not only would he have taken us three fathers, as we were quite unaware and had no means of resisting, but the kingdom of Tigrê would have gone over to the insurgent.

During all this there was a dream, which I shall relate even though it was just a dream. The previous day, a Portuguese and a young Catholic man who for a time had served Father Francisco Lopes, one of the former fathers, were on their way to our village, but since they were unable to reach it they stopped to sleep half a league away. Just after midnight, while the young man was asleep, he thought he saw Father Francisco Lopes coming down from heaven, shining brightly, and he heard him say, 'He will go; he will go.' He stopped in front of our church and began to say, 'Peace, peace.' And he was holding Our Lady in his arms and another father, one of the current ones, was near him and had on his shoulder Christ Our Lord as a boy with the cross on his back. Father Francisco Lopes told him, 'Tell all this that you see.' He asked, 'Who should I tell?' 'Your companion,' said the father. So he woke up the Portuguese and told him what he had dreamt. The Portuguese told him to go back to sleep and stop dreaming, but <[f. 305v/295v]> when they reached our village the next day and learnt of the danger in which we had been and that the viceroy had just been fighting at that very time, they considered it to be more than a dream. We are quite sure that the fact that Our Lord God watched over us with such peace and delivered us from such dangers was due to the holy father patriarch's intercession.

The Lord not only honoured this servant of his with manifest revelations, but also vouched for him by severely {[f. 357v]} punishing those who wronged him. And leaving aside the scourges that He gave to Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd – for he had no lack of them after he began to persecute the father patriarch, as can be seen from what we said above – when the father patriarch was leaving that mountain to which he had been banished, the man who had brought the emperor's message that he should be released asked him to pay for the journey that he had made for his sake. The father answered that he had nothing at all to give him but, as soon as they reached a Portuguese settlement through which they would have to pass, he would ask them for some alms to give him. The man was content with this, because his home was close to that place as well. When they arrived, however, they found just a woman there. The man again insisted that he should pay him, and when the father asked him to wait until the following day when the lord of the house would be back, he refused, but instead he very arrogantly and peevishly took a rochet and a stole from the father. The woman told him not to take it because it belonged to the Church, to which he replied that it was nothing but a Moorish mosque. And so he took it, leaving the father patriarch with his eyes looking up to heaven, saying, 'Oh, Lord; oh, Lord.' The man had only walked about a quarter of a league when he ran back in extraordinary haste and, without saying a word, threw the objects in front of the father and ran off again just as fast.



Some women who were there were amazed and frightened at this, and one of them said, 'Jesus, that man's face has really changed; he looks as though he has gone mad.' Two or three days later his wife, who lived nearby, came to ask after him since he had not been home. When they told her how he had run off, she and her kinsfolk went looking for him everywhere but could not find him, and nothing more was heard of him. When the Portuguese man's wife, who was not yet a Catholic, saw that, she was reduced to our holy faith. And the people of that land were left so afraid because of what had happened that from then on they did not dare touch anything belonging to a Portuguese. This was still apparent a long time afterwards when two cows belonging to that Portuguese escaped and ended up a long way away, where some people caught them. When they were about to kill them, some other people who recognized them said, 'Do not do that, because they belong to a Portuguese. Whoever takes <[f. 306/296]> their property flies off like the wind and is never seen again, as happened to so-and-so.' So they took them back to the house of the Portuguese to whom they belonged.

Furthermore, as we said at the end of chapter 6, after Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd was defeated in Tigrê, the father patriarch was going on his mule to Isaac's camp when a soldier found him and made him dismount and then mounted it himself {[f. 358]} and took the mule. When he arrived home, however, his wife and two children that he had died all of a sudden, at which he was so frightened that the next day he returned the mule to the father. Throwing himself at his feet, he begged his forgiveness, saying that God had punished him for the disrespect he had shown him, since his wife and children had died as soon as he arrived home with the mule, even though they had been safe and well before; so he was bringing back the mule. He begged him dearly to plead with God for him, because he still feared further punishment, but the father told him not to be afraid for no more would come. Afterwards, he used to visit the patriarch every now and then and bring him something. These and other punishments became very widely known, so that not only were the local people very afraid, but the Catholics too on the one hand feared and extolled the divine justice that came so quickly for God's servant, and on the other increased their love and respect for the father, since they could see with their own eyes how God held him among His own, not only to grant mercies to him and to those for whom he interceded, but also to punish those who wronged him.

Despite all his work and indispositions, he never stopped writing various treatises against the errors of Ethiopia and translating the matters of our faith into the local language in his own hand, so that everybody might understand them better. To do this, he used the time when he should have been sleeping and resting, and he spent the rest of the time preaching and teaching, not only to the Portuguese and Catholics, but also to the schismatics. Thus he sowed the seed of the divine word the whole time and in every way that he could, in imitation of his master, Christ, who cast it so liberally not only on good ground but also on rocks and among thorns, Luke 8,<sup>1</sup> even though he knew very well that most of the Ethiopians' hearts at that time were like rocks and thorns where that celestial seed would not yield any fruit at all. The holy Pope Pius V had understood that very well when he explained why he was ordering him to leave Ethiopia and why his preaching and doctrine were not yielding fruit; as he said in his brief, which we <[f. 306v/296v]> reported above, 'After having spent many years you have obtained no fruit despite all your

<sup>1</sup> Paraphrase of the parable of the seed, Luke 8:5–8.

work and pious industry, because of the hardness of these people's hearts and the obstinacy that they have in wanting to preserve their old errors.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, until his death the father patriarch never stopped working to remove those errors from them, by means of various writings that he always gave them, constant preaching and disputations, and great perseverance, and in his prayers he begged Our Lord {[f. 358v]} to {enlighten} <relieve> them and give them grace to abandon their perfidy and submit to the holy Roman Church.

<sup>1</sup> See bk III, ch. 8, above.

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## CHAPTER XI

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### On the death and burial of Father Patriarch Dom André de Oviedo

The father patriarch was occupied in the activities that we have seen, with great fervour and zeal for the good of other people, when the time came for his death, if we are right to use the word death for the happy passage of a man who for many years had been dead to the world, so that at that moment he could certainly go and live with God. There is no doubt that for a long time he could have shared the words of Saint Paul: 'And I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me,'<sup>1</sup> because, with Him, he always had his flesh and all his passions crucified, and so, free from them, this faithful servant remained in a constant vigil, eagerly awaiting the time when the Lord would come and knock on his door, with the rejoicing and pleasure brought by those who come to be wed. And the first message that He sent him in advance, as if to say '*Ecce, sponsus venit*,'<sup>2</sup> was an extraordinary yearning for heaven and such a burning desire to be free from the bonds of the flesh and to be with Christ that they caused him a general aversion to all worldly things, as he himself said to Father Manoel Fernandez, the mission superior, as I was told by an honourable Portuguese who came with them from India, who was called Francisco Dias Machado, whom Our Lord has also now taken to Himself. Thus, although previously he had desired life in order to teach the people of Ethiopia the true faith and to try (as he always did) to bring them to obey the holy Roman Church, it now merely reminded him of the preparation for death.

Our Lord God did him another mercy, which he received with great joy and consolation for his soul, which was to give him a very acute fever with intense gravel pains, from which he often suffered, because he never considered sickness to be a lesser gift from God than perfect health. One day, while he was extremely tormented with the pains, a schismatic doctor happened to visit him <[f. 307/297]> and told him that if he took a certain medicine he would certainly be rid of them, but the father saw that there was an offence to Our Lord in that and answered that he would not do it even if he were sure that those pains were going to last for many hundreds of years and if he were just as sure that he would be cured at once with that medicine, and he would seek no other remedy than to suffer the pains with great patience, saying, 'I shall bless {{[f. 359]}} the Lord the whole time.' And so he blessed and praised Him constantly for all the many great mercies that he had received from His generous hand and for that very special one that He was doing him then, to die for love of Him in that place so devoid of human things as Fremonâ was at that time, located next to a wilderness where there was nothing but wild beasts.

<sup>1</sup> Galatians 2:20.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 25:6, 'Behold the bridegroom cometh.'

When his final hour came to leave this world, his soul was consoled with extraordinary joy and unique confidence in gaining the reward which, as Saint Paul says, God has prepared for those who love Him, 1 Corinthians 2,<sup>1</sup> which he considered to be quite certain, like someone who is already within sight of the harbour. And he remained as free of the fears of the devil, which people generally have at that time, as he was sure of the presence and favour of God, which he had so often experienced and seen on his right side, so that nothing could move or assail it. And so, with this invincible confidence in divine mercy, with all his senses calling out the name of Jesus, he paid the tribute of all flesh, that holy soul leaving his body as easily and smoothly as it had always been free and detached from it, leaving it with such great beauty as if it had already begun to share in glory, to which we are all certain that Our Lord took it through His infinite mercy.

He died in the year 1580,<sup>2</sup> on the very day when he was celebrating the feast of Saint Peter and Saint Paul and giving the poor what he could, not on 29 June, as the Roman Church celebrates it, but on 9 July, as it is celebrated in Ethiopia – because of the ten days that were taken out in the time reforms, about which they have no knowledge here, other than the information that we have been giving them now – twenty-three years after he arrived in Ethiopia. Three fathers who were alive at the time were present and, because of the high opinion that they had of his holiness, even <[f. 307v/297v]> after he expired they revered him as in life and mourned him with many tears and great sorrow as in death. The Portuguese and Catholics mourned for him likewise for a long time; those who then saw themselves as orphans and widows sighed disconsolately for such a good father, the married for their master, and all of them for such a watchful shepherd. Even the schismatics showed great sorrow, for when the viceroy of Tigrè at the time, who was called Isaac, heard that the <viceroy was> patriarch was dead, he held his head in both hands and exclaimed, ‘The father patriarch is dead? The father patriarch is dead? {[f. 359v]} We are all finished and done for.’ For he had <a very> such a high opinion of his holiness while he was alive that he often said in front of his people that all that land was being sustained through his prayers. And when he sometimes passed through the village of Fremonâ, he would visit the father and never stopped to eat, so as not to be a burden, but after he had taken his leave the father would {ordinarily} send him four or six loaves; he would take them in his hands and give them to his servants, saying, ‘This is holy bread; keep it for me very carefully, because I alone will eat it.’ The abbot of a large monastery about half a league from Fremonâ, whose name was *Abba* Guerimâ, had the same opinion of him. And he affirmed in the presence of many people that once, when a very thick mist like dust was coming, which was so poisonous that, wherever it passed, people fell sick and died as if it were the plague, he was very afraid and started praying and begging God for mercy, when he heard a voice saying, ‘Through the prayers of the Portuguese patriarch, I have forgiven this land.’ And nobody in the land fell sick or died.

He was buried in the church in Fremonâ village itself, which at the time was tiny and roofed with straw. And afterwards he performed many miracles, which have already been published, but I shall not report them here since I do not yet possess the full version of the authentic instrument that has been drawn up on them, as we said above. I shall just mention two things of which I still have a clear memory, since they happened more

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:9.

<sup>2</sup> Oviedo in fact died in 1577.

recently. The first is that when a Catholic surgeon – I had seen him perform very great cures and he was always very famous in Ethiopia – was very sick and he had applied all the remedies he knew to a very large wound that he had in his side, without achieving anything other than getting worse day by day, <[f. 308/298]> as a last resort he had some earth brought to him from the father patriarch's grave and, mixing it with water, he applied it to his wound two or three times and it healed perfectly. No less wonderful was the health that a Catholic maiden regained through the same remedy: she had long had a foot that was swollen with such a poisonous wound that none of the many remedies that they tried was to any avail, until she took earth from the father's grave and, again mixing it with water, she applied it to her whole foot and was thereby healed, and today she is healthy and has never felt anything else at all. Not just the Catholics but also the schismatics too have such great devotion for the father that they are continually taking earth from his grave for their sicknesses, and so no matter how much we cover it up they always make another very deep pit in it, and they usually bring him offerings of wheat and other things. A man once came in with a good amount of wheat and put it on the grave and, in front of some of our people, he said, 'Father, I have brought you this for you so that you may do for me what I have asked you.' They also have such great {{f. 360}} reverence for this grave that, when they want to make some solemn oath, they go and make it over the grave.

Having seen these things and the wonders that Our Lord God worked through His servant, just as many witnesses swore in the instrument that was drawn up on his life and death, I decided to send his holy head to India so that they could share in this great treasure there as well. And so I went with some people who were present when the fathers buried him, and I removed it and sent it off in 1603, and later the head of Father Francisco Lopes as well. We put all their bones into a wooden box with divisions and stored it in a kind of vault that we made under the high altar of the church, which is now much larger than {before} <the first one>.

One can see from this how poorly informed Friar Luís de Urreta was in what he said about the holy father's burial and funeral rights, on page 210, in the following words:

*In the end he died in a most holy manner, as he had lived. They did him the same honours as they usually reserve for emperors, with all the people of Ethiopia honouring him and all the churches in the Empire celebrating his memory for thirty days. He was buried in the cemetery of the church of the Holy Spirit on Mount <[f. 308v/298v]> Amara (the emperors' ancient burial place). The Prester John and all the court were present at his funeral (a great favour and demonstration of how much they loved and valued him), so that only Father André de Oviedo is buried in that cemetery apart from the emperors.*<sup>1</sup>

Up to here are the author's words. Everything was so much the opposite of this that only the three fathers who were here at the time were present at his death and burial, together with some Portuguese and the few Catholics who were with him. And he was given no other funeral rites than those that they performed. And the emperor could not

<sup>1</sup> The author has directly copied the quotation from Urreta (*Historia de la Etiopia*, bk I, ch. 21, pp. 210–211) that Fernão Guerreiro used in the 'Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia', together with his comments before and after the quotation, see ff. 326v–327, p. 360. [Páez quotes the passage from Urreta in Spanish]

have been there even if he had wished to be, because he was a long way away facing more than a few difficulties because of the many uprisings that were still occurring in his empire; and he neither knew nor had ever seen the father. Nor is there any memory of any emperor at all having been buried on that Mount Amharâ,<sup>1</sup> which is the same one that he mentioned in chapter 8 of his first book and that {we spoke of in chapter} <in chapters 5 and> 6.

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (Mount Amharâ/*Ambā* Gešan).

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## CHAPTER XII

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### On the life that five members of the Society who came with Father Patriarch Dom André de Oviedo led in Ethiopia and on the death that they died

Five members of the Society came to Ethiopia with Father Patriarch Dom André de Oviedo, and they arrived on 19th March 1557, as we said above in chapter 5: Father Manuel Fernandez, the mission superior, Father Gonçalo Gualdamez, and Brothers Gonçalo Cardoso, Antonio Fernandez and Francisco Lopes, whom the father patriarch later ordained to say Mass. Four of them were Portuguese and Father Gualdamez Spanish. They were all {[f. 360v]} truly apostolic and generous with their lives and spent them on the bodily service and spiritual good of others with such great charity and zeal for the salvation of souls that, in order to help in this, they never shirked any work or feared any danger, however great it might be. The reward for this was not totally reserved for the next life, because the more generous they were towards others in what they did, the more Our Lord revealed Himself to them by sharing out His divine spirit with a generous hand and filling their souls with <[f. 309/299]> heroic virtues and such greatness of heart and confidence amidst the greatest dangers as they might have had after the best successes. Therefore, even though the yoke and burden that they bore was heavy, it became very easy and light for them. During their tribulations they also remembered those words with which Saint Paul consoled himself during his own and heartened the people of Corinth, saying that what is at present a momentary and light burden of tribulation later yields an immense weight of glory, 2 Corinthians 4.<sup>1</sup>

The life that these blessed fathers led in Ethiopia was more angelic than human, because the great purity with which they always lived deserves that name. And it was not only this celestial virtue that shone in them, but also charity towards everyone, humility in their behaviour, patience in the greatest difficulties and persecutions, and mortification of all their passions. While they were on earth, and especially in Ethiopia where they had opportunities to show their passions all the time, they nonetheless kept them so well under control and were so far above them and above all earthly things that it seemed that they had totally forgotten about them, and all their discussion and conversation was in heaven. And indeed much of the time it was, because they spent their time in fervent prayer, through which the Portuguese and the Catholics were exceedingly edified and consoled by seeing the rare example that their masters set in all

<sup>1</sup> 2 Corinthians 4:17, 'For that which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory.'

matters. Even the schismatics marvelled at this, and although they did not like them, they considered that there were no others like them in Ethiopia; moreover, although Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd hated them so much that he often said that he would burn them alive, because of the great aversion that he had for our holy faith, he himself recognized their virtue and purity in the face of his insults, saying, ‘If only I had four monks in my empire who were as pure and clean as these dogs, and admitting that there were none.

They suffered so many great hardships and persecutions that, if we were to talk in terms {[f. 361]} of how nature usually judges them, we might well say that their lives were just a long drawn-out death. They were almost always walking here and there among mountains on very rough paths, teaching and administering sacraments to the Portuguese and Catholics who lived in very remote places and helping the poor as well as they could. At other times <[f. 309v/299v]> they were fleeing from Turks, Gâlas and the *Habexins* themselves, who after the death of Emperor Atanâf Çaguêd were always divided and in constant civil war; so sometimes they were robbed by thieves (of whom there is no lack on the roads of Ethiopia even in peacetime) and other times they fell into the hands of enemies, who took even what they were wearing, and they considered themselves very well delivered if they were left with their lives. Once, when Father Manoel Fernandez was going from one land to another to confess the Catholics, the people he was with moved on a little ahead of him; as he was alone, a violent robber sprang out of the bushes at him, grabbed him by the throat and tried to strangle him, but it was Our Lord’s will that a Portuguese who was coming behind arrived and the robber ran off, leaving the father almost throttled. On another occasion, Father Francisco Lopes was going to Dambiâ to give confession when robbers attacked him on the road, and he was hit in the arm by a spear and miraculously escaped from many others that they threw at him. When the father patriarch was seized to be taken to his place of banishment, they beat Father Gonçalo Cardoso so much that he was left badly hurt. A long document would be needed if we were to relate each individual case in detail. Evidence of how much they suffered is given by the cases that they themselves wrote about in the letters that we reported above, and by what we have said about the father patriarch, whom they always accompanied. I shall just recall here those words from the letter that they all wrote together to Rome five years after they had arrived, which we put in chapter 7, in which they explain in passing what happened to them while they were in Tigrê with Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd and he was defeated by the Turks, as follows:

*On this battle day, we were all captured by the Turks and Habexins opposed to the king, and God did us the mercy of saving our lives through the Portuguese who were there, although with very great hardship on our part. Before that, we had been robbed four times. Here we were thrown into the depths of misery. Therefore Your Paternity can see how we live, going into the field and into battles, surrounded by enemies and among people so alien to our customs, laden with debts that we cannot avoid, not only because of our poor {[f. 361v]} family but also because of many widows and orphans that we cannot <[f. 310/300]> refuse to help, and the local people are not accustomed to giving alms, but to taking what is given to them and stealing what is not.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> See Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 10, pp. 146–56.



Up to here are words of the fathers, in which they clearly show the poverty in which they lived, the hardships that they suffered and the constant danger of death in which they lived, and they lived in that way until their lives came to an end, which came about happily and fortunately, as we shall now see for each of them individually.

The first one whom Our Lord saw fit to take to Himself was Father Gonçalo Gualdamez, a great scholar, charitable, a man of much prayer and exceptional mortification. Some of those who accompanied him on the long journeys he made to go and give confession now say that when they used to stop in the countryside at noon to rest and the others would seek shade to have some freshness for that short time – for it is generally very hot – he would go off alone into the bush and stay in the sun praying, sometimes kneeling, other times standing up, with his eyes fixed on heaven and his hands raised, and he would stay there so absorbed in contemplation that he would not realize that the time to depart had passed or notice the people looking for him until they were standing next to him. They say that the father patriarch, with the counsel of the other fathers, was sending this father to India in 1562 in order to give a full report on affairs in Ethiopia and to show how easy it would be to provide a remedy, and to seek one through the viceroy and others who might be able to help achieve it. And a Portuguese called Marcos Fernandez was going to accompany him. They were taking some local Christians and a Catholic whom they trusted so that they could secretly talk to the heathen captain of a ship from Diu, which was at the island of Maçuâ, near Arquico. However, when they arrived at the place where the father and the Portuguese would wait while they were negotiating the ship for him, none of the Christians {that they were taking} or the Catholic dared to go and talk to the ship's captain, for fear of the Turks who were in the port, as the Catholic told me when I arrived here. When the father saw that he could not make any of them go, and as he was very anxious to make the voyage, he decided, with his companion's counsel, to send a Moor who seemed to be very friendly. When he asked him, he gladly offered to help and said it would be <[f. 310v/300v]> easy but, as the Moors never keep their word with Christians, this one did not either, because instead of speaking to the ship's captain he spoke to the captain of the Turks and told him that two Portuguese wanted to go to India and had sent him to {[f. 362]} negotiate a vessel and agree with the ship's captain where and at what time at night they should come and embark. The Turk was very pleased at this information and told him to tell them which night the ship would depart and to bring them close to Arquico, where he would have placed a guard in order to kill them. The Moor went back to where the father was and pretended that the ship's captain had said that he would set sail on a certain night, and at midnight they should go down to the beach towards Arquico, and there they would find the boat to embark on. They gave thanks to God for the mercy He had granted them in facilitating the journey like that, since they now thought it was certain to happen, but the Lord was preparing another, happier journey for them, which was to heaven. They went at the appointed time and, a good distance before reaching the beach, the Moor told them to wait there while he went to the beach to see if the boat had arrived, so that they would not stay down by the sea for very long. But his intention was to warn the Turks that they were coming; when he found them on watch, as they had agreed before, he told them to get ready and he would bring them at once, and that is what he did, by telling them that the boat was waiting. As they approached, the Turks jumped up with their sabres and surrounded them and, not content with capturing them, they cut them to pieces with great cruelty and ferocity. In

doing so they clearly showed how much hatred they had for the faith of Christ, for they were not satisfied just with capturing or killing them, but they had to cut them to ribbons. Because of that, we can trust in the divine mercy and generosity of the Lord, for whose love they had offered to sail to India, and who would put them at once in the safe harbour of bliss and give them the reward that He keeps for His holy martyrs. I cannot talk about his homeland or birth, or those of the other fathers, because I have nobody here who can inform me about them.

<[f. 311/301]> The second one to whom the Lord saw fit to give the reward for his hardships was Father Gonalo Cardoso. The father patriarch had sent him to accompany a large number of Catholics who were moving to Dambi , so that he could take care of them there, but on the way he was killed by robbers, as Father Antonio Fernandez wrote to the provincial father in India in 1575. I shall quote a paragraph from his letter because not only does it relate the father’s death, but one can also gather from it the hardships and anxieties that they all suffered. He says:

*Since the Catholics who {[f. 362v]} were living here in three or four villages could not face the prospect of so many frights from the Turks, they moved to the kingdom of Dambi  and other parts; the father patriarch remained here alone with just a few who preferred to stay amidst these dangers to see whether they could send word from here to India and receive the reinforcements that were wanted so badly, if God would bring them. But seeing how it was necessary to help those Catholics who were leaving, he sent Father Gonalo Cardoso and Father Francisco Lopes with them to accompany them wherever they went. On the journey, some robbers attacked them and speared Father Gonalo Cardoso to death. He was a great servant of God, to whom the Lord had revealed that he would be killed on that journey, as he himself told his companion a few days previously; and so it happened on 22nd May 1574. His death was deeply felt and mourned by those Catholics, because they lost in him the most effective minister that they might find for a long time. Father Francisco Lopes escaped with a spear wound in one arm, though God had spared him from many others that they had thrown at him. None of the other Catholics was in any danger, because it seems that the Devil came armed only against the Church, just as it also seems that he does everything he can to prevent the Portuguese reinforcements coming from India, because he knows what harm will follow from it for him.*<sup>1</sup>

This is what Father Antonio Fernandez wrote about the death of Father Gonalo Cardoso. And a Catholic *Habexim* lady swore to me that she too had been in that company when they killed him and that she usually confessed with him, and so the previous afternoon <[f. 311v/301v]> he had talked to her, urging her not to forget the doctrine that he had taught her and to remain always very firm in the holy faith of the Roman Church. And, {taking his leave} <undressing>,<sup>2</sup> he said to her, ‘Farewell, for from now on we shall not see each other again. May it be Our Lord’s will that we meet in heaven.’ She marvelled at hearing this, but she did not dare ask why he said it. The next day, at nine or ten o’clock, some robbers attacked the part of the caravan where the fathers

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Ant nio Fernandes to Vicente Rodrigues, Fremona, 22 September 1575, in Guerreiro, ‘Adio   Relao das coisas de Eti pia’, ff. 321v–322, p. 354. See also Beccari, *R SOI*, 10, pp. 263–5.

<sup>2</sup> The word used in BPB, MS 778, ‘*despindo-se*’ (undressing), is clearly a copyist’s slip for ‘*despedindo-se*’ (taking his leave).

were travelling and killed him and Father Francisco Lopes escaped wounded. These were very clear signs that the Lord, like a dear friend, had revealed to him the day when he was to leave this world and then the next day had given him the reward for his hardships and for that immense charity and zeal with which he taught what was necessary for the salvation of souls right up until his death. On hearing the shouting, {[f. 363]} some Portuguese who were further ahead turned back and chased off the robbers, but when they reached the father he was already dead and his companion was mourning him, and they also mourned him with great sorrow and they were left with the perpetual regret that they had lost such a good master and father just because they had gone on ahead that day. They wanted to take him to be buried in a certain church, but since it was a long way off they decided, together with Father Francisco Lopes, to bury him in that wilderness. Some time later this father returned with some people and took the bones to the church of Fremonâ, where they are now in a box.

When Father Manoel Fernandez, the mission superior, heard of the father's death, he was heartbroken by this sad event and the loss of such a great worker. He realized that Father Francisco Lopes on his own could not attend to all the Portuguese and Catholics in the area where he was without great difficulty, and so he himself went at once to help him, and he spent all his time travelling here and there without rest, confessing and preaching and helping the poor in every way he could. He had far too much work to attend to everyone, particularly after the father patriarch died. Some people told me they were sure that Our Lord revealed to him many things that were yet to happen, as became apparent in some cases. Once, when the Portuguese and Catholics were sorely afflicted, since the principal monk of Ethiopia had persuaded Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd <[f. 312/302]> to behead all *Habexins* who had adopted our holy faith, some came to the father weeping and asked him what they should do. He consoled them, telling them not to be upset, because that monk would not last two months and that tribulation would end with his death. And the monk did die within that time and the emperor gave up doing what he had intended.

Afterwards, when the time came to attain the reward for his hardships, it seems that the Lord had also revealed it to him because, while he was in Dambiâ, he called the Portuguese and Catholics to him and said to them, 'I am leaving you here to Father Francisco Lopes. I mean I am leaving you to Saint Francisco Lopes.' (He was not present.) 'Treat him and revere him as such. I am going away to be buried with the father patriarch. May the peace of the Lord be with you.' They were very sorrowful at these words and wept as he left, since they realized that they would not see him again. And indeed it was so, because on going to Fremonâ he became seriously ill with fever and, within a few days, the Lord took him {[f. 363v]} to Himself on Christmas Day – which he always used to celebrate by giving the poor whatever he could – in the year 1585, but it must have been the day when the Ethiopians celebrate the feast of Christmas, which is ten days after we do. And he was buried near the father patriarch.

After the death of Father Manoel Fernandez, Father Antonio Fernandez and Father Francisco Lopes ordinarily resided in Fremonâ, and from there they carefully and diligently went to all the places where Portuguese and Catholics lived, no matter how far away. Once while they were in Fremonâ they heard that a Portuguese was badly wounded in another land that they call Naninâ, some eighteen days' journey from there. Father Antonio Fernandez set off at once as fast as he could to confess him. He passed by where

Emperor Malâc Çaguêd was, but did not visit him so as not to be delayed, because he did not want to waste a single hour, so intent was he on arriving in time to confess the wounded man. But a nobleman saw him and told the emperor, who replied that it could not be and he must have been mistaken, because the father would not have gone past without visiting him. The father arrived in Naninâ and confessed the wounded man, giving many thanks to God for having found him alive. And he died shortly afterwards, for it seems that the Lord had kept him alive because of the father's prayers, <[f. 312v/302v]> so that he might receive the great boon of confession at that time and so that the father might be consoled to see how important his diligence had been.

The father stayed there for a few days, administering the sacraments to the Portuguese and Catholics who lived in those lands. On his return, he went to visit the emperor, who asked him if he was coming from Tigrê. He replied that he was not, but from Naninâ. He said, 'They had told me that Your Reverence had passed by, but I could not believe it, since you would not have done so without coming to see me.' The father said that he had done so for fear that he might delay him and that the sick man whom he was going to confess might die in the meantime, since he was in peril. On hearing this, the emperor made him sit down near him, a favour that he never granted to anyone, and he sent for the two chief monks at court and said to them, 'Have you ever in your lives heard anything like this? The father came from Tigrê to Naninâ just to confess a Portuguese who was injured, and when he passed by here he did not visit me, despite being such a friend of mine, for fear that I might delay him and the sick man might die in the meantime without confessing. If someone asked you to go and give confession half a league away I am sure you would not go, no matter how much they begged you.' The father was about to respond on their behalf, but the emperor said, 'Never mind, father; I know these monks very well.' He then spent a long time talking to the father and, when he took his leave, he had 100 *cruzados* {[f. 364]} in gold given to him for the journey. As the father continued on his way, he slept one night in a very damp cave, since there was nowhere else as it was uninhabited, and in the morning he found he had a stiff neck so that he could not turn his head or speak except very quietly; after that, as he went through some very hot lands, his throat swelled up, and he went on like that with great difficulty until he reached Fremonâ, where, after receiving the sacraments, he ended his pilgrimage happily since he had gone to the aid of others. And he was buried with the other fathers in 1593, and everyone was very sad at his death because of the great charity with which he always helped them in all their affairs.

With the death of Father Antonio Fernandez, the whole burden of the Portuguese and Catholics in Ethiopia fell onto Father Francisco Lopes, and he bore it with great suffering, charity and zeal for the good of all. <[f. 314/303]><sup>1</sup> Thus, even though he was already very old and tired, he came to their spiritual and temporal aid with particular care and diligence, without ever granting respite to his weary old age. He therefore fell sick from overwork and, as the sickness grew worse day by day, everyone was left very disconsolate and they all gathered in the church to pray for his health. In the end, when the sickness reached the point where they all thought he was dead, they went to the church together, weeping and saying, 'How, Lord, canst Thou leave us unprotected in this place of exile? What will become of us and our children? What remedy will this small flock of Thine

<sup>1</sup> In BPB, MS 778 the folio numbering skips from f. 312v to 314 (a copyist's error).

have among so many wolves without a shepherd? Lord, have mercy on us, for we are lost.' They recited the litanies amidst many tears and returned to the father's house, where they found him better, and once he had recovered from the illness he told them in a speech in the church that his lifespan had already come to an end, but that through their prayers God had given him two more years, and they should not stop saying that prayer that they had said. And from that time onwards it became a custom for them, every Sunday and feast day, after the day's Mass, to say together part of the litanies that they had said then. At the end of the two years he was in good health, and he said to a man, 'In fifteen days' time you will see something. Do not become disconsolate at that, for God will console you within a year by bringing you a father to accompany you.' Afterwards, when they were all together in the church, he said to them, 'My time has now come to an end. {Confess and} do not abandon this church, because within a year God will come to your aid through His mercy.' He fell sick a few days later and everyone was very sad and begged God not to take him from them, but he heard this and said that they should no longer plead for his life, but they should not be disconsolate, {[f. 364v]} for within a year a father would come to them, and they should guard the church property very carefully. Taking the hand of one who appeared to be more sorrowful, he said to him, 'Do not abandon this Catholic Church, for you will see other fathers who will come to teach you.' And he died on the 15th day, as he had said, at the end of May 1597. And at <[f. 314v/303v]> the beginning of May the following year a priest came, sent from Goa by Archbishop Dom Aleixo de Meneses and the fathers of the Society, of whom we shall speak later.<sup>1</sup>

Father Francisco Lopes was a man of great virtue and holiness and so everyone in general revered him as a saint. Leaving aside the testimony that Father Manoel Fernandez gave of him (as we said above) since he knew him well, Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, a man of great understanding, had such a high opinion of his holiness that once, when coming through Tigrê and spending the night half a league from Fremonâ, where the father was, he said to a Portuguese, 'What should I do to see Father Francisco Lopes?' The Portuguese answered, 'Your Majesty should summon him, and he will come straight away.' To which the emperor said, 'I cannot do such a thing, since I am very afraid of this father, who is a holy man.' And the next day he passed close by the village and from a distance saw that the father was coming out, so he waited until he reached him and then spent a long time asking him a number of things. They also commonly say that he had drunk the spirit of Father Patriarch Dom André de Oviedo, whose companion he had always been. While he was with him on the mountain to which Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd had banished him, as we said above, the lady of the land went to see him and, on reaching the door of a little hut where they were being held, she saw what seemed to be the sun and the moon inside and, awestruck by such great brightness, she went back trembling without daring to enter. And she told her husband (who was the emperor's kinsman) what she had seen and strongly entreated him to beg the emperor to release them from there, since they were holy men. Her husband did so, telling the emperor what was happening and that he was sure that if he did not release them he would either die or receive some great punishment, and so he commanded that they be released. This was not the only time that Father Francisco Lopes was seen to shine; indeed, several people often affirmed that while he was saying Mass they had seen his face shining and his hair like strands of gold, and afterwards he would go back

<sup>1</sup> See bk IV, ch. 2, below.

to his previous appearance and natural complexion, which was very dark with white hair, which he always wore <[f. 315/304]> long. It seems that the flood of heavenly grace and consolation with which the Lord visited the soul of His priest when he was offering that lofty sacrifice was so great that it overflowed and even moistened the souls of the congregation.

It was from this flood of heavenly grace and light with which we may be sure the Lord enriched His servant's soul that there came the great charity that he showed towards the sick, for he visited and helped them all as much as he could, even if they were not Catholic. And {[f. 365]} some were so edified that they said that such a man could not possibly be wrong in matters of faith, so they listened carefully to what he said and were reduced. In the course of time, six people fell sick with contagious diseases that were so evil-smelling that nobody dared go in to where they were, but he served them (in imitation of what his good master the father patriarch did, as we said above), feeding them, sweeping the house and washing their clothes with his own hands. And once, on hearing that some heathens called Gâlas were coming – and, as we have said, they kill anyone they come across – he picked up one of those sick people, who was full of maggots and could not move, and carried him on his back to a mountain where everyone {was taking} <had taken> refuge, since he was afraid that the Gâlas, who were already very close, might come while he was looking for something on which to take him, but they turned back before reaching the village.

He not only showed his charity to the sick, but he also gave the poor everything he had, to the extent that on the death of Father Antonio Fernandez he at once distributed to the poor the gold that Emperor Malâc Çaguêd had given him and afterwards all the possessions that were in the house, so that he was left with just a torn hide to sleep on. A man once came to ask him for a little piece of cloth, because he was almost naked, and he cut off a piece of the cassock that he was wearing and gave it to him, because he had nothing else; later, a devout woman who saw this gave him some cloth to remake his cassock, since he had not another. Furthermore, when a poor woman died and he saw that he had nothing <[f. 315v/304v]> to use as a shroud, he went home, took off the cassock he was wearing and sent it so that they could bury her in it. In the end, when he himself was ill and had no other bed than the hide on which he used to sleep, a Catholic who was also poor himself saw him like that and brought him a thick blanket like a horse blanket and spread it over the hide; but the next day, when a poor man came to his door to ask for something with which to cover himself, he gave it to him and remained as before, wishing to leave this life as poor as he had entered it, all the better to resemble his Lord and master Jesus Christ in death. In part he achieved this because, even though he did not die naked, the clothes he was wearing were not enough to bury him in and they could not find anything in the house in which to wrap the body, and so a devout man had to bring enough cloth from his own house in which to wrap him, as Joseph wrapped the Lord in the linen that he bought, Mark 15. All the Portuguese and Catholics from the villages around Fremonâ gathered together and, with the sorrow and tears due to the man whom they regarded as their master and true father, they buried him near the father patriarch. And so those who had been companions and much loved in life were not separated in the grave and will never be separated in glory.

<sup>1</sup> Mark 15:46.

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{[f. 365v]} CHAPTER XIII

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Which reports the history of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd as told by the books of Ethiopia

*On the death of Adamâs Çaguêd, the father of Zer Ça Denguîl, the great men of the empire gathered and took counsel on whom they would make emperor. Some said that it should be the eldest son of the deceased, so that the people would not be troubled and there would not be any revolt. Others thought that they should not raise the emperor without all the great men of the empire being present, including Hamelmâl, Zara Ioânnes, Taquelâ Haimanôt and Manadeleôs. However, those who said that they should appoint an emperor at once prevailed, God having raised their spirit, so that he could sustain the empire with the help <[f. 316/305]> of strong men. And they concealed the emperor's body and his death so that there might be no opposition to what they wanted to do. The following day, 12th February 1563, Azax Cumô, Cafelâ Mariâm chief of chiefs, Abba Azca Denguîl, {Cebehâd La Ab and Anania met and called Çarça Denguîl,} who, while young in age and small in body, was wise in his counsel and great in his works, and they put him on his father's chair and asked Azâx Cumô what he wanted him to be called, and he said Malâc Çaguêd. He did not say this on his own account but, because he was the chief of the elders that year, he prophesied that this emperor would subjugate and trample on the false kings and the Turks, who later rose up. After this, they announced the death of the emperor his father and there was great sorrow and weeping in the camp. And then they went to the church where they had already buried the emperor father and stayed there for forty days, making remembrance (which means reading the Psalms and other books and saying prayers) and they gave many alms, as the elders ordered. Afterwards the emperor went with his mother, Çelüz Hailâ, and brothers and all his army to the land of Zamâ, where they spent Easter. And then they left for Gojâm and encamped his army at the foot of the mountain of Mangêsta Çamayât church, where Empress Çebelâ Oanguêl, his grandmother, was. She made the emperor, his brothers and his mother stay up there with her, because she had great love for them, leaving the camp below. The great men who were there took this opportunity to start complaining because of the malice that they already had in their hearts, for he who wants to separate from a friend always seeks an opportunity to do so. Gathering together, they swore secret oaths with each other and conspired to rise up against the emperor, and so they took down the debanâ (scilicet, the imperial tent)<sup>1</sup> and folded it up and went to Ezlamô, the chief of the conspirators who was in Gojâm, so that the emperor was left with just eight horsemen who had offered to stay with him until death.*

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Pâez.

{[f. 366]} *Meanwhile, Hamelmâl came with Azmach Taclô Romçaguêd, because they had agreed that all three of them would draw lots to share out Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd's horses, and they pitched their camp at Dêbra Orc, and there the azaxes and soldiers, many on horse and on foot, all in order, came to join Hamelmâl, and even the emperor's pages came, because they had all rebelled. Then Hamelmâl and his companions went to where the old empress was, making a show of great sadness despite the many ill deeds that they were doing to her grandson in trying to take <[f. 316v/305v]> the empire away from him, but He who lives in the heavens will laugh at them, etc.<sup>1</sup> They put on a show of sadness and weeping, but their hearts were joyful and full of deceit. After they had finished weeping, they took the road to Xâoa, leaving the empress weeping with her grandchildren, and their mother, Adamâs Mogoçâ, went with them weeping, since she thought that they would have pity on her and her son, since they were her kinsfolk. When they arrived in Xâoa, they pitched their camp in Dagâbetân, and Hamelmâl made it his stronghold. The emperor and his brothers had remained with Empress Çabelô Oanguêl, reminding God of the hardships that those who had received many honours from his father were causing him and what they were doing to him; but God did not hasten to punish the ingrates, because He hoped that they would convert and do penance.*

*Soon afterwards, Harbô went to the empress and, speaking to her while standing, he asked her for the boys, saying that Azmâch Isaac had sent for them. When she heard this she was very upset and, amidst many tears, she asked him to leave them, but he had no pity for her in his heart and used Isaac as an excuse. However, she wept so much that she finally persuaded him to let them stay that night, on pain of excommunication and with sureties that she would give them to him in the morning, and with that he returned to his camp. Afterwards a man came and, standing by the fence, put one hand on his throat as if to throttle himself, and pointed towards the sea with the other, without saying a word. On seeing this, the people with the emperor realized that he meant that they were going to put chains round the boys necks and take them to the coast, as this was the custom of the Turks, who put chains round their captives' necks and take them where they like, and that man had sworn not to speak that secret and so he had expressed it through signs. Mercoreôs and others then decided to take them to another land, and they told the boy and his brother Fiquetor what they advised. They too {[f. 366v]} approved it without worrying about the hardships of the journey or fearing the people who would pursue them, because God wanted to deliver them from the noose that those others had concealed from them. They decided on the time when they would leave in secret and then lay down and went to sleep in the empress's oratory; later, the emperor woke up and said that he had dreamt that a nun had woken him and made him leave <[f. 317/306]> the house, and had gone in front guiding him and then disappeared. And so they got up at once and left without saying anything to the empress, who was in the church praying and weeping bitterly, because she was under excommunication to deliver them up the following day. They made their way towards the Abaôî (scilicet, the Nile)<sup>2</sup> and both brothers mounted a decrepit mule that only had one eye, and they travelled like this with great difficulty all night without rest, and on leaving Dimâ two monks guided them, because they were friends of this emperor.*

<sup>1</sup> Reference to Psalm 36 [37]:12–13, 'The sinner shall watch the just man: and shall gnash upon him with his teeth. But the Lord shall laugh at him: for he foreseeeth that his day shall come.'

<sup>2</sup> Interpolation by Páez.



When Harbô found out in the morning that they had fled, he was furious and sent his servants out along all the roads and sent messages to the neighbouring lands, saying that anyone who brought him those boys would be given plenty of goods and commands and receive many honours. Word spread so fast that, when they reached the Abaôî three days after they had left the empress, the men there recognized them and would not let them cross. They were very distressed at this, thinking that they were lost and would be handed over to Harbô, but eventually, after much pleading, the men let them cross, together with seven servants who were accompanying them, on 11th February in the first year of his reign, after the empire had been taken from him on 29 May. After crossing the river, they gave thanks to God for delivering them from their enemy. They climbed up a mountain on foot with great difficulty, because they were not accustomed and the mule could not walk, and thus they reached a monastery called Celalô, where they were made very welcome for the twenty-one days that they stayed there. Meanwhile, Laecô, Empress Çabelâ Oanguêl's eunuch, returned to where she was and brought back the emperor's crown. After receiving the blessing of the abbot and monks of the monastery, they went to Cebelâ and there learnt that Hamelmâl had commanded that they be seized by a bad man called Mazcâl, which made them very afraid. And so they travelled on through deserts with Belên as their guide, and they suffered great hardships since the path was full of thorns. Far greater was the danger that they faced later when crossing the River Româ, which was very swollen; however, the fear that they had of Hamelmâl's men, who were pursuing them, made them venture on. Once they had crossed it, they at once found Belên's brother, {[f. 367]} who duly gave them lodging and sent word to the empress that they were on their way to her. She replied that they should take a different route, because she was very frightened of Hamelmâl. So they sent Abba Feta Denguîl to talk to the soldiers in Cebrât, so that they would join them. Although <[f. 317v/306v]> at first they did not trust him, since they thought it might be a trick by Hamelmâl who wanted to test them, once they realized that he was telling the truth they swore to die for their lord the emperor, and thirty horsemen and 500 foot soldiers set off at once, taking the emperor gifts of robes, tents, mules and other things, each one giving what he could. After that they went to Enyelân, where Azmach Taclô joined them with thirty horsemen and many foot soldiers.

When Hamelmâl heard this he was so furious that he almost lost his wits, and he summoned Taquela Mariâm, an elderly man who was a descendant of Emperor Çeif Arâd, and raised him as emperor, since he would rather the empire passed to another house than let his nephew have it, because Hamelmâl was the son of Româna Orc, a sister of Emperor Lebena Denguîl. He set off straight away with the new emperor and entered Damôt with 500 horsemen and countless foot soldiers. He pitched his tents opposite the emperor's camp, but the emperor rose from there during the night and went to Enaxân, where he was joined by Azmadân, a malaçai Moor, with his Moors, to whom he had previously sent a message. On seeing this, Hamelmâl gave battle at once and it lasted three hours without victory being won, because Hamelmâl had his back to a fortress. Later, however, they surrounded him in it until his men were starving, and so he spoke to Oizaro Amâta {Guiorguiz} <Guîngel>, whom he had in his camp because he had captured her near a monastery, and he asked her to forgive him and to gain the emperor's forgiveness for him, because the Devil had deceived him and had made him sin against God and his lord, and he would go back and repair the empire that he had pulled apart and would seat the emperor on his chair. She went to the emperor and everything turned out as he had asked. Hamelmâl handed over the old man whom he had made emperor and another boy that Azmach Isaac had sent him, whom they had also raised

as emperor; he handed them both over as captives, and he seated the emperor on his chair. {f. 367v} But the emperor did them no harm. All this was in the second year of his emperorship, on 23 February.

Two days after Hamelmâl did this, while the emperor was in the church listening to Mass, Facilô, Caflô, the son of Melaxô, Eslamô and Hamalmâl's other great men committed treason, because with all the foot soldiers and cavalry they suddenly surrounded the emperor and <[f. 318/307]> his followers and stole the belongings of the emperor, the empress his mother and everyone else, even stripping the women, without pity or shame for anyone and with more cruelty and fury than if they had been heathens, and they put the emperor with his brothers and sisters into a tent. On seeing this, Hamelmâl almost lost his wits and wept because they had done so completely without his knowledge, and he said, 'My servants have betrayed me, like Judas who sold his Lord.' And he reprehended them severely, asking them why they were disgracing him so seriously, and making them see that he was breaking the excommunication and oath that he was under. And with these and other similar words he calmed them down and persuaded them to obey the emperor. Making them all draw up in order, he asked the emperor to mount his horse and, standing in front of him, he said, 'I, Hamelmâl, the son of Româna {Orc} <Oic>, proclaimed my lord Malâc Çaguêd, the son of my lord Adamâs Çaguêd, emperor. He has already forgiven the crime that I committed previously; but today's wrong was not by my counsel. I shall live and die with my lord.' Then everyone shouted for joy and they took the emperor to his tent with music and celebration, and by means of proclamation and excommunication he made them return the possessions {they had taken}. After this, they made Hamelmâl viceroy of Gojâm, and so, with the emperor staying in Damôt, he took his leave. When he reached Endagabetân, he stole all the horses, mules and other livestock that was there without leaving any, not even those belonging to the monks. Therefore people said that God would not leave this prince of evil unpunished. And so it was that he did not live out the year, because he and Eslamô died in November and Romçaguêd in June. And just as they were united in their treasons, they were not separated in death.

Some time later, the emperor commanded Auçâ to answer charges brought by the empress regarding grievances that she had of him, and since he could not find a surety, he was taken prisoner. When Guiorguis Hailê saw that they had taken his captain prisoner, he drew up all his men and ransacked the {f. 368} emperor's camp, stealing everything in it, even from the churches, and stripping everyone they could, leaving them as bare as animals; then they set Auçâ free and went off to Olacâ. When they arrived, he sent word to the emperor saying that that had not been done through his counsel, but through his men's folly, and he had not gone of his own will, but out of fear of what his men had done, and he asked him to forgive him and he would ensure all the property was returned. When he heard this, the emperor was so moved <[f. 318v/307v]> that he forgave not only him, who had not been part of it, but also all those who had committed the wrong. They, however, did not trust him, and so they replied that if he had forgiven them from his heart, he should go there alone, because they were afraid of the men of the camp, from whom they had taken the property. Although the emperor wanted to go, his counsellors told him that it was not appropriate for the emperor to go to his servants, and even less so to go alone. Despite that, he followed Azâx Guerâ and, when he arrived, they all dismounted from their horses and mules and, prostrating themselves on the ground before him, they said, 'Forgive us, Lord.' He replied with gentle words that he had already forgiven them their wrongs, and they should not do them any more after that. And he took them with

him to Mugâr, where Empress Çabelâ Oenguêl was, and they returned the property that they had taken from the people in the camp.

Meanwhile, Facilô sent word to the emperor asking him to forgive him and he would come, because he would rather be with him as his servant than where he was as lord, for the lord would not reject the slave when he came with many servants and horses. With these words he deceived the emperor and all his people, and so they said that it would be good to be friends with him. When he and his servants joined the emperor, they swore on pain of excommunication to remain loyal, and the emperor and his men swore not to do them any harm. He then started to cajole the hearts of the emperor and the great men with gifts and presents, by means of which he persuaded them to give him Azmach Taclô's command. And he always gave counsel deceitfully, to the emperor's cost, since he naively believed him. When they happened to be short of food in the camp, he told the emperor to command all his captains to go with him, and he would seize enough provisions to supply them all; but that was a trick to take away his horses and mules. The emperor, who did not suspect such a thing, innocently commanded them to go. The captains, however, did not leave for fear of Facilô's malice, and only his own men went with him. When he noticed this on the road, he returned to the camp in a rage and commanded his servants to ride into the tents on their horses and not to take off their weapons. One of the men in the camp saw this and went to tell the emperor about it and said that he should take good counsel at once. He answered that since they were both under excommunication and oath there was nothing he could do, and God should judge. While the emperor was saying this, {[f. 368v]} the men who had been ready in their tents suddenly came out and surrounded the camp and stole everything, as was their custom. <[f. 319/308]> At this point, the emperor mounted his horse, broke through the middle of them and fled. He was accompanied by Taquelâ {Guiorguîs} <Guenguis> and Ta Oaldâi, and some of the traitors pursued them, but not one of them dared to approach the emperor because God was watching over him and made his enemies turn back. Later, seventy of the horsemen who had fled joined him and by travelling all night they reached the River Zebê and crossed it with great difficulty, because it was very swollen, and there Conchecâz welcomed them and regaled them with food and drink and gave them beds and provided each one with a slave with a sickle to cut grass for his horse and to care for him.

From there, the emperor went to Corâb, where his mother was, and when Azmach Taclô joined him he gave him back the command that he had taken to give to Facilô. Guiorguîs Hailê and many men joined him as well, and they went to fight Facilô, who was in Guahêguahetâ. They had skirmishes for fifteen consecutive days without actually joining battle. Then Facilô and his men went away at night, and in the morning the emperor went after them at a very fast pace and caught up with them at Endagahetân, where they gave battle. After many men had died on both sides, they separated without victory being won. On seeing this, Abuna Josâb went to Facilô with a large group of monks and told him that he had come to make peace, and he should obey the emperor and do penance. He replied that he did not want peace, because he could have no agreement with that emperor. And so they returned, without achieving anything. Meanwhile, large numbers of men were coming to join the emperor from all parts, including from Facilô's army, which was deserting him. When he realized this, he proclaimed another emperor, since he thought that his followers would calm down with that, but even so his principal captains left him within two months and passed over to the emperor at night, and so he did not dare wait there any longer. He therefore took the gold that he had and the items that did not weigh much, and left all the rest and the tents

still erected, and fled with fifty horsemen whom he trusted. Even though the emperor's men pursued him, they were unable to catch him, but afterwards one of his father's servants, called Taclâu, captured him on the road and sent him as a prisoner to Azmach Harbô, and he had him imprisoned on an island in the Sea of Dambiâ, which is called Dec,<sup>1</sup> at which the emperor was very pleased and all his camp celebrated.

<[f. 319v/308v]> After the winter of the fifth year of his emperorship, he sent a message to Cepenehî, the governor of Nareâ, to come with his men, which he did at once. And he brought so many men that they covered the plain, and he paid his tribute in gold, adding much more than his predecessors had ever given {[f. 369]} to the former emperors. Also at this time, Isaac sent the emperor a large present of all kinds of silks and brocades, countless dhotis and salwars (these are cotton cloths from India), and very fine horses, because at that time his heart was pure. The emperor then went with his army to the Moorish kingdom of Hadeâ and, once there, he waited for fifteen days for them to bring him the tribute that they customarily paid, but Azê deceitfully detained him while gathering his men to fight. Once he had them gathered together and saw that there were countless numbers of them, he drew them up in battle order. {When the emperor heard that,} he went there in a rage and, on giving him battle, defeated him and killed many of his men, but he escaped and regrouped, gathering the ones who had fled and some other new troops. The emperor therefore sent in his captains with many men, and on giving battle again they encountered great resistance, because the malaçais were determined to die rather than turn tail; but after they had fought for a long time and many had died, the rest fled, Azê among them. Soon afterwards, however, the principal leaders of his land joined the emperor and so he begged forgiveness; the emperor gave him guarantees and he came and made peace. A few days later, the emperor went to overwinter in Cêfbâr, leaving Taquelâ {Guiorguîs} <Guinguîs> there as captain to finish settling matters in Hadeâ. Afterwards, as the captain realized that Azê's heart was not pure, he cut off his head and sent it to the emperor, and with that the heathen Guraguês were also subjugated, and they paid tribute of horses and mules since they were very frightened to see the strong men of Hadeâ overthrown.

The following year, the emperor left Cêfbâr and went to Xaoa and encamped at Betân, and afterwards decided to move on to Dambiâ to join up with Isaac and Harbô, since he thought that as they were ashamed of what they had done to his father and himself they would not dare enter his camp. So he broke camp, <[f. 320/309]> saying that he wanted to go and settle things with them with friendship and love. When Harbô learnt that he was coming, he went out as far as Begmedêr to welcome him and brought him to Gubâi, where he pitched his camp, and there he feasted the emperor and his captains splendidly and gave them all so many presents that they said that no prince of Ethiopia had ever been so generous and munificent. Three weeks later Isaac arrived and also gave everyone many gifts, but they were not so well accepted as Harbô's. At this time news arrived that the Turks had sortied at Debaroâ, and so the emperor gave Isaac leave and so he hurried away. Harbô also gave more presents and took his leave of the emperor. News then arrived that the Gâlas had entered Ôye with their women and children and had laid waste all the land, so the emperor commanded his troops to gather from all parts and arrived there without their knowing. {[f. 369v]} He gave battle and defeated them and killed almost all of them, and took the cattle that they had brought and those that they had stolen, which were beyond count. This happened in the tenth year of his emperorship.

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (Lake Dambiâ/Lake Tānā; and Dec/Daq).

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## CHAPTER XIV

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### Which continues the history of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd

*After the emperor had spent three years in those parts, he returned to Dambiâ and found that Harbô had just died. And then Isaac sent word to him, saying, 'My lord should not summon me, because I am frightened; and he should not come in search of me because he will not find me.' On hearing this, the emperor was extremely angry and replied, 'When did we summon you, for you to say that {we should not summon you} <we summoned you> and you would not come? And when did we say that we would go in search of you, for you to reply that we would not find you? All your words are like those of a child who does not know what he is saying.' After winter, when the great men saw that Isaac was not fulfilling his obligations, and since they wished him well, they begged the emperor to show him generosity so that he would not lose his soul by joining the Turks, and they persuaded him to send word to him to obey and to keep his command as viceroy of <[f. 320v/309v]> Tigrê. So the emperor sent Za Paraclitôs, Azbê, Ite Odît and Abba {Camâ} <Camad> to come to an agreement with him on these terms. When they arrived, they told him what they wanted. He replied that it should be so, but he would send a monk to bind the emperor and great men to the agreement on pain of excommunication, and afterwards he too would swear under excommunication to keep it. With that they returned and, once the emperor and empress and all the great men had sworn under excommunication, they went back to Isaac with a monk from the emperor to bind him under excommunication. He received them well, but kept putting off the oath from one day to the next. In the meantime, the emperor sent him the gold chain that he wore round his neck and a gold bracelet, many valuable robes and one of his personal mules as a sign that he confirmed him in his command and that the agreement would be binding. But when they pressed him to take the oath of excommunication, he created a diversion by saying that he had heard that Amâ {Guiorguîs} <Guinguîs> had taken someone from the house of Israel to raise as emperor, and that they should send a message to the emperor about what was happening and he would do so as well, and he swore that he would not be part of any such thing. And that was false, because he had started everything, and he secretly sent a message to Amâ {Guiorguîs} <Guinguîs> to send him that Israelite quickly so he could make him emperor publicly. They wrote to the emperor as he had said and showed him the letter, but they also sent a message by word of mouth telling him of his malice.*

*While these things were happening, the emperor received news that {[f. 370]} the king of Adel, who was called Mahamêd, was coming to attack him, but he did not hasten to deal with that because he was waiting to see how matters with Isaac would turn out. When he received the confirmation of his deceit, he said, 'May God reward him according to his deeds. Let us go and fight the enemies of our faith.' So he decamped from Gubâi, passed through Gojâm, where he was joined by many men, and went on to Ôye. On reaching Mahamêd in*

{Obi} <Oby>, he encamped his army within sight of the Moor. He began to have some skirmishes with him and, every day, some of the Moor's men passed over to the emperor on the advice of Azmadîn, who was the emperor's friend, and then he himself came over with many men. On seeing this, Mahamêd fled by night <[f. 321/310]> with seventy horsemen. While journeying to his land, he seized many cattle in a certain place and stopped there for fourteen days. Meanwhile, the men who were with him took counsel and seized him and took him to the emperor, making him enter the camp carrying a huge stone. And even though the emperor did not want to kill him, but instead to take him to the empress, the great men persuaded him to have him beheaded at once. The next day, they also beheaded many of Mahamêd's great men, thus avenging the blood of his uncle Atanâf Çaguêd (scilicet Claudius)<sup>1</sup> which they had shed, and he did Azmadîn many honours and favours. This was in the fourteenth year of his emperorship.

After this victory, he took his army and marched through the kingdom of Damôt, overwintering in Abexgâi. And he was determined to go to Tigrê to fight Isaac, but his mother made him stay, saying that he should not leave her and his brothers in the hands of the Gâlas, who were already in Ôye. Therefore, he went there and fought and defeated them, and killed many of them. After that he hurried back to Dambiâ, as he wanted to arrive in time to go against Isaac, but he found that other Gâlas had taken that land and killed many people. He encountered them in Oinadagâ, gave battle and defeated them and killed 900, apart from the large number of those that fled that were killed by the local people. Since he had been delayed by this for longer than he had expected, he stayed overwintering in Gubâi without being able to go to Tigrê, which pleased the great men, because they wanted him to make peace with Isaac. So they asked him for permission to write to him to say that they would have him pardoned and he would keep his command if only he would obey. The emperor granted them this, and so they wrote to him and sent their servants to Debaroâ, where he was, but he replied that he had become friends with the pasha of Maçuâ, not by letter as before, but by sitting with him on a carpet; and he had not done this in order to fight the emperor, but {[f. 370v]} he had taken him as a protector because he was afraid of his lord, as a slave does when he is afraid. And he sent them a cannon ball from a bombard, saying that the owner of that was the one he had taken as his protector. <[f. 321v/310v]> When the emperor heard this and saw the cannon ball, he was amazed at his insolence and said to God, 'Lord, look at Isaac's arrogance.' And he put the cannon ball on the altar, where the altar stone sits, and asked the priests to say a prayer beseeching God to keep an eye on the pride of that man, who had no shame towards men and no fear of divine justice. Drawing his sword from its scabbard, he said, 'If I have wronged Isaac, may God judge and punish me, and if he has betrayed me, may He cast him at my feet.' As he threw his sword on the ground, it happened to land on its point and penetrated a span into the earth, as if he had thrown it hard on purpose. Acaby saw this and said, 'That was no accident: it was a sign of the victory that my lord the emperor is going to win.'

Soon after that the emperor replied to Isaac, 'If you trust in cannon balls, I trust in my Lord God; and if you come at me with the Turk, I will come at you with my Lord Jesus Christ.' Sending this message ahead, he set off at once with his army, making haste on the journey so as to catch Isaac unawares. That is what happened, because Isaac did not know of his coming until he was already close and, since his men were scattered around, he was very troubled and

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

those who were with him were very afraid. He had it proclaimed that all his Christian and Moorish friends should follow him with their women and children, and he went off to Belaça. When the emperor learnt of this, he sent a large number of horsemen after him, but they were unable to catch him because he fled towards the coast and their horses were tired, so they rode back. He sent a message to the Turk asking for help, offering him many rewards and giving him great advantages. The pasha therefore came with his Turks and joined him. On learning of this, the emperor hurried out to encounter them so that they could not lay waste to the land, and they met at Maquelbarâ, where they had a fierce skirmish in which the Turks gained the upper hand. But four days later, on 24th November, they fought again, and although the Turk had many arquebuses and bombards that he fired many times, the emperor's men showed great valour and courage and broke through to where the Turk's standard was and, although they did not completely rout him, he was as good as defeated. While <[f. 322/311]> the emperor moved onto a broad plain that was more suitable for the horses, the pasha and Isaac climbed up a rugged mountain and encamped in a strong position. Wanting friendship, Isaac sent word from there for the emperor to send him his daughter, whom he trusted, to reveal to him what he wanted. The emperor was very pleased and wanted his {[f. 371]} friendship so much that he did not hesitate to send the princess to tell him that he would allow him to keep his command and honour as before, on condition that he left the Turk, so that they could fight him together. When the princess came to where Isaac was, she gave him the message, but he replied arrogantly, saying, 'Am I to anger the one who came to help me? If the emperor wants my friendship, he must not fight the pasha but give him gold and let him go in peace to his fortress.' She answered back angrily, 'Have you not heard what God has done for the emperor with Facilô, Mahamêd, the Gâlas and the other enemies who have risen against him? Although you put your trust in the Turks' strength, Christ's is much greater.' Isaac said that in no way would he break the word and oath that he had given to the Turk.

The princess returned without having been able to agree anything with Isaac, so she told the emperor what had happened with him and how far he was from separating {from the Turk}. He grew so angry at this that he said that anyone else who talked to him about making friends with Isaac would be beheaded. Soon afterwards, all Isaac's kinsmen and his principal servants left him and went over to the emperor, together with many men with guns and Gâlas, but not even this made Isaac humble himself or soften his position; instead, his heart grew even harder. And he sent many Turkish horsemen and other men with arquebuses down the mountain and, once the emperor's men came forth, they fought for much of the day, and in the end the Turks turned and the emperor's men chased them back to the pasha's camp, where they knocked down the bombards and withdrew in good order, and therefore many of Isaac's men went over to the emperor. On seeing this, Isaac and the {Turk} <emperor> decided to give battle at once before their men deserted them completely, which is something that the pasha feared so much that he openly said, <[f. 322v/311v]> 'There are three fools in this camp. I am the first, because I left my fortress, although the emperor sent word to me that he would give me plenty of gold if I did not come and help Isaac. The second fool is Isaac, because when the emperor offered him friendship and to leave everything as it had been before, even so he just wanted to fight his lord to the death. The third and greatest fool is this king whom Isaac has raised up, for even though he has not a single horse he still says he is king, which is the cause of all these revolts and hardships.'

On 21st December 1573, many of the emperor's men {[f. 371v]} went to neighbouring lands to seize provisions, which were running short, and when Isaac learnt of that he told the

*pasha that it was a good opportunity to give battle. He importuned him so much that he made him come down, against his will, to an open area with his bombards and harquebuses. On seeing this, the emperor's men attacked and killed many of them and took some horses and mules. Isaac then charged forward from among his men and attacked with some thirty Turkish horsemen, but they soon left him alone, and when one of the emperor's servants recognized him he ran after him and hurled his spear at him, wounding him in the back. Bleeding profusely, he rode back among his men and, dismounting from his horse, he lay on the ground and they made some shade for him with their cloths. They told him that Garâd, his principal counsellor, had died, and he replied, 'We dared well, but we have left a bad name, for we are dying {like} <with the> filthy dogs.' Meanwhile, many of the Turks were going over to the emperor, and the war ended, with some going off in one direction and others in another. However, when it was the ninth hour of the day, the emperor's men who had gone to fetch provisions all attacked together and, surrounding the Turks, they fought until they made them all fall like leaves from a tree, and they cut off Isaac's head – having found him still alive, as some say – and brought it to the emperor, followed by the pasha's. And they captured the king that Isaac had raised up, and the emperor commanded that he should be guarded and that the heads of Isaac and the pasha should be put together on a carpet, just as Isaac had previously sent word that they had sat together on a carpet. With the heads in front of him, he said to his counsellors, 'Look at God's works and the marvels that he does on earth.' And he ordered them to hold great celebrations, and all the plunder was to be left to the soldiers, except for the bombards and harquebuses and the Turks' other weapons, which he wanted for himself.*

<[f. 323/312]> *When the celebrations were over, the emperor left Adecorrô and marched on to Debaroâ. When the Turks who were in the fortress that they had built there heard that and learnt that the pasha and his men were dead, they sent a message to the emperor to send men whom he trusted and they would obey and hand over the fortress. So he sent Cebehâd La Ab and Corbân Heiotê ahead, and the Turks submitted to them, and when the emperor arrived they fired the artillery and welcomed him with festivities. Afterwards, they handed over the pasha's property and that of the other Turks, of which there was a large amount, {[f. 372]} and taking the richest and finest items for himself he shared the rest among his captains. And he gave thanks to God for delivering his enemies to him, and he had the fortress and the pasha's mosque demolished and appointed a captain over the Turks. A few days later, he left Debaroâ for Agçûm and sent word to the priests to prepare everything necessary, because he would be crowned there in front of the Ark of the God of Israel, like his fathers, David and Solomon. Therefore, many clerics and monks from Sirê and Tigrê gathered and went forth from Agçûm on 20th January with a large retinue, the principal ones in their vestments beneath twelve {silk} canopies of various colours, bearing crosses and thuribles, until they reached a large rock that stands near the town to the east, where they await the kings who are to be crowned. When he arrived, they received him with great splendour and performed all the ceremonies that are customary at coronations and major feasts; and they were all especially joyful because, although all the kings had been anointed on this chair of Agçûm from Ebenabaquêm, Solomon's son, until Zara Iacob, after the latter none had been anointed until Çarça Denguîl, for we do not count two kings that Isaac put on this chair, because he did so when rising up against the emperor, and these kings fell by divine virtue.*

*The emperor did not want to delay in Agçûm or stay any longer in Tigrê so as not to burden the land with so many men, and so he went to Gubâi, where he had the chair of his empire,*



and there he dismissed the captains and great men so that they could return to their lands, after doing them many honours and giving them many items and fine horses; but the following year he commanded them to gather again and went to Cemén against the Jews, because they would not pay the tribute that <[f. 323v/312v]> they had promised. On arriving there he surrounded a mountain fastness on which Caléf was with many men, and he commanded that they should give combat on three sides, but the ones on top defended themselves for a long time by throwing down large boulders. When the emperor saw that, he commanded that they should fire at them with a bombard and, when the ball hit the one holding the flag and a woman, they were frightened and lost heart, so that Caléf fled up to a very high rock with some of {[f. 372v]} his servants. The emperor's men therefore climbed up to where the rest were and killed many of them and captured others. One soldier grabbed a woman and tied one of her hands to his so that she could not escape {and took her with him like that}; but when they reached the edge of a {very high} cliff she threw herself off, saying, 'Adonai, save me,' and, pulling the soldier after her, they were both smashed to pieces. Like her, many others threw themselves off, preferring to die in that way rather than live with Christians.

When night fell, Caléf came down with his men from the rock where he had been and fled, since the emperor's men were not keeping good watch, and by journeying all night he escaped. The emperor then decamped and went to the River Mexhá, and found that on the other side of it was Radâi the Jew, Caléf's brother, with many highly experienced warriors; he therefore sent chosen men with harquebuses, spears and shields, who fought the Jews and killed many of them. Radâi then fled with the rest of his men and climbed a mountain. While the emperor was going there, Empress Çabelâ Oenguêl died on the journey, on 30th November 1574. The next day the emperor arrived at the foot of the mountain where Radâi was. When the men of his camp saw such high cliffs and remembered that Isaac's strong warriors had died near there, they lost heart. The emperor encamped on a high spot and commanded them to attack the mountain on three sides, the captains being the monk Abba Noâi, Ianaél and Dahargôt, and that day they killed many of the Jew's cattle, mules and asses and some of his men. The next day Dahargôt's men attacked, but the Jews came down and routed them and chased them almost back to the camp. On seeing this the emperor was furious and went down himself and took up a position at the foot of the <[f. 324/313]> mountain, at which Radâi was very afraid. When night fell, he took his women, children and some servants that he most trusted and retreated to a cave at the top of the rock, where nobody had climbed before, and he commanded that the rest of the people should find safety where they could; but he did not feel safe even there, and {so} he sent a message to Abba Noâi, saying that he would give himself up if he swore on the Gospel that he would obtain forgiveness for him. Noâi replied that he should swear by the Law to keep his word. Once the oaths had been sworn, he sent word {[f. 373]} to the emperor about what was happening. He gave thanks to God, who raises up the humble and casts down the proud. The next morning, Radâi came down from the rock and went to where Abba Noâi was with his men, and he took him to the emperor. And near his tent, Radâi put ash on his head. And they made him stand waiting in front for a time in shame and contempt, and afterwards, when he came in, the emperor told him, 'Radâi, be not afraid or angry, for everything will be done as you asked. But do not sin again, so that you do not find something worse.' And he had his women and children brought straight away.

When this was over, Abba Noâi climbed up that mountain and set up a tent where he said Mass, in order to dedicate that place to Our Lady, and then the emperor went up and heard Mass there. And afterwards he gave everyone a splendid banquet and, when he descended, he

moved his army out. And he made his way out of those mountains with great difficulty, since the paths were very rough and so narrow that they could only go in single file, and they could not pass without great danger, because the whole of that land of Cemèn is very rugged and the mountains are so high that they seem to reach the clouds and are therefore extremely cold. Once he had emerged, however, he went on without difficulty to his city of Gubâi, taking Radâi with him, and there they held great festivities. This was in the eighteenth year of his emperorship.

Afterwards, while he was in Gubâi, news came to him that the Jews had attacked Oagrâ, where they had burnt many houses, killed many people and taken a lot of plunder. He therefore commanded his men to gather with great haste and set off for Ambâ Xacanâ, where Guxîn, the head of those Jews and Radâi's kinsman, was based, and he surrounded his mountain and took the water that was around it. And one of the Jewish great men sent what seemed to be a peace message <[f. 324v/313v]> to Acubâ Michaël, the captain of the Xagnês, which deceived him, and then he fell on him at night and killed him and many of his men. The emperor was very aggrieved at this and commanded Macabîs to take Acubâ Michaël's place and to fight hard. However, the war was long and the emperor's men began to suffer from great hunger and thirst and said to each other, 'It is better for us to die fighting Our Lord's enemies than to perish here of hunger and thirst.' So they attacked the mountain with great determination and strength and reached the place where the Jews were, and where they had water, and they forced them up to the top of the mountain, where the women, children and animals were, {[f. 373v]} so that they were very cramped there and had no water. So they sent a message to the emperor asking him to forgive them and for Ionael to come and get them. The emperor was pleased at this and sent him at once, saying that he should bring them down without doing them any harm or touching their possessions. When he reached the foot of the mountain, he sent word to them about what the emperor had ordered him to do, and so they came down with their women and children and cattle. And Ionael gave them a place to camp a short distance away from his tents, and they gave him some presents, but he did not take them, saying that he did not want their property, but them, and that the emperor would give them plenty of riches and he too would give what he could. However, as it was late at night, they began to flee, and when Ionael heard the noise he came quickly and reached some of them with their women before they could get out, and he seized them; he then chased the others and killed some twenty of them, but the rest, numbering about eighty, escaped. The next day he had fifty more that he had caught executed, and he said to the last one who was left, 'If you want to live, beg me to forgive you for the sake of Our Lady, the Virgin Mary, and I will do so. If not, you will die by this sword.' He answered, 'Is it not forbidden for our mouths to utter Mary's name? It will be good for me if I die, because I shall go from the land of falsehood to the land of truth, and from the world of darkness to the world of light. Therefore hurry up and kill me, so that I may leave this world of hardship and toil.' Ionaël said, 'Since you have chosen death, prepare for it and bow your head.' He did so at once, baring his neck, and Ionael struck with such force that the sword hit both knees and struck the ground, penetrating so deep that it broke in half. Then Ionael went to the emperor and presented him with 200 slaves, the sons and daughters of Jews.

<[f. 325/314]> After this, they moved on to Orê Ambâ and pitched camp at its foot. When Guxîn saw that the other mountain had been taken and so many men were surrounding him again, he was very afraid, to which was added such hunger and lack of water that many of his men died; even so, he was determined not to give himself up for anything. Then

the emperor's men made a very long ladder, tying pieces of wood together for rungs, and two young men climbed up a very rugged part and tied it to a tree, and then thirty very brave soldiers and ninety Turks climbed up it. {[f. 374]} After killing a lookout who was in the way, at midnight they suddenly reached the place where Guxin was and set fire to the people's houses, making a huge uproar. The emperor, who was in a high place waiting for this signal, commanded his men to play their trumpets and drums and shout loudly. Guxin was very disturbed at this and, withdrawing with some of his men to one part of the rock, he said to them, 'It is better for me to die than to surrender to these Christians.' And he threw himself off the rock. The others did the same, and they were all smashed to pieces. Many women also threw themselves off the rock, choosing this death rather than to fall into the Christians' hands. But one captain, who was called Gedeon, came down the usual path with some of his Jews and, on reaching the bottom, said to them, 'Heed my words, chosen people. Behold, we are surrounded by swords and spears, but let us <deliver and> offer ourselves to death, and let us not seek to live in captivity under our enemies. Have you not heard what our ancient fathers did, when Titus surrounded them? It is better to die with honour than to live in contempt; it is better to die in freedom than to live in servitude.' He encouraged them with these and similar words, so that they all went ahead, determined to die, and they passed by Dahargôt's camp without any harm coming to them. Some say that they did not see them, since it was at night; others say that they did not dare fight them, because they knew that they were very strong; and so they escaped.

The next day they brought the emperor Guxin's head, <[f. 325v/314v]> and giving thanks to God he said, 'We are blessed, because we see the enemy of Our Lord Jesus Christ fallen.' And he commanded that they should erect a tent on the top of that mountain that they had taken and say Mass in it, and they did so. Later, the emperor heard that there were many Jews on a less secure mountain nearby who were very afraid to hear that they had taken Guxin's mountain, so he sent Ionael with his men to make them come down either with a peace agreement or by force. When he got there, he pitched his camp at the foot of the mountain, which frightened them very much, so they sent a message saying that they would surrender if he swore not to do them any harm or take their possessions. He swore, and so they came down with all their cattle. He took them to the emperor, who forgave them and spoke to them with kind words. Then he broke camp at once and went through Xeoadâ and reached Gubâi in seven days, and there he dismissed his warriors. Later, however, he commanded them to gather again and he went to some heathen lands where no emperor had ever been and fell on them, taking many slaves and countless cattle. And he commanded that the rights he had over them {[f. 374v]} should be distributed among the soldiers who had not taken anything. And so they all returned home joyful and content. This was in the nineteenth year of his emperorship.

The following year, he heard that the father of Bedanchô, the governor of Nareâ, who was called Cepnihî, had wanted to become a Christian, and that the great men of the empire had not wanted him to do so since they were ruled by their love of wealth, because if he became a Christian they would no longer receive bribes and the tribute they paid to the emperor would diminish. On hearing this, the emperor said, 'How could they love wealth more than Christianity? How could they choose that which passes so quickly over that which will endure forever?' And he decided to go there. Gathering his men, he set off from Gubâi, having sent a preacher on ahead to the governor of Nareâ to explain to him the matters of the holy faith and to tell him that he would reduce his tribute if he stopped worshipping idols and became a Christian. He was delighted to hear this, because he had wanted to receive the holy faith of

Christ for a long time. And so, when the emperor arrived there, he at once gathered all his kinsfolk and the other people of that kingdom <[f. 326/315]> and the emperor commanded that they should prepare everything needed to perform the baptism with solemnity. He was Bedanchô's godfather and gave him the name Za Mariâm, and said to all those present, 'This is my beloved son.' And to him he said, 'You are my son. Today I have begotten you in baptism.' And he gave him rich velvet robes with many little gold bells at the edges, and he put a gold chain around his neck, with a very fine gold cross. He also baptized his wife, and her godmother was Ite Oalatô, and she gave her rich robes. Then the emperor commanded that the great men of the empire should be godfathers to the rest and give them magnificent robes, but the multitude of people was so great that the priests were not able to baptize them all, and so some were left until the next day, when the baptism lasted until the ninth hour.

After they had all been baptized, the emperor gave a splendid banquet to {all} the great men of that kingdom and held great festivities. On the third day, he had them explain to the governor of Nareâ how to keep the feasts and Christian law. And he gave him a master to guide him on the true path of the faith and recommended that he listen to his doctrine and not depart from it. He appointed other masters, priests and deacons to stay and administer the sacraments and to baptize the rest of those whom it had not been possible to baptize on those days. And he waived much of what they owed in taxes and commanded the governor to build churches, which he did very fervently, and ordered them to be built in all the lands. And so, in those places where sacrifices had been offered to the Devil, they offered to God the true sacrifice of the flesh and blood of Christ Our Lord.

{[f. 375]} When all this was finished, the emperor left Nareâ on 8th March and went to fight the Gâlas who had entered Ôye. He was accompanied by Bedanchô for a few days and then he dismissed him so that he could return home. As the emperor moved on to Cêf Bâÿ, the Gâlas heard he was coming and fled, and so he decided to go to Beteramorâ to fight other Gâlas who were there, but these too fled on receiving news that he was coming. Then he turned towards Gubâi and, <[f. 326v/315v]> when he reached Guraguê, the captain of Boxâ became a Christian and the emperor was his godfather and gave him the name of Guiorguis, and he gave him rich robes and Abib as his master to teach him and baptize all the people of his land. And the emperor moved on and reached Gubâi on 9th July.

Once winter was over, he went to Begmedêr, where he spent the whole summer without encountering any enemies; but as he returned to Gubâi he received news that the Turks of Adeconô (scilicet Arquico)<sup>1</sup> had come as far as Debaroâ and entered the fortress that the previous Turks had built and, coming unexpectedly upon Azmâch Dahargôt, who was then viceroy of Tigrê, they killed many of his men and he escaped with <considerable> difficulty. He therefore commanded his warriors to gather and, once winter was over, he went in great haste as far as Cirêi, where he learnt that the Turks were in Debaroâ. And so he sent the nebrêd<sup>2</sup> of Agçûm ahead with many men from Tigrê, and Oald Christôs with many Gâlas – men longing to shed blood – and many others with harquebuses. Meanwhile, the pasha sent a captain with some Turks to make a raid, but when they had taken some booty the local people charged down on them and made them abandon nearly all of it. And then Acubâ Michael suddenly attacked them in Marâb with eighty shields and killed seventy men and took their weapons. When the pasha saw this and heard that those captains {of the emperor} were

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

<sup>2</sup> *Nebura ed*, the superior of the church of Saint Mary of Sion in Aksum.

approaching with many men, and the emperor was coming behind them with many more, he left Debaroâ at night and went with the utmost haste to his fortress in Adeconô. Thus, when the emperor's captains reached Debaroâ, they waited there for him and, as soon as he arrived they marched on, and on the fourth day he encamped his army close to Adeconô and had the fortress surrounded. The Turks closed the gates and others were down beside the sea with many arquebuses, and when they fired a bombard they killed an important monk. The engagement began, and the emperor's men fought hard and killed and wounded some seventy Turkish arquebusiers, and so the rest were highly troubled and wanted to get into the galley to cross <[f. 327/316]> to the island of Maçuâ. The next day, as it was a Sunday, they did not fight and all the men in the camp then began to complain that they had nothing to eat and they could not stay there. The complaints grew to such an extent {{f. 375v}} that they forced the emperor to turn back to Debaroâ on the Tuesday. When he arrived there, the pasha of the Turks sent him a letter, in which he said, 'Lord, the people of your land made me err and take that which was not mine to take. Forgive me and henceforth I shall be like one of your servants.'

The emperor was very pleased at this message and replied with kind words, but in the manner that the victor customarily addresses the vanquished. Then the pasha sent a richly adorned white horse {and many other items}, saying, 'My lord, receive this small present that I am sending for the honour of your empire, and do not stop the merchants from coming, for I shall receive them very well, and I shall not depart from your command in any way.' He also sent presents to the great men, and the emperor replied with kind words. The emperor then left Debaroâ and marched on towards Dambiâ. Before crossing the River Tacacê, he made camp and had wine served to the great men, and when the jug was empty the one who was pouring the wine got up to take it away but found it full again, at which everyone marvelled greatly; so he poured it out again and, when it was finished, he got up and again found it full. That happened three times, and they therefore gave glory to the virtue of God, to whom everything is possible. Then they crossed the Tacacê and reached Gubâi in peace, where he overwintered. And he spent the summer in Oagrâ. The following year he went with his army to Gambo and fought the people of that land for a few days, killing many of them. And he surrounded some others on a mountain and pressed them so hard that they begged for peace, which he granted. And then they came down and entered his camp. But later, because a man from the camp cut down a nest,<sup>1</sup> which is those people's food, they killed him, at which the emperor was so enraged that he said, 'Even if we forgive them, God has not forgiven them the blood of the Christians that they have evilly killed.' And he commanded that they should kill them all, sparing nobody, and they did so, covering the plain <[f. 327v/316v]> with dead bodies. Then he came to overwinter in his camp on 20th June. All this was in the twenty-ninth year of his emperorship.<sup>2</sup>

Up to here are words from the book of Ethiopia and it does not say anything else about this emperor, but some Portuguese who always accompanied him told me that for the rest

<sup>1</sup> *Ensat*, enset or false banana (*Ensete ventricosum*).

<sup>2</sup> Abridged excerpts from the *Târiqa negus Šarša Dengel*, omitting encomiastic expressions, biblical references and part of the passages in direct speech. See the full translation published by Conti Rossini, *Historia Regis Sarsa Dengel (Malak Sagad)*. Pedro Páez's translation was copied by Manuel de Almeida in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a Alta', bk IV, ch. 26, entitled 'History of Emperor Malac Sagued literally translated from the Ethiopian chronicle' Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 5, pp. 497–501.

of his life – four years – he spent every summer at war, without taking any rest at home except in the winters, and when he died, which was from sickness, he was coming back from fighting the Gâlas in some lands a very long way from his court called Absilí, and he perished in Xat.

On his death, they swore in as emperor a bastard son of his (for he had no legitimate ones), a seven-year-old boy called Iacob. But before we begin {[f. 376]} to deal with him, it will be a good idea to report the events of a mission that was undertaken from Goa to this empire in the time of his father. Although it did not have the outcome that was intended, it is enough that it was initiated with that in mind for it not to be outside our purpose to recount here what happened, because we intend not only to relate the histories of the emperors, but also to write about the missions that the fathers of the Society undertook to Ethiopia during the reign of each one of them.

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## CHAPTER XV

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Which deals with the mission that Father António Monserrate and Father Pedro Páez of the Society of Jesus undertook from Goa to Ethiopia, and some things that happened to them at the beginning of their journey

After Father Bishop André de Oviedo entered Ethiopia with five members of the Society, which, as we have said, was in March 1557, the Turks kept such close watch on the ports to prevent any Christian from getting through that the people in India lost almost all hope of being able to help the fathers with new companions or to attend to the spiritual well-being of the Portuguese and Catholics that were in Ethiopia. But when the most Christian King Philip, the second of this name, heard that only two very old fathers were left in Ethiopia, he realized that the salvation of the Catholics was in danger <[f. 328/317]> if they died and the people were left without a pastor. Therefore, because of his great zeal for the good of souls, he sent letters to the viceroy of India, who at the time was Dom Duarte de Meneses, strongly urging him to do everything he could to seek a possible way for some fathers of the Society to enter Ethiopia, sparing no expense to achieve this. These letters arrived in Goa in September 1587 when, because of the death of Viceroy Dom Duarte, India was being governed by Manoel de Sousa Coutinho. He at once sought with great care to implement what the king was commanding, because not only was it something of such great service to Our Lord, but the king was urging it so strongly that, as he told me later, he would value it more than all the other services that he had done him in India. The viceroy himself therefore went to Saint Paul's College and asked Father Pedro Martins, who at the time was the provincial of India and later became bishop of Japan, to give him some fathers for Ethiopia, because he had understood that from the fortress of Diu they could get through under cover on the ships that go to Maçua. The father was very pleased to offer him as many as he liked, because that was what the superiors in India had long desired and sought, but the governor thought that no more than two should go because of the need for extreme secrecy.

{[f. 376v]} With that agreed, one of those who very fervently offered to go on this mission was Father António Monserrate, a truly apostolic man and so zealous for the good of souls that he desired it very much, although he was already fifty years old or thereabouts and was very well aware that the least of the dangers on that journey was being captured by the Turks. All the fathers therefore thought he should be entrusted with it, both because he wanted so much to go and because he was a man of rare virtue and prudence, and he would be helped on the journey by the Persian language, which he knew since he had

spent two years at the court of the Mughal emperor, who was called Gelaldin Acabâr.<sup>1</sup> That venerable father had so many qualities for this mission with which he was being entrusted that, if it were my intent to speak of them and of the other things that might be recounted about him, it would make a large treatise; however, since the opportunity is offered, I shall briefly give some information about him in passing for those who did not know him.

<[f. 328v/317v]> Father António de Monserrate was born in the town of Bic in Catalonia, the son of honourable parents, and while studying in Barcelona was so attracted by the {ways} <life> of the Society's fathers who were in that city that he wished to follow its rule and join it. While having these thoughts, he heard his father recount such marvels of our holy father Ignatius, who had been a fellow student of his, that he finally resolved to do what he intended. Among many other things, he told me that his own father had said that when a man had died and his kinsfolk and friends were mourning, he went into the house with several others and shortly afterwards our holy father came in and said, 'He is not dead; he is not dead.' The people present took little notice of this, since they could clearly see that he was dead; but when our father knelt in prayer next to the body, it was not long before the dead man rose up, at which everyone marvelled and thought very highly of his holiness. Through hearing these things from his own father and through seeing the extraordinary virtue of the Society fathers, he became so fervent that he pleaded insistently with the Society until they admitted him. Because of the virtue that was seen in him straight away, they soon sent him to Portugal with another member of the Society who was going there. He arrived at Saint Anthony's College in Lisbon, where for some years he read the humanities with great success, and afterwards, having been made a priest, he spent many years in D. Sebastiam's palace with Father Luis Gonçalves, who was master to the king, while he was master to the young nobles. Since the king and Cardinal Dom Enrique had a high opinion of his virtue and prudence, they always kept him busy on matters of great importance and service to Our Lord. And he had so much charity towards {[f. 377]} others that, as rector of Saint Anthony's College in Lisbon at the time of the worst plague that there had ever been in Portugal, he sent the fathers and brothers out of the city to a country estate where there was no plague and he stayed in the College to attend to the sick, together with some fathers who also offered to do so of their own will and to serve God. And so he was always in a great fervour for as long as the plague lasted, which was a long time, confessing those affected by it, providing for people's needs with enormous charity, and burying the ones who died.

<[f. 329/318]> When the plague was over, many boys and girls had been left orphaned, so he gathered all the boys into one house, putting people he trusted into it to take care of them, and the girls into another, with honourable women to look after and teach them, and he provided for all their needs through the alms that he begged. Some time later, some maidens in the girls' house who were daughters of great men were determined to leave the world and to religiously serve God, who had delivered them from that great plague in which so many had died, and so he built a convent with the name of Saint Martha and endowed it plentifully with the alms he had sought for that purpose, and not only did those maidens become nuns there but many others entered that convent as well, moved by their example, and it is now very well known in Lisbon. He also saved many

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (Gelaldin Acabar/Jalâl ud-Din Muhammad Akbar/Akbar the Great).



women of the streets from sin and put them in honourable houses, where they persevered, showing great repentance for their past lives. While busy with these and other similar occupations that greatly served Our Lord, he very much desired to devote the rest of his life to the most destitute. And so he begged Father Alexandre {Balochano} <Balinhano>,<sup>1</sup> who was coming as the visitor for India, to bring him with him, which he did very willingly as he had the power to do so, although the superiors in Portugal were rather saddened because he served Our Lord so much in that province.

On arriving in India, he insistently asked to be occupied in the conversion of heathens, something that he greatly desired. And so he did that for a few years, until the provincial father, Rui Viçente, called him to accompany him and to help in visiting the province. While he was doing this, the Mughal king Gelaldin Acabâr sent a request for some fathers; he offered to go, and the others thought that that enterprise could not be entrusted to anyone better than him. Thus the provincial father was going to send him as the superior, but he refused that, so he gave this position to Father Rodolfo Aquaviva and he went as his companion, together with another father called Francisco Enriques. After he had <[f. 329v/318v]> been there for two years harvesting plenty of fruit, especially among the heathens {[f. 377v]} of that land, the king decided to send two ambassadors, one to the viceroy of India and the other to go on to Portugal, and he told Father António Monserrate to go with them, the better to dispatch their affairs. He therefore departed from the court, which at the time was in the city of Lahore, and brought the ambassadors to Goa; since, however, there was only one ship for Portugal that year and it was already heavily laden, the viceroy Dom Francisco Mascarenhas, was of the opinion that the ambassador should not embark, and so the embassy stayed in Goa and the father stayed as well, occupying himself in the Society's ministries until, as we said above, he was appointed as superior of Ethiopia. When the fathers discussed giving him a companion, that good fortune fell to me, who had arrived from Portugal that September. And so we made ready for the journey at once, and the governor generously gave us what we needed.

When the time came to leave for Diu, the governor told us that in matters of our route we should follow the directions of {Luís de} Mendonça, a married man in that fortress, because he had been dealing with Ethiopian matters for years and he had offered the governor to have us taken there in secret, since the officers of the ships that went to Maçua were great friends of his and some of them were bound to him by obligation. We took our leave of the fathers and brothers of Saint Paul's College in Goa and embarked on the afternoon of 2nd February 1588,<sup>2</sup> so as not to miss the company of the northern fleet, which was to set sail that night. And with a good wind we reached the city of Chaul in three and a half days, and we at once went on overland from there to Baçaim, where I said a new Mass. Afterwards, since we could not find a ship, we boarded a *manchica*, a tiny craft that was going to Diu with a cargo of rice. However, we were hit by a storm in the gulf, which lasted all night, and we were in such danger that the captain of the boat covered his head with his cape and lay between the benches, saying that he did not want to stay staring death in the face. The seas were so high before dawn that, since we could not make any headway, let alone turn back, they decided as a last resort to drop anchor (or *fateixa*, as they say) in the hope of finding bottom, and it was Our Lord's will that we were in sixteen

<sup>1</sup> Father Valignano was visitor (1574–96) and provincial (1583–7) of the province of Goa.

<sup>2</sup> A mistake for 1589. See Introduction, p. ???.

fathoms. But we were not in any less danger, because the seas were devouring us and it seemed that each one would engulf us and send us to the bottom. We remained in this anguish until the sun rose and the wind dropped, and then we hoisted sail and <[f. 330/319]> in the afternoon came to disembark some distance beyond Diu in a bay that they call Rabaos, since we did not dare enter the city without wearing turbans and caftans, like Armenians, so that later we should not be recognized by {[f. 378]} the merchants or sailors on the ships bound for the Strait of Mecca on which we would have to embark. We sent a message to Luís de Mendonça straight away, and he came out and at night took us, now dressed as Armenians, into the city and he put us in a house in great secrecy, where we stayed for a month waiting for the ships to depart, and he gave us everything we needed in abundance.

While we were there, Father António de Monserrate never left the house during the day, since he was well known in India. I was the one who went about negotiating the matter of a vessel, so that the merchants and sailors on the ship would not be surprised at seeing me later. And something very unusual happened to me in that city, for I was stoned three times in the streets by schoolboys who called me a Moor, although there are plenty of Moors and Armenians there to whom they never do that. That reminded me of what a very virtuous priest, the prior of Belmonte cathedral, had told me when I was leaving Castile for India, that I should know that I was going to be stoned and insulted for the sake of Christ Our Lord, and I should always remember the insults and injuries that He suffered with such patience for us, so that I too could suffer with good spirits the ones that people would do to me for His sake. On another occasion, when I was entering the fortress at noon, one of the soldiers guarding the gate said to me, 'Hey, Moor! Who gave you permission to enter the fortress? Get out.' And as I turned to explain what my business was there in such a way that they would not recognize me, another one said, 'He is Armenian. Go away.'

All this time Luís de Mendonça was trying hard to persuade the captains of the ships bound for Maçua, who were heathens, to take us, offering them as much as they liked to do so. But he found it impossible to get them to agree because they were so afraid of the Turks. And they said quite clearly that we were going to die and we would get them killed as well. And in truth, if we had embarked, we would have been unable to escape from the hands of the Turks since we were white men, as we learnt later from experience. And so, after we had everything ready for our departure, Luís de Mendonça informed us that it could not happen, and so we were very disappointed and sad, and asked Our Lord to be so good as to open a door through which we could make a start on this matter of such service to Him.

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<[f. 330v/319v]> CHAPTER XVI

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On how, once the ships bound for the Strait of Mecca had sailed, we took another route to continue our journey, and how after many misfortunes they captured us

On seeing that all the ships on which we thought we could get {[f. 378v]} to Ethiopia had sailed and that it was no longer possible to further our mission by that route, we tried to find out whether there was any other way to continue the journey. We put great efforts into this and found a rich Armenian merchant who offered to take us by another route that he said was safer, albeit difficult and long, because we had to go to Basra and Aleppo, his own city, and from there to Babylon, making a detour round Great Cairo. We were not very worried about the hardships and dangers of such a long journey through lands of people who were so barbarous and such enemies of our holy faith; instead, the great desire that we had of finishing what we had started made us care little for the difficulties that they meant for us. With the counsel of some honourable Portuguese friends of ours, we made up our minds to go and embarked on a ship for Hormuz, a Portuguese fortress <[in the Strait of Basra]>, together with that merchant. Leaving Diu on 5th April 1588,<sup>1</sup> we spent forty-nine days on the voyage since we had a headwind on many of them; before we arrived, however, the ship put in at the fortress of Muscat, since it was very short of water and provisions. We found that the captain there was a Portuguese called Belchior Calaça, a man with experience of Indian affairs and a devout supporter of the Society, and we asked him in secret what he thought of the route we were taking. He answered that it was very difficult and dangerous, and that he had a Moorish pilot who used to go from there to the Strait of Mecca every year and, if he dared take us, it would be an easier undertaking. He said that as soon as the pilot came back from another land, where he was, he would discuss it with him and would write to us in Hormuz. After leaving there we arrived within a few days and, before disembarking, we found out from some Portuguese who knew the land where we could stay with a greater degree of secrecy, because we had to stay there for three months waiting for the wind for Basra. They said there was nowhere better for us to stay than in a monastery of Saint Augustine that there is there, and so, for that reason and because we would find it convenient to say Mass there, we wrote secretly to the father prior, telling him of our arrival and intention. As soon as night fell, <[f. 331/320]> he sent us a small boat and they led us through a false gate to the monastery that gave onto the sea, and they gave us a very charitable welcome; however, since the monastery was poor, the captain of the fortress gave what was necessary for our expenses on the king's account.

<sup>1</sup> A mistake for 1589 (see previous note).

At this time a Jewish merchant from Thessalonica was in Hormuz and, since he was a rabbi, he often came to talk to the friars. One day while he was strolling on a veranda the father prior told me that that Jew always spoke Spanish and that I should make myself easily found, as I was, in turban and caftan, and try to {{f. 379}} persuade him to become a Christian. Although I realized how little profit there would be in trying, nonetheless I went out to do the father's bidding; when I spoke to the Jew in Spanish, he was very surprised and began to ask me questions, thinking that I had gone there to become a Christian. I answered them and said, 'I am a Christian already, and I give many thanks to God for granting me the mercy of making me understand how true the Law of the Christians is and how everything that is in the Scriptures and everything that the prophets said is nothing but a most perfect {picture} <prophecy> and living portrait of Him whom the Christians hold to be the Messiah. And indeed, anyone who reads them carefully and dispassionately will find the same.' 'Well,' said the Jew, 'I have read them many times and have not found that.' 'That will be,' I replied, 'because you are blind with passion and do not read them with the desire to understand the truth, for otherwise you would certainly have understood them by now and would not be wasting so much time waiting for another Messiah.' He said, 'I am not tired of waiting. And are you bothered because he has not come?' 'I am far from being bothered,' I replied, 'because I know that he came more than 1,500 years ago and all the Scriptures have been fulfilled. If not, tell me, where is the temple of Solomon now, which He was to enter and fill with glory (Aggeus 2)<sup>1</sup>? What has become of the priestly order of the sons of Aaron who, wearing the robes of salvation and righteousness, were to receive and celebrate Him, as David said? What has become of the sacrifices and ceremonies and the kings of Israel, which were to last until the Messiah came (Genesis 49)<sup>2</sup>? Nor can you deny that the weeks of Daniel 9<sup>3</sup> are now over. Therefore, if we are to believe the Scriptures (which cannot be wrong), we are forced <[f. 331v/320v]> to admit that He has come already.' He replied that that was true and that the Scriptures had been fulfilled more than 1,500 years ago, and no Jew who understood them would say the contrary. 'So if you understand that,' said I, 'why do you not become a Christian? For no one has appeared in whom the Scriptures are fulfilled other than the One whom the Christians say has come and, moreover, he performed great miracles and marvels in confirmation of his teachings, to the extent that even the scribes and Pharisees said that that could only be done by divine virtue.' 'You are very mistaken,' said the Jew, 'because he is not the one that the Scriptures say, nor did he do those things, except by virtue<sup>4</sup> of some words that were written at the top of the temple of Solomon that nobody but he could read.' 'That is too much to believe,' said I, {{f. 379v}} 'that God should have revealed such a secret to Him alone so that he might deceive people by means of such great miracles as healing people who had been sick for many years, giving sight to the blind and raising the dead. Why did he who wrote those words not do other similar things? And besides, where is that Messiah that you say came more than 1,500 years ago? Why have we never known of him?' He replied that he was hiding in the world and would show himself when he so desired. I said to him that he would now be very old and that

<sup>1</sup> Aggeus [Haggai] 2:8–10.

<sup>2</sup> Genesis:49:10.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel 9:23–7.

<sup>4</sup> BPB, MS 778 is written in another hand from this point to near the end of f. 332v/321v.

he had come to the world in vain, for he had been hidden for so long without putting into effect that which the true Messiah would do. At that point, some monks who had been listening from a corner of the veranda came up, and so I did not want to continue the conversation. He talked to me again on many occasions afterwards, but did not want to discuss matters of disputation.

Meanwhile, the captain of Muscat did not neglect to enquire about what he had promised before. He sent for the pilot at once and, after questioning him, he wrote to us that he was willing to leave us in a month's time on the *Habexi* coast, at a port that they call Ceila, which is a little before one enters the gates of the Red Sea, and that he had another Moor who would guide us to the land of Christians. We discussed this with the fathers of Saint Augustine, with Dom João Pereira, <[f. 332/321]> the captain of the fortress at the time, and with others who knew about the Strait of Mecca, and they all thought that this was a better route than the one we were taking. And so we decided to take it, but because we had to embark in Muscat, which is a small village full of Moors where we would not be able to stay in hiding until the fair wind came, which was not for some time, we stayed in Hormuz with the friars until the time came to go. In order to feign better and show that we did not intend to make such a journey but rather were going to exercise the ministries of the Society, we had cassocks and mantles made, for everyone was of the opinion that it was better for us not to be disguised in caftans. And we began at once to occupy ourselves in confessing the sick in the Portuguese hospital and in the one for local people and in often talking to them and helping them in everything that we could. There was also plenty for us to do with the Portuguese who were living in that city and merchants who gathered there, of whom there are many, and they were in great need of guidance in their contracts and in other matters of their souls since they mixed with Jews, Persians and Arabs, who are very seductive.

{[f. 380]} Of the married Portuguese who showed us great kindness, one man appeared to be particularly devoted to the Society, and so Father António Monserrate frequented his house and usually stayed there for a long time talking to a young daughter of his, who for years had been paralysed and unable to leave her bed, whereas he hardly ever spoke to her very pretty little sister, whom her parents always kept beautifully dressed. The Portuguese noticed this and asked the father why he was so enjoyed the company of that sick daughter of his and {caressed her so much} <did so many things for her, and he very much wanted to know why>, since not even they could get close to her – and if it were Our Lord's will to take her away, it would remove a great burden from them – yet he did not speak except in passing to the other one, who was so pretty and whom they cherished as the apple of their eye. The father replied that he enjoyed being with that sick girl so much because <[f. 332v/321v]> she would soon go away to enjoy bliss and he wanted her to intercede for him in the presence of the Lord. And that is what happened, because soon afterwards she died showing strong signs of her salvation, since she had always suffered that long and difficult sickness with great patience, as the Portuguese later said, at which the father demonstrated particular consolation and regard.

At this time, Father António Monserrate fell seriously ill with fever and spent several days afflicted, since that land was very hot, but afterwards Our Lord saw fit that he should get better and, before he had finished convalescing, I then fell ill for more than two months. When the time arrived to depart for Muscat, we embarked, but with the poor shelter and the movement of the vessel, which was small, my sickness worsened so much

that, after we arrived, the father took counsel with the captain of the fortress and others and decided to go on to Ethiopia alone, so as not to miss the fair wind that was now blowing. Thus determined, he took as his companion a young Suriyani<sup>1</sup> who could speak good Turkish, Persian and Arabic and reasonable Portuguese, at which I was very disappointed, since I very much wanted to continue that journey. However, when everything was ready and they were about to embark, news came that seven small boats of pirates – they call them Noitaques, and I think they are heathens – had taken another small Moorish vessel from Muscat village itself and were expecting a ransom for the people {[f. 380v]} that they had captured.<sup>2</sup> Since that was the route that he would necessarily have to take, Father Monserrate gave up going that night, as was agreed. The captain of the fortress commanded that the ransom they were demanding be taken to them and, in the meantime, armed seven other vessels similar to the pirates' ones and, once the people had been ransomed, sent them to attack them. They seized the pirate captain's vessel and took him alive, though badly wounded, while the rest fled since their vessels were faster. All this took fifteen days, during which time Our Lord saw fit that my fever should leave me, and so, although still weak, I decided to embark.

<[f. 333/322]> Father Monserrate wanted two books that the father vicar of that village had – he was a very honourable priest from Portugal and had taken charge of that church to serve God – and as we were about to depart he asked him for them; he said he was sorry, but in that wilderness he had no other consolation than his books, and he could have those two later, and asked for his forgiveness. At that the father spoke in secret to a Portuguese friend of his and told him that the vicar had not wanted to give him those books, but that they would soon be sold at auction; he asked him to be so kind as to buy him those two and some others that he had noted down for him, which would be cheap, and if Our Lord took him to Ethiopia, he should send them by the same route as we were going. The Portuguese said he would do so willingly if they were put up for sale. And he did so, because the vicar died shortly after our departure and he bought the books at the sale of his possessions, and he had them in safe keeping to send on to the father when news arrived of our capture. And so, as he happened to be going to Goa, he took the books and gave them to Father Manoel de Veiga of our Society, who was the provincial at the time, and related to him everything that Father Monserrate had said to him.

<sup>1</sup> The Suriyani Christians of Malabar in SW India are also known as Saint Thomas or Syrian Christians. Páez uses the term '*Suriano*'.

<sup>2</sup> BPB, MS 778 returns to the original hand here.

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## CHAPTER XVII

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### On how, after many misfortunes at sea, the Moors captured us

Although they had captured the pirate captain, they said that the others that had fled had taken up position a little further on at a headland, and we could not pass without encountering them. We therefore decided to put well out to sea and {{f. 381}} to try to pass that spot at night, but then reliable information came that they had returned to their own land, which is opposite Hormuz, inside the strait. And so we embarked and set sail in the last octave before Christmas and had a fair wind until Circumcision Day,<sup>1</sup> when such a fierce storm hit us before dawn that it broke our rudder and we almost went down, but the sailors very quickly attended to it <[f. 333v/322v]> and fixed some oars in its place. Since the wind was very strong, however, the vessel did not respond, and so we sailed with serious difficulty until the sun rose, when some fishermen saw us sailing like that and came in an almadie<sup>2</sup> and tossed us a rope so as to tow us to land, which was within sight. But the almadie was small and our vessel heavy, so it often slewed round and took the wind on the front of the sail. Thus with great difficulty and danger we reached the shore, where, since it was desert, we could not find anything with which to mend the rudder. So we tied it with ropes and sailed on along the coast to see if we could find some remedy, but at night the wind started blowing offshore so hard that it took us far out to sea, since we could not put any pressure on the rudder, so that when morning came we had lost sight of land. As we tried to sail back to it, the ropes holding the rudder broke and it floated off a good way from the boat. Some sailors immediately jumped into the sea despite the very high waves, since they could see that that was our only hope, and Our Lord saw fit that they should bring it back. They then tied it on again with great difficulty, and we then had a very hard time until we reached land.

Seeing the great danger they were in, the sailors discussed among themselves what remedy there might be, but they found none and told us that the boat could neither sail any further nor return to Muscat, and they did not know what to do. We replied that the pilot and a few sailors should sail the boat along the coast to a place where there were Moors and they could mend the rudder, and we would stay there with the others until they returned. Alternatively, if they were going to take a long time, we would go overland to Muscat. They said that we could not even stay there for two days, let alone return {{f. 381v}} overland, because we were a long way away and all that land was full of robbers who would kill us straight away, and if we escaped from their hands we were bound to fall into the mouths <[f. 334/323]> of lions, since there were many of them in those deserts.

<sup>1</sup> 1 January.

<sup>2</sup> A long, narrow boat used in the Arabian Sea.

Therefore, after much discussion, they decided to sail to some islands that lie about ten leagues from the mainland, where the pilot had some Moorish friends who usually had boats, to see if they could find some timber with which we could solve our problem. After waiting for some calmer weather, we sailed to the first island and the pilot disembarked with some sailors, taking a good amount of dates and rice to give to those friends of his, but he did not find any timber; they just had an old tarada<sup>1</sup> which, after much pleading, they lent to him to sail to Ceila for forty *cruzados*, which he would pay on his return. They took six days to make that vessel ready and to mend the rigging and sail, and so we had time to see the island, which must be two leagues around and is quite high on one side. It has water and twelve to fifteen men were living there with their wives and children in huts roofed with seaweed that the sea throws up. They live on fish, of which there is plenty, but since there is a lack of firewood they eat it raw, dried in the sun. A lot of amber is washed up there, and they tried to sell us some very large pieces for very little, but we had nothing to buy them with. That island is called Suadie and another nearby is Hazquie, where a few people live as well. There are two other small ones nearby that are uninhabited; they are called {Huriamuria} <Hieria muria> by the local people and {Curiamuria} <Caeria muiria> by the Portuguese.

Once the vessel had been repaired, we continued our voyage within sight of land, but, since we were afraid of a city of Moors called Dofâr,<sup>2</sup> we made them put far out to sea well before reaching it. However, when we were about level with it we met such a stiff headwind that we had to turn about and sail back a good distance. The same thing happened twice more: we reached that point without ever being able to go beyond it, because Our Lord did not want us to enter Ethiopia yet, but rather to go and console twenty-six Portuguese and five Christians from India who had been held captive by the Turks for four years. As they told me later, they had been praying constantly, begging Our Lord, if He did not see fit to deliver them from such {[f. 382]} arduous captivity, to bring them a priest with whom <[f. 334v/323v]> they could confess. And so, the last time that we were forced back, which was on 14th February 1589, the vessel was spotted from a headland and they came out to us in two boats that were so swift that, even though we were far away and turned about very quickly to flee, they caught up with us in no time and took us {without any resistance}, because there were many of them and on our vessel there was no one who could fight. We were told later that they were waiting on purpose, because they had been warned by a Moor from the Portuguese lands, called Sheikh Çalêm, to whom the pilot of our vessel had revealed that we were going to sail. They took us towards land straight away and, as the afternoon wind got up, the soldiers, who were not very used to the sea, were so sick that they put down their weapons and spent the whole night without coming round, so that had there been four Portuguese with us they would have been enough to kill all of them and take the boats.

The following day they landed us a little way before that city of Dofâr and, as we walked along the beach, a Moor whom we had brought to guide us inland into Ethiopia, began trying to persuade Father {Antônio} Monserrate to say that he was a Moor and they would let us go. The father replied, 'You only dare to talk so shamelessly because you see me here. I am not a man to say that, even if I were to die a thousand times.' At that the Moor fell

<sup>1</sup> A kind of small man-of-war used in that region.

<sup>2</sup> Probably either Mirbat (the former capital) or Salalah (the present capital) of Dhofar province, Oman.



silent. We reached the house of the captain of the city, and many Moors gathered round and, in front of them, he asked us many questions about our journey, and finally he said, 'I know full well that you are spies and that you were going to Ethiopia to persuade the emperor to make war on the Turks.' And he commanded them to put us further inside, where they locked us in a room, and we spent the whole night unable to sleep because of all the fleas and bedbugs that were there. The next day they moved us to some very flimsy mud-walled houses that they had as a fortress, where we stayed for a few days suffering from great hunger, because hardly any of the little food they sent us actually reached us, because the men guarding us ate it. While we were there, the Moor whom we had brought from Muscat came to visit us, and he told us that the captain of the city <[f. 335/324]> had decided not to kill us but to send us {[f. 382v]} to where his {king} <father> was, so that he could give us the death that he thought best. And so that we would not say there that the captain had taken many of our belongings from us, he showed us what we had brought, in front of many people, and asked us if everything was there, and we answered that it was. He then commanded that it should be bound up and taken to the king as it was. Amongst our belongings was a small image of Our Lady and another of Magdalene, and when they found them some of them turned their faces away and began to revile them so as to appear more observant of their accursed sect, which condemns the worship and painting of images. However, a sharif (*scilicet*, kinsman of Mohammed) of theirs chided them, saying that they were not right to do that because, even if the person who had painted them had sinned, they might be paintings of saints; and so everyone kept quiet.

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## CHAPTER XVIII

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### On how they took us to the Moorish king and what happened to us on the journey and on our arrival

When the captain of Dofâr decided to send us to the king, they put us in a vessel together with our belongings and some guards and took us on a five-day voyage by sea. We disembarked on a shore and travelled some two leagues inland without any path, over rocks and thorns, as far as a small village, and since they had given me some very tight Moorish shoes I arrived there with my feet raw and blistered, so that when we set off the next day and were forced to walk behind the camels along a path covered with stones, I suffered great torments as I was barefoot, since I could not put on the shoes they had given me because my feet by now were badly swollen and raw. Father António Monserrate could not keep up with the camels either, because he was now an old man, so the next day they allowed us to climb up amidst the camels' loads. We entered a large sand desert, and when it was time to eat they lit a fire and roasted many locusts, which they gave us to eat, but we could not put them in our mouths. When they saw that, they made an *apa*<sup>1</sup> with a little wheat flour that they had brought from <[f. 335v/324v]> from the supplies they had taken from our vessel and cooked it in the embers, and that is what they fed us from then onwards, with nothing else at all; we were only sorry that there was so little, and so we were always hungry.

{[f. 383]} There was very little water in that desert, so they gave us measured amounts to drink from the supplies they carried on the camels and so, when one day we saw a valley in the distance where it seemed a large river was flowing, we were overjoyed in the hope of drinking as much as we wanted. As we got closer, however, we found that it was sand being blown by the wind and running like water; at that time it was rising only three or four spans above the ground. The ones who were taking us said that when the wind was strong it rose up much higher and sometimes it moved in one direction and made large hills and at other times in another direction, depending on the way the winds blew. The sun on those sands was so bright that the Suriyani boy and I went almost blind and our eyes watered all the time, because we only had some thin white cowls on our heads, as they had taken everything from us. They had left Father Monserrate a piece of thick cloth that he had on his head, and he protected himself from the sun with that.

We travelled through that desert for ten days without coming across any people or even a path, because the wind covers it with sand, and so by day they took their bearing from the sun and at night from the Pole Star. On the afternoon of the last day we came to a large

<sup>1</sup> A round, flat unleavened bread cooked on a flat, circular earthenware tray onto which the batter is poured.

city that they call Tarîm. As the news spread that they were bringing Portuguese captives, many people came out to see us before we entered the city. At first they stared in astonishment, without uttering a word; afterwards they asked those who were bringing us if we believed in Mohammed and, when they said that we did not, they began to call us *cafarûm*, which in Arabic means 'lawless man', as well as many other insults and offences, insistently spitting in our faces, and they began to lay hands on us; the men leading us could not defend us because there were so many people in the {streets} <street> that not even the camels could break through. In the end, things reached such a point that they had to very quickly push us into a house, <[f. 336/325]> because boys were already picking up stones to throw at us. They held us there for a day and, before dawn the following day, they very hurriedly took us away on foot until we were a good distance from the city, for fear that there might be a similar revolt on our leaving to the one we experienced on our arrival; and afterwards the camels came.

We went through several towns <and cities> on that and the next two days, but what had happened to us in Tarîm did not recur in any of them. There were many ruins of fortresses among the mountains, and the men leading us said that they had been built in former times by Christians. In the last town we found a brother of the king, who was called Xafêr, and he sent word {[f. 383v]} that they should take us to his house, which was large. And he was seated on the floor on carpets, as is the custom of the Moors, and as we approached he received us with kind words and had us sit down and served *câhua*, which is water boiled with the rind of a fruit that they call *bun*,<sup>1</sup> which they drink very hot, instead of wine. He asked us who we were and where we were going and, after talking for a while, he dismissed us and, as we left, he said to those who had brought us, 'These men are not going to become Moors.' We set off from there that afternoon and, after travelling all night, we arrived at dawn at a city that they call Heinân, where the king, who was called *Sultân* Humâr, *scilicet* King Humâr, was. They took us to the fortress where he lived, which was very large and tall even though it was made of mud brick, as the buildings usually are in that land, and they put us on the wall in a very small sentry room, where we stayed that day, more than a little troubled by the people who came to look at us.

Two days after we had arrived, the king sent word that we should be given some clothes to wear, because we were almost naked, but they did not give us all of them. In the afternoon, they took us to a terrace at the very top of the fortress, where we found the king sitting on a brocade cloth on an area raised some four spans above the floor. He was wearing a caftan of very fine green cloth and a turban edged with gold thread on his head. He must have been forty years old, dark in complexion and well built. In front of him, sitting on carpets on the floor, was a *sharif*, *scilicet* 'descendant of Mohammed', <[f. 336v/325v]> and for that reason they do them great honour. All the others – and there were many of them – were standing. We came and kissed the king's hand and, with a kind expression, he told us to sit, but he did not want our companion the Suriyani to interpret, because they think little of them, and so he summoned a renegade<sup>2</sup> woman of Peguan<sup>3</sup> origin who was with the queen. When she arrived, the king spoke in Arabic and she told us in Portuguese, 'The king says that you should not be angry, for God has brought you here, but I say that

<sup>1</sup> Coffee; *bun* is the Amharic term for the coffee bean. See Glossary (*câhua*/coffee).

<sup>2</sup> A Christian who has converted to Islam.

<sup>3</sup> From Pegu, a former kingdom in SE Burma.

your sins have brought you among such bad people.' He then asked us who we were and why we were going to Ethiopia. We answered that we were priests and we were going to Ethiopia to be with the ones who were left of the Portuguese who had entered the country in the past. After that he asked us a number of questions, with which he kept us the whole afternoon, and at the end of the conversation we asked him as a favour to have our prayer books returned to us. He replied, '*Inxa Ala, Inxa Ala*', God willing, God willing. And with that he dismissed us and they took {[f. 384]} us back to where we had been before. The next day he sent us the breviaries and other books, which were great consolation to us, and we gave thanks to God for such a great mercy as to be able to recite the divine office.

We stayed there for many days without being able to know what the king was deciding, until one day that woman who had been our interpreter came to visit us and told us that the king wished to ransom us but dared not do so until he saw what the Turks to whom he paid tribute would say, so she thought we would be there for some time. We asked her how she had been captured, and she said that she was going by ship from Chaul to Hormuz when they were caught in a storm which drove them towards Xaêr, that king's port. As they anchored off that city, some Moors came out to them in a small boat and told them that they were friends of the Portuguese and they could safely disembark and take whatever refreshment they desired. At that, almost everyone on the ship disembarked and, when they reached land, the people gave them a very good welcome; the next day, however, they seized them and went out to the ship in a few boats and took it without any resistance. They then took them inland to that same city, where <[f. 337/326]> the present king's father had also had his seat, and he tried hard to make them all become Moors, particularly the Portuguese, of whom there were eight, but they remained very constant in their faith at all times until they eventually died of sickness, leaving just one black man. This man was very friendly with a Moor who used to take merchandise to the Malindi coast every year, and one day he asked him to take a letter to the captain there; he said he would willingly take it and bring back his reply, but as soon as he was given it he gave it to the king straight away, and somebody was able to read it to him. In it he had written that if they came in a *fusta* to a certain place that he mentioned they could capture some people without any resistance, and with them ransom him and other Christians from India who were in captivity there. The king was extremely angry at that and summoned the man; he asked him whether that letter was his and he answered that it was. The king said, 'Then you must become a Moor, or they shall cut off your head.' He answered that he was not the kind of man who would become a Moor, and he should do as he wished. As the exchange continued, he spoke at all times with great constancy and Christian freedom, and so the king very indignantly commanded that his head be cut off in his presence and the head and body be thrown out of a window of the fortress. After that, she had been kept in irons for four years {[f. 384v]} to force her to become a Moor, and in the end she saw herself in such hardship and with no hope of rescue that she said she would become a Moor, but she was not one in her heart, and she had been there for forty years. We explained to her how glorious that Portuguese man's death had been and what she should do in order to save herself but, although she shed many tears, it was to no avail.

We remained in that prison for four months, suffering great deprivations, but even the local people suffer them because that province of Arabia, which is called Hadarmôt, is very poor since most of it is desert, and they harvest little of what they cultivate because of

the extreme lack of rain there. They have <[f. 337v/326v]> some wheat and barley, but their usual crop is millet; they also have some date palms. The men are dark complexioned and usually poorly dressed; they usually wear their hair very long and curl it with hot irons and then fill it with butter, so that it gets very dirty when the wind blows up the dust. When the women leave the house, they go covered with some white cloths and have their faces hidden behind a black veil, like nuns. They have some of the customs that used to be kept in Israel in ancient times. Thus, when one of the king's daughters died, many women from neighbouring villages came on foot with their heads covered with dust and, wailing loudly, they took the queen to some houses within sight of the fortress where they remained weeping for about a month. Every morning and afternoon they would come out onto the terrace of the houses, which was very large, and, standing in two lines, face to face, they would clap their hands and occasionally throw their arms round each other's necks, crying out loudly, with which they moved themselves to wail even more. They do not bury their dead inside the mosques, but in the fields around, as do all other Moors, and they place many stones on the graves and those who can build four pillars with stone and lime with a small dome on top.

Everybody in that land is very devoted to Mohammed and so they are always saying, '*Ala, Mahamed*', 'God, Mohammed.' The one in charge of the mosque calls them to prayer before dawn, at noon and in the afternoon by shouting in a loud voice from the top of a tower (which some call *alcorân* and others *menâra*), '*La ıla, ıla Ala, Mahamed Raçul Ala, Alaiçalâ Alaiçalâ*', which means, 'There is no God but God, Mohammed, messenger of God, pray to God', in which they deny the Holy Trinity, {[f. 385]} because they say that there is no Son. And that is why {the first chapter} <beginning> of their Qur'ân says 'God has not begotten, and has not been begotten.'<sup>1</sup> When they say those words with which they call them to prayer, they put their thumbs in their ears. Father António Monserrate asked one of them why he <[f. 338/327]> did so and he answered that those were words of such great power and efficacy that they would burst if they heard them. 'I am very surprised at that,' said the father, 'because I have often heard them and many Moors hear them every day, and they have never shaken me and I have never heard of any Moor bursting; indeed, there is no doubt that if that were true all the Moors would have burst already.' The Moor was very annoyed at this and went away without uttering a word in reply.

<sup>1</sup> Al-Qur'ân 1:2.3.

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## CHAPTER XIX

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### On how they took us to the Turks and on the interrogation that they gave us when we reached them

At the end of the four months that we remained in the power of the Moorish king, news of us reached a Turk, the pasha of a kingdom that they call *Iamân*, which begins at the entrance to the Strait of Mecca. Since that king was his tributary, he wrote telling him to send us there at once, because all Portuguese {captives} belonged to the Grand Turk. The king was very upset at this, but because he had little power against the Turks he decided to send us together with four very fine horses, so that nobody could go to him and argue that he had taken a lot of goods from us, or that he was guilty of having kept us there for a long time without reporting it. He called the Moor who was to take us and told him to be very careful to give us food and whatever else we needed on the journey, without waiting for us to speak, because we never asked for anything. He also commanded them to give us horses to ride and a good guard, since there were many robbers on that road. When everything was ready, we departed on the eve of Saint John the Baptist<sup>1</sup> and, after travelling for two days, we reached the last fortress in that kingdom, where they filled some skins with water and loaded them onto the camels. And we travelled across a desert at great speed for four days and four nights, without resting except at noon and in the early evening while the people and camels ate, which took very little time, because there was not a drop of water in the whole of that desert. And so they were very afraid that the weather might become overcast and prevent them from seeing the Pole Star, by which they took their bearings at night, because there was no road or any sign of one, and the water that they were carrying would not be sufficient if they did not travel at night as well. {[f. 385v]} <[f. 338v/327v]> We underwent <very> great hardships on those days, both because the camels have a very awkward gait when they urge them along fast and because we could not sleep, since we dared not do so on top of them in case we fell off, for they were very tall. And, even though they walked so fast and it was very hot, they did not drink a drop of water in all that time. On the morning of the fifth day we arrived at a spring, where we rested until the afternoon, when we set off again since the desert was not over yet. At dawn some thieves fell on a *sharif* who was at the back and robbed him, and his saying that he was Mohammed's kinsman was to no avail at all. Afterwards he was very angry about it and said that they had not been content just to rob him but had also hit and punched him a lot, without respecting the fact that he was a {descendant} <kinsman> of Mohammed.

<sup>1</sup> The eve is 23 June.

The following day we arrived at a small village that they called Melquís, where there were ruins of large buildings and many stones with ancient letters that not even the local people knew how to read or explain. There was a yard where people had previously been buried that was more than half a league long and, when I asked them what those buildings were, they told us that it had formerly been a very large city where Queen Saba had had many cattle. If that was true, it confirms what Friar Luis de Urreta considers beyond doubt in chapter 6 of his first book,<sup>1</sup> where, in order to reconcile the opinion of those who state that Queen Saba departed from Ethiopia, when she went to Jerusalem to see Solomon, with those who believe that it was from Arabia, he says that Queen Saba was also the lady of part of Arabia Felix inhabited by the Sabaeans and Homerites; and so, even though she departed from Ethiopia when she went to Jerusalem, she crossed the Red Sea and on the way visited the land of her vassals, and from there went on to Jerusalem, and therefore both groups are right. We have already discussed this topic in the first book, and so I only point this out here in passing.

Continuing our journey from Melquís, we travelled for twelve days through inhabited but very rough lands, but as we were crossing a broad river Father António de Monserrate fell off his camel and, since there was little water in that part, he landed so heavily on the ground that he was unconscious for a long time, and when we reached the city of Saná, where the Turkish pasha was, he was still badly hurt. <[f. 339/328]> The city governor, whom they call *subaxi*, came out to meet us on the road near the city with some horsemen and foot soldiers playing drums, and commanded the father and me to walk in front {[f. 386]} of his horse. And so they took us through the main streets of the city as far as the fortress, where the pasha had his house. When we entered it, a very serious Turk, who was the overseer of the treasury, whom they call the *taftardâr*, came down and asked us many questions – because we were being presented as spies – which we answered truthfully and said that we were priests. A Moor from India, the captain of a ship from Dabûl, was there and said to the Turk, ‘Sir, that is false, because the priests in India do not buy and sell, and these men have brought goods to sell.’ We replied that that was true, but in India they had alms from the Portuguese to support themselves, but we were coming through Moorish lands where we had to sell something in order to eat. The Turk found this convincing and said that we were right, and he always appeared to be satisfied with the way we answered many other things that the Moor put to us.

After this, the Turk went up to where the pasha was and told him what we had said, and he commanded that the father and myself should be put in the house of the constable of the fortress, and the overseer of the treasury should take the young Suriyani, our companion, so that he could interrogate us again and see if he could find some contradiction. To that end, that night they called two renegades to talk to us, and one of them, who was a heathen by origin, recognised Father Monserrate as soon as he came in and embraced him in front of the constable and many Turks and said that he was a priest and that he had made him a Christian in India, but not even that was enough for them not to ask us many questions. They interrogated the Suriyani boy much more harshly, however, and even tortured him, but he always answered that even if they left him in pieces he could say no more than what we had stated, that we were priests and were going to

<sup>1</sup> Urreta, *Historia de la Etiopia*, bk I, ch. 6, entitled ‘In which it is stated whether Queen Saba came from Ethiopia and whether she conceived of Solomon. The River Sabatico is discussed’, pp. 66–79.

Ethiopia to stay with some Portuguese that were there, because that was the truth. That ship's captain from India insisted very much that they should torture him and he would reveal the truth, to which the boy said in front of everyone, 'I have already said it and have nothing left to say; but as for you, who wrongly accuse me like this, <[f. 339v/328v]> God will punish you before you reach India.' And so it happened, because as his ship left the Strait it was driven by a storm onto an island, where it was wrecked and he was drowned together with everyone else on board, and only three sailors escaped. Because of that the boy gained great credit among the Turks, after they had heard what had happened, and from then onwards they treated him well.

Five days after they had put us in the house of the constable {[f. 386v]} of the fortress, when they were satisfied that we were sincerely telling the truth, they took us to the city's prison, which was inside the fortress itself and was a very strong, three-storey house where King Mutahâr, the lord of all those lands, had once lived, and they put us in a very dark ground-floor room between two open privies, where we stayed for almost a year suffering great hardship because of the stench there. Since Father António Monserrate was an old man they did not put him in irons or make him work. On me they put a stout chain on one foot, which they tied to my waist, and I went to work with it on. That greatly upset Father <António> Monserrate and often at night, when he thought I was asleep, he would get up very quietly and kiss the irons, and he wanted to have them himself so much that, when he fell very sick, he begged me to buy a chain, if he died, and to bury him with it on his feet.

In that prison we found twenty-six Portuguese and five Christians from India, whom the Turks had captured on the Malindi coast, and they were so at odds among themselves that they did not talk to one another, and two of them were seeking an opportunity to kill their adversaries for certain wrongs that they had done them. We therefore at once set about establishing friendships on purpose, and it was Our Lord's will that they should become so strong that from that time forwards they never had any {more} differences, but rather they treated one another as if nothing at all had ever happened between them. With the talks that we often gave them, they all confessed within a month and some of them regularly, and they changed their lives and behaviour so that even the Turks who were in charge of them noticed it and said to them, 'You have become different people since those priests came, because you now act with more self-control, like men who fear God.'

The Suriyani boy stayed in the house of the overseer of the treasury and set <[f. 340/329]> such good examples and showed such virtue that they soon took off his irons and gave him the job of buyer, even though it was a household with a large expenditure, because that Turk had many serving folk. And when the overseer gave him {to keep} what was left over from what he had sent him to buy (which he often did), he would at once bring that money and force us to accept it, without wanting to keep any for himself, however much we insisted, because he said that he was not short of food whereas we were in need. Once, when he went out to purchase something, he went through the Jews' district, which consisted of some 500 houses, {[f. 387]} and one of them contemptuously said to him, 'Hey, Christian! We killed the man you people worship as God.' 'That is true,' he replied, 'but you are ill-mannered enough to say that in contempt. You will pay for that dearly.' And he threw himself at him, knocked him to the ground and, after kicking and punching him a good deal, grabbed him by the collar of his caftan and dragged him away,



saying, 'Let us go before the pasha and there we shall see whether you people killed Him.' At that many other Jews came up and asked him to leave him alone, saying that he was mad and did not understand, so he let go of him, thus doing him a great favour, because the Turks use any excuse to take property from them, and here they had a very good one, because the Qur'an says that Christ Our Lord did not die but, when he was imprisoned, he put another in his place and he ascended to the fourth heaven, where he will remain until the Day of Judgment.<sup>1</sup> On another occasion, while he was walking round the city, a great Turk from his land recognised him and asked him how he came to be there, and he answered that they had brought him there as a captive, so the Turk asked the pasha to release him, which he did readily, but on condition that he returned to his own land via Cairo. The Turk in whose house he was living gave him money for the journey and, when he took his leave of us, he promised to return to India however difficult it might be, and he did so very diligently, because he at soon made a detour via Hormuz and went to Goa, where we found him after we left captivity.

The pasha also did the Portuguese and me a favour at that time, because he commanded that our irons be removed, and after that we were seldom put to work, because he put most of the Portuguese in charge of the gardens that he had, in which he was very interested <[f. 340v/329v]> since he had been gardener to the Grand Turk for a long time, and later he was made his chief doorman, and from there he rose to be pasha and, for a while, *guacîr*, which means 'governor of the empire'. For all that, in the hall where he ordinarily sat with the captains and great Turks, he had a very fine hoe hung, since he was not ashamed but proud to have risen from that office to such a high position among them; but it would have been much better for him to have been proud to be a slave unto death for love of Christ and not to have abandoned his holy faith, because he was a Christian from Albania and became a Moor when they captured him. The constable of the fortress, who was also Albanian, also allowed us at the same time to move {[f. 387v]} from that foul-smelling place where we lived to the first floor in the same houses. When the Portuguese shared out the rooms among themselves, they gave the father and myself a large hall with a separate room in it, and so we had somewhere to make an oratory. They gathered in it every afternoon, and we recited the litanies, and on Saturday nights we always gave them a sermon about the Sunday's Gospel, because that was the best day for the gardeners to gather, when the pasha was holding a general audience, while on Sundays he generally went to the gardens and the Portuguese working there could not return that night, since some of them were a very long way from the city.

In this oratory, we had a beautifully arranged altar and instead of a retable there was a canopy of Indian cloth painted in blue and green with some images that Father Monserrate painted, at which he was reasonably good. And there we made a crib with all its figures, which the Turks, who were nearly all of Christian origin, loved to look at and they offered many candles. On Christmas night we sang matins with some Portuguese who knew how to sing well, and in turns they played three viols that they had and sang some appropriate songs for the feast. In Holy Week we also solemnly mourned and hung the oratory <[f. 341/330]> with lustrous cloths that were lent to us by some heathen merchants from India who were usually in that city, and we put up a cross, to which everyone showed great devotion. We had many little white candles and some large, thick

<sup>1</sup> Al-Qur'an 3:55; 4:157.

ones, almost like torches, some green and others red, which the Turks would give to the gardeners for some things that they took to them from the gardens; others, because they were of Christian origin, would send some for the oratory. We always sang the office for Thursday and Friday and we preached the Mandatum and Passion and, on Resurrection Day, at dawn, we made a procession inside the hall, which was very long and broad, singing and the Portuguese playing their viols, and at the end we gave a sermon on the Resurrection. The gardeners brought many roses and flowers for that day, and once they brought a small spray little more than a span in length which, although a single stem, had three very beautiful roses in a row: the first very white, the second half white and {the other} half very red, and the third was all very {[f. 388]} red; at that we all praised the Holy Trinity, who even in the roses seemed to want to show us some resemblance, and so we attributed the first to the Father, the second to the Son, in whom there are two natures, divine and human, and the third to the Holy Spirit, who is burning love.

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## CHAPTER XX

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On how, after the pasha had given us our freedom, a heathen from India had us seized again, and on the hardships that we suffered

We spent two years in that prison and they never spoke to us of ransom, even though they ransomed other Portuguese, and we never negotiated it so as not to leave those captives without support. At the end of that time the pasha's wife wished to see us, so she told a eunuch servant of hers to wait until the pasha <[f. 341v/330v]> went to the gardens and then advise us, as if from him, to go and see a son that he had who was seven or eight years old. But the eunuch, who was Christian by origin, revealed the secret to us and said that we must be sure to go. We did as he said and, as we reached a false door in a small courtyard, the boy came out at once, as beautiful as an angel, wearing caftans made of silver fabric. Since it is the custom among them to take something the first time they go to visit some great man, we presented him with a flask of rose water, of which they are fond. The boy withdrew his hand, showing that he did not want to accept it, but the eunuch said to him, '{Take it, sir,} for even though they are your slaves, they are very honourable men.' And so he took it {then} and handed it to a servant. We spent a long time there talking to him and, when he dismissed us, his mother called the eunuch (he told us later that she had seen us from a window) and told him to draw up a petition to the pasha in our name, saying that we were poor men and were of no use to him there and asking him to give us leave to go to Jerusalem. She asked him to give this petition to her son, so that he could present it to the pasha when he was alone with him. He did so, and the boy took the petition and gave it to his father. His mother said, 'What does Mahamed ask?' (for that was the boy's name). The pasha replied, 'The priests are asking us to give them leave to go to Jerusalem.' 'Give it to them, then,' said she; 'for what purpose do you want them here? I shall give them {[f. 388v]} money for the journey as well, if you will do that.' The pasha replied, 'So be it, but they will have to go with the Constantinople post, so that they are not killed on the way.' The eunuch at once sent word to us about what was happening, because he had been present. The following day, the pasha said in front of many Turks that his wife had taken it upon herself to send us to Jerusalem. At that, a captain, who was a friend of ours, sent word to us at once saying that we should be pleased, because we were without fail going to Jerusalem, and in a much better deal than with any captain. It seems that <[f. 342/331]> this woman was moved to do us such a good deed because not only was she very well inclined (as everyone said), but she was the daughter of Christians, and she had been captured to be the wife of the Grand Turk Sultan Murât, and later he had married her to that pasha and sent him to those lands.

That captain's message made us see that everything the eunuch said was true, and we gave many thanks to Our Lord for such a great mercy as to give us our freedom and at the

same time a way to able to visit the holy sites in Jerusalem. But while we were waiting for the departure of the post with whom we were to leave, a merchant from India asked the pasha's overseer (who had a great hatred of Christians, even though he too was Albanian) how they could let us go like that, because we were very rich and highly esteemed among the Portuguese, who would give at least 5,000 *cruzados* for us. He went straight to the pasha and said that we were tricking them by giving them to understand that we were poor, while in fact we were very rich, as that banian,<sup>1</sup> who knew us, was saying. 'Well, if that is the case,' said the pasha, 'do not let them go. You will be accountable for them.' The overseer at once commanded that we be seized and given no more than two small breads, which were almost all bran, and nothing else, and said that if we wanted to be free we would have to give 20,000 *cruzados*. And even though the pasha's wife learnt about this straight away, she did not dare say anything else on our behalf. Thus we stayed for a year and a half suffering many hardships, because the other captives were also in such great need at that time that they could not come to our aid; but whenever they found anything, however little, they very charitably shared it with us.

At the end of this time, there came from Mecca a Turk called Molà Aly, a native of Algiers and the son of a captive Christian woman and a Turk. When he heard that we were there, he wished {[f. 389]} to speak to us, so he asked the pasha's overseer to give us leave to go to his house. The overseer, who revered him like a saint since he was regarded among them as a learned and contemplative man, replied that he could send for us whenever he liked, and he did so many times and he almost always gave us a meal and spent most <[f. 342v/331v]> of the day when we were there asking about various things, because he was very curious. With this our prison conditions were moderated and they had more respect for us, since they could see the attention given to us by that Turk, who did not miss any opportunity to try to give them to understand that we were poor and that that banian had lied, and he always praised us as virtuous, learned men. When the pasha's treasurer mentioned this one day in the presence of many Turks, the pasha's *cacis*,<sup>2</sup> who was present, said, 'What can they know? If I talk to them, I shall win them over in a couple of words.' 'You will be hard put to defend yourself against them,' said the treasurer. 'If you would like to try, I will have them called here this evening.' He replied that he should call for us, for it would cost him very little to win us over. Many Turks gathered to watch the disputation, and they sent a message to the constable of the fortress, who was in charge of us, but because it was dark he would only let Father António Monserrate go. The disputation lasted until nearly midnight and dealt with various subjects, and the *cacis* became so confused that he was unable to say anything. In the end he asked, 'How could God have had a son?' The father then explained to him the provenance of the divine persons, so that the *cacis* eventually said that if the Christians understood it like that there was no difficulty at all. The father turned to the treasurer and said to him, 'Could Your Lordship please send for some water to baptize the *cacis*, because he now accepts what we believe.' Everyone applauded that {a great deal} and one of them said, 'Truly, if you spent three days with the father, he would make you a Christian.' He was very angry at that.

<sup>1</sup> Banian, member of the Vaishya caste, Indian merchants and bankers who operated in the ports around the Indian Ocean and neighbouring seas; also used generally of Hindus. See *OED*, s.v. *banian*, and Yule and Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson*, s.v. (1) *Banyan*.

<sup>2</sup> *Casi*, *cadi*, doctor of Islamic law, judge. See Yule and Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson*, s.v. *casis*.

After the disputation, the treasurer gave them all a splendid supper and afterwards obtained the pasha's permission for us to be released and to be able to walk freely around the city, and he always spoke well of us. The *cacis*, in contrast, vituperated us whenever he had the opportunity to speak out. Once, when he met me in the house of that Turk from Algiers, {[f. 389v]} he asked me if the name of Mohammed was in the Gospel, and when I said that it was not he said, 'If it is not there, you Christians must have removed it, because <[f. 343/332]> you hate him so much.' 'No Christian', I replied, 'can remove or add anything to the Gospel, because it is divine Scripture. And even if we had been so evil as to remove that name, other Christians very far away from us have the same Gospel from the time of the apostles, written in their language, and they would not have removed it, yet it is not to be found in any of their books. That, then, is a sign that we have not removed it and that it has never been in the Gospel.' 'Now', he said, 'so you can see that Christ promised in the Gospel that he would send Mohammed, wait a moment and I shall show it to you.' And he sent to his house for a book written in Arabic, in which it said, 'Saint John, at the end of chapter 15, states that Christ promised his disciples that he would send Faraglitâ: this is Mohammed.' 'So if it is not in the Gospel now, you must have removed it.' 'It is true', I said, 'that this name Faraglitâ' (which means Paraclete) 'is in the Gospel, both here and elsewhere – nobody has removed it. It is also true that Christ promised His disciples that He would send Faraglitâ, but this is not Mohammed, because he never said of himself that he was God, but rather in his Qur'ân he admits he is a sinful man like the others, but God did him the mercy of making him a prophet. This name Faraglitâ is a name of God; therefore, Faraglitâ is not Mohammed, and such a name is not appropriate for him. Moreover, if Faraglitâ meant Mohammed, then Christ did not keep His word which He gave to His disciples to send Faraglitâ to them, because Mohammed came more than 600 years after Christ, a very long time after the apostles had died. You should know that Faraglitâ is the same as Rahalcudûz, *scilicet* "Holy Spirit", and Christ promised Him and sent Him to His disciples ten days after He ascended to heaven, when they were all together in Jerusalem waiting for Him, as Christ had commanded them.'

He said nothing in reply to this, because they do not know how to persist in their arguments; instead, they jump from one subject to another without any order. As I saw he was not persisting but was busy reading his book, I said to him, 'Since I have replied to what you asked me, <[f. 343v/332v]> I should like it if you could explain to me some things that I have found in your Qur'ân, which show that it cannot be God's book, as Mohammed states. First of all, if lies or contradictions are found in it, it cannot be {[f. 390]} God's book, because that is contrary to His infinite goodness and divine wisdom.' He replied that it was so and that no such things {were} <would be> found in the Qur'ân. 'Well, in chapter 19, Mohammed states that after the angel gave the embassy to Mary and she conceived by divine virtue, since the others did not know of this mystery and saw her with child, they said to her, "How have you done such a terrible thing, as you are the sister of such honourable men as Moses and Aaron?"<sup>1</sup> Look, the Qur'ân says that Mary, the mother of Christ, was the sister of Moses and Aaron. This is false, because more than 1,500 years passed between them and Christ. So the Qur'ân, in which this is found, is not God's book.' The *cacis* felt so wounded by this that he was left speechless, and so the

<sup>1</sup> Al-Qur'ân 19:27–28: 'Mary, thou hast surely committed a monstrous thing! Sister of Aaron, thy father was not a wicked man, nor was thy mother a woman unchaste.'

other man from Algiers came to his aid by saying that it was not false, because the Qur'ān was not speaking there of the Moses and Aaron who had led the sons of Israel out of captivity in Egypt, but of two brothers that Mary the mother of Christ had, who had those names. 'Mary had no brothers,' I said, 'and you will find no authentic Scripture that says so.' He replied, 'If your Scriptures do not say so, ours do, and that is enough proof for us.' 'Now, since you deny something that is so true,' I said, 'let us look at something else in the Qur'ān that seems contradictory to me, because in one place it says that Christ did not die, but He put another in his place who looked like Him and He went up to the fourth heaven, where He is now. And in another place it says that when God was speaking with Christ, He said to Him, "I gave you my blessing on your resurrection." Well, resurrection implies death {for nobody can be resurrected without first dying}. Therefore, it says that He died and that He did not die.' They began to converse with each other, not wanting to say anything in reply, either because they did not know how to reply or because they had scruples about continuing the disputation, for their Qur'ān commands that they should not dispute on matters of the law. After that, the *cacis* never spoke in a disputation again, even though he met us in a number of places.

<[f. 344/333]> Since we were no longer prisoners, although we lived in the prison, we used to go out more often to deal with matters arising. A renegade young man who lived in the pasha's house with the other servants, who are not allowed to go out, heard about this and wished to speak to us, so one day he went onto a terrace that overlooked the prison door and, seeing me outside, called down to me asking how I was. I replied that I was very sad to see him in that state of perdition and I did not know what harm he had found in Christ – who with such great charity {[f. 390v]} had died on a cross for the redemption of the world – for him to deny Him, nor what good he saw in Mohammed to go over to his sect. He began to weep, saying that his sins had brought him to such an unhappy state and that he was very repentant and wanted to find a remedy for his salvation. I replied that it was in his hands and also that it would stand him in great stead before God if, with a valiant heart and plenty of spirit, he again affirmed his belief in Him in front of his enemies; many others had also denied Him out of weakness and were later highly favoured and honoured by His divine Majesty because they for their part had done their duty. While we were talking some people passed in the street and so he had to go inside. Another time, when he came out to talk to me from the same place, he was seen by a eunuch who was in charge of him and other servants of the pasha, and he told him not to go there again.

When he saw that he could not speak to us, because they were now keeping a watch on him, he wrote us a letter and gave it to a Portuguese who was taking fruit from the gardens to the pasha. In it he said that, the first time that the pasha went to the mosque to celebrate (which he always did on the first Friday after the new moon), he was determined to leave his house secretly and go into the mosque, where he would take off his caftans in front of everyone and stand in the Portuguese clothes that he would be wearing underneath, which he had already prepared for this, <[f. 344v/333v]> and he would say that he was a Christian and had made a serious mistake in becoming a Moor, because the sect of Mohammed was false and nobody could be saved except through the law of Christ.

The father and I were delighted at this letter and replied that when he went there he should come via where we were, and he should come well prepared to confess with whichever of us he liked, and he could easily do that because when the pasha went to the

mosque on that first Friday of their month nobody remained there at all. After that we prayed for him, entreating Our Lord {with great devotion} to give him strength and grace to suffer torture and death for His sake, and we were prepared to die with him if necessary. Without sending word to us again, however, he changed his mind and asked the pasha for the favour of granting him permission to go out, since that eunuch was treating him badly. The pasha readily granted this to him and so he came to see us at once. {[f. 391]} When we asked him why he had given up such a holy decision, he replied that it was because he was afraid of the torture, for they apply very harsh torture even for minor reasons. When we saw this, we persuaded him to flee, and he did so even though it was a very risky thing to do; they caught him on the road, however, and brought him back to the pasha, who commanded he be given many lashes. Despite all that, he fled once again and after he had suffered many hardships and faced many dangers Our Lord saw fit that he should reach India. Reconciling himself with the Church, he at once withdrew to a hermitage a long way from any settlement, where he did great penance, and he was still persevering in it when I came here.

We also advised four other renegades to flee, and they all reached India, although one of them was recognized in the port where he was going to embark. He was taken to a servant of the pasha, who also recognized him, and he ordered that they should guard him very well so they could take him to the pasha. But when a ship of an Indian heathen was about to sail, he escaped from the house where they were holding him and, dressed as a sailor, he put a bundle on his back and went on board through the guards without being recognized.

<[f. 345/334]> Shortly after the pasha had given us leave to walk around the city, another pasha arrived who was a very good friend of his and was going to the lands that the Turk has on this coast of Ethiopia. His name was Aly Pasha and he was from near Seville, and when our friend the Turk from Algiers, whom he knew, went to visit him he told him, 'Your Lordship has a Castilian priest here.' He was very happy to hear that and sent for me at once. Father Monserrate and I went together and found him in a large hall, all carpeted, and on either side there were many of the most important Turks in the city sitting in a row and others standing, and he was by himself, a little apart, on a very fine carpet and resting on some brocade cushions. As we entered we bowed to him in their customary fashion, placing one's right hand on one's breast and bowing one's head without uncovering it. He said we were welcome and that we should sit, which was a very great favour because only very great men sat before him. He asked us in Spanish how we had been there for so long without being ransomed. When we answered {[f. 391v]} that it was because we were poor and had no one to speak on our behalf, he said, 'Well, I shall speak and have you released, with God's help.' He then started to tell the Turks in Arabic that we were very good men and that when we became religious we abandoned whatever possessions we had, however great they might be, and ate from the alms that they gave us and all we did was pray and teach Christians the Gospel, which was God's book because God had spoken the words in it. Speaking to us again, he said that we should go away and return at night, because he {wished} <wanted> to speak to us alone. We then rose and, as we went downstairs, we passed a *sharif* who had been a captive in India and still had a son there. We were very worried by that because we were afraid he would spoil everything for us, which in fact he did, because when he went up they were still talking about us, as that Turk from Algiers later told us; he then started to weep, saying, 'If Your Lordship has these

priests ransomed now, my son will never come here.' The pasha angrily replied, 'Do not speak of that, <[f. 345v/334v]> because they will not do any harm to your son. Did the Portuguese not ransom you? Well, I too want to have these men ransomed.' When he saw the pasha's determination he did not carry on the conversation but, as he left, he tried to persuade the principal Turks in the city to ensure that the pasha did not speak on our behalf.

When the father and I returned that night, as the pasha had commanded, he made us very welcome and, after asking us in detail about things in Portugal and Castile, he told us that when he was eight years old the Moors of Algiers had taken him and, as he was a boy who did not understand anything, they made him a Moor. Afterwards he rose to be a pasha because of the things he had done in war against Moors, for he had never taken up a sword against Christians. We took the opportunity to speak to him a little about his salvation, but he said nothing in reply but instead changed the subject, saying, 'I am now going to the lands that the king has in Ethiopia, and I shall ensure that your lord lets you go. My servants will take you to Mocâ so that from there they can put you on a ship with the goods I am sending to Maçuâ. I will be going there, but by a different route, because I will have to travel overland for many days and then take ship to cross over, and so for you it would be too difficult to go with me. When I arrive, {[f. 392]} you will enter Ethiopia and see your priests and, if you are not happy with the country, you can return to my house and I shall give you my servants to take you to Jerusalem and everything you need to go from there to your own lands.' It seems that he did not want to discuss the matters of his soul at that time because that Turk from Algiers was there and he understood the language, but he wanted to go back to the Christians, as he showed after he arrived in Maçuâ, when he sent a trusted servant to Diu to ask for an assurance in order to go there with all his household. The servant spoke in secret to the captain of the fortress (who I think was called Gonçalo de Tavares) and to a very honourable man, Luís Álvares Camelo by name, who at the time was the overseer of the king's treasury, and they replied that not only would they give him their assurance and make everything free of impediment, but he would receive many honours from the viceroy. This did not come about, however, <[f. 346/335]> because it was discovered, and his friend the pasha of Sanâ himself sent some soldiers under cover of helping him in a war that he had with the Moors, but with orders to kill him as soon as they found a suitable moment to do so. As he was riding his horse out of his tent one day, the army fired off many arquebuses as a sign of celebration, as they always did, but among them one of the other pasha's soldiers shot a bullet which hit him in the back and killed him, without anybody at the time knowing who had done that. That pasha then sent more men to seize the dead man's belongings, and they found he had 900,000 Venetian coins, and then everything was made public.

While we were very happy with what Aly Pasha was promising us, because we were sure that once he spoke everything would be achieved with ease, his treasurer said that there were some Turks there who had come to visit him, and so he told us to go and wait in his wardrobe. Two men came up, the most important Turks in the city, who were great friends of his, and since he thought that they might help him speak in our favour he had us called in. As we entered, he said, 'I want to have these men released, for they are very good men and have nothing.' The Turks replied that they were coming because of that *sharif* who wanted us not to be released. 'Your Lordship should not interfere in this, because they have promised 3,000 *cruzados* and they can give 5,000 for sure, which is



what the heathen from India said.' On hearing this, the pasha's expression changed and, showing that he was very sorry, he said in Spanish, 'You know what these men are saying, that you have promised 3,000 *cruzados* and you can give 5,000.' I replied that we had not promised anything, and we could not give anything except some alms that might come from India, {[f. 392v]} which would be very little. 'I know very well', he said, 'that you are telling the truth, but if these crooks have got that idea into their heads, who will be able to rid them of it? Anyway, I shall try as hard as I can.' With that he dismissed us that night and we went to sleep in the house of that Turk from Algiers who was always with us. The next day news arrived of the death of the local pasha's son, who was the captain of a fortress a long way from there. <[f. 346v/335v]> He was so upset that he shut himself in for several days, allowing only a few great men to enter. Aly Pasha therefore told us that the pasha could not speak of our business or even of other very important matters that he had, because all he did was weep, without giving any reply to anything, and that he himself had to leave at once. We thanked him very much for having been so willing to help us and asked him as a favour to give us a safe-conduct so that we could go to Ethiopia, when we left there. He replied very willingly and at once had a provision drawn up in which he gave leave in the name of the Turk for us to be able to enter Ethiopia and travel through Turkish lands without anybody hindering us, but he warned us not to show it while we were still captive, because if the pasha learnt of it he would take it, so that we would not flee. With that he dismissed us. Later, however, fearing that the Turks might search our belongings, as in fact they did some time later, a Portuguese took the safe-conduct so that they would not find it. I do not know what unfounded fear came over him, but he burnt it, at which we were very sad.

When that pasha departed for his lands and our pasha's sorrow at the death of his son moderated, we dealt with our ransom through the constable of the fortress, in whose charge we were, and the pasha's overseer replied that we would not be ransomed unless we gave 10,000 Venetian coins. We therefore decided not to mention the subject again, but to stay with the captives at all times for as long as the Turks left us there, and so we wrote to that effect to Father Francisco Cabral, who was the provincial of India at the time, asking for his approval because, unless it was to go to Ethiopia, we were very loath to leave those captives. We then named some of them to be ransomed, since the brothers of the Misericórdia<sup>1</sup> in Chaul, who always gave the ransom, had written asking us to ensure that the ones in greatest need should go, and they sent word as to how many could go each time, and that if one went without our permission they would not pay anything for him. But each of them thought he had a greater need to go than all the <[f. 347/336]> others and, since some necessarily had to stay because the Misericórdia {[f. 393]} could not ransom them all together, they gave us trouble, which we suffered patiently, because otherwise it was not possible to ransom them, as they had already experienced, because they worked against each other and asked for much more than they could give or it was right to give. And in that way Our Lord saw fit for them to be ransomed without there being any fights among them, leaving just ten whom the pasha did not want to ransom while he was there, because they looked after his gardens very well.

<sup>1</sup> Santa Casa da Misericórdia (Holy House of Mercy), a charitable institution founded in Lisbon in 1498, with branches throughout the Portuguese-speaking world.

At this time, the captain of Mocâ, who was called Aly Chilibî, came to Çanâ. The banian who had spoken against us in the matter of the ransom had also told him that we could give 5,000 *cruzados*, and he promised 3,000 for us, without saying anything to us, and the pasha said that he could take us. But his overseer came and said that he was mistaken, as he knew that we could give much more. And so we stayed, and it was by Our Lord's mercy, because he was so cruel and fond of wealth that, had he taken us, he would have killed us or at least subjected us to many torments as soon as he saw that we could not give him what he wanted. In fact, some time after that, when the pasha had him seized in his house and ordered him to hand back the property of his that he had taken unlawfully, he went so mad that he took a knife and slit himself open with it and cut all his guts into pieces. One of his young sons came in at that point and said, 'What is this, sir?' He replied by slicing his hand with the knife and he would surely have killed him if he had reached him, and so the boy ran off quickly and the father then died. The pasha took all his possessions, which amounted to 70,000 *cruzados*, and as a great favour he gave 1,000 of them to the two sons that the dead man had.

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## CHAPTER XXI

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### Which deals with the hardships that the Turks gave us because of the ransom

Shortly after Aly Pasha had left that city where we were, the Turk from Algiers who favoured us went to Mecca, and so we were left in great need without having anyone to speak on our behalf, and they only rarely let us leave the prison, on a few occasions when we went to a garden next to the city wall that the Portuguese were tending. Something very noteworthy happened to Father António Monserrate there, as some Turks who saw it claim: <[f. 347v/336v]> while he was in prayer under {[f. 393v]} some very tall trees, he rose up in the air to their height, at which the Turks who were watching from the city wall marvelled greatly, and afterwards they recounted it to everyone, saying that it could only be that that man was a great friend of God. When the Portuguese heard this, they mentioned it once to the father, when I was present, at which he laughed and replied, 'I do not know what was wrong with the Turks' eyes, because I cannot even climb trees, let alone rise in the air.'

A year later, the pasha received news that another man was coming to replace him, so he determined to ransom us and, so that we would promise what they wanted, the pasha's overseer took us to his house and said that the amount that we absolutely had to give was 5,000 *cruzados*. When we answered that we had no more than a small amount of alms that they gave us in India, he became very indignant and made many threats. Seeing that that was to no avail, he turned back to kind words, saying that all he wanted was for us to tell the merchants from India that we would pay them the 5,000 *cruzados* there and he would take it from them. We replied that we should very much like to go to our lands, but that we could not deceive anyone, and so we would not say more than what we thought we could find in alms, which would be what the other Portuguese gave of their own accord. When he heard this, he commanded his men to put chains round our necks and throw us in a dungeon. They took us away at once and put collars three fingerbreadths thick round our necks; these closed with a ring through which they put a long, very thick chain, and they put a very large padlock through the last link, and so we remained chained up together with a Christian Brahmin who was with us. Afterwards they put us underground in a very dark hole so low and confined that when we were sitting our heads nearly touched the ceiling, and only just wide enough for all three of us. We stayed shut up in there in continuous darkness with very little to eat, and when one of us turned over during the night he would wake the others, since he could not help pulling and shaking the chain. The air in there was so thick that our heads spun when they took us out for some necessity, so that by the fifth day we could not <[f. 348/337]> walk without difficulty. Father António Monserrate suffered the most, since he was an old man and could not manage

the chain, which was very heavy, so {I} <he> begged the man in charge of us to take it off him and {I} <he> would get something for him {{f. 394}} from the Portuguese, if he would call some of them for that purpose. Even though he was a very cruel Moor, he took the chain off in expectation of what he would get, but he put another smaller one on his feet. The Brahmin and I were left with the chain as before for fifteen days, and then they gave us to a Turk to take us to Mocâ, where the ships for India were, to see whether we would promise more once we spoke to the merchants, or whether they would be moved to give more.

We stayed in that city of Çanâ for six years, less four or five months that the king of Xaêr kept us imprisoned when they captured us. It was formerly a very large city, but after the Turks took it it became depopulated, so that only some 2,500 households remained, 500 of which were of Jews. Inside the walls, which are of very thick mud brick with many bastions, there are many gardens and orchards, with many fruits like those of Portugal, and everything is watered with water from wells, for they have no springs inside the city. I shall not speak of the particularities of the land and the ways of the people, because that would require a very {long} <large> treatise.

When that Turk took charge of us, he took off our irons at once and we set off for Mocâ, which must be sixty leagues from there. Because the camels that we were riding gave Father Monserrate considerable difficulty and he was always afraid of falling off (as when the Turks first took us), we got him an ass to ride on, but that was worse because, as we entered a narrow path, a loaded camel knocked him off as it went past and he was in danger of being trampled underfoot by the other camels and killed. He was so badly hurt by this fall and the collision with the camel that he could not even hold himself on the ass, and so one of us – sometimes the Brahmin and other times I myself – had to go on foot and hold on to him. We could not travel as fast as that Turk wanted because of that, so he used to come up very angrily and tell the father to go faster or he would tie him on a camel. The next day we arrived at a small, well-walled town that they call Taîs, where we rested for two days and the father felt better, but the Turk put irons on him and <[f. 348v/337v]> gave him a very difficult time so that he would promise him some money and, because he did not, he did not take them off until it was time to leave. He took many men from there because we would have to travel for two days through some high mountains full of robbers. On the third day we reached another smaller town {{f. 394v}} that they call {Moûça} <Moriça>, six leagues from Mocâ; having departed from there at nightfall, since the land there is very hot, we arrived in Mocâ before sunrise and they put us in the house of a servant of the pasha's overseer, just like his master,<sup>1</sup> and for four or five days he tried very hard to persuade us to promise the 5,000 *cruzados* and he would allow us to speak any merchants that we liked, and he spoke to us kindly, thinking that in that way he would achieve what he wanted.

After that, once he saw that despite all his inventions we were not doing what he wanted and that kind words were to no avail, he decided to resort to actions. He commanded that they should take us to the captain of the city, and in the presence of many Turks and some merchants and ships' captains he made a very long speech to us, explaining the hardships that we would suffer if we stayed, and saying that we should promise the 5,000 *cruzados* and he would take it from those merchants, even if they did

<sup>1</sup> The meaning of this phrase is not clear.

not want to give it to him. We replied that we had already promised what we thought we would be able to find in alms in India, which was what each of the other captives gave for himself, and that even if we were never to leave captivity we would not promise more because it was not right to deceive the merchants. When he saw this, he made many threats to us and commanded that we return to where we had been before. They chained us and put us in a storeroom full to the ceiling with bundles of cloves and pepper with just a very narrow space in the middle. It was so very hot in that land at that time that the people could not even sleep on the roof terraces of their houses at night except with great difficulty, and so the heat in the middle of all those spices was so great that the sweat was continuously pouring off every part of us, and when night came we could not stand it any longer because we felt as though we were suffocating. There is no doubt that Father {António} Monserrate was running a great risk if he stayed there that night, because he was a stout man, but Our Lord saw fit to get us out by means of a *Habexi* servant of that Turk: when the Turk lay down to sleep on the terrace of his house and it was so airless that he ordered them to throw water on him, <[f. 349/338]> the *Habexi* said to him, 'Lord, if we cannot bear the heat {even though we are} up here, what will those poor people do stuck down there? Give me leave to take them out, or they will die tonight.' The Turk was very fond of this Ethiopian because he took care of all his household, and so he readily granted what he asked, so he was very pleased and went down at once and {[f. 395]} moved us to a different building; although it was still very hot, there was no comparison with the one in which we had been.

They held us like that for a few days, giving us very little to eat, and when they saw that neither chains nor threats nor hunger were of any use in making us promise what they wanted, they wrote to the pasha's overseer about what was happening. By then he had received confirmed news that the Grand Turk had ordered the pasha that was coming to return to Cairo, and he replied that they should not release us unless we gave what he asked, and he wrote a letter to his servant, for him to show us, in which he said, 'If they will not give the 5,000 *cruzados*, bring them back with chains around their necks and shackles on their feet, and I know what I shall do to them once they arrive.' They summoned me alone because I could read Arabic and showed me the letter. I replied that no matter how many torments they gave us we could not promise that because we did not have it. The Turk {then said} <replied>, 'Then you will return to Çanâ with me. I will not put the fetters on you because I am going to make you walk in front of my horse, but with a very heavy chain round your necks, and I will goad you along with this sabre to make you walk fast.' 'In addition, if you have permission,' I replied, 'you can cut off our heads with it and we shall be very happy, because we desire nothing more than to die for our faith.' 'Then you will soon have what you desire,' he said, 'because when we get there I shall flay you alive.' With that, he commanded that I should be put back inside the house, where we remained in irons until the ships set sail for India, and he used to send word to us through the man guarding us, 'So-and-so's ship is now about to sail; now it's so-and-so's.' We answered every time that we should very much like to go to India, but that we could not give what they were asking.

When the ships had sailed, they commanded that we should be put on one of two galleys that they had in that port. <[f. 349v/338v]> We went on board on 1st September. They removed the chains that we had on and put others on our feet and the bench, each of us separately among four galley slaves. A few days later, the pasha sent word that they

should prepare the galleys, because his wife was to go in them on pilgrimage to Mecca, at which we were very pleased, because they would be forced to leave us there in Mocâ since they cannot take Christians into Mecca. But when all the men from both galleys were in ours {[f. 395v]} raising the mast, there was a roll of thunder and it began to rain, and so everyone sat down because the seas were also very high. Soon there was such a thunderclap and flash of lightning that it scared us and made us all duck our heads and, as the father and I then looked over in one direction, we saw something like a piece of iron dross fall into the sea; in our view it was more than a span across, and it appears to have been the thunderbolt that fell there. Once it was all over, we saw the top half of the main mast was smashed to pieces without anyone having noticed, even though there were many people around it, and it was God's will that all the fragments, which were very large, fell into the sea, for if any had fallen inside the galley it could not have failed to cause serious damage, since it was all full of people. We gave thanks to Our Lord for having saved us, and they thanked their accursed Mohammed, through whose intercession they thought that God had done that mercy for everyone. However, they considered it a bad omen and wrote to the pasha about it at once.

By this time, the pasha's wife was already only three days' journey from there, on her way to embark, and when she heard about this she did not want to go any further. The pasha too, when he learnt of it, sent with great haste for her to return, because they pay great heed to omens. And so the galleys remained there with us in them suffering great hardship, because they used to give us a just very small measure of bitter red millet to eat, and nothing else at all. They would not even give us a stick of firewood to cook it with, and so we begged some of the galley slaves who were allowed on shore to take that millet to some woman in the city to cook it and to take from it as much as they thought right for their trouble, but not even that was of much use to us because often there was nobody to bring it back, and so we would spend the whole day without <[f. 350/339]> eating a mouthful. I therefore decided to grind it as the other galley slaves did, which meant soaking it and putting it on a broad stone and taking another long, round one with both hands and grinding it, and adding water until it formed a dough, and it was cooked by sticking pieces of it inside a large jar, which they heated by putting fire inside it as well, and so one piece would come out burnt and another uncooked. I started grinding it for two or three days, and my back hurt so much that I could not bear it, because depending on how they placed the stone, one almost had to kneel down to grind. But when a Moorish kafir who shared {[f. 396]} my bench saw how tired I was, he said, 'This is not a job for you. Give it to me and I will grind it.' And he did so every time and hardly accepted anything, no matter how much I insisted.

It was not just the food that was hard for us, since it was as I have said and very bitter, but mainly it was the galley boatswain, who was a very cruel Moor who a short time before had escaped from a Portuguese galley on which he had been an oarsman, and for that reason he was ill disposed towards us. We were therefore never able to persuade him to let us have two shirts that we had left on land brought to us, and we only had the ones we were wearing when they put us in the galley, which by now were putrid with sweat and dirt. Above all we were troubled by the bedbugs: the galley was so full of them that we spent almost the whole night sitting on the benches shaking them off, because they crawled up all over us, and if ever we were so tired and overcome by sleep that we lay down they would cover our faces in no time, making us get up again, and so we could not sleep

until it was nearly dawn and they crawled away again with the cold. The fact that the soldiers who watched over the galley at night used to complain and that the galley slaves were always yelling about this continual torment was to no avail in making the captain have the galleys cleaned out. When I realized that I could not sleep at night and it was not possible by day because of the hot sun and the noise of the galley, I decided to try something, so that Father Ant3nio Monserrate could do it afterwards if it worked for me. It was to put a little cloth bag that I had with me over my head and tie the mouth of the bag over the collar of my cassock, tie my cassock round my <[f. 350v/339v]> feet as well and hold the ends of my sleeves in my hands; having done that I lay down thinking that I was quite safe from the enemies' incursions and that I would sleep soundly that night. Although at first I did sleep a little, they then found a little hole in the bag that I had not seen, and so many got in through it that they swarmed over my neck and covered my face, itching so much that they woke me up and I became thoroughly entangled, because in my haste I could not untie the bag and they were trying to crawl into my ears and nostrils. Therefore, after I had got rid of them, I thought it better not to sleep than to try such a remedy again.

We lived like that for almost three months and then our friend the Turk from Algiers arrived there on his way back from Mecca and commanded that they remove us. The captain of the galleys objected strongly to that {[f. 396v]} because he was very afraid of the pasha's overseer, but since he took full responsibility for it they removed us from the galley and took us to the house of the captain of the city, where he was staying. When we entered, he left the captain of the city and the captain of the galleys, who were together, and came to the middle of the room to receive us, showing that he greatly regretted the hardships they had given us. He then sent for some food and to honour us began to eat with us, and the captain of the city joked with him that he too was a Christian, to which he replied that even though he was not he did enjoy their company and especially ours. Then he had them give us a good room inside the house to sleep in and told them not to stop us going to the seashore on the side next to the house enclosure, and in the twenty days that he was there not one went by when he did not visit us. He always asked us with great affection if we needed anything and tried to ensure that we had plenty of everything, and the captain, the lord of the house, saw to it as well, because he had great respect for him and wanted to please him in every way, and so we always had more than enough. But since he had to continue his journey, for he was going elsewhere, <[f. 351/340]> he strongly requested the captain of the galleys to let us stay on shore, which he promised to do with many words of assurance. Five days after his departure, however, he put us back in irons in the galley, where we continued our previous torment, although it felt much worse since we had gone so quickly from one extreme to the other.

Shortly afterwards, Father Monserrate fell seriously ill, and it very much grieved me to see him in such great distress without being able to have any rest all night, what with his sickness and the bedbugs, and without any medicine or even any food to give him other than that miserable millet bread, because when it was cold it seemed to be even more revolting than eating earth. I therefore sent word to the captain of the galleys that that old man was very sick and asked him for permission to have him taken ashore where they might give him some remedy, and I would stay on the galley, because if he died there like that the pasha would blame him severely. When he heard that, he sent to see whether it was true and, finding that it was, he told the men to take him ashore and for me to go as

well to look after him. A heathen merchant from India guaranteed that we would not flee, and they put us in a house without irons, but they gave us nothing at all to eat, not even that little measure of millet that they gave us on the galley, and we had to buy even the water that they brought {[f. 397]} from some wells a long way from the city. We therefore begged that merchant to lend us something until the ships arrived. He gave us a little rice and butter and two *cruzados*, with which we bought water and firewood and supported ourselves until the ships arrived. And it was Our Lord's will that Father Monserrate was better by then.

Once the ships arrived from India, they started bothering us again about the price of the ransom and they gave us plenty of trouble, until that heathen merchant gave 500 *cruzados* for each of us, since the viceroy of India had written to him saying that not only would he pay him back for what he gave but he would also do him favours. <[f. 351v/340v]> We were very sad that the merchant gave so much, but he thought that he had done well to have us released at that price. And after the money had been paid and we were about to embark, the captain of the galleys said that he would not allow it unless we gave him 100 *cruzados* for having allowed us to stay ashore. The merchant was in a very awkward position, since there was no longer time to write to the pasha and for a reply to come back, since it was a long way, and so he was forced to give him some bolts of cloth. And so he let us embark on a ship from Diu after we had been in Mocâ for a year, and Our Lord delivered us from a violent storm in which everyone thought we were doomed, because the sails were rent and the whipstaff of the rudder broke. We reached Diu in twenty-nine days and, as we moored, the father guardian of Saint Francis came out to receive us. He took us to his house, where he put us up with great charity. Afterwards the fathers of Saint Dominic took us to theirs for a few days, because it seems that all these religious were vying to show us their great charity. From there we went on to Chaul, where the brothers of the Misericórdia gave us good alms to help with our ransom and they agreed that that house would give everything necessary to ransom those who remained captive. We then travelled on to Goa and the factor of the merchant who had ransomed us went with us and, when we arrived, Father Francisco Cabral, who was the provincial at the time, paid all the rest of the ransom at once and did the heathen many honours and favours.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The two fathers reached Goa in December 1596.



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## CHAPTER XXII

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### On how Father Abraham de Georgis<sup>1</sup> was sent to Ethiopia and on the journey was captured and martyred by the Turks

While Father António Monserrate and I were still captive, {[f. 397v]} the fathers in India and Viceroy Mathias de Albuquerque learnt that Father Antonio Fernandez had died in Ethiopia and that now only Father Francisco Lopes remained, and he was so old and weary that he was unable to travel from one place to another as was necessary to attend to the Portuguese and Catholics who lived in very remote areas. They therefore discussed sending other priests to take over from that old saint before <[f. 352/341]> these Christians were left entirely unsupported and without Catholic teaching. To do this, the father provincial of India appointed Father Abraham de Georgis, a Maronite by birth, who had been sent from Rome to India, and Father Diogo Gonçalves, a Portuguese, a man of great example and virtue. At this time Father Abraão was busy preaching very successfully to the Christians of Saint Thomas, who live in the mountains, because he knew the Suriyani<sup>2</sup> and Arabic languages very well, and because of this and his great virtue and saintliness he seemed to be highly suited to this mission. Once they had been chosen, both fathers remained under cover for a year, so that the Moors who live in Goa could not have any knowledge at all of their departure and could not give warning of it to the Moors on the coast of Ethiopia, with whom they have dealings and communication. When the time came, the viceroy gave everything necessary for the fathers' journey, but both he and the fathers were concerned about two fathers going and, on further consideration, it seemed it would be more convenient for the time being for Father Abraão to go with just an Ethiopian servant, who had been raised in our house. And so it was agreed, because in that way the father would be better disguised.

When everything was ready for their departure, the viceroy wished to see the father and, for the sake of greater secrecy, he called for him to come to his house at night. The father went with a companion, dressed in the clothes in which he would pass through the lands of Moors and enter Ethiopia, with a long beard and a turban on his head, and when the viceroy, who was very pious, saw him come in like that he was so moved inside that he could not hold back his tears, and he embraced him and said, 'These are inventions that the Society uses in order to bring souls to God, risking its sons to so many obvious dangers for their sake.' After being comforted by him for a long time, he dismissed him. From there he went to Saint Paul's College in Goa, where the provincial father was waiting for him with the other fathers and brothers, whom he embraced one by one with so much

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (Abraão (Abraham) de Georgis).

<sup>2</sup> The language spoken by the Suriyani (or Syrian or Saint Thomas) Christians of Malabar is Malayalam.

{[f. 398]} weeping and sobbing from everyone that it really seemed to be an omen that they were saying farewell for ever in this life and they would never see one another again, except in heaven. And that same night, which was Twelfth Night in the year 1595, he embarked on a ship bound for Diu, the Portuguese fortress <[f. 352v/341v]> whence all the ships always depart for the island of Maçuâ and for Çuaquên, which lie on the coast of Ethiopia, and there he came to an arrangement with the captain of the ship that was going to Maçuâ and with the pilot, who was a Moor. He embarked in March and they set sail, and after some setbacks with storms and headwinds, he arrived in Maçuâ without being recognized by anybody. There, instead of the pasha, he found a captain of Christian origin, who was called Xafêr, who did him many honours, thinking that he was a merchant.

A few days after the father had disembarked, some servants of Father Francisco Lopes arrived there and, meeting him through a banian heathen who knew the secret, told him that he should move on straight away, because any delay was very dangerous, but he could not do so easily because of the close watch that the Turks keep on the crossing from the island to the mainland. And so he asked the captain for permission because he wanted to move on with his goods to Ethiopia, where he was told he would do good trade, but he would not give it, not because he suspected anything but because he thought he would not be able to go there safely until there was a caravan of local people, which would be quite soon. But when the father asked him again afterwards he granted permission, and so he had the servant cross to the mainland at once with some merchandise that he still had, since he had already sent most of it in secret to Father Francisco Lopes. Taking his leave of the captain, he got into a boat and, when they were half-way across the channel, which is narrow, a heathen banian from the father's ship – its captain, apparently – said to the captain, 'Lord, you have let that man go. I am not acquainted with him; I do not know what kind of man he is, whether a Moor or a Christian. Do not blame me afterwards.' When he heard this, he sent word very quickly for the boat to turn back and for that merchant to be brought to him. When he arrived, he asked him, 'What kind of man are you? A Moor or a Christian?' He replied he was a Christian from that land. 'So why have you come here in disguise?' said the captain. 'You must become a Moor or I will cut off your head.' 'Do as you please,' {replied the father,} 'because I am not the kind of man to become a Moor.' The captain then commanded his men to seize him and to bring back all his merchandise. When the people who were with it, some of whom were Catholic Christians, learnt about this <[f. 353/342]> they all fled, leaving only the *Habexi* servant that the father had brought from Goa. They brought him back together {[f. 398v]} with the merchandise, and the captain asked him who that man, his master, was. He replied that he did not know, and that he had joined him in Diu to serve him. However, because of the fear that they put in him, he later said that his master and he were Christians, and for fear of torture he became a Moor. Afterwards, the men on the ship gave the excuse in India that the servant had eaten at the wrong time during Ramadan, the Moors' fast, and he was seized because of that and asked why he had eaten when he should have been fasting, and they questioned him so much that he eventually confessed that his master and he were Christians, and that was why they had seized the father. It did not happen like that, though, but as I have described instead, as I was told after I arrived here by some Catholics and servants of Father Francisco Lopes, who were with the servant on the mainland when they seized the father.

That captain held the father prisoner for a few days, trying to persuade him to become a Moor, and when he realized that he would not succeed, he sent word to him secretly that he would call him to appear in front of some Turks and he should say that he was a Moor, and then he would give him permission to go wherever he liked. He replied that he should not tire himself any further, because he would not say such a thing by any means. He therefore had him brought before many Turks and told him to decide once and for all to become a Moor or he would cut off his head. He replied that he should not waste any more time, since he was not going to become a Moor, for Mohammed's law was not worth as much as his shoe. The captain was greatly angered by this reply and commanded that they should take him outside the town to a small field on the island and cut off his head there. And a heathen from India who was present told me that as he knelt down for them to cut it off, he started saying, 'Jesus, Jesus,' and when they struck him on the neck with a sabre it broke without harming him at all. They brought another and it too broke, leaving him with just a very small wound. Then the third one came and with it they cut off his head, and he was still saying up to that point, 'Jesus, Jesus,' and thus he gloriously and most happily concluded his mission and holy life.

The father being dead, they took his body straight away to another island nearby where they put the bodies of criminals, and some say that they buried it, but later, in Maçuâ, the man who took it told Father Luís de Azevedo of our <[f. 353v/342v]> Society that they did not, but left it on the ground {[f. 399]} among the bones of others that they had thrown there. And three very large, white birds of a kind that had never been seen in that land remained there for forty days, and for all that time, when it was late, many lights like candles appeared there, and many Moors and heathens would go outside to see them, marvelling at such a great novelty, and some of the Moors said, 'Is it not enough for that *câfer* (which means 'man without law') to be burning in hell, but that he should burn here as well?' 'Do not say such a thing,' retorted others, 'for that is nothing but a sign of a good man, and that is why the captain who had him killed and those who counselled him all died so quickly.' Because he and the other four Turks who were in the council had died a few days later. Once the forty days had passed neither the birds nor the lights were seen again.

This holy martyr had such a fervent spirit that even in his private conversations he lit up the hearts of those with whom he talked. He was a very penitent man and so devout that all the time that he had left over from his day-to-day occupations with others he spent in constant prayer. And his abstinence and fasting were also such that he never ate except at night, and so, when he was sent from Rome to India, during the eight months that he spent waiting for the wind in the College in Coimbra, he was a rare image of every virtue, and particularly of singular, burning charity, and therefore everyone had great respect and affection for him, especially Father Luís de Azevedo, who at the time was a student brother, and now we are together in Ethiopia. Because he dealt with him for a long time and with intimate familiarity, he knows many details about him, and I shall mention here some of those that he recounts with particular affection and devotion, which reveal a little of all that Our Lord communicated to that blessed father. The first is that, when they were together in Coimbra, he pleaded with the superiors to be allowed to come with that father to India, but when the time came they nominated the ones who were to come without mentioning him, at which he was very sad and disconsolate. When Father Abraão saw that, he told him not to be so disconsolate because he would go to India. He asked in reply

how that could be, since all those <[f. 354/343]> who were to go that year had already been named and were already leaving for Lisbon to embark, and he was staying behind. The father again assured him that he would go. And so it happened, because when the father provincial of Portugal later found {[f. 399v]} that one of those nominated for India could not go, he summoned him to Lisbon to go in his place. He therefore gave many thanks to Our Lord for granting to him what he so greatly desired and had prayed for, and he then had an even higher opinion of the virtue of that father, to whom God Our Lord revealed His secrets.

Before embarking, they all asked for leave to go and see that portentous miracle of Santarém, in which the Lord constantly shows many extraordinary marvels. Father Abraão agreed with Brothers Luís de Azevedo and Belchior Coutinho to reveal to one another everything that they saw. When they came out, the brothers told the father what they had seen and asked him to reveal to them what he had been shown, since he had given his word. But he strongly resisted telling them and asked them to leave him alone, and although they gave up for then out of respect for him, Brother Belchior Coutinho afterwards took him aside and importuned so much that he said he would reveal it to him provided he promised not to say anything for as long as he lived. He promised and then the father told him that he had very insistently asked Our Lord to show him a particular sign if he was going to die for His sake, and he had seen that very sign. The brother recounted this after they had martyred him.

Furthermore, when they were in India, because of the high opinion that Brother Luís de Azevedo had of Father Abraão and the familiarity with which he talked to him, he asked him one Christmas Eve to obtain three things from Our Lord for him during the Masses for that holy feast; two of them he desired for himself, and the other was to grant that a brother who was restless should remain in the Society, for he very much wanted him to stay. When he asked him afterwards how he had been dispatched with Our Lord, he simply replied that there was no reason for him to ask for the first thing again, because he would not <[f. 354v/343v]> get it, but the second was granted to him and, as for the brother, he should not worry, because God did not want him in the Society, and a few days later they dismissed him, and he found the other things to be as the father had told him. He also often begged him to write to the superiors as soon as he reached Ethiopia, where he had already been appointed to go, asking them to send him there as well, and he always replied, 'If I get there, I shall do so willingly, but I shall not get there.' It seems that the Lord had already signified to him, as He did to Saint Peter, how soon he was to depart his mortal flesh and He was resolved shortly to grant him the rewards and crown of his holy life and a most fortunate end.

Ten years after his happy death, Father Luís de Azevedo came to Ethiopia with Father Lourenço Romano, his companion, {[f. 400]} apparently through the intercession of the holy Father Abraão, and it seems that what he had begged of him so much in life he obtained for him from the Lord after his death. On arriving in Maçuâ, he very much desired to obtain the precious relics of his good friend and holy martyr in order to send them to India, where they would do him the honours that were due. He made many enquiries to that end, even bringing the very man who had taken the holy body to that island after they had cut off his head, and with him he sent a Christian from India whom he trusted. However, they could not tell the holy bones from the others that they found there because they were all mixed up; they brought some back, but the fathers did not find

it appropriate to choose any so they left them, not without considerable disappointment and sorrow that that great treasure was hidden from them in the field. But Our Lord God often does such things, for although He has manifested here the bodies of many saints for the principle of their glory and the exercise of our devotion, He has concealed just as many from us, so that we may even see in them how little the flesh will be ennobled, before resurrection, by all the honour that men can do to it on earth, and how certain is its eternal {weight} <reward> that God Himself will give it in heaven for ever.

{{f. 401}}<sup>1</sup> <[f. 355/344]>

## BOOK IV

WHICH DEALS WITH THE LAST THREE EMPERORS THAT  
THERE HAVE BEEN IN IT UNTIL TODAY AND WITH THE  
MISSIONS THAT THE FATHERS OF THE SOCIETY HAVE  
UNDERTAKEN TO THIS EMPIRE DURING THEIR TIME

<sup>1</sup> Folio 400v is blank in ARSI, MS Goa 42.

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## CHAPTER I

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### Which reports some matters of Emperors Za Denguîl and Iacob

There are no histories of these two emperors other than a few things that are mentioned in passing in the history of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, which we shall put later.<sup>1</sup> Even though they began to write Iacob's, they soon abandoned it because, unless it is done while the emperor himself is alive or unless he leaves a son who commands it to be done, nobody wants to take on the work. Therefore, I shall only be able to report here the things that certain great men who were constantly in their palace have told me and those that I experienced with them, as we shall see in their due places.

Since he had no legitimate sons, Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, whose history we reported in chapter 13 of the previous book, decided to leave the empire on his death to a nephew of his who was called Za Denguîl, the son of his brother *Abeitahûn* Liçana Christôs. He therefore started introducing him by doing him many honours and having him sit near him and commanding all the great men to accompany him and, in the end, treating him as his son and heir to the empire and making him known as such. While matters were like this, however, they brought to him a bastard son of his by the name of Za Mariâm, whom he had had with a converted Christian woman of Jewish descent. When he saw him – for he had not seen him before – he was moved {[f. 401v]} by a father's affection and love and decided in his heart to give him the empire, and so he started to do fewer honours to Za Denguîl and to leave him standing and to discredit him in his absence, by saying that he was not suitable for the empire, that he was niggardly and would be very intransigent. The great men understood his intention at once <[f. 355v/344v]> and, since they ordinarily wear the colours that they see on their kings so as not to displease them, they always confirmed what he said against Za Denguîl and praised his son <highly>, showing that they all wanted to have him as their lord. Za Denguîl was thus left almost completely excluded. Six months later, however, the son died, and the emperor felt extraordinary grief, believing that it was Our Lord's punishment for what he had done to Za Denguîl. Nevertheless, because of what he had already said about him, he did not introduce him again as before, although he did honour him and show that he liked him.

At this point, the emperor's lifespan ran out and he came to his end, as we saw above in his history.<sup>2</sup> As he was about to die, he called for the great men and (as *Eraz* Athanatêus, his son-in-law, told me) he told them to give the emperorship to his nephew Za Denguîl, because it was his. The emperor had another son called Iacob, who was seven years old, by

<sup>1</sup> The first thirty chapters of the Chronicle of Susneyos concern Kings Yâ'eqob and Za Dengel and the seizure of power by Susneyos. See bk IV, chs 16–17, below.

<sup>2</sup> See bk III, ch. 14 above.

the same converted Christian woman that we mentioned before. And, either because they still wanted to flatter him at that late hour or because they wanted to have a boy emperor so that they could be absolute lords and freely do what they wished, the great men said why should they give the empire to his nephew when he had a son, and Za Denguîl was very harsh and would not give them a good life, together with many other arguments, and therefore the emperor said that they should do what they thought best. After he died, the captains and great men who were then in the army assembled and decided to make Iacob emperor. So that there would be no opposition, they very swiftly sent men to seize Za Denguîl and a cousin of his called Suzeneôs before they heard of the emperor's death. Somebody, however, told the latter that they were going to seize him and so he fled, as we shall see later in his history, which is very long. But those who went to seize Za Denguîl caught him unawares and took him prisoner. Later they put him under strong guard on an island that they call Dêc<sup>1</sup> {[f. 402]} in Lake Dambiâ, and after some time they took him to a mountain stronghold in the kingdom of Gojâm that is so secure that the only way to enter it is up ropes. Afterwards they took him <[f. 356/345]> from one place to another, and he suffered many hardships in the seven years that they held him prisoner.

Once they had Za Denguîl, the one they most feared, in their hands, they appointed Iacob emperor and he gave himself the name Malâc Çaguêd, like his father. And they moved the court from the place where Emperor Malâc Çaguêd had had it, which was called Gubâi,<sup>2</sup> to another, more suitable place nearby, which they call {Cogâ} <Gogâ>. And for seven years Empress Mariâm Cinâ, Emperor Malâc Çaguêd's wife, and *Erâz* Athanatêus and *Dêye Azmâch* Cafluhâd, his sons-in-law, and other great men governed and reaped the benefits of the empire. And in all this time there were no uprisings, because they did what they wanted at will, but there was no lack of wars with some heathens that they call Agôus and others that they call Gâlas, who always used to make many incursions into the borderlands in summer, killing many people and taking a great deal of plunder, especially cattle.

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (Dec/Daq; and Lake Dambiâ/Lake Ṭānā).

<sup>2</sup> See Glossary (Gubâi/Gubâ'ê).



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## CHAPTER II<sup>1</sup>

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### On how a priest from the seminary that the fathers of the Society have in Goa was sent to Ethiopia, and what he did here

While what we described in the previous chapter was happening in Ethiopia, the superiors of the Society in India were not neglecting the good of the sons of the Portuguese and Catholics of this empire, who, they had heard, numbered over 1,000. Indeed, with the {great} zeal that they had to find a remedy for these unsupported Christians, they very diligently tried in every way to find a possible means for fathers to reach them, but they were unable to find a method or route for that because of the Turks' extreme vigilance ever since the death of the holy father and martyr Abraham. However, since there was nothing that they would not try, they decided to ordain a dark-skinned brother so that he could take a chance dressed as a sailor. But at this time they received letters from the Portuguese in Ethiopia saying that Our Lord had taken Father Francisco Lopes to Himself and that they were left without any support and their children were in obvious danger of adopting {[f. 402v]} <[f. 356v/345v]> the customs of the local people, many of which were contrary to our holy faith. Since no white man could get through, they earnestly requested them to find some priest who was native to India and knew the language well; they thought that if he disguised himself as a sailor on some ship he might be able to conceal himself better and enter Ethiopia without being recognized.

When the father provincial saw these letters, he took them to the viceroy, who at the time was Dom Francisco da Gama, Count of Vidigueira, and to Archbishop Dom Aleixo de Meneses,<sup>2</sup> and he also told them about how strongly the fathers of the College desired to take part in that undertaking, however risky it might be, and also about his idea of sending the brother, but still they should both see what would be in the best service of Our Lord. They discussed the affair very thoroughly between themselves and then with the father provincial, and in the end they decided that the brother should not come, because he did not know the language of India so well that he did not need more time to become proficient in it. Instead, as the Portuguese in Ethiopia suggested, they should look for a secular priest who knew the language so that he could embark straight away during that favourable wind and go to the aid of those people who were in such great need; then, after he had seen the situation in the land and discussed it with the Portuguese, he would write back describing the least risky way for fathers of the Society to be able to come.

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta,' in Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 45–7.

<sup>2</sup> See Glossary (Aleixo de Meneses, Friar).

Once that had been agreed, they diligently sought a priest and found one, a very virtuous and learned man of the Brahmin caste, Belchior da Silva<sup>1</sup> by name, who as a boy had {served} <been raised> in the seminary that the fathers of the Society have in Goa. The viceroy provided him liberally with what he needed for the journey and he embarked at once for Diu. From there he left dressed as a sailor in March 1598 on a Moorish ship bound for Maçuã. After arriving on that island, he stayed there for a few days because he met a Catholic, who is still alive, whom the Portuguese had sent to see if he could find any letters from India. He then sent a message ahead to the Portuguese and set off straight away with few men, an easy prey for robbers, for there are many on that road. After four days he reached a town that they call Debaroã, <[f. 357/346]> the usual residence of the *bahâr nagâx*, the governor of all those lands, and the Portuguese went there to welcome him with great joy and contentment. They took him three days' {[f. 403]} journey on to a village called Fremonã,<sup>2</sup> in which the previous fathers had always had a church, where many other Portuguese and Catholics were waiting, and they received and welcomed him with enormous joy and they all gave many thanks to Our Lord for having shown them what Father Francisco Lopes had told them, that within a year someone would come to be with them and take care of their souls.

Like a good shepherd, he began at once to visit and tend his sheep, which gave him a great deal to do because, even though they had been without him for so short a time, some people were already straying from the path and doctrine of the holy Roman Church by circumcising their sons and doing other unlawful things that they had caught from their communication and dealings with the schismatics. He tried to remove all that from them at once by diligently teaching them what they must do and keep in accordance with Catholic doctrine, and he eventually confessed them and reduced them to the customs in which Father Patriarch Dom André de Oviedo and the fathers of the Society, <his companions,> had raised them. Because the Portuguese and Catholics are widely dispersed in many distant kingdoms, he suffered great hardships on the roads, which are very rough, and he was always going from one place to another to confess and teach them without a rest for the six years that he spent in Ethiopia, in which he always set a good example for the benefit of everyone.

They had given him some memoranda in India, and one thing that he was most urgently enjoined to do was to diligently discover what means there might be for the fathers of the Society to enter this empire. He did this very carefully and passed on all the necessary advice and warnings about this, one of which was a minute that the principal Portuguese and leaders of this Christian community drew up, which is as follows:

*On 22nd July 1602 we assembled all the Portuguese and some of our children born in Ethiopia, namely: Francisco Dias Machado, born in Setúbal, Andre Gonçalves, born in Porto, Jorge Vaz, born in Covilhã, Luiz Machado, Maurício Soares, Joam Gabriel,<sup>3</sup> together with our Father Vicar Belchior da Silva, Theodouro da Costa, Pedro Vieira, Manoel Jorge and others; and we gave counsel on the coming of the fathers and which would be <[f. 357v/346v]> the best point of entry for them so that the Turks would not encounter*

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (second Jesuit mission).

<sup>2</sup> See Glossary (Fremona/Fremoná/Fremonã/Mây Gwägwã).

<sup>3</sup> See Glossary (João Gabriel).

{[f. 403v]} *them and take them captive. And we found that there was no better port than that of Baylûl, which lies right at the entrance to the gates of the strait, on the left, opposite Mocâ, twelve leagues away, by the entrance to the Habexi channel.<sup>1</sup> And although said port is subject to a Moorish king named Dancalî, nonetheless the father vicar together with the aforesaid Francisco Dias and ourselves has agreed with Cafluhâd, the governor of this Tigrê, that he will write again during this year of 1602 asking said King Dancalî to welcome the teachers that the emperor is requesting; and in recent years the emperor has already written asking him to do the same. And since this is our decision, we subscribe hereunder in said month and era.<sup>2</sup>*

This is what the Portuguese wrote, and they made a good suggestion because, in fact, there was no safer place where the fathers could disembark and the galliots bringing them could depart again before the Turks could do them any harm from Mocâ, which is on the Arabian side but in view of Baylûl. And the king of Dancalî (Dancalî is not the king's name, but the kingdom's) could not refuse to send the fathers to the emperor, because he depends on him in such a way that the viceroy of Tigrê can take the kingdom away from him with great ease whenever the emperor commands; since that king knows this, he <always> does {everything that} <what> the emperor commands and sometimes comes to visit the viceroy of Tigrê, as I saw when Cela Christôs,<sup>3</sup> the king's brother, was *erâz*; and in 1619 I also met him at the emperor's court and I often spoke to him and to a son of his who is now king after the death of his father. Since both of them were great friends of mine and I wished to oblige them in case some need might arise, I dispatched some things to them, via the emperor, which they wanted and could not obtain. The only drawback is that the journey, once one starts going inland, is difficult, because the journey to the land of the Christians takes eighteen days, many of them through deserts with little water, and to find any in certain parts it is necessary to take a good guide. Once they enter Christian lands, they reach the residence that we have in Fremonâ within four or five days.

<sup>1</sup> The navigable channel on the African side of the southern Red Sea.

<sup>2</sup> Letter kept at ARSI, *Goa 33 I*, f. 80r-v (Anua pro. Goa 1602); see also Guerreiro, *Relação anual*, I, f. 101v-102r, p. 361.

<sup>3</sup> See Glossary (Cela Christôs/Se'ela Krestos).

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<[f. 358/347]> CHAPTER III<sup>1</sup>

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On how I, Father Pedro Páez, entered Ethiopia and on some things that happened to me on the journey

Before the priest, Belchior da Silva, and the {[f. 404]} Portuguese sent the minute that we reported above, the superiors of the Society of India were very disconsolate and concerned at being unable to find a way to accomplish what they so strongly desired. With the many years' experience that they had, they realized that the Ethiopian mission could not be carried out, let alone maintained, while the fathers were so far from the fortress whence the ships depart for Maçuâ and Çuaquêm, ports on this coast of Ethiopia. Therefore, Father Nicolau Pimenta, who was the visitor for India at the time, decided to set up a house in Diu, the Portuguese fortress whence these ships depart, which some Portuguese who lived there strongly desired and had requested. In order to make a start on this, he sent Father Gaspar Soares, a truly religious man who had great zeal for the good of souls, together with a brother. And so with great joy and contentment he embarked at once from Damão, where he was at the time, without seeking any money or help from anyone, because everything comes aplenty to him who wants nothing and even to him who seeks his desire, and certainly to him who goes after the divine with all his heart. When he arrived there, however, the devil feared the ill that would follow for him if there was a house of the Society there, and hindered it as much as he could through his ministers, the heathen inhabitants of that fortress, and they were as powerful in countering this as they are in wealth (of which they have a great deal), for wealth often achieves what its owners want. The worst thing is that on their side they had many who should have favoured us in such a holy intent.

When the heathens saw that they had support, their spirits rose and they made even more effort to achieve what they intended, and so persecution of the father became considerably worse. In the end it reached such a point that they tried to force him out of that fortress by recourse to justice, and when they did not succeed in that somebody wrote to His Majesty King Philip, the third of this name, saying that if the fathers of the Society entered Diu that land would become depopulated and his customs duties would be lost. But since <[f. 358v/347v]> the generous and most Christian king much preferred to spend the revenue from the states of India on spreading and preserving the holy faith rather than to increase it just so as to accumulate it in his treasuries, he wrote to Viceroy Aires de Saldanha with the information that he had on the entry of the fathers of the Society in Diu, saying that he did not send viceroys to India in order to increase his

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 49–58.

{[f. 404v]} revenue but to defend and extend Christendom, and therefore, if he sought to do this with the zeal that was his obligation, even if all his customs houses yielded not a single *real*, he would consider himself well served and would do him many favours. Since, he continued, the fathers of the Society worked for Christianity with such fervour, they should enter Diu and wherever else they might hope for success, and he should liberally give them everything necessary from his treasury, so that they might want for nothing at all. The viceroy received this letter with great joy and consolation, for he was very pious and zealous for the good of souls, and so he favoured the fathers to such an extent that nobody dared thereafter to oppose or speak out against them. The heathens, who had feared the fathers' arrival so much, became so fond of them once they saw how they treated them that they helped considerably with donations to build the house and church that they now have there.

Not only did King Philip recommend to the viceroy that we should enter Diu, but the following year he commanded him to ensure that he provided six galliots,<sup>1</sup> which, according to the information that he had, were enough to land the fathers safely on the coast of Ethiopia, which he was determined to do with great care. But since it was necessary at that time to send a large fleet to Sunda and keep the rest standing by in India, where they cannot be spared, he could only give two galliots, which many people also said were enough to land the fathers in the port of Baylûl, as suggested by the Portuguese of Ethiopia, whose letters had arrived by then. It was agreed that three fathers should come, and I was one of them, for [together with another father]<sup>2</sup> I had already been in Diu for some time seeking the right time to make the voyage. Thus the galliots set off from Goa to pick us up there, but on reaching the gulf they were caught in such a violent storm that they were scattered, and one put into Diu with its mast split and the other stood off Damão fortress <[f. 359/348]> with great difficulty; therefore, after remaining there for a few days, its captain decided not to press on and so sailed back to Goa. When Luís de Mendonça, the captain of the other galliot, heard that, he also returned to Goa, since everyone who understood the situation in the strait told him that he could not go alone. And it seems that it was Our Lord's great providence for matters to turn out like this because, even if we had not had the problems on going ashore that everyone feared, because of the Turks, other fathers at least would not have been able to land there afterwards except at great risk because, once the Turks learnt of the {[f. 405]} resources that had been put into this venture in India, they would have kept very close watch on the ports in the strait.

Seeing that the mission by way of the galliots was over and fearing that further difficulties would arise the following year and that no fleet could be formed, I then spoke to two Turkish merchants, friends of mine, who were servants of the pasha of Maçuâ and Çuaquêm, to see whether some route might open up for me with their help. They once asked me why I stayed in India without returning to my own land after I had been held captive for so long. I answered that they would not let me go in the ships that go to Portugal, and it could not be via Hormuz and Basra either, for that meant going through many lands of Turks. The principal one of them, who was called Raçuân Agâ, said, 'If you want to go with me, I will take you to Cairo quite safely, and from there you will have an

<sup>1</sup> One- or two-masted galleys.

<sup>2</sup> Páez is referring to Father Antonio de Montserrat, his superior.

easy journey to your land.' I replied that it would be very good of him if, when we put in at Maçuâ, I might make a quick trip to a land of Ethiopia near there to see whether there were any belongings of some fathers who had died there a short time before. He said that it would be {very} easy to get there from Maçuâ, because many caravans of Christians came there and that I would go with them and that there was enough to cover the expenses of the journey, and even if I did not find the fathers' belongings he would give me what I needed as far as Cairo. He told me that I had nothing to fear because, even if we found a new pasha, he would arrange for me whatever I wanted, and he would rather lose his own head <[f. 359v/348v]> than allow any harm to come to me. I thanked him very much for the offer and said that I would sail with him without fail, but that he should not reveal this to anyone, so that there might be no problems if it should reach the ears of the captain of the fortress; I said that to divert him and so that he would not speak to any Moors of that land who might make him change his mind.

I returned home very pleased with this and told Father Gaspar Soares, who was the superior of the house, what was happening. Although he too really wanted me to go, so many difficulties occurred to him that he dared not give it his vote. When I saw how hesitant he was, I told him not to be afraid, for I considered it a certainty that I would reach Ethiopia, and I was more sure in my heart about this voyage than if I were going to Goa; nor was this anything {{f. 405v}} new, because ever since I had been captured I had always had that very firm confidence on account of something that had happened to me while I was with Father António de Monserrate in the fortress in Muscat.<sup>1</sup> He, however, remained very irresolute and worried because the ship was in such a hurry that it seemed there was no time to write to Father Manoel de Veiga, who was on the other coast in the residence at Bandora. Nonetheless, we sent a man in a boat from Baçaim just in case, with letters in which we explained what was happening. But I already had an order from the father visitor<sup>2</sup> that, if some means of getting to Ethiopia arose and there was no time to consult him, I should listen to the advice of the captain of the fortress, Guterre de Monrroi, and of Father Gaspar Soares and then decide on what I thought best in the sight of Our Lord. We therefore went at once to speak to the captain and he was of the opinion that it was best not to waste that opportunity, and so I decided to embark even if the father provincial's reply had not arrived. When I got home I sent Raçuâm Agâ a present of fruit and sweetmeats that some Portuguese devotees of ours had given me. The next day I went to visit him and he told me <[f. 360/349]> sorrowfully that he dared not take me without the captain's permission, so that if he returned there again they would not blame him for it. I was very pleased to hear that, but outwardly I showed that I was worried, and I said that I did not want any harm to come to him on my account, so I would speak to him and come back with the answer I obtained from him. I went straight to the captain and reported to him what the Turk had said, and asked him to send for him for some reason and then say to him, 'There is a father here who wishes to go in your company. If you think that he will come to no harm on the journey, he may go. I recommend that you favour him in whatever may arise, for he is a good man.' The captain thought that the caution shown by the Turk was a good sign. Afterwards, when he spoke to him in the way I had asked, he promised to take me safely and to help me in whatever might arise, and for

<sup>1</sup> See Introduction.

<sup>2</sup> Father Nicolau Pimenta (see the beginning of the chapter).

that the captain did him many favours. Out of respect for the captain and us, the customs officials also did him favours, at which he was very pleased and considered himself highly obliged.

It also happened that the servant who took the letters crossed {[f. 406]} to Baçaim in twenty-four hours and reached Bandora in great haste; the father provincial then sent him back at once that night on a ship that was leaving for Diu. He arrived just as I was about to go on board, with a letter in which the father provincial gave many reasons why I should not trust those Turks, but at the end he said that above all I should do what I thought best in the sight of God. Therefore, without any further consultation, I took my leave at once of the fathers and brothers of that house and went on board that night in the company of the Turks, without taking any Christian with me or anyone to serve me, except a Moorish sailor that I employed on the ship. We set sail the following day, which was 22nd March 1603, and throughout the voyage the Turk Raçuân Agâ treated me very well. Because I settled down in the bow in a {poor} spot, he asked me several times to go and stay with him on the gallery, but I did not want to so as not to attract too much attention from the Moors, for even the heathens in Diu thought that I was just an Armenian, since I was dressed as one. <[f. 360v/349v]> When we entered the gates to the strait on 17th April, Raçuân Agâ called me at night and said, 'We have to agree on what we will say if there is another pasha there, so that they do not find any contradiction in us.' To that I replied that those who speak the truth cannot contradict each other, because the truth was always one and the same, and he only had to say what we had agreed in Diu. 'Now, do not be troubled,' he said, 'for, God willing, my master will be there. And if we find another, I shall die if necessary before any harm at all comes to you, because I am not a man who says one thing in your lands and does another in mine.' I replied that I was quite certain of that and I assured him that I would not care what they might do if we found a new pasha there.

Having passed the gates to the strait, we had a headwind for a few days and so we did not reach Maçuâ until 26th April. We found that the pasha had gone on pilgrimage to Mecca and had left in his place a captain called Mustadên, who was a great friend of Raçuân Agâ, out of respect for whom he did me many favours. The second time I went to visit him he told me that I could freely go wherever I liked, either to Ethiopia or to Jerusalem, and that while I was there I should imagine that I was in India, because nobody would do me any wrong {[f. 406v]} and I would want for nothing. Raçuân Agâ then took his hand and thanked him profusely for that, and he said that the best counsel would be to go straight to Ethiopia if I wanted to see the Christians who were there, and I should return from there in two months' time, and then I would go with him to Cairo, from whence I could easily get to Jerusalem, if I wished. I too thanked him profusely for the goodwill that he was showing me and the favours that he was doing for me, and said that I thought Raçuân Agâ's counsel was good, and with that I took my leave. I went away giving many thanks to Our Lord for thus having turned and softened the hearts of those who commonly have such great hatred for Christians and are so false and cruel towards everybody. When I arrived at the house of the captain of the banians – heathens from India – where I was staying, <[f. 361/350]> the Turkish captain sent me some chickens, rice and other things to eat, and he continued giving me plenty all the time I was there.

The day after I arrived in Maçuâ I sent a Moor to Father Belchior da Silva, who, I was told, was based seven days' journey from there, asking him to send some people with whom I could travel, because no one was coming to Maçuâ on those days since they were

feast days for the *Habexins*. It happened that, on that very same day, an old monk said to the Portuguese captain, who was seven or eight days' journey from Maçuâ, 'Do you know that last night I dreamt that I saw a priest of yours come out of the sea and on his forehead he had a spot of silver and another of gold, and you were going to meet him in Debaroâ?' which, as we have already said, is a town where the *bahâr nağâx* resides and is almost half-way there. The captain replied, 'You are a monk and an old man, and yet you believe in dreams? How can a priest get here through the Turks now?' The Moor arrived there eight days later with my letter and gave it to the captain, since Father Belchior da Silva was not there, and so he was amazed at what the monk had said to him. Since the viceroy of Tigrê, who was called Cafluhad, had commanded him to accompany him, as he was about to set off for the kingdom of Dambiâ, the captain informed him of what was happening and the viceroy told him to go and meet me and then go back and join him in Dambiâ.

Meanwhile, one night while I was on top of the banian's house in Maçuâ, I overheard some Turks {[f. 407]} who lived in a neighbouring house saying very seriously to each other, 'How can they let this Christian go wherever he wants without any further questions? What kind of government can allow that?' And they talked for a long while, all the time condemning the captain for giving me leave. On hearing this, I decided to move on straight away in whatever company I could find, in case they made the captain change his mind, which the Turks do readily. And so, as next day five local Christians arrived in Maçuâ together with a Catholic sent by the Portuguese captain to pick up letters from India, I arranged with them for them to take me to Debaroâ. And the banian gave me two Moors that he trusted to accompany me as well.

Having arranged to leave that night, one of those Christians told me that we could not go because news had arrived that robbers had <[f. 361v/350v]> killed two men on the road. I replied that we had to leave at once despite that, because I suspected that he was saying that so as to spend a few more days in the port on his own business, and when he saw that I was determined he said no more. On hearing that I was going, the captain commanded that I be given a mule to ride as far as Debaroâ, but since the banian said that it was too splendid for a poor man, they told him it was not a good idea for it would be stolen from me on the road, so he would have me given an ass that those Christians had brought, and he did so. I then went to take my leave of Raçuân Agâ, the Turk, who treated me warmly and told me to try to return quickly, and that if he went on to Cairo he would take me with him at his own expense, and if not he would entrust me to a friend of his, but if I stayed for a long time I should not come to Maçuâ afterwards without first finding out whether he or that same captain was there, and if it was a different captain then, I should send and ask for permission before coming. I thanked him very much for this advice and promised to write to the captain in Diu telling him everything, so that when he returned there he should reward him for this and for everything else that he had done for me. He replied that he was very glad because he had become very fond of him, for he had not seen a man of such character and nobility as him. But this Turk did not have time to return to Diu, because he died a few days later.

{[f. 407v]} I left Maçuâ on 5th May at night, and the banian captain and a Turk, a friend of his, ferried me across in a small boat and accompanied me for some distance inland to where the Christians were waiting for me, and there they took their leave. I went on my way dressed in a very old coat from a Moor, covered with a piece of white cotton cloth; the banians said that that I should dress like that in case of robbers, since there was



no caravan. I walked almost all that night on foot because the road was very rough and the ass weak, and my companions were so afraid that they dared not speak except very quietly. A little before dawn they wanted to rest a little, and to do so we went a good distance away from the road. While they were sitting down before going to sleep, they all suddenly jumped up shouting. I turned my head to see what it was and saw a lion that was already prowling around us, and it must have been only about eight to ten paces from me, so it could have leapt on me but for some thorn bushes in the way. With all the noise they made it went away, but very slowly. They threw a lot of stones in its direction and, when they thought that it had <[f. 362/351]> run off, we lay down leaving two men on watch, but soon it came past again within sight, for there was a good moon. And so we went on without sleeping and travelled through very high, rugged mountains until noon when, since it was very hot and we were very weary and sleepy, we lay down and slept under some trees. Then we continued our journey and at night reached a village of Moors. Since my shoes were badly made and I had travelled a lot on foot, my feet were already raw. The Moors who were with me saw this and, as they knew that the sheikh of that village was a friend of the banian captain, they asked him on his behalf for a mount of some kind, and he gave us another ass like the one we already had, and so I suffered a good deal of hardship on that journey.

On Ascension Day in the evening we reached a hut of some Christian herdsmen, where there were 500 cattle belonging to the viceroy of Tigrê. Since they thought that I was a Turk, they were afraid and kept their distance, but after they learnt that I was a father, they all came to kiss my hand, showing {[f. 408]} great joy, and they brought so much milk that we had plenty left over, and it came in some little straw baskets and to boil it they put red-hot stones in it. Early the next morning I took my leave and they asked me to bless their cattle, and later, when we had gone some distance, the herdsmen's wives came over a mountain calling out for us to wait. They came up weeping and said that they had not visited me the previous night because they had thought I was a Turk, and they asked me to forgive them and give them my blessing. Some of them grasped my hands to kiss them, others vied for my feet, with great affection. They detained me for some time while I consoled them, and I was more than a little edified to see their devotion. From there we went over some very rugged mountains, just climbing up and down all the time, since they had left the usual road for fear of robbers, until we reached a village of Christians. Some of them came to me at once and showed me their crosses and books, but I could not say anything to them about errors, even though they enjoyed talking, because a Moor to whom I said things in Arabic only explained to them as much as he felt like saying. They gave us a very small hut in which we stayed, but it was no small mercy because it rained very heavily that night.

The following day, 10th May, we arrived in Debaroâ, where my companions left me, except for the Catholic who had been to fetch the letters and a young Moor, the banian captain's servant, because they had only undertaken to accompany me as far as that. I lodged in a dreadful little thatched hut, <[f. 362v/351v]> and that night a Moor came who was there collecting the duties that the merchants who come from the sea pay to the *bahâr nagâx*, the governor of those lands. Appearing very irate, he said to me in Arabic, 'Who gave you leave to enter these lands? Are you not Portuguese? Well, what have you come to seek in the lands of the *bahâr nagâx*?' I replied that the Turks had given me leave to enter and that when the governor, who was a Christian, wished to know why I had

come, I would tell him, and it was not his place, as a Moor, to ask me about that. He said, 'You are bringing a lot of hidden merchandise.' I replied, 'Have a look and take whatever you find.' With that he went away. The young Moor told me that he was threatening {{f. 408v}} not to let me pass unless I gave him some merchandise, but would arrest me instead, but the next morning the Portuguese captain arrived with some other people who were coming to wait for me there, because of the letter that I had sent from Maçuâ. When the Moor heard of that, he hid and did not appear again while we were there. When I saw the Portuguese I was so overjoyed that all the past hardships were as nought to me, and I gave many thanks to God for the great mercies that he had done me, and they too would not stop thanking God, as they thought it a miracle that I had passed amidst Turks so openly and freely. They then took me to another large house, and to celebrate my arrival they slaughtered a sheep, which I could not eat because all they did was give the meat a couple of turns over the fire and they ate it like that, almost raw, as is the local custom; when they saw that I was not eating, they gave me a little milk.

We left that town the next morning and went on our way with difficulty, because it was raining heavily, and on 15th May 1603 we reached the much-desired journey's end, which was Fremonâ, for that is the name of the place where the first church of the Portuguese stands, and Father Patriarch André de Oviedo and the other fathers, his companions, lie buried in it. Before I entered, I put on a cassock and donned a cope and biretta, which I had kept hidden until then. Many people were waiting for me at the entrance to the village, and as soon as they saw me they raised a loud shout as a sign of joy. Some beat their chests, others kissed the ground and shed many tears, giving thanks to God for having seen fit to bring me and deliver me from all the perils that they know exist on the way that I came. We all entered the church and, after praying, I told them briefly, through a linguist, that I had come to accompany and serve them and that I considered all <[f. 363/352]> the hardships I had had on the journey to have been well employed since I found myself with people who, though surrounded by others who did not obey the Roman Church, faithfully preserved their faith and doctrine and showed so much devotion. From there I went to see the house in which the holy father patriarch had lived, which was round like a half orange, twenty spans across and very low, without any partition at all, and thatched with straw. I should have liked to stay in it since it had been that saint's, but I could not for the time being because it was {{f. 409}} taken up with some things belonging to Belchior da Silva, the priest. The Portuguese captain set off for the court at once as the viceroy had ordered, which was twelve to fourteen days' journey away, and I wrote a letter via him to Emperor Iacob, who had recently started to govern, advising him of my arrival and saying that, although I had arrived weary from my journey, I would have gone at once to kiss his hand, had I had permission for that, and as soon as he gave me permission, I would do so. He replied that he was delighted that I had come and had arrived safely, and I should by all means go to him after the winter,<sup>1</sup> since it was not possible at that time because it was raining heavily.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The main rainy season, from June to early September.

<sup>2</sup> This account is also found in a letter from Páez to the provincial of Goa (Fremona, 24th July 1603, in Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 11, pp. 54–6).

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## CHAPTER IV<sup>1</sup>

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### On how they seized Emperor Iacob and gave the empire to his cousin Za Denguîl, and on some things that he did that summer

At the same time as I received the reply from Emperor Iacob, the priest Belchior da Silva arrived in Fremonâ, having left over six months previously to confess the Portuguese and Catholics that are scattered in various lands, and he was overjoyed to see that he could now return to India. But first he wished to take his leave of the emperor and to finish certain matters of importance to him, and so he decided to stay here that year and go to court with me in October, when winter was over. But this did not happen because Za Denguîl, Iacob's brother, claimed the empire and almost all the great men decided to give it to him, some because they thought that he was entitled to it, as Emperor Malâc Çaguêd had declared when he was about to die, as we said above, others because they were dissatisfied with Iacob's manner of governing. Not daring to seize him without first giving the empire to Za Denguîl, they secretly brought him to the imperial city and proclaimed him emperor, and then they went to seize Iacob, who was still in his palace, quite unaware, but <[f. 363v/352v]> he escaped by taking to his horse, for he was a great horseman despite being a fifteen-year-old youngster. He took the road to some impregnable lands where one of his mother's brothers was, and {[f. 409v]} if he got in there would be impossible for anyone to get him out by force of arms, since those mountains are very high and secure and have water and provisions on top, and his uncle had many men. But before he arrived, when he was already weary from having ridden so fast, the chief of the eight to ten horsemen who were with him said, 'Lord, these are my lands. Your Majesty should rest a little, while I have some food brought.' So he dismounted and lay down under a tree, but when the man reached his people, he said to them all, 'This is the emperor, who is fleeing. Come with me so we can seize him, and make sure he does not escape, because if he does Za Denguîl will do us great harm, for he is now the emperor.' Either because he was their master or because they were afraid of what he had said, they went with him. The emperor thought that they were bringing him something to eat and so stayed there, even though many people were coming, and when they reached him they seized him without any resistance and took him to the village.

Shortly after this, the ones who were pursuing him arrived there, and so they all took him with great celebration to Za Denguîl, who now called himself Atanâf Çaguêd. Some said that they should kill him, others that they should cut off his nose and ears so that, even if he escaped, nobody would accept him again as emperor. But Atanâf Çaguêd would

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 59–64.

not agree that they should do him any harm at all and, although he was very pleased that they had caught him, even so he said that that nobleman had committed a very serious betrayal. On the great men's counsel, he commanded that they put Iacob under heavy guard at the very end of the empire, in a kingdom that they call Nareà, and he wrote at once to the captains and viceroys of the empire, who held great celebrations, particularly the viceroy of Tigrê, who was one of the principal people who had conspired in secret with him. But the Portuguese were very sad, because he displayed a great aversion to our affairs, and the priest Belchior da Silva, who also knew him and had had dealings with him, said, 'Poor Portuguese, he will not give them an easy life.' I replied that they should not grieve too much, because the hearts of kings and emperors were in the Lord's hands, and He would turn the emperor's heart as He saw fit.

While these things were happening, many local people and some monks came to talk to me about matters of the faith and to hear the sermons that I gave in church every Sunday and feast day, <[f. 364/353]> and the doctrine that the children said in their own language through questions and answers, because {[f. 410]} as soon as I arrived in Ethiopia, when I learnt that the *cartilha*<sup>1</sup> had not been translated into the local language, I translated it and made the children learn it as quickly as I could. Everyone who heard it liked it so much that they said that there was nothing like the sermons and doctrine of the Portuguese. And this grew to such an extent that news of it reached the emperor, and since he was very curious in matters of learning, for he had always occupied himself with them as a boy, even while in prison, that he at once sent a courier with a letter, which said:

May this letter from Emperor Atanáf Çaguêd reach the honoured father, teacher to the Portuguese, with the peace of Christ Our Lord. How are you? Hear these things and good news of that which Our Lord God has done for us. We were imprisoned for seven years, and we suffered countless hardships. But Our Lord God took pity on our misery and released us from imprisonment and gave us the empire and put us as the head over all, as David says, 'Lapidem quem reprobauerunt aedificantes; hic factus est in caput anguli.'<sup>2</sup> Now may the Lord himself finish well that which He has started. Hear more: We greatly desire that you come here at once and bring the books of justice of the kings of Portugal, if you have them, because we should like to see them.<sup>3</sup>

I replied to this in great haste, because the courier was returning straight away, by saying:

Most noble and mighty lord. On receiving Your Majesty's letter I was overjoyed at the good news that Our Lord God had released Your Majesty, like Joseph, from imprisonment to such great command and prosperity. Our Lord God does such things to His people to test them and so that they do not become proud when they find themselves in a high position, and so that they may have compassion for those that they see with afflictions and hardships, and so that these may come to them with hope of remedy. With this, all those who are in this condition can now come to Your Majesty, for they can say, as did Saint Paul, if we may change the name of pontiff to emperor, 'Non habemus imperatorem, qui non possit compati infirmitatibus nostris tentatum per omnia.'<sup>4</sup> And that which must give most joy to all is the desire that Your Majesty has to govern your empire, since for that purpose you wish to see even the books by which the king of <[f. 364v/353v]> Portugal governs. I greatly regret that I do not

<sup>1</sup> Catechism; see Glossary (*cartilha*).

<sup>2</sup> 'The stone which the builders rejected; the same is become the head of the corner', Psalms 117[118]:22.

<sup>3</sup> Guerreiro, *Relação anual*, Coimbra, 1607 (1931 ed.), f. 126, p. 170.

<sup>4</sup> 'For we have not an emperor [high priest] who cannot have compassion on our infirmities: but one tempted in all things like as we are, without sin', Hebrews 4:15.

have them here, because they are very good, but I shall endeavour to have them come as quickly as they may and, in the meantime, I shall take one that deals with matters of conscience, which is also very good, and I shall go as once as Your Majesty commands, to whom {{f. 410v}} may Our Lord God give whatever increase of life and estate that He can. From Fremonâ, 2nd March 1604.<sup>1</sup>

The emperor was delighted with this letter and commanded the same courier to return the next day, because he could speak Arabic, to tell me that I should certainly go in the company of the viceroy, whom he had also summoned in haste, and so I made ready as quickly as I could and, on reaching the viceroy, I told him what the emperor had commanded me to do. He replied that it was necessary to wait a while, because he had received another message that the emperor had gone in all haste with an army <drawn up> to a kingdom that they call Gojâm, where a large number of heathen Gâlas had made an incursion and were causing great damage, and he would not go until he saw whether the emperor was returning, and so I too waited. The emperor was there for a long time since the Gâlas had come with a large force and had made their incursion from three different directions, because they knew of the revolts that were occurring in the empire with the change of emperor and had therefore gathered three armies, and each one went in from its own side, as they thought that to be a good opportunity to take control of those lands. When the emperor learnt that there were large numbers of them in Gojâm, he sent word to the viceroy there not to give battle until he arrived, but since he felt that he did not need the emperor's assistance and that it was not a good idea to put off giving battle, as the Gâlas were already very close, he gave battle and was defeated with the loss of many men. The emperor was sorely aggrieved at this and refused to see him for a long time, no matter how many excuses he gave.

The Gâlas were very proud at this victory, and when the emperor came in sight of them three days later they thought little of him, and therefore, although it was very late, they decided to attack at once, saying, 'Why should we wait until tomorrow, since they are so close?' Splitting into three squadrons, they advanced to where the emperor was, and when he saw this he commanded his men to form three squadrons as well and, taking his place in the middle one, he went forth to encounter them. On coming close, one squadron of Gâlas charged so furiously that it soon put the {emperor's} left-hand squadron to flight; they then did the same <[f. 365/354]> to the right-hand squadron, so that the emperor remained alone with his squadron facing the Gâlas' battle corps. When the captains saw that, they decided to turn and told the emperor to go with them to a nearby mountain, but when he heard this he dismounted from his horse, put down his spear and {{f. 411}} took up his sword and round shield, saying 'I shall die here fighting. The rest of you run can away to the mountain and find safety, but you will not be able to flee from one thing: people will say that the emperor whom you made yesterday was abandoned by you today at the start of battle.' At this, they all resolved to die without turning tail, and they attacked and fought so valiantly that they put the Gâlas to flight. When the rest of the emperor's men, who had fled up the mountain, saw this they turned on the Gâlas who were chasing them and put them to flight as well, and so they all followed up the pursuit until nightfall separated them. And although it only lasted a short time because they had started late, even so they had slaughtered 1,700 men, and the next day the emperor

<sup>1</sup> The Portuguese translations of the emperor's letter and of Páez's reply deviate slightly from the letter in Spanish from Páez to Tomás de Iturén, dated 14 September 1612 (see Beccari, *RESOI*, 11, p. 222).

commanded them to search the field, and they also killed some who had been unable to flee and had hidden in the bush.

Afterwards, the emperor received reliable news from his spies of where another Gâla army was and, in the desire to catch up with it, he left the flat road and went up over some mountains that were so rugged that he was forced to go on foot for a long time. When he caught sight of them, he drew up his men to give battle. The Gâlas too were unaware of the others' defeat and approached very confidently, but although they fought well at first the emperor eventually defeated them and killed many of them. Therefore, as he could see how Our Lord was helping him, he decided to go in search of the third Gâla army, even though it was a long way away. But his spies came and told him that they had already gone back to their lands with some cattle that they had taken. He therefore turned back to a mountain where he was told that 400 Gâlas were guarding their possessions, and even though it was a very secure stronghold, he scaled it and slaughtered them all, at which he gave many thanks to Our Lord for doing him so many mercies, and he returned to some lands where he had decided to overwinter.

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## CHAPTER V<sup>1</sup>

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### Which reports some things that happened in Fremonâ while the emperor was at war

<[f. 365v/354v]> While the emperor was in Gojâm involved in the wars that we have mentioned, I stayed in Fremonâ all the time performing the Society's ministries. That old monk who had told the Portuguese captain that he had dreamt that a father was coming out of the sea, as we mentioned above, often came to talk to me and asked me many things about our holy faith. {[f. 411v]} One day, when I was with a number of people, he came in and said that he had something to discuss with me alone, and so everyone left, except for a Portuguese who was my interpreter. He at once threw himself at my feet, prostrate on the ground. When I saw that, I hurriedly bent down and raised him in my arms, asking why he had done that and saying that if he wanted something of me I would do everything I could with great pleasure. With tears in his eyes, he said, 'I want you to confess me.' I made him sit down and asked what had led him to want to confess so much, because when he had spoken to me before he had not appeared to be very attached to our ways, although he did concede some of the arguments that I used to him against the errors that they have. He replied that one night, while he was asleep, he thought he could see a very venerable man who, with a joyful expression, was saying to him, 'If you want to be saved, confess at once with this father who has just arrived.' 'But when I woke up I thought nothing of it, since I thought it was a dream. And two nights later, again while I was asleep, he appeared to me again with a stern expression and said to me, "Why have you not done what I ordered? Go and confess at once." And despite the fact that I woke up somewhat startled, I did not take a great deal of notice, although I did wonder what it might have been. But last night he appeared to me again, looking very angry, and said to me, "Why do you not do what I command? Go and confess at once, and do everything that that father orders you to do." I then woke up so afraid that I could not get back to sleep. So as soon as it was dawn I set off for here straight away.'

When I heard this, I was overjoyed for the good of his soul and replied that I would very willingly confess him, but he first had to promise to obey the holy Roman Church and to keep its doctrine, and tell me how he would behave later with the other monks. He replied that he was one of the oldest in that monastery, which is very large, and so he would necessarily have to go along with them <[f. 366/355]> as before, keeping the Sabbath, being baptized every year and doing all the other public things that they do, because otherwise he would stand out and would even come to harm, but he would come

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 65–9.

to confess in secret whenever I told him to. To that I replied that he could not do any of those things if he wanted to confess and, since the man that he said had appeared to him had commanded him to do everything that I ordered, he should fulfil the command, because I would only tell him to do what was necessary for his salvation. He {[f. 412]} insisted for a long time, but after much reasoning he went away without confessing, and remained like that for almost two years, as ought to be mentioned later, but I shall put it here so as not to lose the thread of what happened to him.

This monk (as I was saying) spent a long time without daring to confess, and I went to where the emperor was and remained there for a long time, and even after I returned to Fremonâ he took so long to come to me that I had lost track of him, when one day he came to our house. Begging forgiveness for the pusillanimity that he had previously had on such an important matter, he asked me to confess him, because he was now determined to do whatever I ordered him to do and he would not join his fellow monks in anything that was against our holy faith or the good customs of the Roman Church. I then explained to him all the matters on which we have controversy, and he promised to abide by everything I told him and to obey the holy Roman Church. And so I instructed him on how he should prepare for confession in general, which took him three days, and then he confessed with great devotion. While returning to his monastery, he slept in a nearby village and fell so ill that he could not continue his journey. Some local people went to visit him and saw that he was seriously ill, and one of them asked him if he would like him to call some monk to confess him. He replied that they should call no one but me, because he was now of the Roman Church and he would die under obedience to it. Everyone was very surprised to hear this, because he was considered a man who observed his beliefs very seriously. When he again insisted that they should call me, a Catholic who was present came to me with a message. I went at once and he confessed again with great devotion, giving thanks to God for waiting for him until then.

The monks of his monastery soon heard of what was happening and some of them came <[f. 366v/355v]> to take him away, but he told them that they no longer had anything to do with him, because he was under obedience to the holy Roman Church, without which they could not be saved. And he talked to them about this for a while, exhorting them to do what he had done, at which they became very angry. Without insisting with him any further, they went to inform the abbot of the monastery, who sent them back with a message. When they arrived three days later they found him already expiring, accompanied by two fathers who had come from India<sup>1</sup> After he died, the monks said that they would take him to be buried in their church. {[f. 412v]} The fathers replied that he had asked to be buried in ours, and that it was right to do so since he was a member of it. But in the end the fathers could see that the monks did not want to listen to reason and were determined to take him by force, so they let them, contenting themselves in the fact that they all knew he had died a Catholic.

At the same time as this monk had first come for me to confess him, a local man also came and told me that if I did not want the locusts (which do considerable damage here) to eat our village's crops, I should arrange for a certain measure of grain from each field to be given to a Moor and the people who accompanied him, and when the locusts came he would take one in his hand and, for as long as he walked, the locusts would also carry

<sup>1</sup> These fathers had arrived in the two years since the monk had first met Pedro Páez.



on flying, and once he stopped, they would settle at once and destroy the crops without leaving a single green leaf. I replied that the Portuguese did not believe in witchcraft and would not give anything because, even if that Moor came and sat there with his locust, I was not afraid of any harm coming to us, unless God wanted to punish us and then we would take it in penance for our sins. So he went away saying that afterwards we would see, and that left some people rather afraid, even some of our Catholics. A few days later, the village people came weeping and told me that they were doomed and I should give them some remedy, because there were so many locusts near their crops that they covered the fields and were destroying everything. When I saw how afflicted they were, I felt sorry for them and said, 'The remedy is to pray to Our Lord to deliver us from such a great plague.' I went with them to the church and we recited the litanies, <[f. 367/356]> and then I performed exorcisms in the direction where the locusts were and blessed some water for them to sprinkle on their crops, which they did with great trust in Our Lord. And in His infinite mercy he saw fit that, when the locusts reached the edge of our land and were destroying all the crops around, they did no harm at all to our village's crops nor to those outside where they sprinkled holy water. One Portuguese had a cultivated field outside and had sprinkled holy water on it, and when the locusts came eating up to the edge of his field they flew over it to the other side to eat the local people's crops without touching his, as he told me, since he had seen it with his own eyes.

One peasant who was not a Catholic also asked another, who was, for a little holy water, and as he took it to sprinkle on his crops a neighbour of his made fun of him {[f. 413]} and tried to persuade him to stop that and not to pay so much heed to the ways of the Portuguese. But he refused, saying that he had great faith in them, and so he took the water and sprinkled it on his field, and later, when the locusts came, they did no harm to it at all, whereas they destroyed another field next to it belonging to the peasant that had made fun of him. He was astonished at that and regretted not having sprinkled holy water as well.

Soon after that so many locusts came once again that they covered the sun like very dense clouds. They arrived at our village before noon, which was the time when they move on, because they rise up at eight o'clock, when the sun is already hot, and fly on without settling until the afternoon; despite that, they flew around in the air until very late, at which everyone was very astonished and some thought that it was because the Moor was there with his locust. When I saw this, I performed the exorcisms and blessed some water, which the people took to sprinkle everywhere. Even so, they settled on the crops, which were really beautiful, and covered them so that they could hardly be seen, at which everyone was very sad, thinking that they would not leave anything, since wherever they settled not a green leaf was left. But it was Our Lord's will that they took flight the next day at eight or nine o'clock without doing any damage at all, at which <[f. 367v/356v]> everyone gave many thanks to God. The local people were amazed and some came to ask me to give them some medicine so that the locusts would not harm their crops, to which I replied that the Portuguese had no medicine other than prayer and trust in Our Lord. A very noble young man said to me, 'Now we have seen with our own eyes the marvels that they used to tell us about the previous fathers. It can only be that you have the true faith, and so I shall not leave this Church ever again.' Shortly afterwards he confessed, and he has persevered until now, setting a great example. Furthermore, through the Lord's mercy, it is now many years since the locusts came as they used to.

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## CHAPTER VI<sup>1</sup>

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### On how I went with the viceroy of Tigrê to where the emperor was and how well he received me and our affairs

At the end of April 1604, the viceroy heard that the emperor was returning victorious from the war, and he at once sent to me to give me the news and to say that it was now time to depart, and so I got ready {{f. 413v}} and went with him. The priest Belchior da Silva also went with him for three days of the journey, and then he took his leave and returned to our residence in Fremonâ in order to embark in August on a ship from Diu that was in Maçuâ, while that Turkish captain who was my friend was still residing there, in case there happened to be some change later and the port was closed. Our Lord took him safely to Diu and Goa, where Viceroy Aires de Saldanha and the Most Reverend Signor Dom Aleixo de Menezes, the archbishop of Goa, rewarded him very well for his work here with the Portuguese and Catholics. I continued my journey with the viceroy, taking with me two boys, sons of Portuguese, who already knew the *cartilha* that I had translated into their language. And the viceroy loved to hear them so much that on several afternoons he had them called {to his tent} so that they could recite it to him, and he would say to them, 'How did they teach you so many good things in such a short time? Our monks never teach anything, and all they are good for is eating and drinking.' When I went to his tent, which I did most days, he would have it carpeted throughout even though it was very large, and he would have me <[f. 368/357]> sit near him while his monks were further away. One of the more serious of them was so annoyed at this that he even remarked to the viceroy's servants how in the world it could be that he always had his tent carpeted for a foreign priest whereas he showed them, his own teachers, so little honour. The viceroy laughed heartily when he heard this, and even then he did not show him any more than he had before.

When we arrived in the kingdom of Dambiâ, he left the men accompanying him, of whom there were a large number, {on a plain} in the tents and, taking a few horsemen, he told me to go with him to visit the old empress, his mother-in-law, who lived some five leagues from there. When we arrived she received me with great honour, having me sit near her on equal terms with the viceroy and speaking with words of great courtesy. When I took my leave, she commanded her people to lodge me very well and give me everything I needed from her kitchen, which they did thoroughly.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta,' Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 71–6.

<sup>2</sup> ARSI, MS Goa 42 has a new paragraph here; BPB, MS 778 does not.

The next morning we returned to the tents and journeyed on towards the emperor so slowly that although we could have reached there from Tigrê in twenty days, we took forty. A league or so before we arrived, the viceroy made camp and sent to ask the emperor for permission to enter. When the messenger returned, we went and found him on a very broad plain in the land that they call Ondeguê, beside the famous lake that divides the kingdom of Gojâm from that of Dambiâ. He was {[f. 414]} in some very tall houses that he had had built at that time in order to overwinter there and to subjugate that land, which was not obeying him well. There were two tall wooden fences with very spacious compounds inside. When we arrived at the gate in the first one, where there were some guards, they made us wait for a long time. Then a captain came out and told the viceroy to enter and, leaving us at the gate in the second fence, he went off inside. They made us wait there much longer. Then a great lord, who was called Lâca Mariâm, came out and told the viceroy that he was welcome and the emperor was commanding him to enter. Coming to me, he asked me why I was there and told me to wait a while, and he would tell the emperor that I was there, and he would be very pleased. He went in with the viceroy and then the emperor's steward came out and took me inside.

<[f. 368v/357v]> The emperor was in a very long, broad room, seated, as is the custom of the emperors of Ethiopia, on a very well arranged bed with very beautiful curtains. He was a tall, imposing man of dark complexion, with large eyes, a long, slender nose and thin lips, and they told me he was twenty-six years old. Some great men of the empire were standing to his right and, to his left, also standing, were the superiors of some monasteries in Tigrê who had come with the viceroy. When I entered, I approached to kiss his hand and then withdrew to where the viceroy was, who was the last of all of them. The emperor told me to cover my head again and sit down. I put on my biretta, but remained standing. And he then signalled to me with his hand to sit on a dais that was in front of the bed, with rich carpets. There was no chair at all in the room, and they do not put one there except when {he} <the king> wants to sit on it, and when he gets up off the bed he normally only sits on that dais, which is somewhat raised, and he rests against some brocade or velvet cushions. When I had sat down, he asked about the supreme pontiff, the king and some affairs of Portugal and India, on which he spent about a quarter of an hour, addressing the others very little. When the viceroy of Tigrê saw this, he said to the Portuguese captain, who was nearby as he was my interpreter, 'What will that monk' (who was among the others) 'say now, now that the emperor is doing this? He was complaining before that I had my tent carpeted when the {[f. 414v]} father was coming.' Afterwards, the emperor told me to go and rest and commanded his people to give me a very good house and everything I needed, which they did in great plenty all the time that I was there.

He summoned me the next morning and I found him on top of the houses {on a veranda} from which once could see the lake and wide, beautiful fields. With him were the principal lords {of the court} and some monks and secular learned men. He had me sit {near} <next to> him and told all the others to sit down as well a little further away, and he said to me at once that he would like to hear something about the matters on which they had controversy with us.<sup>1</sup> I replied that they could ask what they liked, and I would <[f. 369/358]> explain how we understood it. They started to ask questions and,

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (religious controversy).

on that day and many others when we were in the emperor's presence, from morning until evening, we dealt with almost all their errors just as we explained them in their due places in book 2 of this *History* [and so I shall not report them again here] and, through the Lord's mercy, I always got the better of them and left them unable to answer. Some of those who were there understood the truth well, and two of the most principal monks told me in secret that they had understood perfectly well that the doctrine that I upheld was true, but that they had to argue against it in the disputations because they were afraid of the others who were there and later on, if time allowed, they would declare themselves. I replied that they should put forward their arguments as strongly as they could, so that the truth could be better understood thereby, but they should be very aware of the obligation that they had not to deny or hide it for fear of men. One of them, however, died without speaking to me again about this; the other one, who is called *Abba Za Manuel*, now openly defends our holy faith and confesses and communes in our church in front of everybody, without being afraid of anyone.

The emperor, too, who was very quick-witted and well read in their books, because he had studied almost all the time as a boy, soon started understanding the truth, and when he found a difficulty he would call for me alone and ask me questions and put forward the arguments that he could find in opposition, and he often said in private, in front of people that he trusted, that he very much enjoyed listening to our affairs. The viceroy of Tigré once replied to him that His Majesty would enjoy hearing not only what I said but also what I taught the boys, because they were very good things, and so he called for me and told me to bring the boys. When they recited {[f. 415]} part of the *cartilha* in front of him, he praised it all highly and said that if I had that written down I should give it to him so he could look at it at leisure. I then sent for a *cartilha* that I had brought on purpose, very nicely written out, in case I had an opportunity to show it to him, and he was very pleased with it. Afterwards he told me, 'Now all I have to do is see your Mass and hear a sermon. You will not deny me this, and I should like it to be on Sunday.' I replied that I would do everything as His Majesty commanded. And they put up a very large tent inside the inner fence, where I arranged <[f. 369v/358v]> an altar as well as I could and, on the gospel side they put up another small tent, slightly separate, where they put the emperor's chair and dais. He asked the Portuguese captain whether I preached sitting down or standing. He replied that in our lands the churches had a place up high arranged for this, but since there was no such place for it here I preached sitting on a chair. He therefore commanded that one be put near the altar, for only his could be put in there.

Very early on Sunday, I took the best ornaments that I had and arranged the altar and put up two images of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. Many monks and great lords and so many other people came that, although the tent was large, it was not enough for a twentieth of the people who gathered there. When the emperor came in, I began the Mass by censuring in the manner customary on solemn feast days and, after saying the Gospel, I had it read from their book, so that they might better understand the subject on which I was going to preach. It was Sunday *infra octavam corporis Christi*,<sup>1</sup> and so I took as my theme '*Homo quidam fecit coenam magnam et vocavit multos*.'<sup>2</sup> I explained how not even all men – or the world – could make a great supper, and in fact there was only One who made one, and

<sup>1</sup> Sunday in the octave of Corpus Christi, the second Sunday after Whitsunday.

<sup>2</sup> 'A certain man made a great supper and invited many', Luke 14:16.

such a One that His power was equal to His will, and, resolving to show His treasures and riches, His great liberality and magnificence, he made a great supper. I also said why it was called supper and why great, and the preparation that the guests needed in order to partake in it. And having preached for about an hour, I said that I was going to cut short the rest that I had so as not to be tedious. But the emperor sent word to me by a page boy not to leave anything out because he was very much enjoying listening, and so I went on until I finished, taking about half an hour. When the Mass ended and the emperor left, {[f. 415v]} one of the principal old monks said at the door of the tent in front of many people, 'I truly do not know what separates us from the Portuguese. Are not all the things that this father says divine things?' When I spoke to him afterwards, he said 'May God Our Lord fulfil the desires of your heart. I cannot explain how much <[f. 370/359]> I enjoy listening to you. What we did not know you have taught us, and what we did know you have explained better. Henceforth, regard me as one of your Portuguese, because in truth I am.' I replied that I would regard him as my father and would serve him in every way I could. The emperor then sent the most splendid dinner from his kitchen and, in the afternoon, he called for me and asked me in detail about the meaning of the vestments and certain ceremonies of the Mass, and praised everything highly.

The following day the old empress arrived with two married daughters to visit the emperor and, on hearing how I had said Mass and preached, she asked the emperor to have me preach again. Although it was already dark, he sent a great man to tell me on his behalf that he would esteem it highly if I preached the next day because the empress was requesting it very much, and she would not rest until she heard a sermon. I replied that I would do what His Majesty commanded, but I wished to know on which Gospel the empress would like me to preach. He replied that it should be on the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady, of whom she was a devotee. I prepared myself that night but, early the next morning as I was about to go, a message arrived from the emperor saying that some very important business had come up that he could not put off, and the sermon should be left until the next day because he did not want to miss it. The empress, who was waiting, sent at once to ask at what time the sermon would be, and I replied that I had not gone because the emperor had sent word that it should be left until the next day. Very early, they put up the tent in the same place as before, and I arranged everything as I had previously. When it was time, the emperor and the empress with her daughters came and many more people gathered than the first time, but they could not hear because the great men filled the tent. After the Gospel, I began to preach standing up, because I could not find a chair. The emperor noticed at once and, seeing that there was no time to have one brought, he rose from his own and sent it to me, and he sat on the dais on a crimson velvet cushion, judging that even though he was the emperor it was not appropriate for the vested priest to preach standing up while he was seated. {[f. 416]} It is noteworthy <[f. 370v/359v]> that, although he was the emperor and had all the majesty that they customarily have, he gave up his chair to a poor foreign priest in front of all the great men of Ethiopia and many who did not like our holy faith.

Although the tent was so full of people, there was complete silence throughout the sermon, and the empress and some ladies shed many tears because of it. When I had finished, the emperor sent word to me that they would like to hear again what I had said in the other sermon about the preparation that was necessary in order to commune, and so I spoke again on that topic saying different things from the ones I had said before and

taking new authorities from Scripture, at which the emperor and those who had heard the other sermon were amazed, because they do not preach in Ethiopia. Although they started preaching a short time ago, because the emperor commanded some monks to do so, they soon gave up, and so the common people hardly receive any teaching. After Mass, the emperor and empress left with all those lords and, as he entered the palace, the emperor sent word to me that if I was not too tired he would like to have a word with me. {I went at once} and, on going up to a veranda, I found him with the empress and several of the great men. Having me sit near him, he thanked me very much and praised the sermon, and said, 'Your Reverence should give many thanks to God because, in the very short time since you entered our lands, you have achieved a great name for virtue and learning. I strongly recommend one thing to you: always try to live up to the opinion that we have of Your Reverence through your works, and be very aware that the flesh always fights against us and defeats all those that it catches unawares.' I kissed his hand, saying that he was doing me a great favour in warning me of such an important matter, and that I trusted in Our Lord, who had seen fit for them to have that opinion without my deserving it, and that I would also consider it a boon if He gave me grace to fulfil that which His Majesty recommended to me. With that, the emperor dismissed me, saying that I should go and rest.

When I had left, the empress said in front of the Portuguese captain, 'Truly, if I were to hear <[f. 371/360]> this father often, I think I would abandon everything {[f. 416v]} and go off to the desert.' That same afternoon, while I was at home, a lady sent word to me that God should reward me for the great good and honour that I had done her, for, if she lived, she would not forget the obligation under which I had placed her. I did not know who she was or why she had sent that message, but the person who had brought it said that she was a very noble lady with whom one of the great men of the empire was entangled, and he did not want to marry her because of his position, but when he left the sermon he said, 'The father spoke for me. May God give me grace to find a way out of the state that I am in.' On arriving home, he sent her some very fine presents, saying that he wanted to marry her at once because they could not remain as they were. She was sending me this message since she knew that he had done that because of what I had said in the sermon. I replied that I was an outsider and, as such, without knowing anything about that, I had spoken explaining how serious and dangerous a thing it was to be in mortal sin and the great purity of soul that was needed to be able to receive that highest sacrament, but I said that I was very pleased that it had yielded such an outcome and delight for Her Ladyship.

Someone who was present at both these sermons and at all the disputes that I had with the learned men in front of the emperor was a son-in-law of the old empress, a man very given to learning, and the principal man of Ethiopia, for which reason he was called *Erâz Athanatêus*, which means 'Chief Athanasius', and he was the chief of all the empire, and so, on the death of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, his father-in-law, he governed the empire for seven years with the empress, as we said in chapter 1 of this book. I went to visit him one day, and he commanded all his men to leave the house, and he began to speak about what had been discussed in the disputations and conceded what I had said, saying that no man who understood the books could deny any of that. 'Then why', I asked, 'does Your Lordship contradict me so much in front of the emperor?' He replied that it was because he dared not reveal his heart to him, for they were at odds over some differences that they had had. And after talking for a long time, he said I should come often, for he wished to

discuss matters of faith at leisure, and I should send him the boys every day so he could hear <[f. 371v/360v]> the doctrine. From that time onwards, whenever I was late because of my occupations, he called for me and we always talked about matters of the books, and he had the *cartilha* copied out, since he greatly esteemed it,<sup>1</sup> and no day passed without the boys {[f. 417]} going to recite it to him. When the empress heard of that, she too commanded that they should go to her house, and so they went every afternoon, and when they had finished she would have them eat a snack in her presence and then send them to the house of *Eráz* Athanatêus, where many lords and ladies customarily gathered to hear them, and with that they became fond of our affairs.

<sup>1</sup> See *Ex litteris annuis Prov. Goanae an. 1609*, in Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 11, p. 175.

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## CHAPTER VII<sup>1</sup>

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### On how the emperor decided to give obedience to the holy Roman Church and wrote to the supreme pontiff and His Majesty King Philip

Since Emperor Za Denguil was very intelligent and well read in the books of Ethiopia, he easily recognized their errors and he decided with Lâca Mariâm, whom we mentioned above, and other great men whom he trusted, to give obedience to the Roman Church and make all his empire receive its holy faith. He summoned me in order to discuss this with me while he was alone with Lâca Mariâm. When I arrived, he made me sit very close to him, and he took a gold cross that he wore on his chest on a magnificent chain and told me to swear to keep what he was about to tell me secret from the people of Ethiopia. I replied that my word was enough for me to die before I revealed what he might {say} <reveal> to me in secret, since fathers did not have the habit of swearing. ‘What harm is there in swearing’, he said, ‘if the matter is lawful and necessary and afterwards the oath is kept, for my peace of mind? In any case, Your Reverence must do this, because afterwards you will like what I am going to say.’ I therefore swore, and he also gave the oath to the Portuguese captain, who was the interpreter, and then he said, ‘Your Reverence’s words have pierced my heart and your arguments have won over my understanding and I have formed a good opinion of what you teach. And, most of all, you have confirmed to me what you {proved} <seek> in the disputations, that <[f. 372/361]> no one but the Roman pontiff can be the universal pastor of the Church and vicar of Christ on earth, and so anyone who denied him obedience would be denying Christ Himself and would remain outside His Church. I have therefore decided to obey him and to request that he send me a patriarch and fathers to teach my people. And to establish this {[f. 417v]} more firmly, I shall ask King Philip to send me his daughter to marry my son, and thus we shall be forever united.’<sup>2</sup>

When I heard these things, which I was not expecting so soon, the joy and consolation that filled my soul were as great as such matters deserved and such that I could never express them in words, and I said, ‘May Our Lord God give Your Majesty many years of life to see the fulfilment of such great and important things for the spiritual good of this empire. As for the coming of the king’s daughter, I am sure that she will not be able to, because she is very young, and the sea that must be crossed is very wide and dangerous. In everything else that Your Majesty wants of the supreme pontiff and the king of Portugal, I do not believe that they will put any hindrance.’ ‘If it cannot be the king’s daughter’, he

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his ‘Historia de Ethiopia a alta’, Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 77–83.

<sup>2</sup> This request is confirmed in the letters reproduced on ff. 418v–419v. It is a subject that crops up in several examples of Ethiopian historical and legendary literature (see Ramos, *Historias Etiopes*).



replied, 'he will send me a princess of the royal house and I shall be content with that. Is Your Reverence not very pleased,' he then said, 'that although many fathers have come to Ethiopia Our Lord has reserved this for Your Reverence alone?' 'I give many thanks to Our Lord God,' I replied, 'because of all the emperors that there have been in Ethiopia he has chosen Your Majesty for a matter of such greatness and such service to Him, and because He has allowed me, who do not deserve it, to see that which I have most desired.' 'Well, then,' he said, 'let us not waste time. I shall write at once. Your Reverence must also write about what you have seen and that it is necessary for some men to come to protect my person and to enable me to do what I desire more freely, because I do not trust some of mine.'

The next day, he had it proclaimed that anyone who swore a lie by Our Lady, if it were proven against him, would lose his property, because I had explained in my last sermon what a serious thing it was to swear a lie by Our Lady. When I heard this, I went straight to the palace, because he had also had it proclaimed that nobody should keep the Sabbath, and I said to him, 'Lord, it does not seem to be time yet for Your Majesty to stake everything. I think <[f. 372v/361v]> it would be better to go more slowly, so that it may penetrate gently.' 'Because they will kill me?' he laughed. 'What greater boon could there be for me than to die for the true faith as emperor?' 'It will be a great boon for Your Majesty,' I said, 'but the empire will be doomed.' Lâca Mariâm, who was the only one present, then intervened, saying, 'Lord, the father loves Your Majesty with his heart and is therefore giving counsel of great importance, for things to be introduced gently.' {[f. 418]} The emperor then changed the subject and said, 'I have written to the pope, to the king and to the viceroy of India. But I do not want a patriarch to come from there; I want it to be Your Reverence instead.' I replied, 'Lord, that cannot be by any means. He will have to come from there and there alone, and he will be such a person as will satisfy Your Majesty.' He replied, 'I wish to know none other than Your Reverence.' But after many arguments, I persuaded him to have the letters copied onto paper, since they were on parchment and were very bulky, and to request a patriarch. He was sending a monk as ambassador, but afterwards he dared not go for fear of the Turks, and so he handed me the letters for me to send them in secret. I shall put the transcriptions of them here,<sup>1</sup> and would point out that the baptismal name of this emperor was Za Denguil, and that is what people usually call him now, but as we said above in chapter 4 he titled himself Atanâf Çaguêd when they gave him the empire, and he refers to himself thus in the letters.

Letter from the emperor of Ethiopia to His Holiness, of 26th June 1604  
*May this letter sent by the emperor of Ethiopia, Atanâf Çaguêd, reach the honoured father, humble, virtuous and holy shepherd Clement, pope of the honoured land of Rome. Peace be to Your Holiness. May the peace of Christ Our Lord, who shared poverty with the poor and honour with the honoured, keep the person and life of Your Holiness like the apple of His eye. Amen. How is Your Holiness? Hear, Lord, that which we write. While we were in our empire, there came a father who has on his neck the yoke of the Law of Christ, Pedro Páez by name of the House of Jesus, and he has given us particular news of how Your Holiness works to remove sins, going so far as to spill blood. May everlasting God, who is the Head, have you reach the*

<sup>1</sup> The originals of these letters written or rewritten by Páez have apparently disappeared (they are not in the ARSI or BPB collections, at least).

*end. And when we heard this news that Your Holiness always takes the path of truth, we were joyful and content. <[f. 373/362]> Praise be to God, who has given us a good shepherd to guard the flocks with health and judge the poor with truth. He has also told us how Your Holiness helps Christians in all their needs, giving them strength and fulfilling their desires, adopting from Saint Paul that which he said in his Epistle to the Galatians, 'Dum tempus habemus operemur bonum ad omnes, maxime autem ad domesticos fidei,'<sup>1</sup> {[f. 418v]} and therefore Your Holiness principally helps Christian kings in all ways. Therefore, since God has given us the empire of our forefathers, we wish to have friendship with Your Holiness and with our brother King Philip of Spain. And to establish this more firmly, we ask him to send us his daughter to be married to our son and, with her, fighting men to help us because we have in our land some heathen enemies, who are called Gâlas; if we go against them, we do not find them, for they flee; and if we withdraw, they attack where we are not, like robbers; and therefore, to destroy them, we request that he sends us men and craftsmen of all crafts and fathers to teach, so that we may be in one heart and in one body, and so that the faith of Christ that was lost at the hand of the heathens may be firm, whereby peace and love may be with us. My forefathers desired this in the past, but it was not God's will: they were unable to do so because the Turks were in the way with their forces. This time the island where they are can easily be taken, wherefore we beg Your Holiness to urge our brother to fulfil that which we request of him, and may it be at once without delay. We are writing this briefly to Your Holiness because we know that you will fulfil our desires. Furthermore, may the fathers who come be so virtuous and learned that they can teach us that which we need for our souls. I write no more: a good listener needs few words.*

The emperor commanded the secretary to write up to this point in his language and script, and told me to add that he was giving obedience to His Holiness and that he was requesting men, not to go against the Gâlas, but to guard his person and so that he could better introduce the holy Roman faith into his empire without those who did not like it daring to oppose it. As for the Gâlas, through divine virtue he had defeated them and they would not dare return. But he wrote in that form because he did not trust the secretary very much, and he dared not write in his own hand because, if the letter happened to be intercepted and his intention was revealed before the men arrived, he feared that they would <[f. 373v/362v]> slay him. And for that reason he also wrote in the same manner to His Majesty, the transcription of which is as follows:

Copy of the letter from the emperor of Ethiopia to His Majesty, of 26 June 1604  
*May this letter written by the emperor of Ethiopia, Atanâf Çaguêd, reach {[f. 419]} our brother Philip, king of kings of Spain. Peace be to Your Majesty. May the peace and love of Christ Our Lord and the sign of the holy Cross be ever with Your Majesty. How are you? As we came from a war and arrived where we would overwinter, there came here a father, Pedro Páez by name, of whom everyone had said to me that he was virtuous and holy. He gave us particular news of Your Majesty's kingdoms and of your health, at which we rejoiced greatly and gave thanks to God, who has given you such prosperity that no enemy can prevail against you. May Our Lord God give Your Majesty many more years of life and bring that which you*

<sup>1</sup> Galatians 6:10, '[Therefore,] whilst we have time, let us work good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith.'

have started to a good end. Hear, Sire: Your Majesty is well aware that our forefathers of old had love and allegiance in the time of Emperor Atanáf Çaguéd,<sup>1</sup> when a Moor called Granh came to Ethiopia and destroyed all the churches and reigned in our land, and when they sent to D. Joam for help he sent Portuguese men with their captain, Dom Cristóvão da Gama.<sup>2</sup> And together we fought the Moor and obtained victory, with the help of mighty God on high, who raises up the humble and casts down the proud. After that there was peace and quiet, since the strength and command of that Moor, who did not fear God, were broken. The Portuguese were given great honour, and they wanted for nothing until their deaths, and their sons are now with us. So may we too have that love and allegiance that our forefathers had, because we are Christians. Now too we have some enemies who are called Gâlas and are destroying our land. When we go against them, we do not find them, because they flee, and when we return home, they fall like robbers upon those who are near them, and then withdraw. We therefore beg Your Majesty to send us fighting men, and also your daughter to be married to our son, so that our friendship may be firm and we may be in one body and one heart, because we have a son aged seven years and we have heard that your daughter is three, so that we may raise them together with the milk of wisdom and teach them the Holy Scripture. And I therefore greatly desire that Your Majesty send her with many fighting men and craftsmen of all crafts; and may it be at once without delay, so that there may be peace and love between us since we are united in the faith of Christ, and so that this land may not be doomed, for it is a land of Our Lady and <[f. 374/363]> of Christ our Redeemer. The Moors have zeal for their sect and help its members; may Your Majesty also {[f. 419v]} also have zeal for your faith, which is more than everything. As for what we have said, that you send us your daughter, do not think that it is for any purpose other than for our friendship to be firmly established and to be a prison of peace for later. May God see fit to fulfil our wishes and achieve our desires, for He is omnipotent.

Hear also, brother, now that our affairs are going in this manner, in order to establish them firmly, may a viceroy come and stay on the island of Maçuâ, and my captain will stay on the mainland at Adeconô (Arquico), so that power may be in our hand rather than in the Turk's. And, after we take this port, we shall send many merchants with goods beyond count and sufficient provisions. We shall share the revenue of the port half and half. As for our land, it is very rich and nothing lacks in it; however, we do not send merchants on account of the Turks, nor grain, nor honey, nor slaves, so that they may be hungry and thirsty, because we have no friendship with them. When the Portuguese and {the} viceroy come, we shall send {the} merchants, so they may take many goods. May Our Lord God bring that which we desire to a good end, and may Your Majesty be pleased with this, that between us we take away the power of the Turk, who is between us like a stumbling-block.

He also wrote briefly to the viceroy of India, referring to my letter,<sup>3</sup> so that I might be able to give him a long <account and> report of everything. When he had written these

<sup>1</sup> Atanáf Çaguéd (ʿAṣnāf Saḡad) was the royal title of both Galāwdēwos and Za Dengel. The Muslim invasion of the Abyssinian highlands began during the reign of Lebna Dengel (Dāwit/Wanāḡ Saḡad) but Galāwdēwos was already on the throne when Cristóvão da Gama arrived in Ethiopia. Páez retains just the name of the king who was victorious over Imam Aḡmad ibn Ibrāhīm. See Glossary (Granh/Grāññ/Aḡmad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ghāzi).

<sup>2</sup> See Glossary (Cristóvão da Gama).

<sup>3</sup> This letter could not be located in the ARSI and BPB collections, and Fernão Guerreiro does not reproduce it in the *Relação Anual*.

letters, he summoned me every day and, alone with just those whom he trusted, he spoke about matters of our holy faith and always praised them highly; the others also told him that previously they had had no faith. A few days later he sent word to me, through Lâca Mariâm, to send a trustworthy man to receive a little gold that he had commanded the treasurer to give me; Lâca Mariâm did not explain to me how much it was, but later I was told that it was 3,000 *cruzados*. I replied that I had not come in search of gold or any other wealth but that if the emperor wished to do me some favour he could give me a site to build a church, because the Portuguese did not have one in all those lands. Lâca Mariâm said, 'Your Reverence, take the gold that the emperor is giving to you now, and then ask him for the lands for the church.' I replied, 'Lord, a site for the church is enough for me. Please, Your Lordship, do me the favour of persuading the emperor not to force me to take gold, because very little is sufficient for me.' He went to tell the emperor this, and, marvelling greatly, he said {[f. 420]} to *Erâz Athanateus*, who was present, 'Have you ever heard such a thing in Ethiopia?' He replied, 'Sire, I have been watching this father's manner closely. He is not like our monks, who seek nothing but wealth; he has his eyes fixed only on matters of the soul. But even <[f. 374v/363v]> if he is content with so little, Your Majesty could well give him some very extensive lands for his church.'

The following day, the emperor called for me and said, 'Why does Your Reverence not want to take gold? Shall I not also give you lands and all the goods you want?' I replied that very little was sufficient for me and that, when I had need of it, I knew very well that I would lack for nothing in his shadow, but the favours that he did for the Portuguese were sufficient, because I considered them to be for me as well. He said, 'I have done very little for the Portuguese compared with what I shall do for them. I shall give them so many lands and goods that they themselves must say it is enough for them.' I thanked him very much for the favour and, after I had taken my leave, he appointed some lands for me that would yield 3,000 *cruzados* and said, 'If these do not please you I shall give you others.' The Portuguese then told me that the lands that the emperor was giving me were so rich that they were enough not just for me alone but for all the Portuguese there, and that since they were so good the old empress had chosen them for herself and she had been reaping the benefit of them for many years, and that the emperor had taken them to give to me because of the great love that he had for me. When I heard this, I decided not to take them, even though they were just right for me to reach both Tigrê and Dambiâ, since they lay about half-way between. And so I said that, although it was much more than I either needed or desired, I found it difficult, both because the empress would be upset, and because I desired to be among the Portuguese, for I would like to have something very small but close to them, the better to be able to accompany them and attend quickly to whatever His Majesty might command. Later, however, the Portuguese captain, who was very much his confidant, explained that I had not accepted them because of the empress, at which the emperor marvelled greatly and said, 'I am now having the lands that belong to me inspected in order to give them to my servants. I shall choose some very good ones for the father, which will suit his purpose.'

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## CHAPTER VIII<sup>1</sup>

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### On how I took my leave of the emperor to go to another land, and how the treason that had been plotted against him was discovered

{[f. 420v]} While I was with the emperor, with a mind to overwinter there, I was sent a message from a land that they call Naninâ, two days' journey away, where <[f. 375/364]> many Portuguese lived, asking me to hurry there to confess some of them who were very sick and in peril and had not confessed for a long time. I therefore asked the emperor for leave to go, but he would not give it to me, saying that it was already raining heavily and the Nile, which I would have to cross, was very swollen. However, when I insisted in order to attend to those sick people, he gave me two months' leave. The following afternoon I went to take my leave but he kept me until midnight conversing about various things, saying that since I wanted to go so soon I would have to be patient that night, because he had a lot to talk about. When he finished, I asked him for permission to leave early the next day, but he said that I should first talk to him again. In the morning, they said that he was not giving audience to anyone, and they had not allowed any of the great men to enter. And so I did not depart, and at midday he sent for me. He was with his wife (whom they did not call empress, since the old empress was still alive), and he said to me, 'I have called Your Reverence to this house for you to know that I am very much your friend, because only people who are very close may enter here.' I kissed his hand, saying that from the favours he had done me I was well aware of the great obligation that I had always to serve His Majesty, but that I had nothing to say regarding that favour, since anything that might be said would be too little to show the esteem in which it should be held. He kept me there conversing until the afternoon and, when I took my leave, he said to me, 'Go, Your Reverence, with the blessing of Our Lord, but remember that you only have leave for two months.' I replied that if the rivers could be crossed I would be back before then, if God gave me health. Afterwards, he told Lâca Mariâm to send word to the captain of Naninâ to give me a certain quantity of wheat, which would be 100 Castilian {*hanegas*} <*fanegas*><sup>2</sup> or more, and early the next day he should summon a Portuguese who was travelling with me and give him 300 *cruzados* in gold for my expenses for those two months, and to warn him not to tell me anything until we were on the journey; and that is what he did.

Having taken my leave of the emperor, I took my leave of the old empress, *Erâz Athanatêus* and other great men and set off for Naninâ at the beginning of July. I spent

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 91–6.

<sup>2</sup> Unit of dry measure, equivalent to 55.5 litres.

five days on the journey with great hardship, since it was raining hard and the rivers were so {[f. 421]} swollen that, despite waiting a while, they could only be crossed with difficulty, for they have no bridges or ferries; I only found a ferry on the River Nile, and it was a very flimsy thing, for they are all made of {a kind of} very thick straw, as I said in book 1.<sup>1</sup> When I reached those <[f. 375v/364v]> Portuguese for whom they had called me, I found them very sick, but afterwards Our Lord saw fit for them to recover. Once I had confessed all those living in that kingdom of Gojâm, who must have numbered some 600 people, I decided to build a church in their midst, because another small one that they had had previously was almost in ruins and it was in a place where most of them could not go in winter. But when they were all together ready to start at the beginning of August, a letter arrived from the emperor in which he commanded that all the Portuguese should go and I should remain, because he had decided to attack a great captain called Za Celacê (which means 'Of the Trinity'), who had rebelled. They were all very sad, both at the news and because they would not be able to build the church, but they left everything and went, while I stayed behind with some old men. Emperor Iacob had banished this captain for being a rebel, and when this other one took over the empire he had him recalled, since he was a very courageous man, and made him governor of {two} <some> very large provinces. But in return for this he secretly allied himself with three great captains and, with many other men, he rose up saying that the emperor had abandoned his faith and taken that of the Portuguese, and that they would not obey him, but would bring back Emperor Iacob, whom they had put under guard in the kingdom of Nareâ.

When the Portuguese reached the emperor together with some other men, but not many since it was winter, he wanted to take them and the ones that he had with him to attack Za Celacê. But they told him in secret that he should not go because some of the principal ones there were determined to go over to the rebel when they got close, and he needed to apprehend them first. He made some secret enquiries and found out not only that it was true, but that so many had joined the conspiracy that he could neither apprehend them at that time nor remain in that land, which was not very obedient and could easily throw in its lot with the rebels. He therefore dissembled and said that he wanted to go to Naninâ in order to attack Za Celacê from another side. And so he set off on 18th August and, after travelling slowly for two days, as they crossed a {[f. 421v]} large river, *Erâz* Athanatêus hung back and, once the emperor was on the other side, he turned round with some 300 men who served him, having decided to go and join up with the other captains with whom he was in alliance. Many others who already knew of his intention followed him directly, fearing that the emperor would seize them in {Naninâ} <Nareâ>. The emperor, however, left them and pressed on, since he feared <[f. 376/365]> that there was greater treason than that which he had discovered. When he got to within three leagues of where I was, although I did not know he was coming, he sent word to me to go to a town where he was going to sleep that night. I set off at once in great haste and caught up with him on the road. When I saw him, I felt very sorry for him because he usually had so many men with him that they covered the countryside, but he was now accompanied by some 600 men, and so he reminded me of David fleeing from Absalom. When he reached the inn and had rested a little, he commanded everyone to leave him and to call me. When I went in, he said to me, 'Look, Your Reverence, at what my people are doing to

<sup>1</sup> See bk I, ch. 26, above.

me, because I want to maintain justice and not {allow} <want> the great men to oppress the poor. What counsel do you give me?’ I replied, ‘Our Lord God will take care to punish them for this. Your Majesty should not be aggrieved, because it is only those four captains who are stirring up the people; all the rest are very happy with Your Majesty. What occurs to me for now is that Your Majesty should find a safe place until winter is over, for afterwards they will all leave those captains and come to their lord, but they cannot do so now with this heavy rain.’ ‘That is true’; said the emperor, ‘it is only they who are making the people restless. I want to stay here until I see how the weather turns out. Go away now, Your Reverence, and recommend me strongly to Our Lord on this matter.’ And with that I returned to where I had been before.

The next day, 2,000 fighting men came from those villages that were nearest, and so the emperor decided to turn back very quickly upon *Erâz Athanâtêus*, who had not yet crossed the Nile. But when the latter heard from his spies that the emperor was turning back, he crossed to the other side of the river at midnight and had all the boats removed, and so when the emperor arrived he {could} <did> not do anything. He therefore encamped at a spot nearby, where 10,000 men gathered to him within a few days, despite the heavy rains. Commanding them to make many boats, he decided to cross the river and attack *Za Celacê* at once, on the counsel of *Lâca Mariâm* {[f. 422]} and other captains, but the captain of the Portuguese said to him, ‘Lord, it is not yet time, because we cannot use the horses in this mud. In a month’s time the ground will be firm enough for us to fight, and more men will gather in the meantime.’ The emperor said to the captains, ‘I have always thought this advice better than our haste. Why do we not wait until <[f. 376v/365v]> the rain is over?’ *Lâca Mariâm* replied, ‘Why does Your Majesty want to make these men here restless? What enemy have we, to wait for more men? It is better for us to go at once and do what needs to be done.’ He therefore commanded that the men should be ferried across, as they had agreed before. When I heard that the emperor was going to cross, I sent word to the Portuguese captain to ask him on my behalf for leave to accompany him on that campaign, but he replied that on no account should I go, for the events of war were very variable and he did not want me to put myself at risk in the camp. I therefore told the Portuguese that since I was not going with them they should all confess, and so they did.

At this time, an old Portuguese who lived at the far end of *Gojâm* came and said to me that his family, which was very large, had not confessed for many years. He begged me to go there at once, because afterwards the emperor would call me and I would not be able to go again. As I saw that he was right and that afterwards it would be difficult, I wanted to take that opportunity. So once the emperor had departed, I set off not without difficulty, since the rivers and the mud were very deep, and not without risk, since the whole land was in turmoil and I would have to pass close to some heathens who, even in times of peace, did many evil deeds, so that even the local people lived in great fear. Thus, when I was about to go to sleep one night, they came to tell me that those heathens were without fail coming to rob that village, at which everyone was very troubled. A man who was a friend of the Portuguese was there and said that it was necessary to go elsewhere at once, because those people killed everyone they found, and he would take us by secret paths to his house, although it was a long way from there, and we would be safe. Other people told me that he was a good man, and so I trusted him. I left at once and we travelled all night, crossing mountains and valleys with no tracks and so much mud that we could not get

through. A little before dawn we reached his house, where we stayed for three days, because the following night the heathens came to within two leagues of there {[f. 422v]} and, even though they turned back, because they had found plenty of cattle, even so it seemed a good idea to wait until the road became safer. After that I travelled for two days in great haste until I reached the house of that Portuguese and confessed all his household. Because of the novelty, many people from the area came to listen to the sermons that I preached and the doctrine that <[f. 377/366]> the children said, and they asked about our beliefs in detail and, when I explained them to them, they said, 'This is the true faith. Our monks do not teach us anything; nor do they know enough to be able to do so. If Your Reverence had your residence here, we would all confess. But if you have to go away tomorrow, what good is it to us? We are left in the power of our monks again.'



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## CHAPTER IX<sup>1</sup>

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### On how the emperor gave battle against the rebels, and was defeated and killed

While the emperor was making ready in Naninâ to go against Za Celacê, the latter was not idle in Dambiâ, but rather sought all possible means to gather men and stir up the people. To this end, he called together the soldiery many times and everyone else he could find and told them that the emperor was like a Moor, for he had abandoned his faith and taken that of the Portuguese, and they should all make ready to fight him, and he would soon bring them the true emperor. And he had false messages brought every day, saying that he was already coming in great haste and was close by, and that he was promising everyone many honours, commands and lands, and in that way he persuaded many to fight. Others secretly sent word to the emperor to say that once he came close they would go over to him and that they were only with Za Celacê so that he would not destroy their homes. At this, the emperor quickened his pace more, and when Za Celacê heard of this he begged the patriarch to lift the excommunication that he had previously put on him and others never to go against the emperor. He asked what grounds they had for him to be able to do so, and Za Celacê replied that he had abandoned his faith and taken that of the Portuguese. ‘Then I release you from the oath and absolve you from the excommunication,’ said the patriarch, at which all those who were determined to fight were very pleased. When the emperor learnt of this he was very angry and said, ‘Since that is the case, let us do at once what was going to be {[f. 423]} done later. I give all the lands of the patriarchate to the father, because I want him to be the patriarch, for this Egyptian does not know what excommunication is or what the law means.’

When the emperor came close to where Za Celacê was, he encamped on a broad plain that they call Barchâ and said to the Portuguese captain, ‘Oh, I wish the father were here now to confess me, for death or life.’ The captain replied, ‘He very much desired <[f. 377v/366v]> to come; but Your Majesty should ask God for forgiveness of your sins with true repentance for having offended Him and the intention of never returning to them, and that will be sufficient for now, and He will give Your Majesty victory and time to do everything you desire.’ At that, Za Celacê appeared with many more men than the emperor had, and accompanied by *Erâz* Athanatêus and another great lord called Ionaêl, who had previously been with the emperor on the other side of the Nile and had left him and gone over to *Erâz* Athanatêus. The emperor did not intend to give battle that day because it was already late, and he knew for sure that many men would come over to his

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his ‘Historia de Ethiopia alta’, Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 97–101.

side that night. Za Celacê, however, was afraid of this, since he had been warned by a monk – who had a pact with the devil and so said things that were happening a long way away – that if he did not give battle that day he would not have victory, so he decided to fight at once. He therefore placed those he did not trust in the rearguard, and he had a man that nobody knew come shouting that they should wait because Emperor Iacob was almost there, and he had a letter that he had previously given him in secret read out in public, which said, in Emperor Iacob's name, 'Do not on any account give battle until I arrive, for I have already crossed the River Nile and am bringing many men.' He said, 'How can we wait now, as we are so close? What need have we for more men, as we have so many good horsemen here? Let us give battle at once, and we shall return with victory to welcome our emperor.' And so, without waiting, he went forth with his squadrons in battle order to meet the other army.

When the emperor saw his intention, he had his men very quickly drawn up in order and gave the right flank to the Portuguese, who numbered less than 200, and sent a good number of Ethiopian men alongside them. When battle commenced, the Portuguese attacked with such fury and fought so valiantly that they soon made a large part of the opposing army turn, and they went in pursuit slaying them until the rest of the enemy was between them and the emperor. At this time, {[f. 423v]} while the battle was raging, Ionaël, that great man who had fled when they were beside the Nile, changed sides and joined the emperor. Some say that when he came up to him, the emperor said to him, 'You false old man, you abandoned me with deceit, and you return with treachery', and, giving him a blow on the head with his sword, he knocked him off his horse. But a son of his, who was already by the emperor's side, saw this and speared him in the neck, which was uncovered, and knocked him off his horse, and a serious fight started between those who were with the emperor and those who had come with Ionaël. When <[f. 378/367]> Za Celacê saw this, he attacked on that side with many men on horseback and, seeing the emperor on foot, speared him in the face and had the others finish him off. The truth, however, is that it did not happen like that, as the men who were with the emperor all the time affirm. Instead, Ionaël was killed before he reached the emperor, and Za Celacê, seeing that the Portuguese were routing his men, charged desperately with many horsemen towards where the emperor was, and at this point seventy horsemen went over to Za Celacê, since they were servants of *Erâz* Athanatêus and until then had not been able to get away from the emperor. And they fought so hard that they turned the men who were in front of the emperor and, even though he charged twice, only a few nobles were willing to follow him and, unable to withstand the force of those who were advancing with Za Celacê, they fell back, and the emperor with them. Za Celacê pursued them and a horseman of Moorish origin called Humârdîn reached the emperor and speared him in the neck, at which he fell from his horse, but he got up again at once and many men surrounded him without daring to harm him, until Za Celacê arrived and speared him in the face and had them finish him off.

At this time, the Portuguese left the men that they were chasing and turned back to fall on the body of the opposing army. On seeing the emperor's tent overthrown and his men fleeing, they were very troubled, but then they heard the emperor's drums being played in celebration, and so the captain, who {is} <was> called Joam Gabriel, said, 'The emperor has won', and rode over there on his horse, followed by a brother of his and a Portuguese, but the others knew that it was the emperor's men who were fleeing and so they started

moving away, {and they all left} without any of them being wounded. When the captain reached the place where the {[f. 424]} drums were, he found that they had been taken by *Eráz Athanatêus*, whose men rushed out to kill him and the other two. But *Eráz Athanatêus* shouted at them to leave them and, having them approach close to him, he gave {his} <a> helmet to the captain to put on his head and other things to the others so that his men would not dare do them any harm. Then they all began to collect the spoils and they stripped the emperor, without leaving him anything at all; when other men saw that, they considered it a great insolence and discourtesy, and so they covered the body again with a cloth. But some say that when Za Celacê heard that, he had the body uncovered <[f. 378v/367v]> and ordered them to leave it like that – both the emperor’s and that of Lâca Mariâm, whom {they} <he> had killed in the first encounter. And they remained thus on the field from 13th October 1604 until the 15th, when they were taken to be buried in a small church nearby. It was a wicked thing, worthy of people with hearts worse than barbarians’, to leave their lord dead and stripped bare on the field after he had done them <sup>so</sup> many favours. It was a spectacle to be pondered deeply, that he who shortly before had been the emperor of Ethiopia should be left at the level of the most miserable and hopeless slave who died in the battle; that he who dressed in rich silks and brocades and adorned himself with chains and jewels of fine gold should lie for so long in the sight of everyone, naked, without a span of cloth, for the greatest kindness that those who felt compassion and shame at seeing him like that dared to do for him was to cover him with a little straw.

But amidst the worldly dishonours and contempt, the Lord honoured him with a singular marvel, for, although in His secret judgment He allowed him that death, I am sure that He esteemed him highly because, as I was told by some Greeks, honourable men, who were present when they went to bury him, and as I was also told later by many others who saw it, the bodies of Lâca Mariâm, Ionael and the others looked hideous and smelt so bad that nobody could go near them, and the emperor’s looked more handsome than when he was alive, and such a sweet smell emanated from it that it refreshed the heart. Those who were not his friends said that the reason for that was that he constantly ate amber; others believed that it was something miraculous, and recounted it as such, and their view was further confirmed {[f. 424v]} by what happened eleven years later. When Emperor Seltân Çaguêd commanded that the body should be transferred to a large monastery that stands on an island in Lake Dambiâ, called Dagâ,<sup>1</sup> because the church where they had buried him was small, they found the body entire and without yet having lost a certain colour that here, for beauty’s sake, they put on the hands and feet instead of sandalwood, and the shroud was not rotten, either, even though they had not buried him in a coffin but, like the others, in the earth. The emperor told me this and attributed it to a miracle, and so he had him placed in a well-made coffin and laid in the church of that monastery in great decency, and the master of ceremonies, who was present, added that he

<sup>1</sup> The monastery on the island of Dâgâ Estifânos (‘Stephen’s plateau’). This information is reused by Almeida (‘Historia de Ethiopia a Alta’, Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, p. 96). In some brief royal chronicles, Dâgâ Estifânos was the place to which Za Dengel’s body was transferred (see, for instance, Foti, ‘La Cronaca Abbreviata dei Re d’Abissinia’, p. 111). According to other sources, Susneyos had his body transported to the island of Daq in 1614, ten years after his death (see Basset, *Études sur l’histoire de l’Éthiopie*, p. 126). See bk II, ch. 16, above, and Glossary (Dec/Daq).

had been one of the men who had disinterred him, and when they dug him up it seemed that all he lacked was his soul.

<[f. 379/368]> After this sad and painful tragedy, there began a great, universal lament, not only throughout the kingdom of Gojâm, where the news arrived straight away, but also in Dambiâ and the province of Oagrâ, which is close by, because even though Za Celacê had commanded that they should not weep but celebrate, this was obeyed only in his camp. Elsewhere, sons wept bitterly for their fathers killed in the war, women for their husbands, and everyone for the emperor, because they dearly loved him, especially the common people and even the great men, except for the four who had risen up. I too, when I heard news of that unhappy event, grieved more than can be imagined at seeing how quickly the wheel of such happy fortune that that good emperor seemed to have had turned to disaster, and the sure hopes that he had offered for the spiritual good of Ethiopia had been dashed; yet I gave thanks to God for having permitted it through His secret judgment. *Erâz* Athanatêus asked at once where I was and, when he was told that I was in Gojâm, he sent two servants in great haste to tell me to wait there because he had some things to discuss with me that could not be put in a letter, and he would go there soon. Therefore, although I was about to set off for Dambiâ, I waited for fifteen days more until he arrived at a nearby fortress. I went to visit him at once and he received me with great {[f. 425]} honour and displays of affection. After conversing for a while, he told me to go and rest in some very good houses that he had had made ready for me near his own, and he commanded his steward – who was the son of some Portuguese and a very good Catholic – to send me what I needed in great abundance at all times. He took great care to do so.

On the very day when I reached *Erâz* Athanatêus, a Portuguese came from Naninâ and told me, on behalf of them all, that they were ruined and had nowhere to go with their wives and children because, since he was now lord of Gojâm, he had taken all their lands because they had fought against him on the side of the emperor. He asked me to seek to have the lands returned to them and also to gain a pardon for a Portuguese who had accidentally killed a man while trying to separate a fight. The next day, *Erâz* Athanatêus summoned me and complained a lot about the Portuguese because, while he was in his own lands, they had fought against him and killed the best <[f. 379v/368v]> of his men and, even though he had sent word to them before the battle to change sides and come over to him, they had refused to do so. I replied that if they had abandoned {His Lordship} the emperor and gone over to {His Lordship} <his side>, the king of Portugal would never again have held them in any regard or considered them Portuguese, and not even His Lordship would have counted them as such in his heart if they had done what he had commanded; and, as for killing, it was a consequence of {war} <land>. I asked him to return their lands to them, for just as they had served the emperor they would serve His Lordship in every way that they could. He insisted that they had done wrong, but in the end he said that for my sake he would return their lands to them and would favour them in whatever might arise. ‘Your Lordship must also do me the favour’, I said, ‘of pardoning a Portuguese who killed a man by accident when trying to separate a fight. He will seek to give the dead man’s wife satisfaction, even though his kinsfolk have destroyed his house.’ He replied that he would very willingly pardon him and that he would pay everything that might be agreed with the dead man’s wife, and that, since the Portuguese had lost his belongings, I should call for him to come and he would give him much more than he had

had before. He also asked me whether I wanted anything else, because he would very willingly do it. I replied that the favours he had done me were very great, but that by offering that he bound me to a greater extent than I could ever serve, and Our Lord God would repay His Lordship.

After that, he began to talk about the death of the {[f. 425v]} emperor and gave many excuses and arguments to show that he was not to blame in it and that, although he had parted company with him because of the differences that they had had, he had always tried to persuade Za Celacê and the others not to take up the sword but to come to an agreement with him, but they had refused, and he was very angry at his death. ‘Lord,’ I said, ‘nobody can tell Your Lordship whether or not you are to blame better than your own conscience. I give Your Lordship a piece of advice, as someone who wishes you well with all his heart: put your hand very firmly on your heart and, if you find that you are to blame, beg God at once to forgive you, and do very good penance, because the emperor’s blood that has been spilt on that field, like Abel’s, is calling on God for justice, and He will pass judgment very severely.’ He replied that he had great fear of God, but that he really did not feel that he was to blame. With that he dismissed me for that day, since it was late.

The next day, a great lord called <[f. 380/369]> *Abeitahûn* Bela Christôs arrived there with many men and, as *Erâz* Athanatêus’s steward told me, he had come to persuade him that they should proclaim as emperor a cousin of the deceased, who was called Suzeneôs, who was close to Gojâm. And when that lord went away, *Erâz* Athanatêus called me {again} and said to me, ‘I shall do whatever Your Reverence wants of me without fail. I just beg one thing of you: to stay with me to teach me the matters of the law, because our monks are useless. They are all like Pharisees: they just seek honour and wealth and they teach nothing; they do not know enough to be able to do so and, since those that do understand a little are generally low-born men, they have not the heart or the spirit to explain it to us, and so we are all doomed.’ He pointed out a monk who was some distance away opposite the door, standing there very modestly with his hands crossed, and said, ‘That is my tutor, but he is a Pharisee like all the others.’ I knew that Za Celacê had sent word to Emperor Iacob, who was in Nareâ, to come in all haste and that they were expecting him any day. Fearing that *Erâz* Athanatêus might proclaim Suzeneôs, I decided not to remain there, so that I might have a better chance of being received by whichever one prevailed. I therefore replied that there could be no greater pleasure for me than to do His Lordship’s bidding in every way, but that {[f. 426]} for the time being I could not stay on any account because I had received letters during the winter saying that two fathers had arrived in Tigrê from India and I was obliged to meet them to determine how to distribute them among the Portuguese, who were very scattered around. At that, he said that since I already knew about Ethiopia I did not have to go but could write to them from there about what they had to do. I replied, ‘Lord, the matters that I have to discuss with them cannot be arranged by letter. Nor is it right not to visit them since they have come from so far away to help me.’ Nevertheless, he insisted for several days that I should stay, and that he would not give me leave to go.

While we was engaged in this dispute, it was Our Lord’s will that the empress, his mother-in-law, wrote to him saying that he should at all costs make me go to Dambiâ, where she was, for she wished to see me and had previously not had time to talk to me at her leisure. He then called me and said, ‘Since it is now so important for Your Reverence to go to Tigrê, give me your word that you will return as quickly as you can, and go via

where the empress is, because she wants to see Your Reverence.' I replied that I would very willingly do everything that His Lordship commanded, if God gave me life. 'May Our Lord,' he said, <[f. 380v/369v]> 'give Your Reverence a very long one, and may He take you and bring you back safely. In the meantime, I shall keep the *cartilha* because, even though Your Reverence says it is for children, it can serve us well as the highest doctrine that we can desire.' With this I took my leave of him and, when I reached the inn, he sent me a {mule} <portmanteau> and two ounces of gold for the journey, apologizing for sending so little, for the expenses he had had in the war were the cause of that. I replied that I was sorry that His Lordship had sent even that, having spent so much, and that I accepted it so as not to be discourteous, and I wished that Our Lord should give him what he desired. He then sent for that Portuguese who had killed the man and treated him as generously as he had promised me.

On 1st November, I set off from that land of Gojâm and took six days to reach the place where the empress was, which was a land called Cogâ, where the court was at the time. She received me with many demonstrations of affection and commanded her people to give me very good accommodation and whatever I needed from her kitchen, which they sent in great abundance, and sometimes, while she was dining, {[f. 426v]} she would send me some items from her table, saying that she was sending them because they tasted good. She kept me there for several days, conversing with me every afternoon about various matters, particularly matters of faith, which she listened to willingly, and in the end she told me that she wished me to stay there with her. To that I replied that I had to go to Tigrê, because two fathers had come from India, but that I would return soon, for I had promised as much to *Erâz Athanatêus*, and then I would do whatever she commanded. 'Since that is the case,' she said, 'Your Reverence must go away and, when my son the emperor arrives, come back straight away and I shall have him give you lands here, because I want to have you near me.' Then a servant of hers said, 'Emperor Za Denguil offered him such lands and, since he heard that they were Your Majesty's, he would not accept them.' 'It cannot be denied,' she said, 'that these people are the most polite and courteous in the world. Imagine, a foreign man who, four days after arriving in Ethiopia, could take for himself what the emperor was giving him without anyone being able to complain! I promise you that, if he had given them to one of our people, he would not have refused.'

I then took my leave of her and also went to take my leave of Za Celacê, whom I had already visited a few times and, although he behaved as if <[f. 381/370]> he were emperor, he was always very courteous to me. I told him that I was leaving and asked His Lordship for his permission, and also to do me the favour of returning some very extensive lands to a Portuguese from whom he had taken them, because he had been left with nothing. He replied that he had not taken them away because the man had fought against him, but because he had been told that he used to say many discourteous words wherever he was; he said he would not return them to him, but had already given them to somebody else. 'Lord,' I said, 'since this man was a captain for a long time, he has plenty of enemies who invent many things about him. Perhaps Your Lordship will give me the lands as a favour.' 'To Your Reverence,' he said, 'I give them very gladly. Take them.' I replied, 'It has to be in order to return them to the Portuguese.' He said, 'After I have given them to Your Reverence, do what you like with them. I would {also} have given <you> many others if things were not in such turmoil, but come back, Your Reverence, when the emperor arrives and I shall have him provide for you as you desire, as is right.' I replied that the

favour he had done me was sufficient for me to be forever obliged {[f. 427]} to serve His Lordship for as long as I could, and with that I took my leave. And everyone was greatly amazed at what I had achieved with him, because he was very angry with that Portuguese, calling him a slave and holding him in no regard.

At this time, many local people were gathering in order to go to Tigrê. I was very pleased at that, as were six Portuguese who were from there, because the road was very dangerous with the revolts that there had been. And so they all arranged to travel close together <all the time> and ready to defend themselves, but not even that would have been to any avail if those Portuguese had not been there, because when news spread that many men from Dambiâ were coming, people thought that it was Za Celacê who was going to Tigrê, and many men from that land gathered and waited for us among some mountains at a very rough pass, determined to kill us all. But when we arrived and they learnt that there were Portuguese and that Za Celacê was not coming, they said, 'We have not come for these men who so valiantly fought for the emperor, but for those who went against him.' And so they let us all pass. Further on we encountered an even greater danger, because it was said in that land that Za Celacê was coming and so the men from some nearby villages plotted to fall on us at night and kill us all, leaving no one alive. However, when we camped at the foot of a mountain at nightfall – because when many people travel in a caravan they do not go into villages to sleep – by God's will <[f. 381v/370v]> a man on a mule with his servant did go off to sleep in a village. When the people there realized that they were from our company, they seized them and sent word to the men who had gathered; when they arrived they asked them many questions, insisting that Za Celacê was there. They kept saying that no servant of Za Celacê was with us, but just a priest and some Portuguese and other merchants, and that if the following day they did not find that what they were saying was true, they should kill them. When they saw that they were speaking so confidently, they gave up what they were intending to do. On discovering in the morning that what those men said was true, many people came out to the road with some things to eat and a kind of wine that they drink that they call *çâoa*, and they gave it to the Portuguese, saying, 'We have brought this for you because you helped {[f. 427v]} the emperor so faithfully. Give thanks to God for delivering you from our hands last night.' And they related everything that they had been intending to do, together with the men that they had seized.

A few days later, a great captain that Za Celacê was sending to some lands that they call Cirêi passed through there and they attacked him, killing twenty-eight Turks with guns and many other men, and they captured him and held him prisoner for a long time. And through the Lord's mercy no harm at all befell us throughout the journey, which took us almost until Christmas. When we arrived in Fremonâ, I found Father Antonio Fernandez, a Portuguese, and Father Francisco Antonio de Angelis, a Neapolitan. And with much joy and contentment we gave thanks to God for delivering us from all the hardships and dangers that we had all had and for bringing us back together where we so much wished to be, because the three of us had been together in India in order to come here, but they had stayed behind because the galliots had been unable to get through.

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## CHAPTER X<sup>1</sup>

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### On how Fathers Antonio Fernandez and Francisco Antonio de Angelis entered Ethiopia, and what happened to them on the journey

When the superiors of the Society in India learnt of the success of the method that I had tried in order to reach Ethiopia, since I had passed through the Turks freely, they decided to send the two fathers who had remained in Diu as soon as a similar opportunity arose. And Our Lord saw fit for a very good one to arise the following year, because, although the Turk in whose company <[f. 382/371]> I had come had died soon after I arrived here, he had said so much about the favours and honours that the Portuguese had done him in Diu that that the pasha was moved to send another servant of his, who was called Mahamêd Agâ, with considerably more merchandise than the previous one had taken. The fathers in Diu did the second man many more favours, both in return for those that they had done me in Maçuâ and in order to gain his goodwill for what they intended. He considered himself so obliged that when they spoke to him about what they desired, which was to get to Ethiopia, he replied that if the pasha's other servant had taken one {father}, he would willingly take two. Everyone thought {[f. 428]} that such an opportunity should not be wasted, and so Father Antonio Fernandez and Father Francisco Antonio de Angelis started preparing at once.

When the monsoon arrived, they embarked with Mahamêd Agâ in a ship that was going to Çuaquêm, because the pasha had commanded him to go there. On setting sail on 24th March 1604, they were almost drowned, because not only was the cargo poorly stowed, but they had put the heaviest on top and so, as the ship started listing straight away, the cargo slid to that side and they started sinking. They therefore very quickly struck sail and sent a message to the College, and the fathers spoke to the customs officials, who came to their aid very diligently by sending many sailors and other men to stow the cargo in such a way as to trim the ship. When they had finished, they set sail and spent forty-four days on the voyage, with many difficulties. Shortly before arriving at Çuaquêm, while coming in between the shoals that there are there, the ship ran aground and was stranded, and everyone was so distressed that they considered their lives lost, and so the fathers confessed each other with the brevity that the circumstances required. But Our Lord saw fit for the ship not to break up, because it seems that it was low tide, and so they began to take off the cargo in a dinghy and some other boats that came from land to help

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 85–9. See also Guerreiro, 'Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia', ff. 130–34, pp. 175–80. Páez did not transcribe Guerreiro's text literally but used his copy of the work as a basis for this chapter, and he probably also obtained oral information from António Fernandes and Francisco António de Angelis themselves.



and to put it on a nearby island; afterwards, with the boats and a small anchor that they cast a long way out, they pulled the ship off safely; they then reloaded it and it entered port safe and sound. But they took so long over this that Mahamêd Agâ was tired of waiting and took the fathers off in the dinghy; when they landed on the beach he had some mounts brought and they went overland to Çuaquêm, which is a very small island <[f. 382v/371v]> close to the mainland, where they were warmly welcomed and given good lodgings, as arranged by Mahamêd Agâ.

The pasha was not there at the time, since he had gone on pilgrimage to Mecca, but they expected him back any day, and so Mahamêd Agâ told the fathers that it was not right to leave there before he arrived. And so they waited there for twenty days. When he arrived and learnt what they had done for his servant in Diu, he called the fathers and spoke to them very affectionately. {[f. 428v]} As an honour, he gave each one a brocade caftan, which is the highest honour that they give, and he said that he would willingly do whatever they and the fathers in India wanted. Since they had waited for so many days, he at once gave them a *gelba*, which is a small boat, so that they could go to Maçuâ, and he sent the overseer of the treasury with them with orders to give them whatever they needed, and mules and guards to accompany them from Maçuâ until they reached the land of Christians. They set sail with a good wind, but the following day they were hit by such a terrible storm that the *gelba* began to sink, and so the Turk jumped into the sea to see if he could swim to land, which was not very far off. But it was Our Lord's will that the yard broke with the great force of the wind, and the sail came down before the vessel could overturn, and so it righted itself again. It was not out of danger, however, because the waves, which were very high, were driving it onshore in an area where they were unlikely to be saved. When the sailors saw that they worked hard to keep it away. With the wind helping a little, they returned to Çuaquêm and the pasha at once gave them another vessel, in which they reached Maçuâ in seven days, but they did not sail by night, because they dare not on account of all the shoals that there are along that coast, and so they always drop anchor before nightfall.

When the captain of Maçuâ was told by the overseer of the treasury what the pasha had commanded and what hospitality he had shown the fathers, he dared not say anything so as not to displease his lord, who was recommending them so highly, although he implied that it was not good government to let them pass. Even so, he received and treated them very well for the four to six days that they stayed there. When it was time for them to leave, he gave them two of the pasha's mules for them to ride and ten guards, apart from the travellers who gathered and accompanied them for two days. And when they met <[f. 383/372]> some Portuguese and other people from Fremonâ who went to wait for them on the road, since they had had news that they had arrived in Çuaquêm and could not be long in coming, they then dismissed those ten guards and sent back with them the mules that the Turkish captain had lent them. Taking others from the Portuguese, they continued their journey, giving many thanks to Our Lord {[f. 429]} at finding themselves in the land and among the people where they so much wished to be. They arrived in Fremonâ on 13th July 1604, where they were welcomed with great joy and contentment by the Portuguese and Catholics of that land, and they remained there performing the Society's ministries until I returned from Dambiâ, as I mentioned above.

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## CHAPTER XI<sup>1</sup>

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On how Abeitahûn Suzniôs proclaimed himself emperor in Gojâm and, after the governors of the empire had accepted him as such, they abandoned him again because Emperor Iacob came

Soon after I left Dambiâ for Tigrê, *Abeitahûn* {*Suzeneôs* [Suzniôs]} <Suzneôs> entered the kingdom of Gojâm with many warriors and sent word to *Erâz* Athanatêus, who was the viceroy, to go forth and receive him. He did so at once, either because he had plotted with him in secret, or because he had not the strength to stand against him, which was the reason he himself gave later. With all the captains and soldiers of Gojâm gathered there, they proclaimed him emperor, and he took the name Malâc Çaguêd and they held great celebrations. Afterwards, he wrote to Za Celacê and the other governors that God had now given him the empire of his forefathers and that he had decided to go straight to Dambiâ, and that if they made ready to receive him without any dispute, he would do them favours. On hearing this they were very afraid and, after taking counsel with the great men, they replied that he should wait until June and that, if their lord Iacob had not come by then, they would give the emperorship to nobody but him. He replied to this letter that he would not give up the sceptre that God had given him or take off the crown that they had put on his head just because his cousin Iacob might come or even if Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, who was the greatest of all, were raised from the dead. And with this message he sent a monk and a great man to persuade them courteously to accept his intention. When they arrived, however, they apprehended them and sent the great man under guard to a {very} rugged and secure mountain.

{[f. 429v]} <[f. 383v/372v]> When *Suzeneôs* heard how badly they had treated his ambassadors, he was furious and decided to send men with orders to destroy the people {of the land} if they would not obey; this did not take effect, however, because he fell ill. Meanwhile, Za Celacê and the other governors were not idle, for they were well aware that he was not feigning with that, and so they gathered many men and went to the banks of the Nile. {*Suzeneôs* [Suzniôs]} <Suzneôs> saw that they had many horses with them and ordered his men not to let them cross, but they went round by a different way and crossed the river. *Suzeneôs* therefore withdrew, hoping to achieve his aims without shedding blood while the governors took better counsel or some of them to whom he had sent messages came over to him. He went off and made his camp in the kingdom of Amharâ and left *Erâz* Athanatêus as viceroy of Gojâm, as he had been before. The governors tried

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', in Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 103–6.

to give him battle, but he always backed away through difficult country, because his forces were weaker. Because of this, they spent many days marching around the kingdom of Gojâm from one place to another.

When the governors realized that winter was coming and in all that time they had had no news from Iacob, they decided to give the emperorship to Suzeneôs, and so they wrote to him in Amharâ for him to come at once and henceforth they would have him as their lord and would obey him in everything that he commanded. He was delighted to receive this letter and sent a great man with a monk to tell them that, if they were firmly resolved to accept him as emperor, they should swear to that monk under excommunication to fulfil what they promised, and then he would come. When this message arrived, they all swore under excommunication, as he had said, and sent a great man, who was called *Abeitahûn* Bela Christôs, with a letter and a message saying that they now had no other lord but him, and that he should come via the land of Begmêder and there he would be received by the viceroy, who was called *Eraz* Guald Christôs. They returned from Gojam to the Dambiâ side and went to the land of Udô, and there, in the presence of Empress Mariâm Cinâ, they assembled all the great men of the empire, the captains and soldiers. Za Celacê made a speech to them all, saying, among {[f. 430]} {many} other things, that they could easily see how the land was being ruined by warfare since there was no emperor, and that they should get together by family and take counsel as to whether they would give the emperorship to Suzeneôs, the son of their past lords and emperors, or bring one of those who were on Guixên Ambâ, <[f. 384/373]> the descendants of those who had formerly been placed there, but how could such a man govern them, since he did not know them and they did not know who his father was? Even so, they should see which of the two paths would be better.

When Za Celacê had finished speaking, the governors went off with him to one side and the great men to another, and the captains and soldiers by family. When each of the heads had taken counsel with their kinsfolk, they all replied together with one voice that it was better to give the emperorship to Suzeneôs than to bring someone from Guixên Ambâ whom they did not know, nor knew whose son he was, and so by common accord they sent ten great men with many soldiers to put him on oath that he would not break the entitlements given by {Emperor} Malâc Çaguêd or take the lands held by the empress or her kinswomen. When they reached Begmêder, where he was already with the viceroy, he had them welcomed with festivities and conceded all they asked of him. Afterwards, they swore on behalf of everyone under excommunication to die with him and never to accept any other lord and, even if Iacob came, they would not accept him on any account. They then began to hold great celebrations and to name Malâc Çaguêd as emperor, for that was the title that he had taken in Gojâm when he was proclaimed there. While they were celebrating, however, Iacob arrived near Dambiâ and sent a message to Za Celacê to come out and welcome him. On hearing this, he wrote in great haste to the viceroy of Begmêder and to those who had gone to swear Suzeneôs, telling them not to join up with him but to return, because Emperor Iacob had now come and everyone was going out to welcome him.

This letter reached those great men in secret, and it happened to rain that day with a lot of hail, so they easily fled, leaving only two or three who were unable to do so. In the morning, Suzeneôs learnt what was happening and summoned the viceroy and the others who had stayed and asked them what they thought it would be best to do, {[f. 430v]} not

to take counsel with them but to see whether he might infer what they felt in their hearts. He realized from their words that they were not steadfastly with him but would go over to Iacob, so he had them seized and, striking camp, he took them with him to Amharâ, and from there he went to a land that they call Maquedelâ,<sup>1</sup> where he established his camp.

<[f. 384v/373v]> While these things were happening, Za Celacê went with the other governors and a large multitude of people that had gathered at the news of Iacob's arrival, and they met him on the road to everyone's great applause and contentment. They took him to the city of Cogâ, where he had previously had his court, and many celebrations were held. He at once asked for me, and when they told him that I was in Tigrê he wrote me a letter in which he said that I should be happy because he had been delivered from many hardships and perils and Our Lord God had restored him to his empire. He told me to go there at once, because he wanted to see me to be comforted {with me}, since they told him that I too had suffered many hardships in coming to Ethiopia. However, the man bringing the letter fell ill on the journey and only arrived here once winter had set in, and so I was unable to go until it was over.

<sup>1</sup> Magdalâ or Maqdalâ, in Wallo.

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## CHAPTER XII<sup>1</sup>

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### On how Father Luís de Azevedo and Father Lourenço Romano came to Ethiopia

On the same ship on which Fathers Antonio Fernandez and Francisco Antonio de Angelis went to Çuaquên, the pasha sent a servant of his called Mahamed Chilibî with merchandise back to Diu, since he had seen the favours that they had done to Mahamêd Agâ and the profit that he made on the goods brought back to him. The superiors of the Society in India knew from our letters that we three fathers were not enough to attend to the Portuguese and Catholics, since they were very spread out and one father had to attend the court in order to explain the ways of our holy faith to the emperor and the great men and to try to instil in them a liking for them. They therefore decided to send Father Luís de Azevedo, a Portuguese, and Father Lourenço Romano, from Rome, who were in the college in Diu. Having been advised of this, they sought to have the same favours done to that servant of the pasha as had been done to the other one in the customs house, and they too showed him what hospitality they could. And so, when they said that they wished to go with him in order to enter {[f. 431]} Ethiopia, he said that he would willingly bring them and that his lord would do them many honours, as he had to the ones that had come the previous year. Added to this was the fact that the captain of the ship on which they were to come was a Moor from Diu, who was called Mahamêd Gi, who was a good friend of the pasha, and so he too took charge of them.

<[f. 385/374]> They left Diu on 27th March 1605, accompanied by two Venetian merchants who were always coming and going among the Turks. They had many difficulties on the voyage, since they encountered headwinds, and so they took two months to reach Çuaquên, and at the entrance to the harbour they too ran a serious risk of the ship breaking up because they did not find the right channel. They found a new pasha there, a very false and cruel man, who in the past had wanted to be the pasha of Mocâ (so they say) and had sent the one who was there a very fine caftan as a sign of friendship, but as soon as he put it on he was taken ill and died, because there was a very strong poison on the collar; afterwards, without knowing, his treasurer put it on and he too died straight away. Everyone was very concerned, and they were afraid that he might do some harm to the fathers, but it was God's will that, with the presents that the fathers and especially the ship's captain gave him and the favours that they told him the fathers had done in Diu to his predecessor's servants, he decided to treat the fathers well, and so he gave them two

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 97–101. See also Guerreiro, 'Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia ...', ff. 130–34, pp. 175–80. Páez probably obtained this information from his fellow fathers, Luís de Azevedo and Lourenço Romano.

brocade caftans and showed them good hospitality for the eleven days that they stayed there, and then he gave them a vessel to take them to Maçuâ, and he wrote to his captain to give them whatever they needed in abundance while they were there, including mules and a good guard for the journey until they reached the land of Christians.

They reached Maçuâ from Çuaquên in eight days and the captain received them as his lord had commanded and, in the five days that they were there, they tried very diligently to remove the body of the holy martyr, Father Abraão,<sup>1</sup> which is on an island a harquebus shot or so from the island of Maçuâ. To this end, they <very> secretly called one of the men who had taken it there and promised him a good reward if he showed where it was. He offered to do so, swearing to remain loyal to them, but he was a Moor and they care little about oaths, so when he said he wanted to go there first to see how the body was, so that those who were going to bring it back would not be delayed, as that would make {[f. 431v]} the Turks suspicious, and the fathers instructed him not to touch the bones on any account but to leave them as they were, he gathered together other bones from {young} <Moors> and old men, and came back to say that he had seen the bones and they could go and fetch them. Because no vessels at all go to that island, the captain of the heathen {Banias} <Brahmins> of India asked the Turk for permission to bring earth from there to repair his house, and the fathers sent a <[f. 385v/374v]> very diligent and faithful young Christian man there and he found the bones so mixed up that there was no way that they could tell which belonged to one and which to another, because they throw all the people they execute there, all mixed up. Nevertheless, he put the ones the Moor showed him into the boat and, when he took them to the fathers, they found that they were from different bodies, some from small, young men and others from older, larger men, and none of them matched at the joints. That made them realize that the Moor only had intended to take the reward and that it was not possible to know for sure which were the father's bones, and so they left them, as we said in chapter 22 of the third book.

It happened at that time that people were coming with a present from the pasha to the viceroy of Tigrê, and the captain of the Turks told the fathers to travel together with them because he was sending forty harquebusiers, and he gave them a mule for the journey, and the captain of the banians gave another. Some Turkish horsemen also left Arquicô and escorted them for a good distance, celebrating loudly. Later, after they had travelled eight to ten leagues, they met some Catholics that {we had sent to} <were being sent to us from> Maçuâ to accompany them and, further on, some Portuguese who were waiting for them. Thus they arrived in Debaroâ safely, where they met the viceroy of Tigrê, who was called Caflohâd, and *Bahâr Nagâx* Dêlba Iesus, who was his son-in-law, and both of them did them many honours. Having rested for five days, they took their leave of them and the viceroy sent ten of the Portuguese that he had with him to escort them as far as Fremonâ. {The two fathers and I also went out a day and a half's journey to wait for them, and they entered Fremonâ} on 6th July 1605 with great joy and contentment, and everyone gave many thanks to God for having brought together the five of us where previously there had been so little hope of seeing any fathers at all, because it was so difficult to get here. Soon afterwards, we heard that the pasha had killed those {[f. 432]} two Venetians who had come to Çuaquên with the fathers, in order to take their merchandise, of which

<sup>1</sup> See bk III, ch. 22, above.

there was a large amount, and he also had the ship's captain beheaded; and they say for a fact that he had sent word to seize the fathers in Maçuâ, but they had already left when the message arrived, and thus Our Lord delivered them from that ingrate and cruel barbarian, who repaid the Venetians for giving him a large amount of goods and curing him of a serious and dangerous disease by having them killed.

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<[f. 386/375]> CHAPTER XIII<sup>1</sup>

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On how three of us fathers went to where Emperor Iacob was, and on the hopes that he gave of reducing his empire to the holy Roman Church

Since the emperor had written to me telling me to go before winter and it had not been possible because the letter had arrived late, I set off afterwards {with two fathers} in the company of some Portuguese and merchants who were going to Dambiã, <taking two fathers with me and> leaving two other fathers in Tigrê to take care of the Portuguese and Catholics of that kingdom and anything that came from India. Having travelled for four days, we went a short way off the road to visit the captain of those lands, who was our friend, and after keeping us there a while, he said that we should not take the usual road because he had reliable news that there were many robbers waiting for the Portuguese in a desert that we would have to cross, because they knew it was the time when they took the alms of clothes that they always receive from India. We thanked him very much for the warning and decided to do as he said, but we said nothing to those who were travelling with us. When we reached the point where the roads split, we stopped for a day to rest the animals and, as the rest of them knew nothing about it, everyone said that we would be going along the usual road. A spy for the robbers who was in our company went ahead that day to give them the message that we were getting near, but at night we called the Portuguese and principal merchants and told them what was happening, and that it was necessary for us to take the other road at all costs. We encountered considerable resistance from them, because it was very rough and difficult and they did not {{f. 432v}} think the news about the robbers was right, but we insisted, because we knew that the captain would not have told us anything that was not certain, and in the end they decided to go the way that we were telling them, and they explained it to everyone. In the morning, however, many started going off along the usual road, but the Portuguese forced them to turn back.

We travelled for a few days without encountering any danger at all and, on reaching the point where the roads joined again, we met two men running away who had been in another group of merchants coming behind us and had taken the usual road. They said that in the desert there were 300 robbers <[f. 386v/375v]> with their banners waiting for the Portuguese, and when they found out that they had already passed, they robbed them instead and many others, leaving them with nothing at all. They did not know whether the robbers had killed any of them, because when they saw so many weapons they had abandoned their goods and fled. We all gave thanks to Our Lord for having delivered us from such a great danger. As we moved on, we soon met a Portuguese with a letter from

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 107–13.



the emperor, in which he told me to go there quickly because he had to talk to me, and if I delayed I would not find him there, because he was about to march on some lands that were not obeying. We hastened our journey as much as we could but, despite that, when we arrived at the court we did not find him there. We visited the old empress and she received us with much love, and after conversing a while we begged to take our leave, because it was already midday and the town where we were to {sleep} <eat> was a good distance away. But she said she would not let us go on any account, for would we not give her even half a day to enjoy herself? We replied that we would willingly do whatever she commanded. At this point the patriarch came in and she gave him a seat a little further away, and almost all the time she continued asking us many things, and whether we had brought the boys who previously used to recite the doctrine to her. We replied that those ones had not come, but we had brought others who knew it well. She said, 'We do not need them any more, because *Erâz Athanatêus's* pages recite it in the same way, and he has had it taught throughout Gojâm.' The patriarch went out at once and, as we rose out of courtesy, she told us to sit down again and kept us there until night, because it was a {[f. 433]} fast day and they do not eat until that time, and she commanded her servants to give us very good lodgings and straight away sent us many local delicacies. The following morning she dismissed us and sent a message on ahead to the emperor to receive us with honour, as Emperor Za Denguîl had done.

We continued on our way to the emperor, who was three-days' journey from there, and we found him on a very broad plain with a large number of warriors. When the captain {of the Portuguese} told him that we were there he was very pleased and, since it was already late, he said that we should rest and he would call for us, which he did the following morning. We entered his tent and found him sitting on carpets and leaning against a highly ornate bed; this was to honour us, because the custom is to be sitting on the bed resting against velvet or brocade cushions. There were many <[f. 387/376]> captains on either side and, as we came to kiss his hand, he had us sit on the carpets a certain distance away, and he asked how our journey had been, how the king of Portugal and the viceroy of India were, and many other things {on which he spent a long time} <that he asked>. We presented him with a small gilded bed from China, which he praised highly. He dismissed us with great affection and commanded that we be given two or three cows to eat.

Since it was two days before Epiphany, when they hold great festivities because they always rebaptize themselves on that day, he did not call for us again until a day after that. And he told us in secret that a {learned uncle} <scholar> of his, with whom the emperor that they had killed used to discuss his affairs, had told him everything that had happened in the disputations of faith, and what he had decided to do. And since he thought all those things were very good, he was determined with the help of God to finish what the other had started, and so he wished to know what means there might be to achieve this. We replied that it was necessary for His Majesty to write to the supreme pontiff and the king of Portugal and, if possible, to send an ambassador. He told us to wait in Dambiâ and, if Our Lord returned him in peace, we would discuss everything in less of a hurry. The next day he struck camp and sent word to us that he was going to make a new camp nearby, and we should go with him and could return from there. We went {[f. 433v]} and, when he dismissed us, he told us that he was well aware that the Portuguese were poorly provided for, and when he returned he would give some very good lands on which they could all be together, and we should recommend him to Our Lord.

We returned from there to a Portuguese village where we had left the church ornaments and decided to separate so as to be able to confess everyone before the emperor returned. Thus the two fathers went to Dambiâ and I moved on to another land that they call Alatâ, and we met up again a month later and received letters from the fathers who had remained in Tigrê, in which they said that they were in great tribulation because a governor whom the viceroy had left in his place while he came to the emperor had taken away all the Catholics' property because they were Catholics, and was threatening to do them much worse evils if they did not abandon our faith and Church and return to his, but they were all determined to die rather than fail one iota in the matters of faith, and some of them had said as much in the governor's presence. One nun in particular, who had only been a Catholic for a short time, said in front of everyone: <[f. 387v/376v]> 'When I was one of you, I had everything I needed in abundance. Since I moved to this Church of Rome, I have suffered many needs, but even so I suffer them with greater pleasure because I have realized that this is the true faith. And so, even if you tear me to pieces, I shall not leave it.' When they saw how determined she was, they did not argue with her.

This persecution arose because a youth of fifteen or sixteen, the son of an honourable man, became a Catholic while his father was away; even though his mother, who knew what he wanted, told him to do it and she herself brought him to the fathers, her father took it so badly that he went to extremes and really wanted to get his hands on him. As he could not, he went to the viceroy and governor and did his best to do harm to all Catholics, seeking to have their property seized and offering himself as a guide so that nothing would be left. When the viceroy (who was very fond of property) heard what that man was saying, {he was very pleased} since he thought it was a good opportunity to get some, either through bribes from the fathers or from what the Catholics had. Therefore, {[f. 434]} since he was about to leave for Dambiâ, he left the governor with orders to take all the property that he could find from the Catholics and to make many threats to them to see whether the fathers would offer bribes, and that is what he did. That man also made great efforts afterwards to get hold of his grandson in order to hand him over, but the youth stayed away so that he could never reach him, until he became tired of hiding and went to the governor, together with his grandfather, and said that if he had anything against him he should make a complaint, and if not he should leave him alone and not trouble him any more. The governor asked him, 'Why have you abandoned the faith of your parents? Have you gone over to the Portuguese because you have eaten hares' meat like them?' The youth replied, 'The only reason why I went over to them is because when I heard the fathers' doctrine I realized that it was the true one. And so, even if you cut off my head, I shall not give up their faith.' The governor then commanded that he be taken before the magistrates so that they could judge him first and, when he said the same as he had said before, they refused to pass judgment, and so they sent him back to the governor; because of that, he would not pass judgment either, but instead left it until the viceroy returned.

Our Lord did not leave the viceroy unpunished, nor the governor who counselled him to seek the property, because, when the viceroy was approaching the place where the emperor was, Suzeneôs came with an army from another direction and the viceroy wanted to show his valour and that of the men that <[f. 388/377]> he was bringing from Tigrê, so he went ahead with some of the emperor's other men and started to skirmish with Suzeneôs's men. The latter attacked with such fury, however, that they made him turn and

leave behind ten drums and many horses and mules, and he escaped with great difficulty on foot through some very thick bush, leaving many of his servants dead, as well as a brother-in-law of his whom he greatly esteemed. God punished the governor by the hand of the viceroy himself, who, on returning to Tigrê, took all his property from him because of some crimes he said he had discovered, and he imprisoned him with two chains, and he was left like that for many days without finding anyone to help him except the fathers, to whom he sent word begging them to intercede for him. They did so straight away, and travelled for two days in heavy rain and mud to ask the viceroy to do him the mercy of treating him leniently, for {[f. 434v]} he would give full satisfaction to whomever he had wronged. He replied, 'Since Your Reverences are asking for this, I shall show you his crimes and you judge, and I shall say no more.' The fathers said, 'Lord, we have not come to judge but to plead.' He then commanded everyone else to go away and said to them in secret that he could not refuse to banish him, so that people could see that he was doing justice, but afterwards he would pardon him for nobody's sake but theirs, and when it was time he would send them a message to come back. They thanked him very much for the favour that he was doing for them and, as they took their leave, he said in the presence of many people, 'I truly do not know why these fathers come in this rain for the sake of a man who has wronged them so much.' Some people replied, 'Lord, they do good to everyone, even to those who do them evil.' Some time later, the fathers returned and he pardoned the governor as he had promised, for which the governor was very grateful and said that he would not die without having confessed with us, because ours was the true faith. But he was not worthy of Our Lord, because he died without doing so.

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## CHAPTER XIV

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### On how the emperor and empress reprimanded the viceroy of Tigrê for what he had done to the Catholics and commanded him to return all the property

When the emperor returned from that war, two of us fathers went to visit him and we did not <[f. 388v/377v]> tell him anything about what was happening in Tigrê until we had spoken to the viceroy, so that he would have no reason at all to complain. And so we went to visit him and told him what his governor had done, to which he coldly replied that he would command him to return what he had taken. We said that it was not right that such a serious matter should remain unpunished and asked His Lordship for permission to take him to justice. He replied that there was no need for any justice, because he had commanded him to do it. 'We only expected many {{f. 435}} favours from Your Lordship', we said, 'and not such great wrongs. But since that is the case, we are obliged to seek justice from the emperor.' He then said to one of the emperor's sisters who was there, 'The whole of Tigrê is going over to their Church and leaving ours.' She replied with great vexation, 'Let it be proclaimed at once that none of our people may join it any more.' The viceroy turned to us again and said, 'I shall take counsel and give you a reply.' With that we left and went at once to talk to *Erâz Athanatêus* and, although he was in a church, he moved aside from those who were with him and listened to us very carefully, and then he said that he was very sorry for what the viceroy had done, but that we should not be troubled because he would arrange everything as we wished. From there we went to another great man who was both very close to the emperor and a friend of ours, who was called *Macabô*, and when we told him what was happening he was very angry and said, 'Who has given this man the right to interfere in matters of faith? He cannot even read. I shall go to the emperor tomorrow and tell him everything, and the viceroy shall not come out of this well.' We tried to talk to the emperor as well, before the viceroy depicted the matter to him in his own way, but we were not able to because it was already nearly nightfall and nobody was allowed in. Nonetheless, we left the Portuguese captain there to see whether he could get in, and it was God's will that a lord who was a friend of his went past and told the emperor that he was there, and so he sent word for him to enter. When he told him what the viceroy had done, the emperor was very sorry and said that he would reprimand him and he would not interfere in our affairs again.

The next day, we went to talk to the old empress who, since it was Lent, was about half a league outside the city near a monastery. We told her what the viceroy, who was her son-in-law, had done to us and asked her to do us the favour of sending him a message, for it was not right that he should do us such serious harm. She replied that we could not have

told her anything that she regretted more, and that she would summon him and reprimand him. We thanked her very much for this <[f. 389/378]> and, as she began to talk of other matters, a monk who was her confessor came in and she said to him, 'Abba {Marcâ} <Mariâ>',<sup>1</sup> for that was the monk's name, 'are you aware of what the viceroy of Tigrê has done?' And she told him everything. He replied that he had acted very badly because those things did not belong to him, and he took the opportunity to speak about the two {{f. 435v}} natures in Christ, circumcision and the keeping of the Sabbath, and after presenting many arguments he said to the empress, 'My Lady, I do not speak in secret like others. The truth is that in Christ there are two natures and one single divine person. Circumcision is finished, and so is keeping the Sabbath. I have just one complaint about the fathers, which is that they do not let a disciple of mine marry a Portuguese woman, although she is willing.' We replied that, since he was his disciple, we should like him to judge the matter as well, to see who was right. 'Well, the young man is here,' he said; 'we can hear his argument now.' He went out and fetched him, and he said that we were putting pressure on him because he had agreed to marry that woman and we would not let him. We replied that he could not marry her because, since he was already married, he was leaving his wife to take this other one against what Christ Our Lord expressly commands in the Gospel. The young man made many points to confound the issue but, in the end, the monk said in front of many people who had come to listen, 'My ruling is that you cannot marry this woman, because it is against the Gospel and what Saint Paul teaches, and if the people of Ethiopia do this it is because we cannot control them. The fathers are quite right to oblige their people to adhere to what Christ commands.'

We went back in with the monk to the empress, and she was very pleased to hear what he had ruled. We took our leave of her and went to our lodging, happy to think that we were now free of that man who had been troubling us for a long time. It was not so, however; instead, he soon found another means to give us more trouble. He took the woman in front of the emperor's palace and made her shout so loudly that the emperor heard her and sent to ask what the matter was. He replied that, because she wanted to abandon the faith of the Portuguese and take his, the fathers had done her many wrongs, and he begged him to command them not to trouble her. The emperor told him to go away, because the captain of the Portuguese had informed him about everything. The man was very angry at this and said that the captain and all the {other} Portuguese were his enemies and he wanted nothing to do with them. We heard at once what was happening and that afternoon we went to the emperor. Although {{f. 436}} <[f. 389v/378v]> he was resting alone with just four of the great men, he told us to enter. They were seated near him and, since they remained where they were, the emperor said to them, 'The fathers are entering, and do you not stand up?' They stood up at once and remained standing until we sat down. We explained the situation and he replied, 'I do not interfere in those matters. Your Reverences should punish them both very well, for I am quite sure that they deserve it.' He then began to talk about other things and for fun spoke to me a little in Arabic, which he knew well, and then he dismissed us. As we left, we were given a message that the emperor's sister was calling for us, and we found her with some monks and many other people. Having us sit down, she said, 'For the love of God, forgive me for what I said yesterday about people who join your faith. It was thoughtless, and out of respect for the

<sup>1</sup> Clearly a copyist's error in BPB, MS 778.

viceroy. And really, after I realized what I had said, it weighed on me so much that I could not sleep all night. You know very well that I am your devotee: forgive me from your hearts.' We replied that we had realized that Her Highness had said that in order to humour the viceroy and that, since she had explained her feelings so well, our hearts could be filled only with the great desire to serve her that we had always had, on account of the favours that she continually did for us. She kept us there until very late and, when we left, she sent us a good supper.

We then sent for that Portuguese woman to see whether we might somehow separate her from that man, but she was never to be found, because they had heard at once that the emperor had said that we should punish them and they had fled together to another land. They were not able to flee from God's punishment, however, although for her it was a great mercy, because shortly afterwards she fell ill and suffered terrible pain, and she said that God was punishing her for her great sin. Finding herself very troubled, she sent word for a father to go and confess her for the love of God, for she had already left that man and would do whatever penance they wished. The father went and, soon after confessing, she died. The young man also died in that same year, but in an unfortunate way, because he was murdered.

The empress did not forget what she had promised before. She sent for the viceroy at once and reprimanded him {[f. 436v]} severely. He made excuses, <[f. 390/379]> saying that he had ordered it to be done because the youth's kinsfolk had demanded it, but the empress would not accept any excuses. The emperor, too, was very surprised at what he had done and commanded him to have everything that he had taken returned and not to interfere again in the affairs of the Portuguese or to say anything at all to those who wanted to join our faith. He went to visit the empress {very} early the next day, since she was indisposed, and when he was with her he said, 'Call the fathers here so that we can make peace between them and the viceroy of Tigrê.' The servants went straight to the city to summon us, but it was half a league away and, even though we went quickly, by the time we arrived the emperor was already riding away to retire for the night before the sun set. We visited the empress and she at once summoned the viceroy and reprimanded him again in front of us and of *Erâz Athanatêus*, and she told a monk to administer an oath to him not to do us any more harm and to have everything that he had taken from our people returned. He swore and said that we too should swear to be his friends, to which she replied that it was not necessary, for our word was sufficient. We thanked her for the favour she had done us and took our leave. Afterwards, the viceroy sent word for us to write as we saw fit to the governor, in his name, for him to return the property, and he would send the letter. And that is what he did, with the result that nothing was lost, and instead much was gained, because on seeing how the emperor favoured our ways, the wife of the man who had started the persecution became a Catholic, together with others who had not dared before out of fear.

Shortly after that, the emperor sent for us and, while he was discussing some very good lands that he {would give} <was giving> to the Portuguese, Za Celacê said, 'Lord, it is quite right that Your Majesty should give them very extensive lands, because they wrested this empire from the hands of the Moors, and one third of it is yours.' The emperor then said, 'Those lands shall be for the Portuguese, and some others nearby shall be for the fathers.' They were also very good. Za Celacê kissed his hand for that favour and then we did the same, and we stayed talking that day almost until nightfall. Afterwards he called us

when he was alone and spoke at great length about our ways and, in the end, made the decision to write to his holiness and his majesty, and said that I should go {{f. 437}} in time to Tigrê so as to be able to dispatch the letters more effectively, because he <[f. 390v/379v]> was about to set off for another land. I went to Tigrê soon afterwards, leaving the two fathers with the Portuguese. Since no ship arrived in Maçuâ that year, it was necessary to send the letters to Mocâ, another Turkish port, twelve leagues within the gates of the Red Sea. However, when the people taking them arrived and learnt that the Turks had seized the merchandise intended for the Portuguese and captured a young Christian who was bringing it, because the ship had put in there owing to lack of wind, they were very afraid and therefore threw all the letters into the sea before landing. In addition, during a revolt by a tyrant that took place in Tigrê, among the things that we lost were the transcripts of these letters, and so there is no record of them. Briefly, however, he wrote that he wished to make his empire submit to the obedience of the holy <mother> {Roman} Church <of Rome>, and that His Majesty should capture this port of Maçuâ in order to have friendship and trade with the Portuguese.

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## CHAPTER XV

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### On how Suz{e}niôs slew Emperor Iacob on the field and became lord of the empire

At the beginning of the following summer, after the emperor wrote those letters, Za Celacê rebelled against him because of I know not what misgivings that he had, and he allowed Suz{e}niôs to enter Gojâm, where he was viceroy, promising to help him take the empire. The emperor was very aggrieved at this, because he did not expect such a thing from someone who had received so many favours from him; indeed, he had thought that he had no more faithful servant, and that is why he put him in Gojâm, which was where Suz{e}niôs could do most harm. He marched against them at once with a large army, but was unable to cross the Nile (which they call Abaoî) because he was prevented by Suz{e}niôs, who was on the other side with his men, until Suz{e}niôs withdrew a few days later. Once the emperor had crossed over, he pursued him for three or four days; Suz{e}niôs took his men to a mountain fastness and the emperor encamped his army {[f. 437v]} at its foot on a very broad plain, which they call Agamnâ. After they had been there for a few days, Suzeneôs wanted to improve his position in order to give battle. One Saturday morning, 10th March 1607, he therefore commanded his baggage train to go over the top of the mountain with a captain, and he <[f. 391/380]> went down with the rest of his men and took up position on a high hill. When the emperor's men saw this, they thought he was trying to flee and decided to give battle at once without waiting any longer, thinking victory was certain since {Suzeneôs [Suzniôs]} <Suzeneôs> had so few men, for (so they say) he had not one sixth of the emperor's, although not even the very men who were there can give the exact number. And so the captains said to the emperor, 'Lord, how long must we march on in this manner? He is already fleeing. Let us give battle before he escapes from us, because for thirty of ours there is not even one of his.' The emperor thought it was good counsel and commanded them to draw up their men in great haste.

When Suz{e}niôs saw this and understood what he intended, he split his men into three squadrons and gave one to Za Celacê, another to a great captain who was called Iuliôs, and he took the middle one for himself, giving the order that nobody should move from his place {until} <unless> he attacked. Exhorting them all to fight valiantly, he said that if they wanted honours, wealth and lordships they would get them all that day, if they fought as he expected such courageous and valiant horsemen to fight; they should not be frightened by Iacob's multitude of men because, even though they outnumbered them so much, they were far inferior in spirit and heart and in fighting skill; and if they achieved victory, they would share among themselves whatever they found in Iacob's camp and whatever those lords had in their houses, for he himself wanted nothing, and it was



better to die in battle than to fall into the hands of their enemies, because if the enemies won, they would sell those that they captured to the Turks, and even the wives and children of those that escaped; and, so that there might be no disorder, nobody should take anything at all while fighting, and he would slay anyone he saw taking anything from another. He also told Za Celacê to make a speech to the soldiers. Starting with many words, he said that they must certainly recall that although he had been the best of Iacob's captains and had a great multitude of men, they had defeated him twice {[f. 438]} when there were very few of them, and that on another occasion they had made Iacob retreat with the loss of many men; now that he was there with so many men, there was nothing to fear, but instead they should be sure that victory was theirs. <[f. 391v/380v]> Finally, he gave them so many reasons that, with great spirit, they all resolved to die rather than turn tail.

When the emperor had finished drawing up his men in order, he gave a good number of them to *Erâz Athanatêus*, who was with him, to attack on one flank, and he with the rest of the army went on the other. And the cavalry charged up the hill so fast that the horses were steaming by the time they reached *Suzeneôs*. *Suzeneôs* then attacked with his men, and they fought so valiantly that they soon forced the front lines back, and *Suzeneôs* battled so furiously and was so engrossed in the fight that before he noticed it he was so deep in among the adversaries who were fleeing that he was forced to go part of the way down the hill among them as if he too was fleeing, and if they had recognized him they could easily have killed him, as he was alone. On reaching a flatter part, he said to the ones who were next to him, 'Let us go this way, brothers. This way is best.' And he gradually moved out of the rush of fleeing men. Thirty horsemen went with him, and when he found himself a little apart from the others, he turned on them with his spear, saying, 'Oh, enemies, can you escape me?' They then fled, and so he went back to his men, who were giving chase and slaying many.

When the emperor saw that his men were turning back, he went to try to stop them, but he was unable to do so because they were coming without any order. He began to fight the horsemen who were beside him, and they soon killed his horse. He was left on foot in a place that they call *Gol*, and some went past him without doing him any harm, because they recognized him. Afterwards, a man on horseback came and killed him. When the ones who were with him saw that, they fled and they all scattered across the plain. *Suzeneôs* soon learnt that the emperor was dead and he had the retreat sounded, as he wished to pardon the throng. Even so, the field was covered with bodies, and many more had fallen off cliffs and been smashed to pieces than had been killed by the sword, because that land was very rugged and it soon began {[f. 438v]} to grow dark and, as they could not see the path, they tumbled down the cliffs, and the ones coming behind thought that they had found a way down and followed them, and so they were all smashed to pieces: the fear that they felt even though nobody was pursuing them was so great that, as if blind and witless, they fell headlong off the cliffs. One of those who was fleeing was a Portuguese horseman called <[f. 392/381]> *Manuel Gonçalves* and, as he began to fall down the cliff, he caught hold of a branch of a tree, while his horse fell past him and was smashed to pieces, and he lay against the tree until morning. When dawn broke, he was shocked to see the vast precipice and so many dead bodies below, and he climbed back up giving thanks to God for the great mercy He had done him. It was a very marvellous thing, and one on which a number of people remarked, that although 500 helmets were found at

the foot of {this} <the> cliff from the men that had fallen, and many died at others, and although all the Portuguese had been with the emperor, not one fell off the cliffs or died in the battle, and they were the ones who fought most, and their adversaries had killed many white men of Turkish origin who had been very close to them, and their own patriarch, who had also been a target – shouting out that he was the *abúna* had been of little avail to him for them not to spear him many times, although some say that they did not recognize him – yet they passed by the Portuguese without doing them any harm, as if they had not seen them.

This victory by {Suzeniôs} <Suzeneôs> was, if not miraculous, at least felicitous on account of the inequality that there was in the might that he had in comparison with Iacob, who had the cream of the empire's cavalry and countless infantry. And from what has been seen so far, it is quite certain that God particularly wished to favour him and give him the crown of this empire. At the time he would have been a man aged thirty-three, tall and well-proportioned, with large eyes, a straight nose and thin lips, a joyful expression and dark complexion, as we have already said. He is very good-natured and has excellent qualities; he is very prudent, a great and courageous captain, cunning and experienced in matters of war, because he has spent most of his life in it, and he has made it his office to govern an army. He is very generous, affable and a man who has the word of a king, because {[f. 439]} no fault can ever be found in what he says or promises, which is something rare in Ethiopia. Most of all, for matters of the true religion and reduction of his empire to the holy Roman Church, he has the heart and spirit that we mentioned in book 2 and will see later. A few days prior to this battle (as he recounted to me recently, and a great lord later affirmed), they saw something like fire come out of the iron heads of their spears at night, and during the day, without touching them, they jangled on their shoulders as <[f. 392v/381v]> when one spearhead gently hits another.<sup>1</sup> The wealth that they collected was beyond calculation, because almost all the nobility of Ethiopia was there, and he left it all to the soldiers, as he had promised.

The morning after the victory, he commanded his men to bury Emperor Iacob with great honour, and he had it proclaimed that all his pages and household officials should keep their positions and should serve them freely, and that he pardoned all the rest, except for a captain of Moorish origin who, as we said above in chapter 9, had been the first to spear Emperor Za Denguíl. He commanded that he alone, of those they had captured, should be beheaded. He soon learnt where *Eráz* Athanatêus was and sent word for him to come, because he pardoned him, and when he came he received him with honour. He gave himself the title with the same name that Malâc Çaguêd had taken before, {but later gave up this name and called himself Seltân Çaguêd,} which means 'Power Worships', and we shall call him that from here onwards. He celebrated his victory on that plain for three days and then crossed the River Nile and went to the city of Cogâ, where Emperor Iacob had had his seat. He entered on Maundy Thursday, and on the following Sunday and Monday the royal festivities began, when everyone showed great joy. But since the world cannot give perfect or enduring joy, the festivities ceased on the Tuesday and joy turned to weeping and the music to laments, which were very deeply felt, because on that day, near the court, the empress died. She had been the wife of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, who was

<sup>1</sup> This was a case of Saint Elmo's fire, an electrical atmospheric phenomenon.

the uncle of this Seltân Çaguêd. We shall now relate the latter's history so that the course of his life may be seen at length, and afterwards we shall add some points that are missing in it on how he proceeded and still proceeds in the matters of our faith; from that the reader will discern what we said above, {[f. 439v]} that one could be sure that God wanted to give him the crown of the empire in order to make use of him in such important matters.

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## CHAPTER XVI<sup>1</sup>

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Which begins to report the history of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd and the difficulties that he had as a boy, as told by his books

[f. 483]<sup>2</sup> HISTORY OF EMPEROR SELTAN SAGUED TRANSLATED LITERALLY FROM HIS CHRONICLE [I- THIS CHAPTER SHOULD BE WRITTEN ON THE REVERSE OF THE FOLIO FOR GREATER DISTINCTION; BECAUSE IT DEALS WITH DIFFERENT MATERIAL, AS SAID AT THE BEGINNING IN THE SECOND PART OF THIS BOOK] CHAPTER XVII – DIVIDED INTO SECTIONS

*In the name of merciful God the Father, forgiver and creator of all things, whose «who raised His» nature is much higher than can be imagined. <[f. 393/382]> In the name of His Son Jesus Christ, who is equal to Him in His divinity, and who delivered Adam from the hand of the Devil, the father of deceit, and his sons, who were immersed in the deep sea of sin, by donning the flesh that He took from the most pure and holy Virgin Mary, daughter of David. In the name of the Holy Spirit, Paraclete, revealer of hidden things, who proceeds from the Father with marvellous procession «(The historian Azage Tino at the time when he wrote the greater of this [...] <sup>3</sup> history had not yet received the [...] <sup>4</sup> faith of Rome, for which he later died a glorious martyr; he therefore says that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father without mentioning that He proceeds also from the Son)», <sup>5</sup> whom the heart of man does not know and the understanding of angels does not understand, God being Triune and worshipped in unity, because He is the source of wisdom and the beginning of all good «of all power». It is He who makes kings and honours princes for vengeance «punishment»*

<sup>1</sup> Chapters 16 to 20 consist of Páez's translation (into Portuguese) of the Chronicle of Susneyos.

<sup>2</sup> Underlined text indicates additions or changes that Manuel de Almeida made to Pedro Páez's translation of the Chronicle of Susneyos when transcribing it in his own manuscript (now in London, SOAS, MS 11966, 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta ou Abassia: Imperio do Abexim, cujo Rey vulgarmente he chamado Preste Joam ..., composta pelo Padre Manoel de Almeida' ['History of Upper Ethiopia or Abassia: Empire of the Abexim, whose King is commonly called Prester John ..., composed by Father Manoel de Almeida', ff. 483–543]. Almeida must have compared Páez's translation with the original Ge'ez text of a version of the Chronicle produced prior to May 1619. London, BL Add. MS 9861 omits the whole of the Chronicle text, and there are discrepancies between the missionaries' translations and the manuscript in the Oxford, Bodleian, MS Eth. 30, Dillman catalogue, which is the copy of the Chronicle of Susneyos acquired by the 18th-century Scottish explorer James Bruce. For a comparative analysis of the translations by Páez and Almeida and the Ge'ez text of the Chronicle, see Pennec, *Des jésuites au royaume du prêtre Jean*, pp. 287–97.

<sup>3</sup> Illegible.

<sup>4</sup> Illegible.

<sup>5</sup> Interpolation by Manuel de Almeida.

of evildoers and praise and honour of the good. Blessed be His holy name, who gave them power and command to cast down the proud and raise the humble. Marvellous are the works of this high, mighty God.

We write the history of the mighty, victorious Emperor Suzniôs, whose heart is in his right hand and his eyes above his head, lover of wisdom and judge of the truth, hater of wickedness and removed from evil, liberal and generous to give, and trusting in the highest God, seeker of His laws and customs, who knows what is current and understands what is lasting.

«[f. 484]» «On his birth and upbringing, how he was captured by the Gallas and released from captivity – Section I»

The name of this great emperor's father was Abeitahûn Faciladâz, the son of Abeitahûn Iacob, the son of Emperor Onâg Çaguêd, who by the grace of baptism was called Lebenâ Denguil, peace be upon him. His mother is of the honoured {tribe} people and strong tribe «Xemê», and is called Hamelmâla Orc, the daughter of Azâx Comô «Collô», a rich man {[f. 440]} affluent in the things of this world. And, before giving birth to this son of hers, «before giving birth to him,» in a dream she saw Abba Taquelâ Haimanôt, who in works and quality is like the apostles, with the honoured Abba Embacôm, successor to his chair and guardian of the law and good customs, and they gave her tidings of joy, saying that she would give birth to a son who would be king, and that, when he was, she should remember to recommend her sons to him. Shortly after she had had this vision, she gave birth to a son, and they gave him the name of the high, victorious martyr Suzniôs, who killed Vizaliâ, who used to take the likeness of birds and wild animals, and later was a martyr for the sake of Our Lord Jesus Christ. And so this emperor was also strong, imitating his namesake in his works. And, while <[f. 393v/382v]> his parents were giving him a good upbringing and education, the Gâlas that they call Borên came and killed many people of the land, including his father, and they took him captive. And the Gâla who took him treated him as his son and he stayed with him for a year and a half, or a little more. This was by the will of God in the highest, to show his might and strength and what he does to those who trust in him, just as God is said to be marvellous in His saints. The strength of his might was seen in Joseph, the son of Israel, who after being sold as a slave became lord and prince in the land of Egypt. Thus this Emperor Suzniôs was often covered by God's mercy, sometimes in captivity, other times in war, and it delivered him from the counsel of the wicked, as we shall say in due course.

While he was in captivity, the Gâlas went to the land of Damôt to fight, but Dêye Azmâch Azbô went forth to encounter them and defeated them, killing many by God's command, and those who escaped hid in caves. But «[f. 485]» Dêye Azmâch Azbô's men, who were pursuing them, got them out by means of marvellous artifice and took them to their lord; he {had them put} <put them> in close prison and told them that, if they brought him the son of Abeitahûn Faciladâz, he would release them «and send them freely to their lands» and send them freely to their lands, and otherwise he would kill them. They {replied} <promised> that they would bring him «replied that they would bring him, and if not he should kill them» and so they made him come, and he received him with great honour, and he let the Gâlas go to their land as he had promised, which everyone praised, and he left a memory of his works. Afterwards, he sent him {by} <to> a kinsman of his, named Mangadô, to Empress Adamâs Mogoçâ, the mother of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd the elder, while she was in Deguên, in the land of Gojâm, and she received him well and gave him a tutor who taught him the doctrine {[f. 440v]} of the holy books, and later he stayed in the lands that his father had in Gojâm, although they did not give him all of them, but just Debêt Cic and Abarâ and Gomamit,

where he occupied himself in hunting wild animals and in all kinds of weaponry until he was a young man, and he showed great piety by doing good and honour to everyone with a joyful expression.

During this time he went to the land of Amharâ to visit his mother and, while he was with her, there came a cousin of his on his mother's side, Melcâ Christôs, lord of Atronê Za Mariâm, the son of Azâx Cer Za Christôs, a man of little knowledge and government, who took him to Emperor Malâc Çaguêd and said to him, 'I bring this youth, who <[f. 394/383]> had moved from Gojâm to Amharâ, so that there may be no revolt in the land.' On hearing this, the emperor did not rejoice or turn his face to him, but instead he ignored him and received the young man very well, and {afterwards} he sent him to his father's lands, where he had been before. Some time later, he again visited the emperor, who was in Coçoguê, and he received him well, with a joyful expression, and he showed him more love than to Za Denguil, the son of his brother Abeitahûn Liçâna Christôs, who reigned after they removed Emperor Iacob. While he was there, evil men of little counsel and {less} <little> mercy went to the emperor and said to him, 'Lord, this son of Abeitahûn Faciladâz has now grown up and become strong; it would be good to have him seized and put on Guixên Ambâ, as used to be done with the sons of emperors, so that there may be no tribulation and revolt in the land.'<sup>1</sup> On hearing this, the emperor showed anger and sadness in his face and said to them, 'Do not speak to me of such a thing again, because this counsel of yours is abominable to God and to men. When a son comes to his father, does he perchance do him ill instead of good, and curse him instead of bless him?' Having said that, he called the young man and, giving him some presents, sent him back to his lands.

<<[f. 486]>> <<How the governors of the empire wished to seize him, and how he escaped from their hands – Section 2>>

Some time later, the emperor went to the kingdom of Damôt to fight the Gâlas whom they call Borê and, when he arrived in Gojâm, this young man joined him <<went to visit him>> and told him that he wished to accompany him on that campaign <<that he wanted to go with His Highness>>. The emperor replied that he should stay in his land until he returned, God willing; and so he stayed and the emperor went on his way and reached the land of Damôt, where he rested from the hardships of this world and went to God. His staying was by divine order because, {[f. 441]} had he gone with the emperor, he would have fallen into the hands of the princes of that time. But, because of what God had ordained to do with him, He made him stay out of their way, which He always does with His chosen ones, may his Holy Name be {extolled} <exalted> <<extolled praised>>.

While the great men of the people and governors of the empire were returning with the emperor's body, they took counsel on the way as to what they should do, and they agreed to seize this son of Abeitahûn Faciladâz and the son of Abeitahûn Liçâna Christôs, so that all the people could remain united and of one heart. To this end they sent Aminadâb and Aquilil with many men and twenty-five arquebusiers and, after crossing the Abaoi (scilicet the Nile)<sup>2</sup> they gathered countless men from the lands of Gojâm and, on arriving in {Abarâ} <Amharâ>, where <[f. 394v/383v]> Suzniôs was, they sent to him with words of peace saying that they were bringing a message from the emperor, while they remained standing outside the enclosure. He replied with kind words that they should enter and tell him what

<sup>1</sup> BPB, MS 778 starts a new paragraph here; ARSI, MS Goa 42 does not.

<sup>2</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

the emperor commanded. But Aminadâb and Aquilil with their men were afraid and dared not enter, because the enclosure was strong and built on a hill, and so they made camp below, a short distance away, saying that they would meet the next day. And at night, when it was time to sleep, a man called Hadarô, a kinsman of his mother Hamelmâla Orc, came to him and told him that the emperor was dead and that those men had come to seize him. On hearing this, the strong young man left by another path towards Abaoî, where he stayed, and the next day, when Aminadâb and Aquilil saw that he had gone, they returned and their men dispersed, each one going to his land, and a few days later Suzniôs went to the monastery of Dimâ, so that the monks could make peace for him with the great men. While he was there, Abba Tigrê came from the governors' camp and told him that they had seized Abeitahûn Za Denguil, the son of his father's brother, to whom the empire should belong, and that there had been much more sorrow and lamenting for his capture than for the death of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd. They also told him that men were coming to seize him, and therefore he left there and went to his mother, and he was not left in peace even there because when warriors came against him he withdrew «[f. 487]» to Abaoî with his servants, who consoled him by saying that he should not be sad, for all that hardship would soon pass. He had also placed all his hope in the Lord and was not afraid of those who were troubling him, because God was strengthening him.

{[f. 441v]} While the good young man was beset by these hardships and temptations, the Gâlas came to attack the province of Olacâ, and on reaching Ziasôr, near Abaoî, they saw Suzniôs's men and they shouted out to ask who {he was} <they were>. They replied, 'Abeitahûn Suzniôs, the son of Abeitahûn Faciladaz, whom you know.' On hearing this, the Gâlas ran up and threw themselves at his feet, showing him great love and reverence. These Gâlas called themselves Bucô, of the Deconô tribe. While he was there, he heard that many warriors were looking for him in order to apprehend him. And so he went with the Gâlas to the monastery of Coât, where he stayed for a short time, and from there he moved to Zalalô monastery and went on at once, because his men could not find anything to eat, for the land was deserted after the Gâlas had laid waste to it, <[f. 395/384]> and so they just lived on the animals that they killed in the field «and from there he moved to Selalô monastery where he did not stop because his men could not find anything to eat, on account of the destruction that the Gallas had caused». Tascâro, Guarenhâ Çarçô and Job, whose foot they cut off for his wickedness, fled from him there and moved to Gojâm, but God did not abandon the valiant young man Suzniôs because in the middle of his great hunger a Gafâte named Fecên came to him and brought him many cattle and many men to accompany him, whom he took a short distance and then dismissed, giving him many thanks, and he passed on to the land that is called Fiyêl Çâf. And from there he went to the monastery of our father Taquelâ Haimanôt, which is called Dêbra Libanôs, the chief of the monasteries, where the monks received him with much love and benevolence, because they had always been faithful friends of his forefathers the emperors, starting with Icûno Amlâc until today, and they pass this friendship from son to son, and the superior of the monastery, Abba Abraham, in particular loved him like a son.<sup>1</sup>

During this time, the monks took counsel as to what they {should} <would> do for the good of the young man, and they agreed to make friends for him with Emperor Iacob, the son of

<sup>1</sup> This *eççagê* ('superior') of Dabra Libânos monastery is mentioned three times in Páez's translation of the Chronicle of Susneyos (see bk IV, ch. 16, f. 441v; ch. 17, f. 447 and f. 452). See Glossary (*icheguê/icheguêl'eççagê*).

Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, and with Erâz Athanatêus, who governed the empire at that time, and with Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs and the others in the camp. When they informed him of this counsel, he said that he would do anything if they gave him his father's lands. The monks agreed this with Erâz Athanatêus and afterwards took him to him, but he did not receive him as befitted the son of an emperor, nor did he keep the word that he had given to hand over his father's lands to him, and he kept him with him that winter in the land of Çarçâ. While he was there, some envious men of wicked counsel discussed among themselves that it was not good to allow Erâz Athanatêus to have the son of Abeitahûn Faciladâz with him, {[f. 442]} because he would make him emperor, and he would be raised up and they would be kept low. Deceitfully, as if they were giving good counsel, they sent word to him that he ought to be imprisoned, because if he escaped Emperor Iacob would fight with him. But Erâz Athanatêus replied that he could not do that because the abbot of Dêbra Libanôs had put him under excommunication not to do him any harm. «[f. 488]» When they realized that he would not listen to their words, they decided to fetch Abeitahûn Za Denguîl to be with them, just as he had Abeitahûn Suzniôs with him. This news spread throughout the land and, when it reached the ears of Abeitahûn Suzniôs, he pretended that his mother was <[f. 395v/384v]> ill and had called for him urgently, and with this excuse «~~excuse~~ pretext» he asked Erâz Athanatêus for leave; he gave it to him, not imagining anything bad. And so he left his camp and escaped from the counsel of the wicked ones, who were seeking to have him imprisoned, and he went to his mother, who was in Gomamît.

«How he began to rebel because they did not give him his father's lands – Section 3»

Soon after he reached his mother, he moved on to the land of Olacâ, where he met Baligarâd Deganô, who was taking tribute to Emperor Iacob, and he took his camels and mules and everything else that he was taking, and told him to go in peace to wherever he wished. From that day onwards, he began to gather men, because he knew that they would not leave him alone without killing or imprisoning him. And so he chose to move around in the deserts rather than stay in populated lands. «And eight days after he seized the goods that Deganô was taking, he moved into Gojam, and by force of arms climbed a mountain fastness that was called Debra Semonâ, where he found the treasures of Queen Cebîa Oanguel and the riches of all the princes of Gojam, and many weapons and drums, and he enriched his men with these goods; and, when returning overjoyed with all this plunder, he entered the land of Olacâ and stopped in Darâ for the feast of the Pasch of the Resurrection of Christ Our Lord.» Afterwards, he went to the land that they call Yeçabâ «Iaçaba», where he decided to stay since the land was flat and had plenty of grazing for the horses, but shortly he heard that Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs was coming against him with many men, because he was the governor of those lands. And so, taking all the booty that he could find, he crossed the River Gemâ and entered the land of the Gâlas. They received him well, and Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs stopped with his men at the fortress of {Tetâ} <Tutâ> «Ieetâ», and the strong young man gathered the Gâlas and, with them and his own soldiers, of whom there were many, he went to where Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs was. He fell on him with his men and they fought fiercely on the plain, some dying on both sides, among them Tançô, the brother of Abeitahûn Suzniôs's father. Recognizing that that was not his day, he withdrew in good order, and «[f. 489]» Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs's men did not pursue them because they knew that if he fled they would not be able to catch him and if he turned on them he was so strong that they would not be able to escape him. And so he went to the land of Xâoa and Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs to Gojâm.



{[f. 442v]} *When winter came, Abeitahûn Suzniôs went with his men to Dêbra Libanôs, where the monks gave him their customary welcome, but, so as not to be a burden on them, he moved on at once to Enermâ, where there is a very large cave, and he overwintered in it with {great} <much> hardship because of the large amount of water that poured over the cave with a great roar; <[f. 396/385]> the people of Xâoa brought him what was needed to feed them and the animals. Once winter was over, he went to Upper Xâoa, where he wished to make his camp, but the soldiers, whom they call hafrô aiguebâ,<sup>1</sup> did not wish to obey him and nor did the local people, and he therefore went against them and, giving battle, defeated them. From there he went to the land that they call Çarmât and they all obeyed him on the counsel of a priest who was there; the Gâlas also obeyed him as if they were his slaves. Moving on to Enxâr, he made his camp there and, soon afterwards, Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs came upon him with many of Emperor Iacob's men on horse and foot and, catching him unawares, they surrounded him. He did not lose heart, however, but instead fought with great valour and courage for a long time, but on seeing that they were killing many of his men and that he could not withstand the force of that great throng he fled. Many horsemen pursued him, but he on his horse turned on them like a lion and forced them back, and he urged his soldiers not to be left behind and in this way he went on withdrawing and attacking until the sun set, when he reached the River Cacêm. Finding no spot where his horse could cross, because there was a high cliff, he dismounted and killed it so that his opponents could not take it, and he swam across and helped some of his men who could not swim very well, and so they all got across, and those who were pursuing him turned back, marvelling at his great spirit and fortitude.*

*Having crossed the river Cacêm, he went to where the Gâlas were and, leaving his men there because they were tired, he returned alone with many Gâlas, five days after the battle. When he reached the place where Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs was, he gave battle and they fought for a long time without victory being gained on either side and, in the end, Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs withdrew to his fortress and did not come out again. The valiant young man therefore returned with the Gâlas to where he had left his men and he stayed with them in Hangetâm, where he came to suffer such great hunger that his men were reduced to cooking and eating the leather sandals that they wore, because that land was unpeopled. And so he went towards {[f. 443]} the land of Guendbarât and, on reaching Çalalâ, he met two men, one a Gâla and the other of the Magt people, who were coming to receive <[f. 396v/385v]> him with presents, as Our Lord had ordained because the governors of the empire were, without reason or justice, causing him so much hardship by throwing him out of his father's lands. On arriving in Guendbarât <[f. 490]> he had his drums sounded. When the Gâlas of that land heard him, many rode out on their horses to see who it was and, when they recognized him, they decided to betray him, but afterwards they were afraid and abandoned their counsel and took him to their land of Oatê, where they showed him good hospitality and gave many cows to feed his men, and they did him great honour while he was there. He then moved on to the land of Magt, and the people there obeyed him and gave him everything necessary, even though it was {a land} <so bad> that <it> had never obeyed the former emperors.*

*«On various events that happened to him while he was rebelling – Section 4»*

*He moved from the land of Magt to that of the Gafatês which they call Abêdrâi, where he was well received, and acting on the counsel of a Gafate of the Berababô tribe, who was called*

<sup>1</sup> 'Fear does not enter them'; see p. ???, below.

*Fecên, of whom we spoke above, he moved on with his men and many Gâlas to the kingdom of Gojâm in order to attack the land of Deguêm. On reaching the river Abaoî (scilicet the Nile),<sup>1</sup> they missed the crossing because it was night and the current carried off thirty-four men, among them one of his father's brothers named Mamô. The Gâlas took this as a bad omen and, after crossing the river, they would not go to Deguêm. Only nine Gâlas and twenty Ambarâs ventured and, on attacking Deguêm, they killed forty people and took {grain} <supplies> and {some} <many> cattle and, while they were returning, they were attacked by the inhabitants of the land «who defeated them, and pursued them until they reached the Abauy, where their lord was» with many fighting men, who had remained there. Because a great many adversaries were coming, Abeitahûn Suzniôs told his men to cross the river and he stayed behind fighting valiantly. Once he saw that almost all of them had crossed, he dived in and swam, and the enemies shot at him with stones and arrows, but they did not hit him because he swam looking backwards and, when he saw an arrow coming, he dived and came up elsewhere, and so he crossed with great difficulty and peril.*

*After he had crossed the river, he found all his men unclothed and with no weapons at all, because in their haste and fear they had left everything on the other side, thinking only of saving their lives. Only he and two others had clothes and all the rest were naked. They cut sticks and carried them in their hands like spears to show that they were armed, and thus they went to the land of Zambêl. The principal <[f. 397/386]> men of that land came out to them on the road, and «[f. 491]» Suzniôs, the wisest of the wise, had them seized. He entered their houses {[f. 443v]} and made them give them all clothes to wear and plenty of weapons and, after resting a while, he went on to Gambô and Azôr, where he fought and took plenty of booty and countless cattle, with which they were all well supplied. He went hence and fought in certain lands and, moving to Biçamô, he met some Gafates whom they call Esublô on the road and, falling on them, he took many cattle. On reaching Biçamô, he laid waste all that land and, on returning from there, he reached the mountain of Ancarêb. Although it was so strong that nobody had ever been able to climb onto it by force of arms, he climbed it because he caught the guards unawares, and he captured everyone who was there and took plenty of riches. And he returned with great joy and contentment, and although he encountered countless men with bows and arrows on the way, he fought strongly and, without losing any of the plunder that he was carrying, he reached the safety of his home.*

*«He did not rest there for long, because he went forth at once and attacked certain lands. In particular he made an incursion into Gojam, where his men took booty and cattle beyond count, but during his return some soldiers that they call Cenâr came out to him on the road with many men, while his were travelling all spread out and busy driving the cattle. Even the few who were with him fled and left him alone with a kinsman of his, Abetahun Abraneôs, and the latter was so frightened that his tongue was as if stuck to the roof of his mouth and he was unable to say a word or to move; but the valiant and courageous young man Susnios encouraged him and he alone attacked the enemies and made them turn, and then he retreated and carried his companion; little by little in this manner, attacking and retreating, he took him to Abauy. His men abandoned all the booty they were carrying and many of their horses and mules out of fear of the great horde of enemies. After crossing the river they went to the land of Guaguatâ, where they overwintered. Another similar event occurred to him after the winter, when he went to Hadeâ.»*

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

When winter was over, he went to Hadiâ to fight the Moors, and he took with him plenty of goods and the cattle that he had seized before. And the Moor Cidi came out to encounter him with 1,000 horse and many foot and, even though he had so many men, he did not wish to fight Abeitahûn Suzniôs but instead went away towards the River Oari, but the strong young man went there and gave battle, which was very fierce and hard. In the end, however, the Moor gained victory and took everything that Abeitahûn Suzniôs had with him. As he fled, many Moors gave chase, but he turned on them like a lion and forced them back, and with that his men reached safety and entered Ebxô. From there, he went to Meigâr, because the Moor came to fight the Guragês and they asked him to help them. On reaching there, the men of Nemôr did not want to obey him but instead wanted to go over to the Moor's side. {Then Abeitahûn Abraniôs deceitfully said that he would make the men of Nemôr submit and abandon the Moor, and}<sup>1</sup> <And> taking twenty horsemen with him, among whom was Cambêz Senô, he went to Nemôr and, instead of making peace, he sent a message to the Moor telling him to come, because he and his companions wished to serve him. On hearing this, the Moor came and met him «[f. 492]» in Chetamô and they revealed to him Abeitahûn Suzniôs's counsels and secrets as well as the names of the people of that land who had promised to join him, and the Moor seized those whom they named and put fear into the others so that they would not leave him. Acting on the counsel of these twenty, who preferred being with the Moor rather than with their true lord, the Moor went to Mugar to fall upon Abeitahûn Suzniôs, and he received them on the battlefield and they fought hard on both sides without victory every being certain and, if those twenty horsemen had not joined the Moor and told him to seize those who were going to help {[f. 444]} Abeitahûn Suzniôs, the Moor would have been defeated. They separated when it was already very late and pitched their camps nearby, and for seven consecutive days they had fierce skirmishes and many died on both sides.

When Abeitahûn Suzniôs saw how doubtful victory was, he decided to abandon that dispute and went off with his men to Ebxô, where he was well received. But since he did not trust the people of that land very much, he soon moved on from there and encamped his army beside the River Corêb. While he was here, Dama Christôs, who was then governor of Ôye, sent a message to the Moor saying that he would capture Abeitahûn Suzniôs and deliver him to him, but before he could carry out his wickedness Abeitahûn Suzniôs learnt of it and seized him. When the Guraguês heard of his capture, they came with great force of arms to rescue him and, although they were incomparably more numerous than Abeitahûn Suzniôs's men, they were unable to take the man from him because he fought hard and gradually withdrew in good order, taking his prisoner in front of him at all times. When his opponents saw that they could not achieve their intention, they very sadly went back. And he went on to the village of a Gàla who had previously been his friend, where, by agreement, he released Dama Christôs, taking fifty horses and 300 cattle from him. Since there was a severe lack of supplies there, he moved on to Xâoa, «on this road he encountered many merchants who were coming from Zoâi, and he took all the goods that they were carrying without doing them any personal harm, and passing close to Debra Libanos he made his camp in a land that is called Ascâ, which lacked everything necessary,» and from there to a land that they call Azcâ, where he made his camp.

<sup>1</sup> This phrase is missing in BPB, MS 778 but present in SOAS, MS 11966.

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## CHAPTER XVII

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Which continues the history of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, and the difficulties that he had until he began to present himself as emperor

*«How he continued his attacks because they would not give him Xâoa, which he was demanding – Section 5»*

<[f. 398/387]> *While Abeitahûn Suzniôs was in the land of Azca, undergoing much hardship and such great need that he came to have nothing to sustain himself other than the milk of a cow, which he drank in the morning, and at night he made do with {[f. 444v]} fruits or herbs from the field, a kinsman of his by the name of Melcâ Christôs came to him and «[f. 493]» said to him that he should make peace with Erâz Athanatêus, who was governing the empire because Emperor Iacob was too young, and with Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs and the other lords of the empire. After taking counsel with his men, he replied that he would do so, if they gave him his father's lands and Xâoa. He met Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs straight away in the land of Darâ, and the latter promised him that he would make this peace with the governors and, if they would not give him what he was demanding, he would thereafter accompany and help him in every way. And so he went directly to Gojâm, taking one of Abeitahûn Suzniôs' servants with him, and spoke to Erâz Athanatêus and the other {governors} <lords> of the empire, and they all swore to give him what he was demanding. When Abeitahûn Za Denguil heard this, he did not think it right that they should give him the land of Xâoa, and he said, 'Do you perchance want to make two emperors?' Erâz Athanatêus therefore undid the agreement and said that he would give him neither the land of Xâoa nor his father's lands, and the rest agreed with this for fear that he might declare himself emperor.*

*When Abeitahûn Suzniôs heard that the governors would not give him any of what he was demanding, he took many of the Gâlas whom they call Bartumâ and went to the kingdom of Ambarâ and laid waste many lands; he did the same in the lands of Olacâ and then in Marrâbeitê. Farîz came to him there with 800 men with shields, pretending that he was going to accompany him but with the intention of seizing him, because at the time he had no more than 200 men with him. After he arrived, he watched for the time to do what he {had resolved} <wished>. But Abeitahûn Suzniôs understood his intention and gave his men a look for them to apprehend him, which they did promptly, and, to prevent some of his men who were present from going to his aid, he grabbed his sword and stood up with determination showing that <[f. 398v/387v]> he would kill anyone who tried to resist, and so they all left without saying anything, and Abeitahûn Suzniôs's servants took the weapons that they were carrying. Afterwards, he went to Xâoa, taking Farîz with him as a prisoner, and he left him there under good guard and moved on {[f. 445]} to Manz, the land where he was born, and shortly after that he sent Iuliôs, his captain, as viceroy of all the lands of Ifât. On arriving in them, he made his seat on Gafagâf, a very strong mountain fastness, and while he was there*

the inhabitants of the land came with the soldiers that they call afrô aiguebâ (which means 'fear does not enter them')<sup>1</sup> and many Moors from Cachenô, and surrounded them. When Abeitahûn Suzniôs heard of the {great} danger that Iuliôs was in, he went there with his men, marching in great haste, and on arriving defeated them and killed many and laid waste all those lands. Returning in great haste, he went to make his camp at Çarmât and overwintered in Magâz, where a son was born to him, to whom he gave the name Faciladâz.<sup>2</sup>

After the winter, he gathered many warriors and many Gâlas that they call Burên, and went to the kingdom of Nareâ. When the viceroy of that land, who was called Gumichô, came out to encounter him with many men, they had very fierce «[f. 494]» skirmishes for three consecutive days. On the evening of the third day, Abeitahûn Suzniôs with his men attacked Gumichô's camp and killed him and many of his men, and took a large amount of booty. But the next morning the people of Nareâ fell on him and fought so hard that they defeated him and, after killing many of his men, made him abandon not only what he had taken the night before but also 600 of his horses. After this defeat, he went off to the lands of some heathens that they call Guraguê. When he reached Nemôr, many warriors came forth against him and, giving battle, they defeated him and all his men fled, leaving him alone with two horsemen, Iuliôs and Azcâl. With these two, he went on retreating and attacking those who were pursuing him with such valour and courage that he killed some of those who came too close trying to catch him. And even though many of those heathens surrounded him {on the road}, he escaped from their hands and reached the place to which his men had withdrawn. After resting there for three days, he went back to take revenge for what the people of Nemôr had done to him, and while he was <[f. 399/388]> fighting, his horse fell with him and his left arm was so badly hurt that even with help he only remounted his horse with great difficulty, and he went off to one side of the Nemôr ditch to see if his arm {[f. 445v]} was broken. Meanwhile, his men got through the gates of Nemôr and killed and captured many. When they returned to the camp, they did not notice their lord, who remained in the ditch with just two horsemen, Çafâlâm Cenô and Imanô, his brother, and at great risk to their lives, these men delivered him from his enemies and took him back to his camp. Once he was healed, he went with his army and camped at Dêbra Libanôs.

While he was in this land, he heard that the great men of the empire had seized Emperor Iacob, the son of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, and given the emperorship to Abeitahûn Za Denguil, the son of Abeitahûn Liçâna Christôs, taking him for this purpose from the island in the sea where they had imprisoned him. The reason why they did this was because the great men had governed for six and a half years while Emperor Iacob was small, and when he was old enough he wanted to take over the government, which the great men refused, since they wished to hold it for longer. And they began to say that he had abandoned the faith and had broken the cross of the church of Jesus and had looked at cow's tallow<sup>3</sup> as the heathen Gâlas do, and other things that did not befit a man. They stirred up the people with these lies and, having seized him, they sent him under guard to the kingdom of Nareâ and raised Abeitahûn Za Denguil as emperor.

When Za Denguil took over the empire, he at once started putting things in order in a way that would please God. He abhorred evil and loved the truth, upheld justice strongly, and

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

<sup>2</sup> See Glossary (sons of Susneyos).

<sup>3</sup> In other words, he practised Oromo divination rituals using cow fat.

punished thieves severely. The poor liked him {a lot}, farmers lived in peace, and merchants loved him and gave many thanks. But Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs had had many quarrels with him for a long time, «[f. 495]» to which was added the fact that the emperor wanted to apprehend his son, Cafelâ Mariâm, who was very much for King Iacob. Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs therefore went to Abeitahûn Suzniôs, saying that he was fleeing from Emperor Za Denguîl's wrath. And he received him in Amenôt with great honour and love, and gave him a gilded sword. Soon afterwards, they both moved to Gojâm and seized many horses, mules, cattle and sheep. And with this booty they returned to Olacâ.

«How, after the death of Emperor Za Danguil, he began to aspire to the emperorship, and was accepted and named as emperor by many – Section 6»

<[f. 399v/388v]> When Emperor Za Denguîl heard about the damage his cousin Abeitahûn Suzniôs had done {[f. 446]} in Gojâm, he was furious and had it proclaimed that all those who could bear arms should assemble and anyone who remained behind would lose his house and property. That made everyone very afraid, because they knew how certain and firm his word was in all matters. And therefore so many assembled that they covered the fields like locusts, and with this vast army he moved to the land of Olacâ. When Abeitahûn Suzniôs, who was in Darâ, caught sight of those men, he realized that Emperor Za Denguîl was coming to attack him and he fled from under his nose. But, as he was close by, some of the emperor's men went after him; after going down a long hill, he left many of his men at the bottom in ambush and marched on slowly. As those pursuing him reached the bottom, the ones who were in hiding suddenly jumped out and killed them, and only two men escaped. At this moment, the rest of the emperor's men were approaching the hill very fast but, by divine will, such a storm of hail and <heavy> rain fell on them that it did not let them go down. Yet nothing at all reached the place where Abeitahûn Suzniôs was, and so he escaped with Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs and all his men, and he went away to Xâoa and encamped in Enxâr. The emperor returned to Gojâm very sad that he had not been able to catch them.

While Abeitahûn Suzniôs was in Enxâr, the leaders of {King} Emperor Za Denguîl's army sent word to him to say that he should not go too far away because they had decided to rise up against the emperor, because he had taken away their servants and turned the peasants into soldiers; they told him this on the eve of the Assumption «[f. 496]» of Our Lady, 1604 (19th August, according to the Ethiopian reckoning).<sup>1</sup> When winter was over, the emperor gathered the men that he could find and gave battle to the ones who had rebelled, who had many more men, and he was killed in battle on 14th October. May God rest his soul in the kingdom of heaven with the saints and martyrs. Amen. After these breakers of the oath and excommunication that they were under had killed the one chosen and sent by God, they decided not to proclaim another emperor but to share the lands among themselves, and for each of them to remain <[f. 400/389]> in his command without anyone ruling over him. But they were unable to put their decision into effect since Abeitahûn Suzniôs had a great deal of power. And so they became disunited and isolated from one another.

When Abeitahûn Suzniôs heard that those great men were {[f. 446v]} divided among themselves and seeing that the empire of his forefathers was falling into ruin, he left Enxâr and went to Amharâ, and entered Ganêta Guiorguîs. While he was there, Farîz came to him, having previously escaped from imprisonment, and made friends. And, although at the time of the two emperors Iacob and Za Denguîl he had not sought the emperorship, but just his

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

father's lands and Xâoa, now that he saw that those evil princes had taken the empire from his two cousins, he was determined to accede to it. To this end, he sent Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs to speak to Erâz Athanatêus and the other governors and to persuade them to deliver the emperorship to him in peace. He went first to Erâz Athanatêus, who was in Gojâm, and gave him the message and many arguments why they should deliver the emperorship to him. He replied that he was bound by oath with the other governors and that he could not do anything alone, and that if the others agreed to this, he too would like it. Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs then went on to Gubâi, where the others were, and told them why he had come and what Erâz Athanatêus had replied. Some said that it was good to deliver the emperorship to him; others that it was not, but that they should give it back to Iacob, the son of Emperor Malâc Çaguéd. They were not saying this because they did not like Abeitahûn Suzniôs, but because, if he were emperor, Erâz Athanatêus would be raised up very high and he would put them down and hinder them in their affairs. This was because, after they had killed Emperor Za Denguîl, they refused to give him the property that they had taken in the battle, even though they knew that it was his, for the emperor had taken it from him because he had joined them and the others that had rebelled {against him}.

In addition to this, they saw that Abeitahûn Suzniôs had many servants who had accompanied him in his hunger and hardships and therefore, once he became emperor, those servants would ask him for the lands that they, the governors, were exploiting and would seek the commands that they held. They therefore decided not to give him the emperorship, but rather to bring back Emperor Iacob, whom they had previously sent as a prisoner to Nareâ, and they deceived Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs by promising to give him the command of Ambarâ and Gojâm, as well as other honours. And so he forgot about the word he had given and the oath «[f. 497]» he had sworn <[f. 400v/389v]> to Abeitahûn Suzniôs and stayed with them, and wrote to him saying that they would not give him the emperorship, but instead had sworn to give it only to their lord {Emperor} Iacob.

When this message reached Abeitahûn Suzniôs, he sent Cembûl Cerçô to tell Erâz Athanatêus, who was in {{[f. 447]} Gojâm, that he was going there and that he should get ready to receive him because his father's empire was ruined, and he should proclaim him. Erâz Athanatêus replied as before, that if the other governors wanted to give him the emperorship, then he would do so as well, but that he could not do so alone, because they were under oath and excommunication together not to do anything without the others. But Abeitahûn Suzniôs sent another message saying that the matter of the emperorship should be left until later, but he was going to join him at once, and so he was to receive him. And so he came with his men to Gojâm and on the way he came across 400 of the Libên Gâlas who were coming to attack Gojâm and, when they recognized him, they submitted to him and went with him. After crossing the River Abaoî, he reached the land of Nebecê, where Erâz Athanatêus received him. And they stayed there in Mertulâ Mariâm for two days and then moved on to Harezma. Since he had many warriors with him, he was proclaimed emperor by Erâz Athanatêus and Oizarô Oalâta Guiorguîs, his wife, with all the princes of the kingdom of Gojâm, and the soldiers that they call Guiorguîs Haile, and Cenâm, and Damâ, and Arbâb. And they held a great feast that day, which was Tuesday, 13th «8th» December 1597 years after the birth of Christ (according to the Ethiopian reckoning, and 1604 in the Roman).<sup>1</sup> And they called him Malâc Çaguéd, but afterwards, since there had been many emperors of this name, he

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

titled himself *Seltân Çaguêd*. And Erâz Athanatêus gave him the crown of gold with royal robes and the tent that belongs to the emperor alone, and he presented him with the best horse of all.

Once this had been done, Emperor *Seltân Çaguêd* wrote to *Za Celacê* and the other governors and all the great men, saying, 'Behold, God has given me the empire of my forefathers and has placed me on its chair, etc.' When this letter arrived, they were all very afraid and resolved to send the *icheguê* – the abbot of *Debrâ Libanôs* – and *Abba Amd Haimanôt* to go and make peace with him and to sort everything out. And they wrote a letter in <[f. 401/390]> which they said that he should wait for them until the month of June and, if they had not heard from their lord Emperor *Iacob* by then, they would give the empire to nobody but him. But *Za Celacê* secretly sent word that if he swore not to do him any harm he would make peace with him. *Icheguê Abba Abraham*, the abbot of *Debrâ Libanôs*, and *Abba Amd Haimanôt* «*Abba Amda Michael*» set off with this letter and, on the road to *Begmêder*, *Erâz Oald Christôs* met them and made the *icheguê* stay behind, {[f. 447v]} saying that, if the emperor had him with him, they would not achieve what they desired and he would not give them the time that they were demanding. And so *Abba Amd Haimanôt* went on alone and, on reaching the emperor, gave him the letter and message that he was bearing. Having taken counsel, he wrote back thus: 'You tell me to wait until June and to give up the crown of empire «[f. 498]» if my cousin *Iacob* comes back. Not if he comes back, I say, but even if Emperor *Malâc Çaguêd*, who was the greatest of all, were now raised from the dead, I would not give up the command that God has given me or take off the crown that He has placed on my head.'

The emperor sent this letter with *Çafalâm Cenô*, a diligent man desirous of pleasing his lord, and *Abba Za Malacôt* of *Debrâ Libanôs*, and on reaching the place where *Za Celacê* and the great men were they gave them the letter. But they did not receive it well, and instead had them seized, and they banished *Çafalâm Cenô* to *Cemên*. Our Lord God, however, delivered them, and they escaped from imprisonment and returned to their lord. When the emperor heard how badly they had received his letter and the wrong they had done to those who had borne it, he was very angry and decided to send warriors to *Begmêder* with orders to destroy the people of that kingdom if they refused to obey. But this did not occur because the emperor was seriously afflicted in his eyes, God permitting this to prevent him from becoming too proud with all the great honour and power that he had found. While he was there, two men brought him the imperial banner, which they had taken by night from *Za Celacê's* camp, at which everyone rejoiced greatly.

In the middle of Lent, having recovered his health, he left that land and went to the River *Abaoi* in order to see the camp of the governors, who were on the other side of the river in the land <[f. 401v/390v]> of *Oerêb*. Seeing that they had many horsemen, he decided not to let them cross the river, and he sent the *dêye azmâch* with men to guard another crossing point. Before he reached it, however, *Erâz Oald Christôs* crossed with the men of *Begmêder* and forced him back to the emperor. When *Erâz Oald Christôs* came close, he saw that the emperor was there and dared not go any further. The emperor's men then wanted to fight, but he commanded them not to do so, for it was not good to kill Christian people and spill their blood to no avail, and they should leave them alone and, since they had no emperor, they would disperse. And so he went to the land that they call *Caxîn*, where he remained for eight days, and *Za Celacê* and the other governors pursued him with many men, although {[f. 448]} as they crossed the River *Abaoi* many of their men were drowned and they lost many weapons.



When the emperor heard that they had all crossed the river, he went away to the land of Gambotâ, where he spent the Pasch of the Resurrection. Leaving Erâz Athanatêus there, he went on to Amharâ and made his camp in the land that they call Faretâ. When Za Celacê and the others heard this, they went to Gambotâ to fight Erâz Athanatêus, but before they reached him he went away to Xebêl and moved from there to the land that they call Manguêsta Çamayât, and Za Celacê went with his army to Debrâ Orc, and made his camp there for several days.

«[f. 499]» «How all the governors accepted him as emperor; but then, when Iacobo came, they went over to him and left Susnios – Section 7»

When Za Celacê and the others in the army saw that they had not had any news at all from Emperor Iacob «~~at all~~ from the king» for so long, they decided to accept Seltân Çaguêd as emperor, and so they wrote to him that he should come at once and that henceforth they would have him as lord and would obey his power. On seeing this letter, the emperor sent Acamaêl and a monk and wrote to them that, if they were firmly resolved to accept him as emperor, they should swear to that monk under excommunication to fulfil what they promised, and then he would go. When they saw this letter, they swore under excommunication in the manner that he had said, and Acamaêl and the monk returned and told the emperor that they were fully in agreement and promised to accept him as such and that the monk had placed them all under excommunication. The emperor therefore decamped at once from Amharâ with a great army and took the road to Begmêder, and Za Celacê, with the others who were in Dêbra Orc, came to Darâ. And they sent Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs to tell Seltân Christôs, 'Lord, we have no other {emperor} <captain> but you. <[f. 402/391]> Join Erâz Oald Christôs, who is on his way.' They then joined Empress Malâc Mogoçâ and went to the land of Udô, and there Za Celacê assembled the great men and the soldiers and the rest of the people by family and said to them, 'You can see that we cannot remain without an emperor. Get together all of you, each with his own family, and take counsel as to whether we shall give the emperorship to Seltân Çaguêd, the son of our lords the past emperors, or whether we shall bring forth one of those who have been on Guixên Ambâ since former times. But how can such a man govern us, for neither does he know us, nor do we know him, nor do we even know who his father is? I show you these two paths: see which will be better, whether we take one of those who are on the ambâ or we give the emperorship to Seltân Çaguêd, who descends from our lord Emperor Malâc Çaguêd.'

When Za Celacê had finished giving them this speech, {[f. 448v]} the governors of the empire went off to one side, the emperors' kinsfolk to another, and the soldiers and other people by family, and they took counsel on what it would be best to do. Afterwards, they all replied with one voice and as if with one heart that it was better to give the emperorship to Seltân Çaguêd than to bring someone from the ambâ whom they did not know, nor knew whose son he was. And so, by common accord, they sent Azâx Minacê, Azâx Cetô, Azâx Mariâm Cinquê, Azâx Zoguê, Azâx Merdîn, Zeerô, and Gojâm Nagâx Caflô, and Abba Marca, one of the doctors, and many «[f. 500]» harquebusiers with them, in order to administer an oath to the emperor that he would not break the entitlements given by Emperor Malâc Çaguêd or take the lands held by the empress or her kinswomen. When they reached the emperor, who was in Begmêder with Erâz Oald Christôs and Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs, he rejoiced greatly and conceded all that they asked of him, but he told them that they should swear and agree to be put under excommunication by five monks that they would not seek any other emperor but would die with him and that, even if Emperor Iacob came,

they would not be his servants or obey him. And they swore thus and were placed under excommunication.

When all these things had been completed, a letter arrived from Za Celacê and the other governors for Erâz Oald Christôs and the azaxes who had gone with the message, in which they said, 'Do not join up with Seltân Çaguêd, because Emperor Iacob has now come and we are going out to receive him. <[f. 402v/391v]> Come very quickly as well, all of you.' On seeing this letter, Erâz Oald Christôs replied, 'One day they tell me to join him and the next to leave him. From now on I do not want to be with them. I cannot abandon my lord Seltân Çaguêd.' It happened to rain heavily that day and a lot of hail fell on the emperor's camp, so that the azaxes who had come with the message had time to leave without being seen. Just Azâx Minacê and Abba Marcâ remained. When Emperor Seltân Çaguêd learnt of what had happened, he was not angry at the message sent by those who ate oaths like bread and drank excommunications like wine. But, placing all his trust in God, he commanded his army to make ready. With all his men in battle order, he went to Erâz Oald Christôs's camp, which was some distance away, and camped nearby, and Erâz Oald Christôs came to him at once with a few men and the emperor received him with joy and much celebration.

{[f. 449]} The following day, the emperor dismissed Abba Marcâ in peace, giving him gifts, and made Azâx Minacê stay with honour. Having his army strike camp at once, he went to the land of Cenyânâ, where he summoned Erâz Oald Christôs, Abeitahûn Bêla Christôs, Caflô, Dâma Christôs, and Azmach Amade Damôt, and said to them, 'Behold, Iacob has come. Let us take counsel as to what we will do.' They replied, 'If it is true that Emperor Iacob is coming, he will defeat us and will not even spare our horses' grooms.' The emperor realized that their hearts were not firm and that they would go over to Emperor Iacob, so he had them apprehended and all their horses and mules seized. Striking camp, he went to Ambarâ, taking them with him. When he arrived there, he had Faríz and Memanô apprehended for their wicked deeds and moved on with them to the land that they call Maquedelâ, where he overwintered. And Emperor Iacob went after him as far as the land of Cemadâ and, not finding him there, he returned to his court at Cogâ, where he overwintered.

<[f. 501]> «How he defeated Za Salasê and Cafluade»<sup>1</sup>

While Emperor Iacob was spending the winter in Cogâ, his men counselled him to negotiate an agreement and friendship with Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, because he was very strong and he would not be able to deal with him; he should send Ite Hamelmâl, Seltân Çaguêd's mother, to conclude peace and agreements with her son so that they might remain in peace. <She agreed to go> in this manner, that he would give him Ambarâ, Olacâ and Xâoa, and <[f. 403/392]> his father's lands, and henceforth he would no longer claim the empire. Emperor Iacob thought this a good plan and spoke to Ite Hamelmâl, who was at his court at the time, and told her to go at once and conclude these agreements with her son, so that they might remain in peace. She agreed to go, even though it was winter, and had great difficulty on the journey, since there was a lot of mud and the rivers were in spate. But through this she escaped from the hands of Emperor Iacob's evil counsellors and, on reaching her son, she told him everything that Emperor Iacob had commanded her, to which he replied that he had not been given the empire by men but by God, and he could not abandon it. Moreover, it would be a very great {shame and} cowardice to take the imperial crown off his head voluntarily and without fighting, for God had placed it on his head, and he would not do so by any means.

<sup>1</sup> The handwriting here is difficult to decipher.

*And all his men counselled him in the same way with all their hearts, and therefore his mother remained with him, without returning with a reply.*

*When winter was over, Emperor Seltân Çaguêd went to {[f. 449v]} Ambâ Dair and, while there, heard that Farîz was saying that he would go over to Emperor Iacob, and he commanded that he be killed. Then he moved on to Amharâ and encamped in a land that they call Uxatêrz, with many Gâlas that had joined him on the road, whom he received with rejoicing, although not as an incautious man but very heedfully, because it was not wise to trust them too much. While he was there, Emperor Iacob arrived by the Begmêder road and camped very close by. When he saw the great horde of men that Emperor Iacob had with him, he decided to go away to the land of Gîglâ, and he told Erâz Emâna Christôs not to leave him, but to {go with him and} help him against Emperor Iacob. He replied that he could not, for he did not want to lose his lands for accompanying him. The emperor insisted so much that he even kissed his hand and took hold of his foot, saying, 'Do not leave me, my brother. If you go, who will accompany me?' But he was unable to achieve anything with him even by that means, and so he went away, taking all his men with him. On the {third} <following> <[f. 502]> day, he encountered Za Celacê, who was coming with the men of Gojâm in order to join Emperor Iacob. They fought and Erâz Emâna Christôs was defeated and he escaped with just a few servants, losing all the horses and mules that he had.*

*When Emperor Seltân Çaguêd learnt what had happened to Erâz Emâna <[f. 403v/392v]> Christôs, his brother, and that Za Celacê was coming with many men, he took some of his and went to wait for him on the road before he could join Emperor Iacob, and he lay in ambush with his men in a low-lying place called Mentadefêr. Za Celacê was coming with great arrogance, saying that nobody would dare stand before him. As he came close to where the emperor was lying in ambush, he leapt out with his men and attacked Za Celacê's men with such great fury that he quickly defeated them, killing many and capturing others. Za Celacê escaped with a few horsemen and the rest, seeing that they could not flee, surrendered <to the emperor> and {the emperor} <he> gave them leave to return to their homes, and he too went off, taking a large amount of booty that he had taken in the battle. This was on 15th 10th February.*

*After Za Celacê had fled, he went to where Emperor Iacob was, and he did not receive him well because he had been defeated, which many men in the camp did not like and they started complaining, and so they were somewhat disunited and all of them very afraid. {[f. 450]} Emperor Iacob then moved to the land of Çamadâ, losing many goods in the lands of Begmêder, and Emperor Seltân Çaguêd went to Acararêm, Erâz Oald Christôs's camp, and took two bombards, and from there he moved to the land of Checbehô. On hearing this, Emperor Iacob went after him in great haste and, on coming within sight, he encamped his army on the plain. Emperor Seltân Çaguêd was in a higher position, and on Palm Sunday they gave battle, and many of Emperor Iacob's men were killed. Deye Azmâch Cafluhâd, who at the time was viceroy of Tigrê, lost many because he had gone forward with his men, and he escaped with great difficulty. The following day, Emperor Seltân Çaguêd wanted to fight again, because he had seen that Emperor Iacob's men were very frightened, but, realizing that his own men also feared Emperor Iacob's large number of horses, he struck camp on the Tuesday and went to Begmêder. He pitched his camp in a strong place and many Gâlas came to him, saying that they had come to help, and that they thought victory was certain because in the smoke of sorcery that they make with cow's fat they had seen their spearheads covered with blood and they were washing them in the Sea of Dambiâ. The emperor also saw that victory*

was certain for him with their help, but he said in his heart, 'After I have defeated Emperor Iacob, <[f. 404/393]> these men will fall on me and kill me, and they will be left as the lords of the lands.' He therefore thanked them very much for coming, but said that it was not yet time to fight Emperor Iacob, because he had horses and men beyond count, and that they should return to their homes and, when his men dispersed, they would return and {easily} achieve «[f. 503]» what they desired. And so the Gâlas went away.

Emperor Iacob remained near where he had fought and, on Maundy Thursday, he commanded that Delô, the son of Azâx Babô, and Za Mariâm, the son of Azmach Harbô, and Za Manfâz Quedûz, the son of Azmâch Bahâr Çaguéd, and four others be slain for no crime, based on false information, at which everyone in the camp was very aggrieved. When Easter had passed, he went to his court at Cogâ, where he spent the winter without knowing what counsel to take, because if he went to Amharâ he would not find what he sought, and if he returned to Begmêder he would see the land brought to ruin. He and the members of his court therefore spent the winter in great sadness and tribulation.

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## CHAPTER XVIII

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Which continues the history of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd and explains how he became absolute lord of the empire

*«How Seltan Saged defeated and killed Emperor Iacobo in battle, and took possession of the empire unchallenged – Section 9»*

{[f. 450v]} *While Emperor Iacob was at Cogâ, Za Celacê sent a message from Gojâm, where he was viceroy, to Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, who was in Bahâr Quedâ, that he wanted friendship with him and to accept him as emperor. He was very pleased at this, and they concluded the matters of friendship with solemn oaths. And the emperor later came to Gojâm and joined Za Celacê in the land of Cedêi. On hearing of this, «and making his camp in Selalô,» Emperor Iacob went there with a large army and, having crossed the River Abaoî (scilicet the Nile),<sup>1</sup> he encamped in Çacâ, «~~but King Iacobo moved on at once to~~» and Emperor Seltân Çaguêd came to the land of Colisâ, and remained there for a week «and they were within sight of each other, but Emperor Iacobo moved on at once to Emzeguedêm». Meanwhile, Emperor Iacob arrived and made camp in Çalalô, and they were within sight of each other. But Emperor Iacob moved on at once to Ençaguedên, where he burnt many houses of the Damotes because they had sided with Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, and he intended to cross the River Abeâ, but his men did not let him, saying that if they crossed they would have to take a very low road and Seltân Çaguêd would be above them and, if he fell on them, he would defeat them. They therefore did not go across, but <[f. 404v/393v]> chose another, worse road and reached the River Ber. From there, the leaders of the army sent a letter to Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, who was coming via cold, high lands, which said the following:*

*Do not think that you will reign or that we shall ever obey you, because if we do not find a son of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, we would rather give the empire to his daughter than to you, or we shall bring forth one of the sons of Israel who are on the ambâ. And if we come to fight, we shall certainly win. And if you think otherwise, choose a good place and be firm in it. Do not flee as you always do. Did we not perchance defeat Facîl «[f. 504]» and take his possessions? Did we not defeat Azê and King Mohamêd and slay him, destroying his army and taking everything he had? Did we not defeat the Abetî Gâlas and slay them, so that not one escaped from us? Did we not defeat Azmâch Isaac and the pasha of the Turks and slay them? Did we not by force of arms enter the fortress of Radeêt and Calêf, and that of Guxîn? And thus they recounted everything that they had done from the time of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd*

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

until Emperor Iacob, and they added, 'Since we have done all these things, can you stand before us? And if despite all this you think that you can fight, wait a little for us. Do not flee, for we shall be there directly.'

Those men wrote with such pride, without remembering the might of God, who casts down the proud and raises up the humble. And when Emperor Seltân Çaguêd saw this letter, he replied, 'If I had begged you to give me the empire and you had not thought it right, you could write that you would rather give it to the emperor's daughter, {[f. 451]} or that you would bring another forth from the ambâ. But I have not asked you to give it to me. The Creator of the heavens and of the earth, the Prince of {all} creatures has seen fit to give it to me. Are you not men like me? What power do you have to give the empire or take it away? As for your saying that I should choose a place to fight and not flee as always, ever since God made me emperor when have I been afraid? At Ogedâ or at Chechêbô? The man who has understanding and heart knows my fear. As for what you tell me, that you have always had victory and there has never been an army that you have not defeated from Emperor Malâc Çaguêd's time <[f. 405/394]> until today, who of those strong men who fought in the time of Facîl, and Azê, and Mahamêd, and Isaac, now remains, other than Dargôt<sup>1</sup> and Bernabâs? Of the others, some are now very old, tired and unfit for war, and the rest are dead. Are you, perchance, trying to frighten me with tired, old men and the dead? I am not afraid. Regarding what you say, that I should choose a good place to fight, may God, in whom I have placed all my hope and who holds victory, death and life in His hand, choose the place that He thinks best.'

When this letter reached the hands of Azâx Macabô, who did not know of the one that the others had written, he was very angry with them and said to them, 'Look, his letter has beaten yours, and so he will beat us as well.' Soon afterwards, Emperor Iacob struck camp and marched across the plain and Emperor Seltân Çaguêd went along some high ground until they arrived at Dêbra Zêit, where they were within sight of each other. And then Emperor Iacob moved on and encamped beside the river Iebêit, and Emperor Seltân Çaguêd went on along the high ground at all times. One Saturday morning, 10th ~~fourth~~ 10th March, he wanted to choose a good site for his camp without intending to fight that day, because he had decided not to do so until he reached the land of Chegâr, in the place that they call Bêita Abât. But <[f. 505]> when Emperor Iacob's men saw that he was striking camp, they thought that he was trying to flee, and so they decided to give battle at once without waiting any longer, considering victory to be quite certain, because Emperor Seltân Çaguêd had very few men and they had so many that they covered the plains. And so they said to the emperor, 'Lord, how long must we march on in this manner? Let us fall on him at once, before he flees from us, because for thirty of ours there is not even one {[f. 451v]} of his.' Emperor Iacob thought this was good counsel and he commanded that his men be drawn up in order. When Emperor Seltân Çaguêd saw his intention, he came down a little from where he was and drew up his squadrons. As they began to fight, the Turks who were with Emperor Iacob fired many harquebuses and only killed one man. Emperor Seltân Çaguêd then attacked with his men, going in the vanguard himself with such great fury that he soon turned Emperor Iacob's men, and they fell before his face like the {dry} leaves of a fig tree blown off <[f. 405v/394v]> by the wind, and like locusts falling into the sea. And Emperor Iacob also fell like one of his soldiers, so that in him was fulfilled what David said, 'But you like men shall die: and shall

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (Dargôt/Dahāragot Azmač).

fall like one of the princes.<sup>1</sup> Abuna Petrôs was also slain there, because he was with Emperor Iacob, and the one who slew him did not recognize him, but thought he was a Turk.

When Emperor Seltân Çaguêd learnt that Emperor Iacob was dead, he at once had the retreat sounded in order to pardon the fleeing throng. Even so, many had died, and some of those who were fleeing and had taken shelter under a tree were killed by a thunderbolt that fell from the sky. Others were fleeing when night fell without anyone pursuing them, and they fell off the cliffs and were smashed to pieces. They say that afterwards, at the foot of one cliff, 600 horsemen were found dead, so that many more died over the cliffs than had been killed by the sword. Erâz Athanatêus, who was with Emperor Iacob, escaped and went to enter the monastery of Dimâ, and took the monks as mediators. Afterwards, Erâz Cela Christôs took him to his brother, Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, and made him pardon him, and he also pardoned all those who had escaped from the battle; this was highly praised, because, had Emperor Iacob won, he would not have granted life to anyone. Thanks be to God that Emperor Seltân Çaguêd won, the Lord having done him such great mercy that only three of his men died and riches beyond count were left for him.

«[f. 506]» «How he wept at the death of the old empress and had several victories over insurgents that he defeated and killed – Section 10»

When the emperor had achieved this victory, he made his camp on the flat plain and celebrated it for two or three days, and then he went to Budâ, and then took the road to Cogâ, where Emperor Iacob had had his court. Crossing the River Abaoî, he went to Udô, where he spent Palm Sunday, and on the Monday he left and went through Docomâ, Ohâ and Caroda until {[f. 452]} he reached Gubâe, which had been the court of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd. He made his camp there and many monks and priests came, vested, bearing crosses and thuribles, and singing, and they gave him their blessing as is the custom. He also thanked, received and dismissed them with much honour, but did not rest there for long. He soon started riding again and went to visit Empress Malâc Mogoçâ, who was very sick, in the land of Tacarâ, and she received him with great joy and gave him her blessing and good counsel. And with this he returned to Gubâe, where he had his army.

He arrived in Gubâe forty-five years after Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd had there defeated Abeitahûn Tascâro, the son of Abeitahûn Iacob, the brother of his father Abeitahûn Faciladaz, because he had raised himself up as emperor on the counsel of Azmach Isaac and Xum Caflô and Abeitahûn Ioannes, <[f. 406/395]> the son of Oizarô Româna Orc, and many other princes, and after he had defeated and captured him, he sent him to the land of Borâ and there they killed him, at which there was a great deal of complaining among the princes and great men, saying that if he had killed him in war it would not have mattered, but after banishing him and holding him prisoner, it was not right to kill him. For that reason, many of the great men of Emperor Adamâs Çaguêd's court distanced themselves from him and only came back after his death.

On Maundy Thursday, Emperor Seltân Çaguêd struck camp in Gubâe and took all his men to Cogâ, Emperor Iacob's court. And then, at dawn on Friday, he went to church and, coming close to the altar, he confessed all his sins, starting in his boyhood, to Abba Abraham, the superior of the monks of Dêbra Libanôs. And he very humbly accepted the penance that he gave him, and returned to his palace. On Saturday morning, hearing that the empress was sorely pressed by her sickness, he went to visit her and returned straight away. Great

<sup>1</sup> Psalms 81[82]:7.

celebrations were held on Sunday of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ and Monday, and the emperor gave many gifts to both the clergy and the secular ones. But on Tuesday Empress Malâc Mogoçâ rested from the labours «[f. 507]» of this world, and the emperor went with all his army and wept with immense grief and commanded that they should take her to be buried in the church of Mahederâ Egzitinâ Mariâm, which she had had built and where before her death she had begged to be buried. And he returned to his palace with great sadness, because he had great respect and love for her, as she had been the wife of his uncle, Emperor Malâc Çaguêd.

Once the days of sadness for the empress's death had passed, he began to organize the affairs of his empire, and started bringing down {[f. 452v]} the proud and raising up the humble, and all those who governed the lands obeyed him. And Deye Azmach Cafluhad, who governed the kingdom of Tigrê, came and brought many horses and very valuable items, which he presented to the emperor. The neighbouring Moorish kings also sent him presents: the king of Senaar sent horses, and the king of Adel sent valuable items and arquebuses, and they all rejoiced greatly that he was reigning, especially the monks of the family of Abba Taquelâ Haimanôt. And he commanded that the figure of this saint should be put on his imperial banner so that he might be his patron saint and help him in matters of war. While he was in Cogâ, he learnt that Za Celacê intended to rise up against him, as he had against two other emperors, and he commanded his men to seize him and hold him under good guard. <[f. 406v/395v]> And, because we shall speak of his affairs later, we shall leave him for now.

When winter was over, the emperor left Cogâ with his army in order to punish the inhabitants of the lands of Alafâ, who did not want to pay the customary tribute, and shortly after he had left, when he reached the land of Çadâ, they brought him two prisoners who were brothers, the sons of Tegueçanh Aragô, who were called Matakô and Cafelâ Mariâm. The latter said that he was the son of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd and that the empire belonged to him, and he promised his brother Matakô to make him a very great lord when he received the emperorship. And with this agreement and counsel, they had laid waste many lands subject to Cemên. When the emperor asked them why they claimed that which did not belong to them and laid waste so many lands, they replied that it was true that they had erred. The emperor then passed the case on to his magistrates, and in all the courts they condemned them to death, and when the emperor confirmed the sentence, they were beheaded.

Having done this, he went to Alafâ and punished the rebels and subjugated them all and, moving on, he laid waste the lands of Dancorâ and Çancarâ and many others, because Auçabiôs had brought Zequêos, a descendant of Emperor Amd Ceôn, from the ambâ and, with their help, he wanted to be emperor. Afterwards, Melca Sedéc, a slave of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, who had taken part in this counsel, sent word to the emperor asking him to pardon him and he would deliver to him the one that they wanted to raise as emperor. And the emperor pardoned him because he is very generous and merciful to those who submit to him, but as fierce as a she-bear defending her cubs to those who resist him. And when he brought Zaqueôs to him, he had his ears cut off and left him. Shortly afterwards, Aly, the son of Ayib, came to him with the Moor Abdulcader, {[f. 453]} king of Senaar, because his people had risen up «[f. 508]» against him and given the kingdom to another. And the emperor received him with much honour and gave him valuable robes and items of gold and appointed some very good lands for him, where he could live with an abundance of everything necessary for him and his followers until he could attend to his affairs.



When the feast of Christ Our Lord's birth had passed, he went to Çarcâ and, on the way, punished the people of Ondeguê and those of Lêg, because they had not brought the tribute that they customarily pay in time. On reaching Çarcâ, he encamped his army beside a small lake, which they call Guedamâ, and spent Epiphany there. Then he went to Udâ, where he stayed for a few days. He moved on towards Xarâ and, on reaching Xaxê, encamped his army at the beginning of Lent to spend it there, since it was a broad land, but news arrived that the Gâlas were about to attack <[f. 407/396]> Berantâ, and so he broke camp at once and set off in haste like one who is very hungry and is hurrying to go and eat or one who is thirsty to drink. He sent his brothers, Erâz Emâna Christôs and Erâz Cela Christôs, with many men by a different route and, as the emperor continued on his way, he encountered many Gâlas from the Orenixâ and Bertumâ tribes who had gathered, and he gave them battle on 10th February. Although the battle was very hard fought, in the end the emperor won and slew many of them, and those who fled took to a gorge where there was a lot of water and there he killed so many that all the water was left red with blood. His brothers then arrived with the men that were with them, not having come across any Gâlas at all, and so he went back to where he had had his camp before.

He did not rest there for long, because he heard that many Gâlas were coming to Oacên {Ambâ}, so he struck camp and set off with his customary haste. On reaching a land that they call Xânbedêl <[Chânbedel]>, he found many Gâlas of the Libên tribe, who had already fallen on all those lands and taken countless cattle from the Gafates, Agôus and Damotes, and captured many women and children. When the Gâlas saw the emperor's men, they made ready to fight and split into four squadrons, and the emperor, without waiting for the foot soldiers, who were coming behind, charged with the horsemen and, by the Lord's mercy, soon defeated them and slew so many that the plain was covered with dead bodies. The following day, which was 25th February, he received news that other Gâlas had raided a land of Gafates and Agôus and captured many people. He therefore hurried to take the crossing point and, when the Gâlas saw the emperor, they fled and took to a gorge of the River Bîr, {[f. 453v]} but he arrived with his men and killed them with their guns, and those who were hiding elsewhere fled during the night. Three days later, the emperor heard that the Gâlas of the Diguelû tribe were in a hot land of Cundil, which is called Ceragâm, and had taken plenty of captives and animals. He went there and gave battle and, <[f. 509]> although the Gâlas fought hard, they were defeated nonetheless, and many died and the rest fled, abandoning not only the plunder they had taken but <also everything that> {what} they had brought. Thanks be to God, who gives victory to those who place all their trust in Him.

After all these victories, the emperor went with all his army to the land of Oanchâ, where he spent what was left of Lent. After Easter, he wanted to go to Olacâ to fall on the Gâlas of that land, but the men <[f. 407v/396v]> of his army were very annoyed and refused, saying that they had fought the Gâlas {four times} that summer alone, and they were tired. How could they go so far to look for them? He therefore gave up this journey and went to Burê and, when he made camp at Guaguçâ, some heathen Agôus stole many mules and asses belonging to the camp. Therefore, when he left there, he commanded Abeitahûn Oald Christôs to stay behind in an ambush with his men. He hid in the bush while the emperor went ahead, and he had a man climb a tall tree so that he could see if any Agôus were coming. Shortly afterwards, many of them came to see whether anything had been left where the camp had been. When the lookout up the tree gave the warning, Abeitahûn Oald Christôs leapt out and, taking them by surprise, slew them and took many heads to the emperor. Afterwards, the Agôus from the

lands of Burê, Guaguçâ and Hancaxâ joined forces and fell on the emperor's rearguard, but the men turned on them and they were defeated; many were killed and the others fled. The emperor moved ahead and commanded all his baggage train to remain in a good place with Dêye Azmâch Iuliôs and Gojâm Nagâx Caflô to guard it, and, taking just armed warriors, he went to attack a land of heathens that they call Guiguêt. On arriving at daybreak, he gave half of the men to Abeitahûn Oald Christôs, so that he could go one way, and he took the other half by another route and, searching the land, he killed and captured some. Abeitahûn Oald Christôs came to join him without finding anything because, when the people of the land heard he was coming, they fled before he arrived. And so they went back to where {[f. 454]} they had left the baggage.

When these matters were over, the emperor decided to go back to his court and, as he passed through the lands of Charâ and Coacorâ, those heathens were very afraid, but he did not stop to fight. On reaching Çarcâ, he encamped his army and stayed there for a week to rest, and then he crossed the River Abaoî and came to his court at Cogâ, where he shared out among his men all the gold, slaves, cattle and other things that he had found in war that summer, at which they were all very joyful and content.

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## CHAPTER XIX

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Which continues the history of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, and reports the journey that he made to Tegrê

«[f. 510]» «*Life and death of Za Salassê: uprising and revolts of the false and feigned Iacobo in Tigrê – Section 11*»

*While the emperor was in Cogâ that winter, he received two pieces of news. The first was that <[f. 408/397]> Za Celacê had escaped from the imprisonment in which he was being held. And for a better understanding of the outcome that his evil nature had, it should be known that his father was from the land of Orêb and his mother from Gonân, and he was born in the land of Derhâ and grew up engaging in matters of quarrels and wicked deeds. When he was a young man, he was a servant of Damôt Çafalâm Abô Axguîr, and later, on leaving him, he served Gueitâ Amdô for a long time, and from him he moved on to Emperor Malâc Çaguêd. When the emperor died, he went on serving his son Iacob, who made him his chief steward. While in this command, he counselled the emperor to seize the property of Empress Malâc Mogoçâ. When she learnt of this, she had the principal men of the court assemble, among them Abeitahûn Gonaêl, and told them what evil counsel he was giving against her, and they had him apprehended and sent to the land of Sireî.*

*When Erâz Athanatêus, who was in Gojâm, heard what had happened, he was very troubled and sent his wife, Oizarô Oalâta Guiorguis, to Cogâ to the empress, her mother, to ask her to pardon Za Celacê. When she reached her mother, she made an agreement with her and with Emperor Iacob to bring Za Celacê back, and when he came, he overwintered in Alafâ. Then they took him to Çarcâ, and from there he returned to the emperor's camp. But because neither the empress {[f. 454v]} nor the great men liked his being there, they sent him to Gojâm with the office of ocên ambarâz. Emperor Iacob, however, realized that they had sent Za Celacê to Gojâm with that command because he liked him and in order to keep him away from {his} <the> camp, and he sent for him and made him captain of the vanguard and gave him the land of Darâ. Soon afterwards, Erâz Athanatêus fell out with Emperor Iacob, and things reached such a point that they both took to the field with their armies. {When they were about to give battle,} Za Celacê abandoned the emperor and went over to Erâz Athanatêus. Later, however, the emperor won and seized both of them, and he sent Za Celacê as a prisoner to the kingdom of Nareâ, and he put Erâz Athanatêus in the land of Ongetâ.*

*While Za Celacê was {banished} <exiled> in Nareâ, the great men seized Emperor Iacob and gave the empire to Za Denguîl, his cousin. He then had Za Celacê brought back from his*

banishment and made him dêye azmâch «[f. 511]» (*scilicet* 'viceroy')<sup>1</sup> of Dambîâ, but it was not long before he rebelled against {Emperor} Za Denguîl. Gathering <[f. 408v/397v]> Emperor Iacob's principal warriors, he gave battle to Emperor Za Denguîl in Dambîâ, in the land that they call Barchâ. The emperor being defeated, he slew him. Afterwards, he sent a message to Emperor Iacob and had him brought from Canbât. And Emperor Iacob made him behêt oaded (*scilicet* 'governor')<sup>2</sup> of the whole empire. Despite that, on seeing that Emperor Seltân Çaguêd was growing in strength, he abandoned Emperor Iacob and went over to him and, when Emperor Iacob had died and Emperor Seltân Çaguêd was celebrating in Cogâ, accompanied by the great men of the court, Za Celacê said, 'Many wise men and others who know things that are yet to happen have prophesied to me that, in addition to the two emperors that I have slain, I shall yet slay another.' And he sought an opportunity to leave the court and do what he was accustomed to doing. When the emperor learnt that, he had him seized and taken to Gojâm and kept under good guard on the mountain that they call Guzmân.

He stayed on this mountain for a year, and then he escaped from his imprisonment and went to Olacâ. When he came back from there {to Gojâm} with men, as a brigand, the local people killed him and brought his head to the emperor, and he had it put on a stake in front of his palace. When the people of the court saw it, they praised God and said, 'The Lord has rewarded him according to his works. His divine justice has not forgotten the blood that he shed of Za Denguîl, a just emperor', because Emperor Seltân Çaguêd was already intending {[f. 455]} to have him released and placed with honour among the princes. By not giving up his habitual ways, he had sought his own death.

The second piece of news that we said the emperor <had> received, together with the news that Za Celacê had escaped from his imprisonment, was that in the kingdom of Tigrê a man had raised himself up as emperor, but nobody knew who his father was, which land he was from or even what his name was, other than that he said that he was Emperor Iacob. But he had died in the land of Gôl and was buried in Nazarêt. When the emperor heard this, he dissembled without showing any intention, because his custom is to keep things in his heart until their due time. Afterwards, the insurgent started gaining strength, because the people of Tigrê, who have neither heart nor ears, at once believed his story that he was Emperor Iacob and they all gathered <[f. 409/398]> to him, leaving Erâz Cela Christôs, the emperor's brother, who was viceroy of Tigrê at the time, with just 300 foot soldiers and twenty horsemen, who included Azfarâm, Gâbra Mariâm and Acabâ Michael, and with them he gave battle to the insurgent three times. The first time, in Debaroa, he defeated him even though he had thousands of men, and he slew countless numbers, and the insurgent fled. Having re-formed as before, he took up position in Maiquelbaherâ, where Erâz Cela Christôs went in search of him and gave battle the second time. Again he defeated him and slew many of his men, but the insurgent escaped and soon many more went to join him again, and he encamped with a large army in the land of Edequê. There too, Erâz Cela Christôs went in search of him and gave battle the third time, and he slew many thousands of his men, who fell before him on either side like the dry leaves of a fig tree blown off by the wind. «[f. 512]» Not even this was enough to stop many others from joining the insurgent again.

<sup>23</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

<sup>23</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

«On a defeat that the emperor had in an encounter with the Gallas, and how he recovered and defeated and routed them – Section 12»

When Erâz Cela Christôs saw the folly and pertinacity of the people of Tigrê, he wrote to the emperor, saying, 'Sire, everyone is following this insurgent, and even though thousands and thousands have died, they are not afraid of death, like martyrs who have placed their hope in heaven. Therefore, Your Majesty, please come to your kingdom's aid by coming here in order to silence and pacify these people with your presence because, if you do not come in person, there is no wisdom that can pacify them or force that henceforth can withstand them.'

This letter reached the emperor in the month of December, and he immediately set off with his men from Cogâ and went to Çadâ {[f. 455v]} and thence to Aibâ, and thence he quickened his pace towards Tigrê. But in Aibâ he received news and a letter from Deye Azmâch Afa Christôs, in which he said that three families of Gâlas of the Meroâ tribe were coming to lay waste to the kingdom of Begmêder. He therefore left the road he was taking and turned towards Begmêder. But his warriors had not yet joined him: only 140 horsemen accompanied him, but even so he did not stop, thinking that they would soon arrive. On arriving in Begmêder, he encamped at Çamâ on 18th December and sent men to see where the Gâlas were, and they soon returned saying that they were already very close. The emperor then commanded that no fire should be lit that night in the camp, so that the Gâlas would not see it and flee, and they all remained until morning with considerable pride. When dawn came, <[f. 409v/398v]> he set off with his army in search of the Gâlas and, when he arrived at the fortress of Çarçô, the son of Haitonh, he came out and brought him eleven heads of Gâlas. Moving a little further ahead, he heard that the Gâlas were very close by, in the land of Ucrô, and he sent some captains ahead to detain them until he arrived. But the captains hurried ahead without order until they reached the Gâlas, who were already prepared, because when they heard they were coming they drew up in order, the horsemen in their squadrons and the foot soldiers separately in theirs.

When the emperor's captains were about to fight, he arrived with the rest of the men in an area lower than where they and the Gâlas were, and he gave the signal for them to attack. The captains who were higher up did so at once with great pride, «[f. 513]» but only the horsemen went with them, while the foot soldiers stayed watching from a hill. The Gâla horsemen went out to meet them and a fierce battle was joined. Sometimes the Gâlas fell back; other times they made the emperor's men turn. And although those who were with the emperor came to help, they continued in that manner from soon after sunrise until noon, without the foot soldiers ever coming down from the hill to fight. Instead, they began to flee at that time, and when the Gâlas saw that they all – horse and foot – attacked with greater heart and strength and soon routed the emperor's men. Many captains and great men died: Abeitahûn Oald Christôs, Acegrâ Liçana Christôs, «the son of Abetahun Cabellô, Escandêr,» the son of Taquelâ Celûz «of Sirey, Amba Raes Fecuro, Za Iesus captain of Oagarâ,» and many others, and so many foot soldiers died that they cannot be counted.

{[f. 456]} When the emperor saw this terrible rout and realized that he could not keep his men together, he went off along the Dabât road. On arriving at Mahederâ Mariâm, he stopped there for two days and Gojâma Nagâx Caflô arrived there from Gojâm with many horsemen and the soldiers that they call hailât, and the emperor sent a message to Dêye Azmach Iuliôs, who was in the land of Gumân, telling him of the defeat he had suffered and to come at once {in all haste} with his men. Meanwhile, he returned to Cogâ and spent the

feast of Christmas there, and then he moved on to Dencâz,<sup>1</sup> where he waited to be joined by the men who had escaped from the battle, who were scattered around, and the other captains who, because they were a long way away, had not <[f. 410/399]> yet arrived with their soldiers. In the meantime, the Gâlas kept coming in and they reached Cogâ and Gorabâ, capturing people and taking livestock, and they burnt down many houses, including Emperor Iacob's, and then they went back to Hamûz Ouz. Our Lord God gave the emperor this punishment because He punishes those whom He loves and so that he would not become arrogant on account of his victories, because from the time when he began to reign until that day he had had seven very great victories over his enemies, and such successes ordinarily make the heart overweening. And so, to teach him humility and to remind him that victories and other good things are gifts from God alone, he permitted him to undergo this hardship.

When the emperor heard that the Gâlas were turning back, he said to his men – for many had already gathered to him – that he was determined to pursue them, because it was not good that they should go back to their land like that. But the captains tried hard to dissuade him, saying that he should not do that because the men in the camp were despondent and frightened, and he would not be able to secure victory in that way, but instead would only succeed in losing his men. The emperor, however, did not accept their counsel, but instead encouraged them and said that they should place their trust in God. He at once decamped from Dencâz and went in pursuit of the Gâlas. On the road to the land of Ebenât, he was joined by Dêye Azmach Iuliôs with many horsemen and all the men of Gojâm. Two days further on, he caught up with the Gâlas at the River Tequên and gave them battle. And the emperor's men fought so hard that they soon routed the Gâlas and slew many of them and the rest <<[f. 514]>> fled, leaving behind not only the people that they had captured and the cattle they had found together with everything that they had seized in the first battle, but also the cattle that they had brought from their own lands. The men in the camp and the whole land rejoiced greatly at this {[f. 456v]} and gave thanks to God who strengthens and revives. And the emperor commanded that the cattle and goods that the Gâlas had taken from the lands that they had plundered should be returned to their owners, and he had the cattle and other things that were recognized as belonging to the Gâlas shared among the soldiers, and there was plenty for the whole camp. With that he returned to Cogâ, but he did not enter the court but instead encamped his army nearby at Anfarâz.

When the emperor had rested for not more than a week at Anfarâz, <[f. 410v/399v]> he decided to continue the journey to Tigrê that he had started before. Setting off on the Oinâdegâ road, he went down Lamalmô and reached Oaldubâ, where the monks of that monastery gave him their blessing. Afterwards, he crossed the River Tacacê and the lands of Sirêi and, on arriving in Agçûm, he was crowned in the church of Edâ Mariâm, as his ancestors had been. And they all went there with great joy, in their ceremonial clothes, with the governors of the empire, the captains and horsemen and other foot soldiers of the army all drawn up in order. Before reaching the church, he dismounted from his horse in the customary place, where many people of the land and priests were waiting, and two maidens were holding a white thread by the ends across the road, and he cut it with his sword, as is the custom, and he went ahead, with everyone singing and shouting with joy. After entering the church cloister, he sat in his place, where Abuna Simon<sup>2</sup> (who was with him at the time) anointed him and

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (Dancas/Dencâz/Danqaz).

<sup>2</sup> See Glossary (Simon/Semc'on).

performed all the customary ceremonies. This was on 23rd March, and great celebrations were held.

«On the emperor's journey to Tigrê; on the insurgents in Dambiâ; how they were defeated, captured and slain; the emperor's journey; death of the feigned Iacobo; uprising of Iulios and Caflo – Section 13»

At this time, the emperor heard that a slave of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, the worst of all the slaves, who was called Melque Sedêc, had risen up in Dambiâ and gathered many other slaves like him and killed Marir, Emperor Malâc Çaguêd's servant. He also heard what he had done to Çafalâm Cenô, who had stayed in Dambiâ because he was sick. Seeing Melquisedêc's insolence, Çafalâm Cenô summoned Abdulcadêr, who had previously been king of Funch, and Aly, the son of Ayîz, who were in Chelgâ, and he gathered many men who liked the emperor and had took position in the land of Cogâ to fight Melquisedêc. But the latter suddenly came with «[f. 515]» many men and fell on Çafalâm Cenô, who, despite being caught unawares, fought hard and killed many of his adversaries, but in the end he was defeated and escaped badly wounded. On hearing these things, the emperor sent Erâz Emanâ Christôs with {[f. 457]} men. He went forth to Oagrâ and joined forces with the captain of that land, who at the time was Abeitahûn Aunabiôs, the son of Abeitahûn Ionaël, and with Çafalâm Cenô and Ligaba Za Denguil, in the land of Braçô. When Melquisedêc heard that Erâz Emanâ Christôs was coming, he gathered the slaves who were accompanying him, and many sons of the great men who were with the emperor and many other evil men rallied to him, so that his army was incomparably larger than that of Erâz Emanâ Christôs, and that caused great fear and astonishment throughout the lands of Dambiâ and Oagrâ.

Everyone became much more afraid when it was made known that Arzô was now coming through Begmêder calling himself emperor, and had made Za Christôs, the son of Achîr Abîb, his captain general. When Melquisedêc saw this and realized <[f. 411/400]> that own his army was very large, he became so arrogant that, without waiting for Arzô, he went in search of Erâz Emanâ Christôs, saying that all his men would be tired, since the journey from Tigrê was {very} long and very hard, and that they would not be able to withstand him or even stay on their feet in front of him. He came across him in Debraçô on the morning of 14th April and gave battle at once, and many died on both sides. While the fighting was very fierce, Melquisedêc broke through until he reached the banner and drums of Erâz Emanâ Christôs. When the latter saw this from afar, he rushed there so fast and with such momentum that he instilled great fear in Melquisedêc and his men, who therefore turned tail at once, and countless numbers died, because they were pursued for a long time and the land itself was a noose for those fleeing, but Melquisedêc himself escaped.

Having achieved this victory, Erâz Emanâ Christôs gave many thanks to God, who gives strength and victory to those who trust in him. He went to Cogâ and made his camp there and had it proclaimed that he pardoned those who had helped Melquisedêc and that they should not disperse, at which everyone was very pleased. At this point, Melquisedêc and Tançâ Christôs were caught in Cegabâ and brought to Erâz Emanâ Christôs, because divine justice did not spare them, and he commanded that they be beheaded. At the same time, Arzô, who had raised himself up as emperor, and his captain Za Christôs were also captured in the land of Darâ and brought to Erâz Emanâ Christôs, and he sent them as prisoners to the emperor under good guard. And so the land was made quiet and peaceful, and everyone gave many thanks to Erâz Emanâ Christôs for having delivered them from the hands of Melquisedêc and the other enemies.

*While these things were happening in Dambiâ, Emperor {[f. 457v]} Seltân Çaguêd was searching the lands of Tigrê and punishing those that had helped the insurgent who was pretending to be Emperor Iacob, who had been buried in the sight of many people. He meted out particular punishment on the lands of Tederêr, Bûr, Xihô and Derbeitâ, which are near the Erterâ (scilicet 'Red')<sup>1</sup> Sea, and also those of Çahart, Ucârte and Hamacên. But he did not find the insurgent, because all his men scattered and he hid in the bush, and so the emperor turned back and stayed for a while in Debaroâ, the bahâr nagâx's town. Afterwards, he crossed the River Marâb and entered Torât, where they told him that some men used to work the land by pulling the plough like oxen. In this land, «[f. 516]» there are some very <[f. 411v/400v]> bad people of two stocks, whom they call Ibarcoâ and Incarê. From there he went to the land of Sirêi, where they brought him Arçô, who had raised himself up as emperor in Dambiâ, and Za Christôs, the son of Hachêr Abîb, and he commanded that they be beheaded. While he was there, Erâz Cela Christôs decided not to remain in Tigrê, but instead to go to Dambiâ with his brother the emperor, and so he left Amçala Christôs as viceroy. Since winter was now beginning, he quickened his pace and went to Dambiâ and in July entered his court at Cogâ, where he celebrated the victory that Erâz Emâna Christôs had had, and he overwintered there.*

*When the emperor left Tigrê, the insurgent came out of the land of Bûr, where he had been hiding, and went to the land of Borâ. On the way, the people of Tambên and Xart came out against him and they fought, but they were defeated. And so he moved on and on arriving in Borâ called for Zâra Ioannes and Amahâ Guiorguis, the sons of Xum Oald Guiorguis, the brother of Azmach Dargôt, who at the time were not obeying the emperor. When they arrived, the insurgent covered his face and wept with them, saying, 'I am Emperor Iacob, and you are my kinsmen in the flesh. I have been away from you for a long time, because I have been beset by difficulties caused by Seltân Çaguêd.' But later, when they looked carefully, they realized that he was not Emperor Iacob, and therefore, on returning home, they commanded that the passes through which he might escape be held. They then fought him and, with his men routed, he hid in the bush. But when he came out at night, the men guarding the passes found him and slew him and took his head to their lords Zâra Ioannes and Amaha Guiorguis, and they sent it to Emperor Seltân Çaguêd. When he saw it, he gave thanks to God for pacifying his empire, and he sent the head to Tigrê so that they might see it and realize to how little purpose so many had been slaughtered by the hand of Erâz Cela Christôs, and how readily they had been deceived just because he had said he was Iacob.*

*During this same winter, Iuliôs and Caflô plotted in Gojâm {[f. 458]} to rise up against the emperor. When winter was over, Iuliôs left Hadaxâ and Caflô left Oanabâ and, joining forces, they went down to Xarâ, where they swore before a crucifix not to obey the emperor. When the soldiery and other men of Gojâm heard this, they left them and some of them went to the emperor and told him what was happening. On hearing this, he very quickly commanded his brother Erâz Cela Christôs to hold the passes of Amharâ <[f. 412/401]> and Olacâ. When they saw this, and that the men of Gojâm had left them, they were very afraid and felt as anguished as a woman at childbirth, and the counsel they took was to deny what they had done. And so they sent a message to the emperor, saying that he should not listen to the words of those who were accusing them, which were false, that they had never imagined obeying anyone but him, and that they had not sinned against his empire in any way. The*

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.



emperor replied, 'If it is as you say, come here at once before I strike camp to go there.' They therefore crossed the River Abaoi and in great fear went to Cogâ, where the emperor was. He commanded the magistrates to carefully examine what they said and to see the witnesses that there were against them and to pass judgment. They unanimously ruled that they deserved death, but the emperor contented himself with sending Caflô prisoner to the island of Dêc in the Sea of Dambiâ, and eight days later «[f. 517]» he pardoned Iuliôs and freed him from prison on the entreaties of his daughter, Oizaro Malacotaoi, to whom Iuliôs was married, but he took away his command and all his servants, and gave him the land of Darâ alone, in order to reduce his pride.

«On a notable peril in which the emperor found himself among the Agaús, and on several victories that he won and the plunder that he took in them – Section 14»

When winter was over, the emperor decided to leave the city of Cogâ, which had been Emperor Jacob's court, and to make his seat in a land of Dambiâ that they call Dehanâ, where there is a large church of Saint Gabriel, and at once commanded that some palaces be built there. In November, he set off with an army along the Tacuçã road in order to attack the heathen Agôus of Burê, who were refusing to obey. On arriving in Çarcã, he spent the feast of Christmas there and the feast of the Baptism in Gumbuli, and then he went on to the land of Burê. Arriving at the beginning of Lent, he sent two captains, Anabiôs and Iulianôs, with men to take the provisions of the land of Çalabaçã for their wickedness, and he himself left the camp and went to divert himself and to see whether there was a better site where he could encamp his army. While he was in a grove of trees in some cool shade, because it was very hot, the Agôus came from a different direction and cut down {[f. 458v]} many tall trees and closed off the paths by which he had gone in so that nobody could get through, because they were very narrow and the bush was very thick. On going back, they showed signs of wanting to fight the emperor, without knowing who he was. He mounted his mule, and his men went to leave the bush by the way they had gone in, <[f. 412v/401v]> and when they reached the place where they had blocked off the paths, they came across many Agôus with bows and arrows in the bush. The emperor therefore commanded them to break through where they could and to take his banners and drums with them, which they did with great difficulty, and the Agôus wounded many of them with their arrows. Meanwhile, the emperor armed himself and mounted his horse, but then he was not able to get through <to> where the ones carrying the banners and drums were, and they were not able to get back to him, so he turned back with the few horsemen and foot soldiers who were with him.

When the ones with the banners saw that the emperor could not get through and that he was in great danger, they decided to send a message to the camp, but nobody dared go, until one horsemen ventured and, breaking through on his horse, he reached the camp and said what was happening, at which they were all very disturbed. [This horseman who brought the news was the captain of the Portuguese, and he took a great risk, because the enemy had countless arrows.]<sup>1</sup> «This horseman who ventured to bring [f. 518] the message was the captain of the Portuguese.» Erâz Cela Christôs, the emperor's brother, and Iuliôs, his son-in-law, set off at once in great haste and were followed by many men. When they entered the bush, they searched a large part of it without finding the emperor or any news at all, and so they returned as it was already almost nightfall. The ones bringing the banners and drums

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note interpolated by Páez in both MSS. (BPB, MS 778 starts a new paragraph here, ARSI, MS Goa 42 does not.)

also returned very sad, which doubled the tribulation and anguish in the camp, as they thought the emperor was now dead. But he, since he was a great and valiant captain, encouraged the men who were with him, who were not fighting as they should. And so he charged like a lion and made the Agôus flee and hide in the bush, and he rode around among those groves of trees, sometimes charging the Agôus who were following him, sometimes withdrawing, until he found a way out of the bush. After crossing the River Façâm, he came out onto the flat plain in the land of Ombaremâ, and the Agôus turned back. Since he was a long way from camp and it was getting dark, he was afraid that there might be trouble in the camp (as in fact there was already some division, because Iuliôs was not on good terms with Erâz Cela Christôs for encroaching on his command, and so some were siding with Erâz Cela Christôs and others with Iuliôs). He sent a horseman ahead to tell them that he was coming. The rejoicing in the camp at this news was so great that hardly anybody stayed behind, <[f. 413/402]> and they all went out to meet him {[f. 459]} with great celebration, and they were not satisfied until they actually saw him, even though it was very dark.

While he was there, Ionaël, the balatina gueitâ (scilicet 'steward')<sup>1</sup> of Gumân, came to the emperor and told him that the people of that land had only given very little of the tribute that they usually gave and did not want to pay the rest. The emperor was angry and said that he should apprehend the ones who had come with him. He struck camp with his army and took the Guaguçâ road, and he marched off that day very much with the intention of reassuring the Agôus. As they began to erect their tents, he made his brothers Cela Christôs and Afa Christôs and some other captains go back with many men; on coming across the Agôus, who had gone to see if anything had been left on the site where their camp had been or to seize part of the baggage train, they slaughtered a large number of them and brought their heads to the emperor. He moved on the next day and, on reaching the land of Gumân, Erâz Emâna Christôs arrived from Amharâ with many men. He sent on from there Erâz Cela Christôs {and} {Deye Azmach} {Afa Christôs} «and Deye Azmach Afa Christôs» and his steward Labacî with many soldiers. After marching all night into Gumân, they suddenly fell on the land when dawn broke and killed and captured many people and took plenty of cattle. The rest of the people of those lands climbed onto a strong mountain fastness that they call Orc Ambâ. When the captains reached the mountain they were unable to scale it, so they encamped at its foot, and the next day the people on top sent a Moor down to them, begging them not to fight and they would pay the tribute in full. When they heard this, they waited there for two days, but they did not bring anything, and so «[f. 519]» on the third day Erâz Cela Christôs took half of the army and gave the other half to Dêye Azmach Afa Christôs and, attacking on different sides, they scaled the mountain and killed many people, including some great men, and captured a large number; they also found plenty of goods that they had stored there and so returned with some very valuable booty. But the emperor took pity on the captives and had it proclaimed that they should release them all, on pain of excommunication, keeping only those that they discovered were slaves to those people. He himself rode out on his horse and had them taken back to where their lands began.

<[f. 413v/402v]> Having done that, he turned back to Burê and thence moved on to the land of Cimâ, where he gave his brother Emanâ Christôs the title and command of Erâz and he made his son-in-law Iuliôs Damôt Çafalâm and gave him the land of Bêd. And then he went to the land {[f. 459v]} of Cebêd, where he learnt that the Agôus kept many cattle there

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

*and in Çacalât and Ongetâ, among the Christians, and he commanded that they be seized and shared out among the soldiers. Afterwards he crossed the River Abaoî on the Darâ road and went to Dambîâ and encamped in Dehanâ, where he had previously had houses built in which to spend the winter, but at the beginning of winter, in June, he struck camp again and went to the Agôus by the Tacuçâ road. And Iuliôs came from the lands under his command and they fell on the lands of Achafêr, Ambeçâ and Lêg, and captured many people and seized many cattle. After this, he returned to Dehanâ, where he remained for the rest of the winter.*

*«On several attacks that the emperor made with his army in the years 1611 and 1612 – Section 15»*

Up to here are the historian's words. But because he quickly skipped over the part where he says that the emperor was angry with the people of Gumân because they were not paying the tribute in full, and he commanded that those lands be destroyed, I shall explain a little more about the grounds on which he did this, because I was with him at that time and learnt what happened, which was as follows: The people of Gumân are Christians and many of them are almost as fair as us, and they live in the furthest part of the kingdom of Gojâm on the River Nile (which the inhabitants of the land call the Abaoî). They owed the emperor 12,000 *cruzados* of two years' tribute, and when he commanded that the sum be collected, they replied that they were poor and could not give it all. The emperor told them to give him 6,000, to which they replied that they could not give that much either. 'Let it be 3,000, then,' said the emperor. They sent 1,500, and when the emperor saw it he was angry and told them to bring as much again, or else he would have them punished. They replied that they were very poor and that they could not give any more, and people say that they spoke arrogantly, ignoring the emperor's threats but trusting in a very strong mountain fastness that they have beside the Nile. The captains therefore counselled the emperor to attack and capture them. That is why he sent them and why they did what was described above.

But before the captains reached the camp, they sent <[f. 414/403]> ahead the ones that they had taken captive, and it was something that inspired great compassion (at least in me, as I had experienced what it is to be a captive, because I was a captive of the Turks for seven years) to see children almost as beautiful as those of the Portuguese and such delicate women all tied up so that they could not move. My heart, therefore, forced me to go to the emperor, and, on finding him alone in his tent, I said to him, 'Sire, when a father punishes his {children} <child>, it is never with the rigour that {their} <his> guilt deserves. {[f. 460]} Your Majesty is everyone's father. I think that if you have mercy on these children of yours by commanding that they be not kept captive, it will please Our Lord greatly, because they are Christians, and it will be good for your empire, because otherwise these lands will be depopulated, since the once who have fled will not dare return to them. And so, not only will the income be lost, but a door will also be opened for the Gâlas to come in, since there is only the river in between. May Your Majesty forgive me if I am wrong in this, however, because the love that I have for you and the desire that everything may turn out prosperously for you have led me to speak out of turn.' He thanked me profusely, saying, 'Who else but Your Reverence would give me such good counsel? May Our Lord God repay you. When the captains arrive, I shall discuss it with them.' And he did so that night. But as they were so happy with their plunder, they all said that they should remain captive, and that it was not right to go back on the counsel that

they had taken previously. The emperor then had them swear to counsel him impartially as to what would be best, and they said the same thing again, except for four who replied that they thought that it was not a good idea to keep them captive. The emperor then said, 'You have given good counsel. But even if you had all kept to what you had said first, I should not have held them captive, because neither is it for the good of this land nor can they be captives. If they were arrogant, it is punishment enough that some have died and that they have lost their possessions. We shall also keep their slaves, but you must release them without holding any of them.'

As the emperor thought that this would not take effect unless he strictly enforced it, he had it proclaimed that the following morning they should bring him all those that they had captured in Gumân, except for their slaves, in front of his tent, on pain of death. And he had excommunication pronounced upon this. In the morning, 11,500 people were brought, and he commanded some captains to guard them until <[f. 414v/403v]> they reached the beginning of their lands. Since he did not trust them either, he himself rode after them as if to enjoy himself in the countryside until all his men returned. Afterwards, his men told him that soldiers had hidden many of the captives, and he commanded them to search the whole camp thoroughly and bring him any that they found, and to arrest the ones who were holding them, {[f. 460v]} and they found 500. And he commanded that they were to be taken to their land<s> and the soldiers who had held them to be flogged in public. And it was said that they had sent many others home that night. I went to visit the emperor the next day and gave him many blessings and high praise for what he had done. He too was very content and thanked me again for the counsel I had given him, and afterwards the whole camp, even those who had previously wished to keep them captive, said that the emperor had never done anything better. This was at the end of March 1610.<sup>1</sup>

*That winter, there was a great sickness in the court at Dehanâ, and so the emperor left there as soon as the rains allowed and went to the land of Xumagalêi Xum. And he pitched his tents in Cacaçâ and stayed there for some time. Afterwards he took the Tacuçâ road and, on arriving in Lêg, commanded his men to fall on all those lands, because they did not want to pay tribute. And they took many cattle and provisions, and the people hid in caves like rabbits. And the emperor commanded that they be surrounded and watched carefully so that they could not escape at night. Feeling oppressed by the heat and thirst, they begged for mercy and the emperor pardoned them, but he took some of their sons as hostages to ensure that they obeyed. From there, he moved on to Gojâm and went through Çalalô and encamped in Dêbra Orc, and later he crossed the River Çuhâ and spent Easter there. He was determined to go and attack the Gâlas in Olacâ and Xaoa, but the men of his camp dissuaded him from that, saying that it was better to go to those in Biçamô, and so he went via Gumarçancâ and crossed the River Abaoî, but he did not reach the Gâlas because they were short of provisions, and so he was forced to go back to Gojâm. From there he moved on to Dambiâ to overwinter in his court at Dehanâ.*

*While he was there, <[f. 520]> in June he commanded his captains to go to attack Chubcên, a very black people, because they had stolen the cattle of Bambabo, a land of Tancâl, and taken some people, and they had also robbed the merchants. When the captains entered*

<sup>1</sup> This long interpolation by Páez is not included in Almeida's manuscript.

those lands, they <[f. 415/404]> laid waste to them and killed many people, and the rest fled to Çarquî, a land of the king of Sanaar. When they returned there were many sicknesses in Dehanâ and such famine throughout Dambiâ that the question on everyone's lips was 'To whom did he leave it?' He therefore had houses built in Gorgorrâ so that he could move his court there, which he did the following year.

{[f. 461]} At the beginning of summer, the emperor received news that the Gâlas that they call Orenexâ, to whom he had given lands in Olacâ, had risen up and killed many people, breaking the friendship and loyalty that they owed, as is their custom and as they are always doing, for they are the most wicked and false family of all the Gâlas. And so they had first broken the friendship and word that they had with the Gâlas of the Urdayâ family and killed many through deceit; they had moved on to the Aquichû family and they deceived and killed many of them too; then they went to the Lebên family and they also killed many of these through falsehood; and they moved on to the Ūolôs and did the same to them; and then they again sought friendship with the Lebêns and afterwards broke it; and they came to the emperor and he gave them the lands of Gemâ and Amonât. While they were there, they killed many people of Olacâ, and they called the Gâlas of the Itû family to help them lay waste to the lands of Olacâ<sup>1</sup> and Gojâm. When the emperor heard this, he gathered his army and went through Begmêder, where he spent the feasts of Christmas and the Baptism, and then he moved on to Amharâ and from there he went through Olacâ. On arriving in Darâ, before pitching their tents, they had a false alarm of a Gâla attack and they all fled, leaving the emperor alone, but later, when they saw that nobody was pursuing them, they came back. The next morning, he found the Gâlas in the land of Amonât and, giving battle, he defeated them and slew many and captured their women and children and took countless cattle.

Soon afterwards, forty Gâlas of the same Orenexâ family came and begged the emperor to pardon them and they promised not to do any more harm at all. And so he made peace and returned by the road to Amharâ. On arriving there at the beginning of Lent, he made Iuliôs viceroy of Tigrê and also gave him the command of bahâr nagâx, and he made Erâz Cela Christôs viceroy of Gojâm, as previously he had made Erâz Athanatêus. And then he set off towards Dambiâ and, on arriving at Querenhá, he dispatched Iuliôs to Tigrê and he came to his court at Gorgorrâ, where he stayed until the beginning of June.

<[f. 415v/404v]> At this time, the Gâlas of the Orenexâ family deceived those of the Itû family and killed many of them and took many cattle, and the principal one of them, who is called Acacô, came to Olacâ to make friends with the captain who was there, who at the time was Fit Aurari Gualdô. He seized him and {[f. 461v]} then all those Gâlas sent a message to Erâz Cela Christôs asking him to give them protection and «[f. 521]» they would go over to him, so he himself went with his men to Olacâ and brought them to Gojâm. And the emperor gave them the land of Ganz, where they have remained until now.

The emperor did not stay long in Gorgorrâ, because in the same month of June he rose and went to the Agous in the land of Achafêr, because they had done considerable damage in the neighbouring lands. As soon as he arrived, he fell on them, but found few because they had fled. On passing on to the lands of Çancarâ and Dancorâ, he seized so many cattle that there were enough for the whole camp. He returned to Achafêr and made his seat in the middle of that land, in order to stay there for what remained of the winter, and when the Agôus saw

<sup>1</sup> The clause 'and they called the Gâlas of the Itû family to help them lay waste to the lands of Olacâ' is missing in SOAS MS 11966.

that they left their villages and hid in the bush, where they built little huts just for protection from the rain. But they were not safe even there, because the emperor's men carried out many raids on them and killed so many that they land became depopulated, and the ones who {escaped} <stayed> went away <and escaped> to the lands of Charâ and Matacâl. «The emperor therefore went back to Gorgorrâ in early September and remained there until February. In that month, he left Gorgorrâ with an army and returned to Achafêr, where Ras Emanâ Christos arrived from Amharâ with many warriors. Commanding him to remain there to guard the baggage train, he went on alone with the warriors through Charâ in great haste. He came to Matacal and attacking» Attacking unexpectedly, he captured many men of that land and took their children, women, cattle and belongings. He encamped beside the River Guindân, where he stayed for two days, and from there he went to the lands of Lalâ and Abolâ, where there are three families of heathens that they call Agôu, Gongâ and Giguêt. On coming close, he split his men into two parts, and he took one and gave the other to Ionaël Balatina Gueitâ. Leaving behind the plunder he had taken, he entered those lands from two sides, and the men on his side found so many slaves and cattle that they all had enough. Two days later, Ionaël came back with many slaves and cattle, and the emperor let the soldiers keep everything they had taken, apart from a few slaves that he handed to others. After this, he returned to Achafêr and, while he was spending Easter there, some merchants from the land of Sanaar came to them and brought 470 horses, which he bought from them and gave to the men in his army. Afterwards, he went to the land of Ambaçâ, where he overwintered with all his army, while making a few raids into the lands of Charâ and Ancaxâ. In October, while he was there, it was discovered that Gojâm Nagâx Caflô was plotting <[f. 416/405]> treason against the emperor, so he had him seized and banished to Olacâ, but after seven months he pardoned him, because he is more inclined to mercy than to enforcing the full rigour of justice.

«On some raids that the emperor made on the Agôus, and on the war that he waged against the insurgent who joined forces with the Jews of Cemen; how he had him in his hands and justly executed him – Section 16»

In January, the emperor struck camp in Ambaçâ and went to Charâ «[f. 522]» and laid waste that land because that winter they had {[f. 462]} fought the Mâyas. Moving on, he reached the land of Ancaxâ and went out hunting one morning with just a few men. After riding over the plain until the sun got hot, he came to a land that they call Docamâ, and he sat in the shade of some trees to rest. While he was there, many Agôus came up and got very close without being seen. The men who were with the emperor came out at once and started fighting, but the Agôus turned them and killed Çalamdâr. When the emperor saw that, he rode out swiftly and charged so furiously that he soon put the Agôus to flight and rescued his men who were already being beaten. He returned to his camp, and at once went to the land of Damacâ, where he found many Agôus hiding in a cave, and he commanded his men to set fire to them and burn them, which they did.

On leaving here, the emperor went to Faguetâ and Ceguelâ, where Erâz Cela Christôs arrived with the troops from Gojâm and paraded them for the emperor. Having moved on for two days, he sent Erâz Emâna Christôs and Balatina Gueita Ionaël with men to attack the land of Açaôâ. When they reached it, they seized many cattle and horses and then returned to the emperor, who was now in the land of Culadugarâ, and there Dêye Azmach Afa Christôs joined him with many foot soldiers and horsemen that he had brought from Amharâ. After they had rested for eight days, the emperor sent Dêye Azmach Afa Christôs, Erâz Emâna Christôs, Erâz Cela Christôs and Dêye Azmach Oald Haureât with all the men they had to

the land of Guerareâ, so that they could attack the Gâlas of the Tulamâ family. And he returned to Dambiâ and entered his court in Gorgorrâ. The ones who went to the land of Guerareâ found the Gâlas there and fought them, and they slaughtered many and captured their women and children and seized their cattle, and then they went back to their houses in peace.

When Easter was over, the emperor went to Libô to see whether there was a good site on which to build a new city where he could spend the summers. On the way, he dispatched Balatîna Goitâ <[f. 416v/405v]> Ionaël with men to attack Colâ Xûm Ausabiôs, who had risen up. On reaching Queçareâ, they suddenly fell upon Ausabiôs, and he was troubled and hid in the bush, but they diligently searched for him and, when they found him, they cut off his head and sent it to the emperor, who was in Libô, and he rejoiced greatly and held a celebration. After he had chosen a site to build a city, he returned to that of Gorgorrâ, where he spent the winter together with Iuliôs, who had come from Tigrê.<sup>1</sup>

At that time, Oald Haureât was the captain «had the command» of Çalamt, {[f. 462v]} Taquelâ Guiorguís of Cemê, and Azcâ Guiorguís of Oagrâ. Despite that, while Oald Haureât was going to the attack on Guerareâ, a man rose up in Çalamt saying that he was Emperor Iacob, the son of Emperor Malâc Çaguéd. On hearing of this, Oald Haureât's men seized him and put him in the house of Acerâ Christôs. On learning of this,<sup>2</sup> Guedeon, a Jew, who was nearby, sent armed men there; arriving at night, they killed Acerâ Christôs and took the insurgent back with them. Once he reached the Jew, many Jewish warriors gathered and made a large force, and they laid waste the lands of Dorenâ and Barnâ and Xoadâ, and killed many people. When the emperor heard of this, he sent Aonabiôs with an army. On arriving there, they split up in three different areas: Abeitahûn Aonabiôs encamped in Tucûr Ohâ, Taquelâ Guiorguís in Zutareâ, and Damianos in Xanamorâ. Oald Haureât was also in Çalamt and, since the insurgent was still very strong despite all this, the emperor gave Iuliôs command of Oagrâ, Cemên, Çalamt and many other lands, because he had offered to kill that insurgent. And in September he went {with his men} to fight him «[f. 523]» and the Jew Guedeon, but on arriving in Oagrâ he heard that the insurgent had killed Abraham, the governor of Çalamt, and he sent a message to the emperor, saying, 'Sire, the insurgent has great strength and has killed Abraham in Çalamt, and so the whole land is in turmoil; if Your Majesty does not come, I will go down to Cemên alone to fight him.'<sup>3</sup>

On hearing this, the emperor left Gorgorrâ in October and set off for Oagrâ and, on arriving at Xambrâ Çagân, where Iuliôs was, he took the command of balatîna goitâ from Abeitahûn Aonabios and gave it to Gojâm Nagâx Caflô. Then he went down to Cemên and, passing <[f. 417/406]> through Tucûr Ohâ, he went to Çabrá, where he encamped his army and sent men to Mecerebâ mountain. Climbing up by force of arms, they killed many Jews who were up there on top, which made the insurgent and Guedeon very afraid, because that was a very secure stronghold. Afterwards, the emperor went on to Hochi mountain, and they climbed that too by force and killed many Jews. From there he went to Ceguenêt mountain, where the insurgent was with Guedeon and a large force of men, and he commanded his men to surround it. Thus the captains took up position with their soldiers on four sides and they fought almost continuously for two months and killed many Jews, including Odêc Matraraní,

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph missing in SOAS, MS 11966.

<sup>2</sup> The part 'Oald Haureât's men seized him and put him in the house of Acerâ Christôs. On learning of this,' is missing in SOAS, MS 11966.

<sup>3</sup> The original Portuguese here is grammatically inconsistent. This is the most likely reading.

Guedeon's principal captain. This broke him and he begged the emperor for peace, saying, 'Sire, I have sinned against God and against you. Pardon me, and I shall give you the insurgent as a prisoner, and henceforth I shall do whatever you command.'

The emperor was pleased with this message and replied that he {[f. 463]} {pardoned} <would pardon> him on the conditions that he mentioned, and so Guedeon seized the insurgent by means of a trick and delivered him to Iuliôs, and he sent him to the emperor with a large stone on his back. The emperor commanded that they should hang him by the back on an iron hook and a short while later they should cut off his head. And that is what they did, at which the emperor returned to Dambiâ, giving thanks to God for having cast down such a great enemy, and he entered his court in Gorgorrâ. There, after the feast of the Holy Spirit, he commanded that the clergy should not live indulging in sins and anyone who did not mend his ways and discharge his orders would be suspended from them and given other punishments. Abuna Simon added excommunication to this, to keep them apart from the pure priests.

At this time, the emperor sent Gojâm Nagâx Caflô and Ionaël with an army to destroy the land of Baliâ. Taking the Darhâ road, they crossed the River Abaoî and, cutting across via Achafer, they reached Baliâ and killed and captured some people, but they did not go very far into the land because of all the mud and rain that they found. And so they returned by the Bêd road and, on arriving, they plundered the lands of Dancorâ and Çancarâ and took many cattle. But when they reached the <[f. 417v/406v]> emperor, he reproved them severely for plundering those lands and commanded them to return everything that they had taken, {and he had them put under excommunication not to keep anything,} at which all the people of those lands rejoiced greatly.

<[f. 524]> «On the death of the emperor's mother and eldest son; on several raids that he carried out, and on how he gave the office of ras to Cellâ Christos, his youngest brother – Section 17»

In November, the emperor left Gorgorrâ and went to Libô, where houses and a very strong enclosure had already been made for him, and he commanded that everyone should build houses so that they could have their seat there. And on 24th December Abeitahûn Canafra Christôs, the eldest of all the emperor's sons, died<sup>1</sup> and everyone was very sad and lamented loudly, «Canafra Christos, the emperor's eldest son, whose death was deeply felt by everyone» because he was very modest in all his ways and they loved him dearly. He was buried in the monastery of Çanâ,<sup>2</sup> «He was buried in Debra Dimâ. A few days later, in the same place, on Good Friday, Ite Hamalmal, the emperor's mother, took her rest from the hardships of this world, and she was buried in the monastery of Çanâ,» and the emperor grieved deeply.

Shortly afterwards, the emperor sent Iuliôs, Oald Haureât, Ionaël and Fit Aurarî Açamô to slay all the Jews they could find in Oagrâ, Xanfacarâ, Baguelâ, Bezâz and all the other lands of their commands, and that is what they did, and only a few escaped, who fled with Finâz, and they captured their women and children. And the emperor had it proclaimed that all the Jews of Dambiâ and throughout the empire should become Christians, as he wished to

<sup>1</sup> See bk I, ch. 10, above.

<sup>2</sup> This information is only found in Páez's translation of the Chronicle. Almeida suggests a different translation and gives the name 'Dâbrâ Dima'. In the Chronicle of Susneyos published by F. M. Esteves Pereira, the name of the church is Dabra Rémâ; see Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos*, I, p. 154 (Ge'ez text); II, p. 119, (Portuguese translation). See Glossary (Çaanâ/Çana/Sana/Ṭānā Qirqos).



abolish Judaism in his land, and many were baptized; he commanded that these should work on Saturdays to show how Christian they were.

{[f. 463v]} After Easter, the emperor sent Erâz Cela Christôs and Gojâm Nagâx Caflô with a large army to fall on the Gâlas in the land of Biçamô, and to send men to Nareâ to bring back the tribute that that kingdom pays. On reaching Biçamô, they marched through the Gâlas' lands for many days but were only able to find a few, whom they killed, because they had fled far away, and so, after sending the men that were to go to Nareâ, they returned in peace. The emperor left Libô and came to his court at Gorgorrâ. Shortly afterwards, Oizarô Amata Michael, Emperor Malâc Çaguêd's daughter, died, and the emperor grieved so deeply that he wept for her for many days.

At the end of winter, the emperor received news that several houses of Gâlas had plotted together to fall on several lands at the same time, that a very large army was already on its way to the kingdom of Tigrê, and that the people of the house of Meraoâ were coming to Begmêder and those of the houses of Itû and Borên to Gojâm. The emperor therefore set off in great haste and went to position himself with his army in Begmêder, «[f. 525]» in the land of Estê, since it lay <[f. 418/407]> between Tigrê and Gojâm, so that he could go from there to wherever there was most need. In December he heard that the Gâlas of the Meraoi house had given up coming to Begmêder, and so he marched on towards Tigrê, and held the feast of Christmas in Xemâmabe Çabeâ. From there he moved to Anfarâz, where all his counsellors told him that he could not go on to Tigrê, because there was not enough water or hay on the Oag Abargali road for the horses and asses and, if he went down through Lamalmô he would not be able to reach the Gâlas because they would already have returned to their lands; so it was best to go to the aid of Gojâm, which was nearby. He therefore turned back in that direction and stopped in Gumarâ for the feast of the Baptism, and from there went to Gojâm. On arriving in the land of Çalalô, he heard that the Gâlas of the Itû house had already passed through to Gojâm, and so he left behind his baggage train and very swiftly went in search of them with just his warriors. But on reaching the River Sabatî, he found that Hadarô, Erâz Cela Christôs's captain, had defeated them and slain many, and those that had escaped were already gone.

At this, the emperor returned to the land of Xarâ and made his camp beside the River Çuhâ, and there he told all his captains to go with their men to the land of Xâoa to fall on the Itû Gâlas that had escaped and on the others from their land. Erâz Emâna Christôs said that neither he nor his soldiers could go, because they had no provisions. The emperor replied that he should stay and his soldiers had to go in any case, but he became arrogant, thinking that without his men they would not be able to gain victory over the Gâlas. And {[f. 464]} he sent word to the emperor that he himself should tell the soldiers to go, and many messages were sent back and forth on this until the emperor became annoyed and, after examining his affairs, he took away the command that he had, which was to be the chief of all under the emperor. (That is what is called *erâz* in the Amharic language, which means 'chief'. It is also called *behêt oadêd*, and in the Arabic language *guacîr*.)<sup>1</sup> And he gave the command to Cela Christôs, his younger brother, and from then onwards he was titled *erâz*, for previously he had been just *dêye azmâch* (scilicet 'captain'),<sup>2</sup> and he commanded him to go with the whole army against those Gâlas who were in the land of Muguêr in the part that they call Meca

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

<sup>2</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

*Ohâ; and so he went. Crossing the River Abaoî, <[f. 418v/407v]> he entered Olacâ and left his baggage train in the land of Darâ and went with just his warriors, drawn up in order at all times, until he reached Meca Ohâ, but he did not find the Gâlas, because they had gone on ahead. And so he moved on to Eguedebêt, where they were. When the Gâlas saw Êrâz Cela Christôs's army from afar, they fled so fast that he was unable to catch them, even though he pursued them as swiftly as he could, but he seized their women and children and many cattle that they had been unable to take with them, and with this he returned to the emperor.*

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## CHAPTER XX

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In which the history of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd is continued and how he finally pacified his empire with the death and banishment of those who were troubling it<sup>1</sup>

*When Erâz Cela Christôs reached the place where the emperor was, he broke camp and took the Dambiâ road and, on arriving in the land of Budâ, « [f. 526] » he spent Shrovetide there. Afterwards, he crossed the River Abaoî on the Darâ road and, when he reached the land of Cencenemâ, the air turned dark and the whole land {of} <as far as> Dambiâ and Tigrê was covered with dust like a mist which smelt of sulphur, and it lasted many days, although sometimes it brightened up. Afterwards, he travelled slowly and entered his court at Gorgorrâ. He stayed there no more than two weeks, because he soon left again and took the Tacuçâ and Tâncâl road to the land that they call Gunquê, and there he sent for Naêl, the son of Agub, with whom he had previously had an agreement. When he arrived, he kissed the emperor's foot and promised to serve him thenceforth and not to return to his lord Urbât, the king of Senaar, and the emperor gave him rich robes and items of gold. {[f. 464v]} Then Naêl guided the emperor until he reached the land of the king of Fûnye, and he fell on the land of Çarquî and slew many men and captured their women and children and burnt their houses.*

*The emperor did this for five reasons. The first was that, when he had sent some very valuable items as a present to the king of Badê, he had not responded < [f. 419/408] > as he should, and he sent two very poor horses. The second was that Naêl had fallen on the lands belonging to Dambiâ and caused great damage and, when the emperor sent word to him asking whether that had been with his consent or not, on hearing this message he remained silent and did not reply. The third was that Alêb, a servant of the emperor, had fled to him with many horses and had taken the drums of Maçagâ, and the emperor had written to him telling him not to detain his servant there, since he pardoned him, and if the man would not come he should send him the drums, but he would do neither one thing nor the other. The fourth was that when the people of Chucên went to Çarquî, he took them in and afterwards his men treated them very badly and would not let them bury their dead without paying, and so they wanted to establish friendship with their lord the emperor and, when they came, the men of Çarquî fell on them and killed many of them and seized their women and children. The fifth was that when the mother of Ioseph, the son of Gibarâ, was coming to the emperor, the people of Çarquî seized her and would not let her pass. For all these reasons the emperor was angry and made friends with Naêl, and destroyed the lands of the king of Badê, a subject of the king of Senaar.*

<sup>1</sup> SOAS, MS 11966 does not make a new chapter here.

«How the emperor's son-in-law Iulios rose up against him, and was killed in battle – Section 18»

When the emperor had come two days' journey away from Çarquí, a message arrived for him on Good Friday from his cousin Ite Amâtra Christôs saying that Iuliôs had risen up and the whole land was in turmoil and she had therefore fled by boat to Çarçâ. On the Thursday after Resurrection a letter arrived for him from the empress, «[f. 527]» in which she said the same thing and that she had fled with her children to Tacuçâ, and he should come in all haste, and so the emperor quickened his pace. Soon afterwards a letter arrived from Iuliôs with words of great arrogance. On arriving in Tancâl he made his camp there. Meanwhile, Iuliôs left Oagrâ and came down through Granhbâr and went to the River Reb, because he and Erâz Emâna Christôs had agreed to meet there to take counsel regarding what they would do against the emperor. But Erâz Emâna Christôs did not come; instead, he fled from him and, while he was going through Begmêder, Ligabâ Za Denguil came out to apprehend him, but he escaped, abandoning his baggage train.

When Iuliôs heard that Erâz Emâna Christôs had fled from him, he went towards Darâ, with the intention of going on to Gojâm to fight Erâz Cela Christôs. On arriving in Guetebâ, he sent many foot soldiers and horsemen to fetch Abuna Simon, who was on {[f. 465]} the sea (scilicet Lake of Dambiâ),<sup>1</sup> at Debra Mariâm. He wrote to him, <[f. 419v/408v]> saying, 'Behold, my father, I have come to die for Christ, because the emperor and his brother Erâz Cela Christôs say that in Christ there are two natures, divine and human. Help me.' Abuna Simon had fallen out with the emperor because of a letter that the patriarch of Alexandria, Marcos, had sent to the emperor, in which he said to him, 'Ever since I sent Abba Simon as pope of the lands of Ethiopia, he has not sent me a single real and he has not honoured me as sons ought to honour their fathers. And when the pasha of Cairo arrested me, he took all the church ornaments, and so I borrowed eighty oqueas (or 800 cruzados)<sup>2</sup> from Abdêl Nechit. Make Abba Simon pay it back to Abdêl Nechit's brother, because he has died, and if he does not pay the Turk will arrest me. If he will not do so, I entreat you, oh Emperor, and also all the great men of your empire, in the name of the honoured God on high and in the name of Our Lady Mary, to take whatever property Abba Simon has. I have also heard that Abba Simon is not treading the path that popes ought to tread, but that he has a wife and children. If this is true, write to me, so that I may send another who loves the purity kept by the Church of God in accordance with the custom of the apostles and their canons.'

When the emperor saw this letter, he sent it to Abûna Simon for him to do what the patriarch {had} commanded. On reading it, he was very angry and said, 'Patriarch Marcos cannot command me here in this land to pay back the gold that he borrowed.' But the emperor ordered him to pay as the patriarch commanded. He was therefore very angry with the emperor.

This Abuna Simon also had many public sins and things that are not appropriate for prelates of the Church or Christ's faithful. First of all, he had many women, he dishonoured maidens, and he took other men's wives, like Romana, the wife of Meti the Egyptian. Second, after he had children, he sent them and their mothers away like someone throwing them to the wolves, so that people would not know that he was a sinful man distanced from the truth. Third, when drinking wine, he would call for the jester to play and sing for him, as princes do.

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

<sup>2</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

Fourth, he dressed richly and had a bed like princes and kings. Fifth, he had pride, which <[f. 528]> is the prince of all sins and the king of all evils. <[f. 420/409]> Sixth, he was very hard-hearted, and so when people came from far away, from the lands of Nareâ, Cambât, Xaoa and {[f. 465v]} Tigrê to take orders, he would make them serve for half a year or a year collecting firewood and carrying stone for houses before granting them, and some died while waiting there for them. Seventh, very fond of property and of amassing gold from all the churches, and if someone in charge of them did not give him gold, he would suspend him from orders and command him on pain of excommunication not to open the church. Eighth, when they came to take orders, there were so many that they pressed in and came too close to him and so he would hit them with a stick or whatever he could find until he wounded them and shed their blood. Ninth, he did not examine <them> to see whether they were suitable to be granted orders, or whether they were heathens or Moors; if they brought a block of salt (something that serves as currency)<sup>1</sup> he would grant them orders, going against the custom of the Church that Christ Our Lord built upon Peter, the rock of faith. Tenth, he was like the Devil in leading many men to perdition, because he told all the men in Iuliôs's army that he absolved those who had killed people, taken other men's wives and broken the law, but anyone who did not kill everyone he found in Emperor Seltân Çaguêd's army, without sparing man, woman, boy or girl, would be excommunicated in heaven and on earth. He had many other sins that we do not wish to recount, but nothing is concealed from God.<sup>2</sup>

Leaving these matters aside, we shall return to those of Iuliôs. After that letter that he wrote to Abuna Simon asking for his help against the emperor and his brother Erâz Cela Christôs, because they said that there were two natures in Christ, he sent him another in which he said, 'I heard from the emperor that he was going to take you to justice, because you go with many women, you have dishonoured maidens, you have children and you have strayed from the path of abûna, and, after they sentenced you to death, he would have you executed in front of his whole camp. You would do better to die with me than be beset with this trial and hardship.' On seeing these letters, he left Dabra Mariâm at once, joined Iuliôs's strong men and came to him, with the Devil following him. When he arrived, he told him, 'You did not take good counsel in coming against Erâz Cela Christôs, because they will say that you are fighting him because he took your <[f. 420v/409v]> command. Turn back against the emperor, whose horses and men are tired, and many men will join you since they will think that you are going to die for the faith.' Iuliôs therefore turned back to Dambiâ in search of the emperor.

When the emperor heard that Iuliôs was turning back against him, he left {Tancâl} <Tencâl> and went to Lengâ Çafarâ, and from there he sent {[f. 466]} Balatina Gueitâ Ionaël and Abeitahûn Melca Christôs with men to go forth and encounter him, and he went through Xangoa to the land of Bulâ and made his camp in a high place. Afterwards, Iuliôs came and encamped in the land of Çada, and Ionaël, with all his men, returned to the emperor. On Wednesday, 11th <5th> May 1617, the emperor went forth to see Iuliôs's army, and that day the emperor <[f. 529]> up high and Iuliôs down below were in sight of each other, and the men in the emperor's army were very afraid, because Iuliôs had so many men that they covered the land like locusts. At dawn the following day, <6th May,> Iuliôs decamped from where he was and gradually approached the emperor, so that the chiefs in the

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

<sup>2</sup> This paragraph is completely omitted by BM, Add. MS 9861; see Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos*, I, p. 164 (G'ez text); II, p. 126 (Portuguese translation).

emperor's army, with whom he had secretly conspired, might come over to him. They were not able to do so, however, because they were not sure of one another and the emperor, seeing that Iuliôs was coming, left his camp and drew his men up in order, horse on one side and foot on the other. Then Gojâm Nagâx Caflô, who was the chief one of those who had conspired with Iuliôs, moved away to one side with many men from the emperor's army, thinking that if he and his men did not fight the emperor would be defeated. When Iuliôs saw that the ones with whom he had conspired were not coming over to him and heard that Erâz Cela Christôs would be arriving the next day with all the men from Gojâm, and that Deye Azmâch Oald Haureât would also be coming that day with all the men from Begmêder, he decided to give battle at once, thinking it better still to die at the emperor's hands than to wait until those others arrived. And so he left the place where he was and very proudly moved towards the emperor and, from afar, he began to gallop ahead with just a few horsemen. When he reached the emperor's captain of the right hand, who was called {Azâx} <Erâz [f. 421/410]> Caflô, the latter moved aside and let Iuliôs pass, some say out of fear, others out of pride. But when Iuliôs reached Çagadê's squadron of soldiers, they began to fight, and one of them struck him on the forehead with a pellet<sup>1</sup> like Goliath, and another, who is called Amelâu, ran him through with his spear and, as he fell from his horse, cut off his head.

Since the emperor thought that Iuliôs was not in the vanguard but had remained behind, he attacked that part with his army, but Iuliôs's men, who had seen their lord fall, «in the meantime the emperor's men attacked the insurgent's, but as they saw that their captain was dead they» turned tail at once, and many died. And Abuna Simon was also killed, because they found him in the war in his wickedness, and he fell at the foot of the banner, like a pasha. They cut off {[f. 466v]} his head and brought it to the emperor together with Iuliôs's. The soldiers found booty beyond count: gold, silver, very fine robes, swords and shields with silver and gilt decorations, many helmets, shirts of mail and other armour, horses and mules. Never had the victors in Ethiopia found such riches, not even when Emperor Malâc Çaguêd defeated King Mahamêd or Azmach Isaac and the Turks, or in Erâz Ça Celacê's camp, or in that of Emperor Iacob, when Emperor Seltân Çaguêd defeated him. And at three o'clock in the afternoon, the captains and soldiers who were scattered around gathering booty returned to the emperor, bringing as prisoners Cegueuûm, Damô, Labacî, Naçaranî, Cabatô, Libçô, the son of Român Azfô, servants and counsellors to Iuliôs. The emperor asked them why they had risen up against him, and commanded that they be beheaded.

When this was over, the emperor had all the armour and horses that had been seized that day brought to him, and mail shirts were collected in one place and «[f. 530]» helmets in another, and they were like two hills, apart from many swords and shields, and there were twenty-five pairs of drums. And he distributed it all to men in his army as he saw fit, and all the rest – gold, silver and robes – he left to those who found it, at which everyone was very joyful and content.

Before we move on, it is worth saying something about who Iulios was and what the emperor did for him before he reigned and afterwards, so that his ingratitude and wickedness may better be seen.<sup>2</sup> <[f. 421v/410v]> Iuliôs was born in the land of Olacâ, and while he was still small enough to wear only half a local cloth he began to serve Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, before he was emperor. When Emperor Malâc Çaguêd died, Seltân Çaguêd fled and for ten

<sup>1</sup> A small metal ball for throwing, attached to a cord by which it can be retrieved.

<sup>2</sup> The phrase 'so that his ingratitude and wickedness may better be seen' is missing in SOAS, MS 11966.

years wandered through the deserts and lands that we mentioned at the beginning of this history. During this time of hardships, Iulios served the emperor very well, and he too did him many favours, because first of all he made him his *balatina gueitâ* (scilicet ‘chief steward’),<sup>1</sup> then captain of the *harquebusiers*, and soon afterwards *zafalam* of *Xâoa*, *Ifât*, *Elasmâ*, *Emanz* and {*Ecâz*} <Erâz>. And when Emperor Iacob was laid to rest and Emperor Seltân Çaguêd ruled over all the land, he made him viceroy of *Gojâm* and married him to his daughter, *Oizarô Malacotaoit* and, after he rose up the first time that the emperor took *Gojâm* away from him, he made him *Damôt Çafalâm* soon afterwards and gave him half of {[f. 467]} *Gojâm*. Since he did not get on well with the people of *Damôt*, he asked the emperor to make him viceroy of *Tigrê*, and at the same time he gave him the command of *bahâr nagâx* and granted him everything. When he arrived there, he laid waste all the land, seizing many people’s property and killing others. After he returned from *Tigrê*, the emperor gave him *Oagrâ*, *Çalamt*, *Abargalê* and other lands; even though they were so many and so large, he was not content and died fighting against the one who had done him so many favours and raised him to such great honours.

At dawn on the day after *Iuliôs* died, *Erâz Cela Christôs* arrived with all the men from *Gojâm* and he was very sorry not to have arrived before the battle took place. The emperor issued a proclamation to say that he was pardoning all *Iuliôs*’s servants and that nobody should take any belongings from those who had helped him by fighting against the emperor other than what they had lost during the battle. He left there and went to *Çadâ*, where he stayed a week, and then he moved on to *Dencâz*, where he gave the command of *Begmêder* to *Ionaêl*, and to *Oald Haureât* he gave *Cemên*, *Çalamt*, *Oâg*, *Abargalê* and all the other lands that *Iuliôs* had had, except *Oagrâ*, which he gave to the soldiers that they call *Cocâb*.

«The treasons of *Ras Emana Christos* against his brother the emperor are recounted – Section 19»

While the emperor was in *Dencâz*, he sent *Dêye Azmach Afa* <[f. 531]> *Christôs* with a guard to *Erâz Emana Christôs*. The latter had <[f. 422/411]> gone off to *Amharâ* and, while he was still in *Udô*, he sent his banner and drums there and then sent two sons. He commanded the older one, who is called *Heoâ Christôs*, to take the fort that they call *Amorâ Gadêl*, and he told the younger one, who is called *Ede Christôs*, to take the *Corêb* mountains, and afterwards he would go with *Iulios* and seize *Dêye Azmach Afa Christôs* (who is his older brother) and, once he had captured him, he would rule over *Amharâ*, *Ambecêl*, *Olacâ* and *Manz*, and the *Maraoâ Gâlas* and others behind them would help him. But *Heo<â> Christôs* realized that his father wanted to rise up against the emperor and did not do what he commanded, but instead went over to his uncle *Dêye Azmach Afa Christôs* and revealed to him the conspiracy that his father had with *Iuliôs* and what he intended to do. A servant of his who had come from *Erâz Emana Christôs*’s camp told him the same thing, so he sent word to him, ‘How could you do such a terrible thing as to join *Iuliôs* against your brother the emperor? Why did you want to lose your honour and deliver the empire to someone else?’ {[f. 467v]} *Erâz Emana Christôs* replied, ‘I do not want to rise up against the emperor, but *Iuliôs* sent word to me that the emperor had told him, “I have now taken this faith, that there are two natures in Christ, and I have taken communion with the fathers. You should join this faith as well and take communion with them.” And he had replied, “Am I to join it alone? Or will your brothers *Dêye Azmach Afa Christôs* and *Erâz Emana Christôs* join as well?” And

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

he had told him, "You join now, and if they want to, they will join of their own free will, or else I shall seize them in the month of June «July» and force them to join." When I heard that, I fled in order to die for my faith.'

When this message reached Dêye Azmach Afa Christôs, he sent back asking whether he had heard anything from the emperor's own mouth or just through Iulios. He answered that it had been just through Iuliôs. Dêye Azmach Afa Christôs realized that it was a lie and gathered many horsemen and foot soldiers with many harquebuses and went to Melêc Ambâ, where Erâz Emana Christôs was, and sent word to him to come down, if he was obedient to the emperor, so that they could discuss everything together. He replied that he would come down with five men, and he should come with five others and they both should swear not to do <[f. 422v/411v]> each other any harm. After they had sworn, Erâz Emana Christôs came down with five men and Deye Azmach Afa Christôs went with five others and, when they met, they sent seven away so that three would remain as witnesses to what they said. Deye Azmach Afa Christôs began by asking him, 'Why are you rising up against our brother the emperor?' Erâz Emana Christôs replied, 'I am not rising up against the emperor, but, as Iuliôs sent me a message saying that I would be forced to join the faith of the Portuguese and take communion from the hand of Father Pêro Paez,<sup>1</sup> I joined Iuliôs and came here to die for my faith.' Dêye Azmach Afa Christôs replied, 'Does one perchance die for the faith on a horse and fighting with an army? If the emperor «[f. 532]» commands you to take the faith of the Portuguese, give your neck to the sword and you will gain a crown in heaven, like all martyrs. This business of yours is not good, but what is done is done. Come now. We shall go and help our brother Erâz Cela Christôs before he dies, because Iuliôs has gone against him with many men and the emperor cannot come to his aid because he has gone to attack Çarquî, a land of the king of Fûnye. When he returns, I shall ask him to show mercy and have him forgive you for what is done.' He replied {[f. 468]} that he would go, and swore before a crucifix that he would come down the following day at dawn with all his men to go with him, and with that he returned to his mountain and Afa Christôs to his camp.

The next day, Deye Azmach Afa Christôs waited until very late and, seeing that he was not coming down, he sent him a message asking why he was making him wait so long, since he had sworn that he would come at dawn. But he preferred to abandon his brothers in one day rather than to keep his oath. And so he drew up his squadrons and commanded them to fight his brother Dêye Azmach Afa Christôs, and they fired their harquebuses and a bombard many times and only succeeded in knocking down a tent. Dêye Azmach Afa Christôs's men fought and defeated those of Erâz Emana Christôs and, on reaching the mountain, they besieged it and seized the water and <[f. 423/412]> grazing, and so the cattle were left with nothing to eat or drink for three days, and the men suffered great hardship because there were so many of them. Seeing themselves surrounded and in such dire straits, they sent some monks to Deye Azmach Afa Christôs and they begged him to have pity on those people and not to kill them through starvation and thirst, because there were many monks and clerics, women and children there. Erâz Emana Christôs would come down alone and go to the emperor, so that he might ordain as he wished. He replied that he should come down and he would raise the siege. Thus he came down and Deye Azmach Afa Christôs handed him to his servant Amçala Christôs to take him to the emperor with eighty guards. While he was on the road, he received a message from his brother Erâz Cela Christôs saying, 'Behold, Iulios, your lord, in

<sup>1</sup> The name 'Pêro Paez' is omitted in SOAS, MS 11966.



whom you trusted, is dead. Come quickly at once and bring a stone on your head, or else where will you escape from my hands or from those of our lord the emperor?' On hearing this, he was very afraid and went on with a troubled mind.

When he reached the camp at Dencáz, the emperor's prosecutor brought charges against him before the magistrates and with many witnesses proved how he had plotted with Iuliôs to rise up against the emperor, and they all ruled that he deserved death. But the emperor, moved with mercy for his brother, was content to send him prisoner to Gojâm, although he did not deserve such pity because, in addition to this treason, he had done the emperor many other wrongs. First, when they were going to make him emperor, «[f. 533]» he said, 'I will not have a part in this. I will not take the emperorship from the house of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, because I am under oath.' After saying this, he went away to Amharâ. {[f. 468v]} Second, when Emperor Iacob went to Amharâ and Za Celace came forth with an army from Gojâm to fight him, he pleaded with him, even kissing his hand and taking hold of his foot, not to leave him but instead to help him, and Erâz Emanâ Christôs had no pity on his brother and was not at all moved by his pleading {and so went away}; but without him, even though he had very few men, God gave him victory over Za Celacê. Third, he counselled the soldiers of Amharâ, whom they call Mariâm Hailê, not to be his servants or <[f. 423v/412v]> to help him, but to go over to Emperor Iacob, having decided to go over to Emperor Iacob himself once they had joined him. Fourth, when that traitor that we mentioned above rose up in the land of Cemên, saying that he was Iacob, he sent his horses and everything he had, even his household goods, to Amharâ, giving his men to understand that that man certainly was Emperor Iacob, for otherwise he would not have sent his possessions away like that; and when the emperor summoned him to fight the insurgent, he would not come until the emperor swore not to do him any harm for what he had done; and afterwards he wanted to become a monk. Fifth, when the emperor had surrounded the mountain of Çaganêt, where the insurgent was with Guedeôn, he commanded him to guard a pass with his men, and he went off to a different one, so that Guedeôn's and the insurgent Taclûi's men escaped. Sixth, he hates anyone that the emperor loves, and makes friends with those whom the emperor dislikes, and seeks to marry his daughters to the sons of those whom the emperor had executed for their wicked deeds; he even wanted to give a daughter to a son of Guedeôn the Jew called Oalâi, but he did not do so because the emperor was angry with him. Seventh, when the emperor commanded him to go as captain-in-chief of his whole army to attack the land of Guerareâ, he refused to obey.

«How some of those who joined the conspiracy with Iulios were defeated in argument and punished, principally Caflô Bellatinoche Goita – Section 20»

After the emperor had sent Erâz Emanâ Christôs as a prisoner to Gojâm, he decamped from Dencáz and went down through Granh Bâr to the River Maguêch, where the emperor's prosecutor brought charges against Erâz Athanatêus before the magistrates, not only for having taken part in the treason with Iuliôs, but also for many other earlier things. And the magistrates and great men of the kingdom ruled that he deserved death, and said to him, 'It was you who brought down Emperor Iacob after he had held the empire for seven years and sent him as a prisoner to Nareâ. It was you who gave the empire to {Emperor} Za Denguîl, and afterwards «[f. 534]» you joined those who had risen up against him and you killed him for nothing. From whom did Iuliôs learn his treachery and wickedness? Are you not perchance the master of all traitors?' Some therefore {[f. 469]} ruled that he should be stoned and others that he should be beheaded. Many people told the emperor that he was to blame for many evils, for having waited until he was three times a traitor, for if he had had him beheaded the

first time Iulios would not have risen up and the whole land <[f. 424/413]> would have remained in peace until now. Even so, the emperor did not want the sentence to be carried out, because he is merciful, but he commanded that he be taken prisoner to Amharâ and did not give him any other punishment.

The emperor moved on and entered his court at Gorgorrâ, and he ordered the arrest of Mahainna Christos, Cantez Cenô and his wife Escandara Oît, the contriver and foundation of all the evils of her husband Cantez Cenô, whom we mentioned in chapter ...<sup>1</sup> and who, at the end of his affairs, «who finally» took part in the treason of Iuliôs and Mahainna Christôs with Erâz Emanâ Christôs. And despite all that he was content for them to go elsewhere as prisoners. Afterwards, at the emperor's orders, they brought charges against Oizarô Oalata Guiorguîs, and they said to her, 'You grumbled about the emperor and said to many great lords and ladies in the month of June, "He is going to imprison you, because he denies the faith of Alexandria and confesses that of Rome, and he will make you join it by force."' She replied not a word for a long time because there were some people there to whom she had said those things. After they had obliged her to reply, she said, 'My grumbling was not meant to unsettle the land or take away the emperorship. I simply spoke as men speak.' They gave this reply to the emperor and he told them to ask her again, 'How do you respond to the charge that your grumbling was simply when, during the time of Emperor Iacob, you gathered the great men of the empire and grumbled about him, saying that he had denied the faith and broken the cross and had looked at the cow's fat like a Gâla, and that he had done what men should not do; did this grumbling of yours perchance not lead to his death? When you grumbled about Emperor Za Denguil and said that he had taken communion with the Portuguese and that he had commanded people to eat sea horse,<sup>2</sup> did this grumbling of yours perchance save him or lead to his death? You were thinking of doing the same to me, but God has delivered me from the poison of your wickedness, which kills by stealth. What is much worse is that you taught Iuliôs to fight me to the death.'

To this she replied that she had never counselled Iuliôs to do such a thing, but many people testified that she had taken part in the treason and used to strengthen Iuliôs's heart for {[f. 469v]} evil, and she was like a nursemaid to him, and they had seen a letter that he had written to her, in which he said, <[f. 424v/413v]> 'The Gâlas have laid waste my land of Gang, and I have not found health. You too must not die, because it is less for heaven and earth to pass.' By which he meant that the emperor would seize and kill him in the month of June. 'So that you do not die, and we do not think it good, do not obey.' <[f. 535]>» And Iuliôs's own servants testified that three of her servants took the letter and were in the battle, and their mules and robes were seized during it. On hearing this, the emperor sent word to her, saying, 'I shall do nothing to you. May God repay you according to your works. But, so that you do not take part in any other wickedness or disrupt my court, stay in Gojâm with your slave men and women. Take your gold and silver and all your belongings.' And so she went to Gojâm and made her seat in Harezmâ.

Shortly afterwards, the emperor asked Gojâm Nagâx Caflô, 'Who is that woman you told me about previously, before Iuliôs rose up, on the Darâ road near the Abaoî, who told the great men that I would seize them in the month of June?' He would not say who she was. The

<sup>1</sup> A blank space has been left here in ARSI, MS Goa 42 and BPB, MS 778, to be filled in later. The words 'whom we mentioned in ch.' were omitted in SOAS, MS 11966.

<sup>2</sup> Hippopotamus.

emperor said, 'After I had charges brought against Oizarô Oalata Guiorguís, she complained that you used to reveal everything and that it was no use her saying anything against you because people would not believe it, since you had accused her first.' When Caflô heard this from the emperor's own mouth, he was deeply troubled and changed the subject, and afterwards, on going into another room, he paced up and down saying, 'She has told them; she has told them.' Some of the emperor's servants heard this and, realizing that he too had taken part in the treason, they told the emperor, and he therefore started making inquiries. Many people told him that he was the mainstay of the traitors' house, and so he had him arrested on 14th June. At dawn the following day, the emperor commanded the magistrates and governors of the empire to assemble. With Caflô standing in front of them, they accused him of all the things that he had done. He denied them, but then Iuliôs's servants and his brothers testified that from start to finish he had not departed from Iuliôs in counselling treason, and they had both sworn to extinguish the house of Emperor Onag Çaguêd by slaying them all so that there would be none of his generation that could reign. They also testified that he had sent a message to Iulios when he was in Darâ <[f. 425/414]> not to go and fight Erâz Emanâ Christôs {[f. 470]} but to turn back and fight the emperor, whose men and horses were tired and who therefore could not fight him. Since Iulios was afraid of Erâz Cela Christôs, he turned back. When the judges heard this, they ruled that he deserved death, and that it should be not an ordinary death, like his guilt. But the emperor only wanted them to cut off his head, and when they had cut it off, everyone at court celebrated and some kicked him and others stoned him; the body was left there and the next day it was not to be found. Some say that the dogs ate it, others that it was wolves, and others say that his servants buried it.

This Caflô's father was a soldier from Doarô and his mother was from Xâoa and both were very poor and had not enough to eat. They had therefore placed him in the house of one of his mother's sisters and, while he was looking after some asses, the Gâlas came and speared him so hard in one shoulder that the spear went right through him and they made him a eunuch, as they usually do to those they kill, and they went away leaving him for dead. He got up afterwards and {was cured} <left.> When he grew up, he became a servant of Azmach Mutagarâd, who was his «[f. 536]» kinsman, and he looked after his chest of robes, for he had some very costly silk ones. One day, because his master had quarrelled with him, he took some embers from the fire and put them in the chest among the robes and closed it again. In the morning, when Mutagarâd went to get dressed, he found them all turned to ashes. He was therefore furious, and from that time onwards he had a great hatred of him. Everyone who heard of the case considered it a very wicked deed.

When he was a young man, he entered the service of Emperor Malac Çaguêd, and he put him under the charge of Oacâ, the son of Abeça Amatô. Afterwards he quarrelled with Oacâ and, taking out his sword, went after him even inside the palace, and so Abeça Amatô was very angry and would not allow him to enter his house again or be with his son. He remained thus for a long time, until the emperor made Erâz Athanateus viceroy of Gojâm, when he went with him. Erâz Athanateus raised him up and honoured him, even making him Gojâm nagâx. Many years later, when there was a fight between Emperor Iacob and Erâz Athanateus and the emperor seized Erâz Athanateus, Caflô served Emperor Iacob and, <[f. 425v/414v]> seven months later, when Abeitahûn Ionaêl, Erâz Athanateus and the governors of the empire seized Emperor Iacob and sent him to Nareâ, he went with the abeitahûn. {[f. 470v]} A year later, when they killed Emperor Za Denguîl, the lover of truth and the Law of God, Caflô fought Erâz Athanateus, his lord, over a cup of wine. He went to

Nareâ to bring back Emperor Iacob, but did not find him because he had moved to Cambât, and so he returned and told Za Celacê and the other governors that Emperor Iacob was not in Nareâ and that there was no news of him. They therefore sent him with Erâz Oald Christôs, Abeitahun Bela Christôs and many other great men whom we named above to go and establish friendship with Emperor Seltan Çaguêd.

While he and the others were with Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, they heard that Emperor Iacob had come from Cambât and entered Gojâm. Emperor Seltân Çaguêd then seized Erâz Oald Christôs, Abeitahun Bela Christôs and this Caflô, but later released him and gave him many fine robes and the best horse that there was and all the goods that they had taken from him when they seized him, and made him a counsellor. When Emperor Iacob died and he became lord of all, he gave him the command of the land of Ocên Ambâ. A year later, he said to the emperor, 'Sire, the command of Oanabâ with {Centôn} <Cembôn> is better for me than that of Ocên Ambâ.' But he did not seek this because it was better, for it was actually of much less profit and honour. What he intended was to join forces with some soldiers of Erâz Za Celacê that were in those lands, the better to carry out the treason that he was plotting against the emperor. And he, with the innocence of a dove, although he was not lacking in the prudence of a serpent, gave him what he asked. A year and a half later, he rose up together with Iuliôs and later, since they could not find the strength, they surrendered to the emperor, as we said above in chapter 19.<sup>1</sup> And after he had been imprisoned for nine months, the emperor pardoned him and made him *balatina gueitâ* (scilicet 'chief steward')<sup>2</sup> and lord of his household and all his possessions.

Caflô remained in this great command for two years and four months. At the end of all this time, he told the emperor that he was unable to cope with such a <great> position, and he sought the command of Damôt çafalam for his purposes. But the emperor sent «[f. 537]» word to him by {some} <three> monks that he should not give up the position. He declined, and so he gave it to <[f. 426/415]> Abeitahun Aunabiôs, the son of Abeitahun Ionaêl. Seeing that he could not obtain the command of Damôt çafalâm, he became greatly troubled and restless and began to plot treason. A year later, he was discovered in it while he was with the emperor at Ambêz Gamâ, and therefore the emperor had him seized and delivered to Bemûl Ūr, who would take him to Olacâ. Seven months later, he commanded him to return to {his} <the> court, where he overwintered. And in the month of November, {[f. 471]} when the emperor was going to fight Guedeôn the Jew and Taclûi the insurgent, he gave Caflô back the command of *balatina gueitâ*. And then he was troublesome and heavy-handed with everyone and as bitter as aloes, and he oppressed all those who had commands in the empire much more than was his right and the emperor dared not say anything to him, because he knew that he would be very angry. Having been in this command for two years and seven months and having amassed a great deal of wealth, he was not content with what he had and joined Iuliôs in his treason, and he was put to the sword forty days after Iuliôs.

«How Ras Cella Christos fought several bands of Gallas and brought one of them to the lands of the empire – Section 21»

At that time the emperor overwintered in Gorgorrâ, praising God for pacifying his empire by casting down those who were troubling it. And Erâz Cela Christôs stayed with him until September, when he went to Gojâm. Soon after he arrived there, the Habetâ and Ilmangocît

<sup>1</sup> The words 'in ch. 19' are omitted in SOAS, MS 11966.

<sup>2</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

*Gálas sent a message to him and to Dêye Azmach Bucô saying that they had quarrelled with their lords, the Gálas of the house of Borên, and had slain many of them, and asking them to go out and receive them because they wanted to go over to them, for they knew well that they were from their lands and not of Gála descent. On hearing this, Erâz Cela Christôs sent his servant Azcadêr at once with a large army to receive them and to fight the Borên Gálas, and Dêye Azmach Bucô also crossed the River Abaoî with many men and joined forces with Azcadêr. They went to the land of Biçamô, where the Habetâ and Ilmangocît Gálas were, and they rejoiced greatly and guided them to Chilêabô, whom they had fought earlier, and they fell on him in unison with Azcadêr and Dêye Azmach Bucô; they were victorious and slew many men and took their women and children and many cattle. Azcadêr at once wrote about what was happening to his lord Erâz Cela Christôs, but before the letter reached him he had already crossed the River Abaoî with all his army to help them, and he wrote to the emperor that he was going and that he too should come to Gojâm so that he could help the Gálas of the house of Mechâ in case those of the house of Tulamâ came.*

*After Erâz Cela Christôs had crossed the River Abaoî, he marched on, and on arriving <[f. 538]> in the land of Bôt found Deye Azmach Bucô and his armies together with the Habetâ Gálas, and they all celebrated. When Erâz Cela Christôs learnt that the Gála Chileabô, who had escaped from Azcader and Deye Azmach Bucô, was with his men in the land of Acendabô, he hurried there and fell on him unexpectedly. <[f. 426v/415v]> He killed many {[f. 471v]} Gálas and captured their women and seized many cattle and pursued them as far as the land of Goâgoatâ, and there he fought him again and killed many of their strong men. At dawn the next day he sent many horsemen to pursue those who had escaped, and they went as far as the land of {Yirân} <Yirâm> slaying those they found. Erâz Cela Christôs then went to fight the Gálas of the house of Abô, who were in the land of {Dêrc} <Dârc>. As he approached, he sent his captains ahead at dawn and they seized many cattle as they entered the land. Two days previously, Benerô, the lord of Nareâ, had fought the Gálas of the house of Acacô, because Erâz Cela Christôs had sent him a message to attack from the other side, and he gained a great victory, because not one escaped and he seized all their women and children.*

*When the Gálas of the house of Abô learnt that Erâz Cela Christôs was approaching from one side and Benerô was coming with a large army from another, they hid in the bush, as Kafirs do, but Erâz Cela Christôs sent his men into the bush, and they slew many of them and captured their women and children and seized many cattle, and the fighting lasted from sunrise to sunset. The next day, Erâz Cela Christôs pursued them to the land of Habexgâi, and there he slaughtered many more than before while fighting for six days without a rest, and he took a large amount of booty. Having achieved this victory by the Lord's mercy, he returned giving Him thanks for such a great favour, and he marched for sixteen days until he reached {Bôt} <Bâr>, where he had left his baggage train. He commanded his captains to remain with almost all the warriors and to guard the Habetâ Gálas' baggage train and to come after him slowly, and he crossed the River Abaoî with few men and entered Gojâm.*

*By this time the emperor had already arrived in Gojâm with a large army and was reaching the land of Bagunâ, because he had set off from Gorgorrâ on long daily marches as soon as he had received the letter from Erâz Cela Christôs asking him to come to Gojâm to help if necessary. When Erâz Cela Christôs reached the place where the emperor was, the emperor commanded that he be received with great festivities and he gave him valuable robes and did him many honours, both for his victories and for having brought the Habetâ and Ilmangucît*

*Gálas with their armies, women and children. Afterwards, the emperor went to Omermâ and encamped on a very flat and spacious plain so that the horses could gallop well, and there he wished to receive the Habetâ <[f. 427/416]> and Ilmangucit Gálas; all their warriors had left their baggage behind and were coming to visit him and show themselves off. When {[f. 472]} they were close, the emperor commanded all his men to arm themselves and draw up their squadrons as they do when they intend to give battle, and he settled inside his tent <<[f. 539]>> on his richly decked throne. As the Gálas saw so many magnificent men drawn up as if for war, they were very afraid and, entering the tent in order, they kissed the emperor's feet. Smiling, he said to them, 'Blessed be God, who has delivered you from death and brought you to my land. Henceforth, behave according to its customs and receive holy baptism, so that you may escape from the Devil's harsh captivity and we may be equal in the honour of Christ's kingdom, which does not pass like the kingdom of the world but lasts for ever and ever.' Some of them replied that they would do as he commanded. Others asked him to allow them to remain in their sect until it was time, and so he dissembled for the time being. To some he gave robes, to others horses and mules, and to all of them many cattle, and the lands of Ocên Ambâ, Mehiquêl, Fecbedinh, Arbüc and Macâl.*

*The emperor then decamped from Obermâ and went to Çalabaçâ, a land of heathen Agôus, and he spent the rest of the summer slaughtering many of them and capturing their women and children, and he seized many cattle, because he not only overran the lands of Çalabaçâ but also other heathen lands surrounding them, spending from December to April on this.*

*<<On the new sect of a feigned Christ, and on how the emperor and his captains made several incursions into the lands of the Ballous, and had victory over them – Section 22>>*

*While the emperor was in the lands of Çalabaçâ, many heretics were discovered in the lands of Olacâ and Amharâ of a sect begun in the time of Emperor Za Denguil by a man called Za Christôs, of the {Ximê} <Zonê> family from Ambelît. This man came saying that he was Christ, the saviour of the world, and he appointed twelve apostles and disciples, and prophets like John the Baptist, and others. Many people believed him and joined him and brought their households, and he fed them. When his possessions ran out and he could no longer support them, he told them to seize provisions by force from the lands surrounding a very strong mountain fastness where he was. When Abeitahün Bela Christôs heard of the raids they were making, he sent warriors to apprehend them, but when they reached the foot of the mountain they were unable to climb up because he and his followers <[f. 427v/416v]> fought hard and threw down many rocks. They therefore stopped fighting and seized his water supply, by which means they got hold of him and took him to their lord Abeitahün Bela Christôs. He sent him to Emperor Za Denguil, who was at Dêbra Abraham at the time, and he commanded his magistrates to examine him. When they asked him if it was true that he had made deacons and priests and claimed to be the Saviour of the world, he replied that he had, <<[f. 540]>> and so they sentenced him to death, and the emperor had him beheaded. His body was left in full view of everyone, smelling very bad, until the emperor decamped from that place.*

*{[f. 472v]} Fourteen years later, his disciples began to make it known that Za Christôs had been raised from the dead and that Christ had put on his flesh and come to them, and they were saying that Christ had been born twice, once in the House of Shem, of the Virgin Mary, and the second time in the House of Canaan, of a woman called Ameta Oenguêl. On his first birth he was called Christôs and on his second Ze Christôs. They built a church and ordained*

deacons and priests, and when they gave their communion they said, 'The flesh of Za Christôs, our Saviour, which He took from Ameta Oenguêl, Our Lady.' And they commanded that three days be kept in the week, Saturday in honour of God the Father, Sunday for God the Son, and Monday for {God} the Holy Spirit. And in Lent they did not fast on either Saturdays or Mondays. On hearing this, Emperor Seltân Çaguêd had some that had been seized brought before him. He asked about their beliefs and tried to dissuade them, but he did not succeed because they were very steadfast. And so he commanded that they be beheaded and any others that were found in the lands of Olacâ and Amharâ be given other deaths if they refused to reduce. He sent Abba Za Malacôt, and Erâz Cela Christôs and Deye Azmach Afa Christôs sent their servants with him. When they arrived, they gathered all they could find and Abba Za Malacôt told them to give up that deceit and return to the true faith and do penance. To that they replied that they would rather die a very cruel death than abandon their faith. Since he could not make them give up their purpose, 490 of them were thrown off a cliff, and 240 more the next day. With that, the Church was left in peace.

While the emperor was still in Çalabaçâ, he received a letter from Cantîba Za Guiorguîs saying that he had fallen on the lands of Beretâ, Caebâ, Betêl and others ruled by King Erobât of Funye, and he had <taken plenty of booty and> captured many women and children, burnt <[f. 428/417]> their houses {and taken plenty of booty}. Afterwards, the emperor learnt that Erobât had sent many foot soldiers and horsemen to guard the land of Çarquî. He was also told that Abuna Isaac, whom the patriarch of Alexandria, Abba Marcos, had sent to Ethiopia, had died in the land of Senaar long after Erobât had taken it. The emperor was very sad at this and at once decamped from Çalabaçâ and marched as far as Dabolâ, and from there he sent Ionaêl with many men to the lands of Gemâ and Çabên. Falling on them, he took plenty of cattle and property, and returned. The emperor then decamped from Dabolâ, passed through Bêd and went to the land of Tançâl, and he sent Ionael, Cantîba Za Guiorguîs and Caba Christôs with many warriors to attack the land of Çarquî. Having reached it in seven days, very early the next day they drew up in <[fighting]> order, and the king of Funye's men were already prepared with many horses and foot soldiers. But on giving battle, {[f. 473]} the Balôus were routed and many died. They brought Ionael 326 heads and seized many horses, mail shirts, helmets, harquebuses, drums and camels, and they returned with great rejoicing to where the emperor was, and he received them with many celebrations. But <[f. 541]> eight days later Cantîba Za Guiorguîs died of a fever, and the emperor wept bitterly because he loved him and he was his kinsman. And so he made his eldest son cantîba of Dambiâ in his place.

The emperor came to his court at Gorgorrâ and stayed there that winter, when there was terrible sickness. So many people died that many did not take them to the church but buried them where they found them, so at the beginning of October the emperor left his court and went to Dehanâ, where he stayed for eight days. There he did honour to the king of Dancalî, in the way that he usually does to the one who is going as viceroy of Tigrê or Gojâm, and then the meaning of his name Seltân Çaguêd was fulfilled, because kings really worshipped him. First, Abdulcadêr came with Ali, the son of Ayîb, and worshipped him {and obeyed.} <submitted to him. Then came> {And the king of Dancalî, who is called Camêl, when he was} <because he was> {defeated by the son of his brother Sehim,} <and had nobody else in whose shadow he could shelter> {came to the emperor and worshipped} and asked him to help him. And he gave him valuable robes and men, with whom he regained his kingdom, and he granted that he should pay only half of the tribute that he paid every year.

After eight days, the emperor left Dehanâ and took the road to Dencâz. When he arrived he chose a place for his camp and commanded that everyone build houses, and he built some very good ones for himself. Two comets appeared at this time, one on 9th «3rd» November and the other on <[f. 428v/417v]> the 25th «19th», 1618 «(one appeared on the 9th and the other on the 25th by our reckoning)», which were in the shape of a sword and lasted for many days. When the heathens from outside his kingdom saw these smoke-grey comets, they said that it was a sign that Emperor Seltân Çaguêd would defeat them. Having stayed there for four months, the emperor left with all his army through the lands of Oagrâ. On arriving at Aicolebâ, he divided his army into three parts and gave one to Abeitahun Melca Christôs, who was balatîna goeitâ, and Deye Azmach Ionaël, and commanded them to go and fall on the lands of King Erubât and try to reach Deberquî. He gave another part of the army to Deye Azmach Oald Haureât, his son-in-law, to go to the land of Adeberâ. And he commanded Deye Azmach Taquela Guiorguis to go with the men of Tigrê to the land of Tahâ. He himself returned to his court at Dencâz, where he occupied himself {[f. 473v]} throughout Lent with books and seeing the explication of the Apocalypse, which he had had translated from Latin.

Abeitahun Melca Christôs and Ionaël set off as the emperor had commanded and, on arriving, they laid waste all the lands of Fûnye, killing and capturing many people, and they seized many horses, weapons and drums. On reaching Abromelâ (even though this mountain was so impregnable that, when the people of that land once rebelled against the king of Dequin, he came with all his might and was unable to get up, and so he turned back), they made their way up by force of arms and slew many men and captured their king there and brought him back as a prisoner. On reaching the emperor with great «[f. 542]» festivities and rejoicing, they presented him with that king together with the slaves, weapons and horses that they had seized in his lands.

Deye Azmach Oald Haureât also went as his lord commanded. After marching for nineteen days, he reached Ateberâ, a land of Fûnye, and straight away, on Sunday before noon, he fell on it and defeated the captain that was there. As he fled, they killed many of his men and captured their women and children, so that it was all left depopulated, and they seized a great deal of silver and gold, valuable objects and robes, many camels, harquebuses, mail shirts and helmets and three pairs of drums, with which everyone in the army was left replete. And so Emperor Seltân Çaguêd achieved something that none of his predecessors had, because in a single week he laid waste from Çuaquêm to Fazcolô, where they extract gold, and Our Lord thus accomplished what he desired.

When Deye Azmach Oald Haureât achieved this victory, he returned at once, giving <[f. 429/418]> thanks to God for such a great mercy, and he arrived at Dencâz forty-six days after he had left, and he entered playing the drums that he had seized in the war, which were carried on camels. When he came in to where the emperor was, he received him with honour and asked him at length about the details of the war. He then commanded that the camels bearing the drums be brought into the patio, and those driving them made them dance in their manner in the emperor's sight, something that everyone applauded as it was a novelty, and the emperor gave valuable robes and a gold necklace to Deye Azmach Oald Haureât, and they had great festivities until evening. The following morning he presented the emperor with the slaves, armour and horses that he had seized in Ateberâ.

During Lent, Benerô, the lord of Nareâ, sent the gold tribute that he pays, together with his son, who is called Emanâ Christôs, saying, 'Here, Sire, is the tribute and my son,



*your slave.* A little before the captains whom we have just mentioned returned, he sent another letter saying that he had been to Orêb and fought the Gâlas of the Borên family, and he had slain many and captured their women {[f. 474]} and children and seized their cattle, and that many more Gâlas of the Habetâ family had joined him than had previously joined Erâz Cela Christôs. For these victories that Our Lord God gave to the emperor from Çuaquên to Fazcolô, he held {great} <many> festivities and gave much praise to the Lord, from whom so many mercies had come. He occupied himself with this until the month of May 1619.

*I, Taquelâ Celacê, who in the language of the Gâlas am called Tinô, have written this book and affirm that I have seen many of these things with my own eyes, and that I am not telling lies, and it does not profit me either for the body or for the soul, nor are these things of ancient times, but of this present time, as all the princes and great men of the empire know.*

Up to here are words of the history of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd as they are in his book. The author, however, says very little of the many things that he has done and the efforts he has made to introduce the matters of our holy faith into his empire and for his vassals to submit to and obey the Roman Church, or of the mortal dangers that he has faced in this respect. The reason for this is that the writer was at that time very opposed to the matters of our holy faith, since he did not understand them, but after we explained them to him he was so satisfied and so steadfast that he said that he would die a thousand times for the faith of the holy Roman Church, and now he upholds it with great fervour and zeal, and he brings many people to it by convincing them with arguments, for he is a very sharp-witted man of great understanding <[f. 429v/418v]> and very well read in their books. For this reason and because he is the chief of the emperor's secretaries and very much his confidant, he has great authority with everyone. He says that he will include in what remains of this history what he has left out here, regarding what the emperor has done so that his people may receive our holy faith, and the uprisings that there have been because of this. But because this will take time, I shall report here some of the things that have happened over the last two years, in which it will be seen how resolute the emperor is to die for our holy faith and how much he desires all his vassals to receive it. «Up to here the *Abexim* historian, and all this Book 6, [f. 543] as I promised above, has been a digression or parentheses in this history of ours. Because in the first part of it I explained the errors and heresies in which the *Abexins* have lived for many centuries, and I added them all so that one might also see the power of hell with which the Devil was fortified and garrisoned in this empire, and one might better understand the great mercy that God has done to the *Abexins*, in the books, by means of the fathers of our Society, bringing them from such blindness and such opaque and thick darkness, to the light of the true and holy Catholic faith that the Roman Church teaches and professes.

In the second part of the book I put the Chronicle of Emperor Seltan Saged or Susnios literally translated from their language, as his historian *Azage* Tino had written it. But because he dealt only with the emperor's wars and not at all with the reduction of all this empire to the holy faith, I am obliged to deal with this intent at great length. And to that end, nobody will find it strange if I mention and partly repeat some of the things that are written in the *Abexim* Chronicle, because many of them are necessary in order to explain better what I shall recount, and I shall repeat others because the historian has been

very incomplete in them, according to the style of his land, and so that which has been said above will serve as sketches to which I shall add the colours of my History, not dead and feigned colours, but vivid and true ones, because what I recount will be until the year of 1623 from the reports of the fathers who saw and were involved in them, and thereafter I shall say what passed through my own hands as a witness who found myself present at almost all the events.»

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## CHAPTER XXI

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Which reports some of the things that Emperor Seltân Çaguêd has ordained and done in the last two years for the good of our holy faith

In addition to what we said in the second book, {particularly} in chapter 4 <principally> and 5, {[f. 474v]} regarding the great efforts that Emperor Seltân Çaguêd made for his people to receive our holy faith and the mortal dangers that he faced because of this, one thing that he greatly desired, among others, was to get rid of the keeping of the Sabbath, since he could see how attached to it the clergy and lay people were. Seeing that his frequent commands that it should not be kept were not fully carried out, he decided to act rigorously and issued a proclamation in June 1620 that lords who did not make their {peasants} <vassals> work the land on Saturdays would have their lands taken away and the peasants would be punished severely. The monks were very aggrieved at this, and those of the kingdom of Tigrê sent him a letter on the 20th of that month, which said:

*Letter of true words, sent from a distant land to my lord the emperor from Ethiopia and Egypt, which joins us out of true faith, and they stand with us and are called Jacobites. This is not so that you will help them in time of war or bring them out of captivity, but because they have the established pillar of ordination and canons, which came down from heaven, the law of the apostles, and therefore they cannot avoid saying, 'Sire, do not ruin the empire of Ethiopia and the dignity of the pope{s} of Egypt, who wear a new, holy ephod<sup>1</sup> and bear the staff of the Cross.'*

And after many words, with which they praise and exalt the patriarchs of Alexandria and try to persuade him that it is not right to abandon their doctrine, it says:<sup>2</sup>

*Your love has allowed me (for one person is speaking at all times, even though many dictated it)<sup>3</sup> to send you this letter, because I have heard that those who have neither holiness nor resurrection (in other words, we fathers who are here)<sup>4</sup> have been troubling you to make you abandon the Law of the Creator and the canons of the apostles, by saying that you should not keep the Sabbath. Why do you listen to those madmen? Are your sons or your camp hungry, perchance, for you to do this? For such a long time have there not been emperors and saints who have enlightened Ethiopia by raising countless people from the dead and through*

<sup>1</sup> Sleeveless surplice.

<sup>2</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

<sup>3</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

<sup>4</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

whose prayers the kingdom, which others had seized, was returned to them, and, after many necessities and hardships, placed crowns on their heads, as we see now on yours, and therefore they swore like David and Abiatar for it to be an inheritance of theirs for you, as it is written among us. And now we do not see why all these words have been undone. It is a certainty that they performed many miracles, as can be seen and read until this day. Did they do this to keep the Sabbath or {[f. 475]} to break it? To keep the Law or to break it? I think it was to keep it, and not to break it, and therefore if you gave me a judge who was not deceived by property but who feared the day of justice, I would go there now to hear them and speak the truth. If they bring me witnesses of the Gospel who lie about it, like their brothers who spoke against Our Lord, saying that He broke our Law and our Sabbath and that is why they crucified Him. And they speak thus: let us break the Sabbath for it led to His crucifixion. If we deny this, we shall hear Saint John, who says that the Jews said that not only did He break the Sabbath, but He said that His Father was God, making Him equal to Him, and that is why they crucified him. Is it right to deny the Father for the death of the Son? Let it not be so. I know that they do not accept the Synods, because they abhor them while relying on the doctors, whom they add and take away. I too shall rely on what my Saviour {gave} <says>, where He says that what happened to you also happened to me; therefore, Sire, do not listen to those who teach covertly. I have written this, not being a wise man, because I have heard that the spirit of the prophets serves the prophets, and Our Lord says, 'Despise not one of these little ones, for their angels always see the face of my Father.'<sup>1</sup>

He then exhorts him with many words not to listen to the {un}circumcised who say that there are two natures and two wills in Christ, when they are swallowed up in the depths of madness racing on the unbridled horse of ink without looking at what is in the land of books, and <[f. 430v/419v]> thus they fall and are doomed. *If you hear me, remove the dirt from your ear, {and} open your mouth wide, and I shall fill it as it is written.* (And then he mentions the authorities from the Gospel and Saint Paul that we cite to prove that there are two natures and two wills in Christ, and at the end he mockingly says:)<sup>2</sup> *Behold, I am defeated. I shall err with those who err and take part in their curse and I shall go down to hell with Leo.*<sup>3</sup> *But listen to me, for love's sake understand, and make your heart like a mirror.* (And then he starts to dishonour us, saying that we are small in heart, that we only look at the writing and ink from outside, without caring about what is inside, and that we want to make a sepulchre in hell; that it would be better for us, as the Gospel says, that a millstone were hung about our necks and we were cast into the sea, than that we should scandalize the little ones.)<sup>4</sup> *Come, follow me so that I may enlighten the darkness {[f. 475v]} of your eyes, which Leo darkened with the thorn of error. Take where it says, 'I am the door. No man cometh to the Father, but by me.'*<sup>5</sup> *And if you think you will find another door, listen: if heaven covers you or the earth swallows you up, He will find you anywhere, because He says that He has power in heaven and in earth.*<sup>6</sup> *Hear me; I shall counsel you (O kinsfolk of Pilate).* He

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 18:10.

<sup>2</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

<sup>3</sup> Pope Leo I.

<sup>4</sup> Interpolation by Páez. The reference is to Matthew 18:6, Mark 9:41 and Luke 17:2.

<sup>5</sup> Misquoted from John 14:6 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father, but by me.'

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 28:18.

says this for those who are of Roman origin, and he cites some things from the Scripture to prove his intent that there is only one nature in Christ and that He is not less than the Father according to His manhood, but when properly understood some of them prove the opposite and others are irrelevant. He finishes the letter by saying, *Behold I send this precious stone that lights the eyes of the blind; let it be an offering. But let not swine look at it, so that they do not trample it with their dirty feet. For it is written: 'Neither cast ye your pearls before swine.'*<sup>1</sup>

The emperor was furious at this letter and, had he found the person who had written it, he would not have gone unpunished. The emperor's response to it was to have it proclaimed again that everyone must work on Saturdays, and anyone who did not work would be fined a cloth – worth one *cruzado* – on the first day, and if he still did not work after that he would lose all his possessions, and he could be charged with this for up to seven years, which is something that is only added to proclamations issued on matters of great importance. And because a great captain, who is called Bucô, did not enforce this, the emperor took away his command and the lands that he had, which were many, and gave them to somebody else.

<[f. 431/420]> As soon as this proclamation was issued at court, the emperor sent a message to the viceroy of the kingdom of Begmêder, who is called Ionaël, for him to issue it throughout those lands as well and diligently enforce what he commanded. He issued the proclamation, but it seems it was to stir up the people against the emperor for his own purposes, because for a long time he had been plotting in secret with some great men of the court to rise up, and many monks from the kingdom of Gojâm had gone over to him because *Erâz* Cela Christôs [the viceroy of that kingdom] was forcing them not to keep the Sabbath. And so {at the beginning of} <on 1st> October 1620 <[1st October 1620]> he declared himself an insurgent and took up position in the farthest part of that kingdom in a mountain fastness with three great men and some warriors who wished to follow him, and he plotted with some heathens called Gâlas that live nearby in the kingdom of Angôt for them to help him against the emperor.

When this news reached the emperor he called for me at once, as I was at court, and told me what was happening. He was very upset at the monks who had tried to persuade him that the Sabbath should not be broken as he had commanded it should, and that there were not two natures in Christ Our Lord but just one, and {[f. 476]} that was why Ionaël had risen up against him. I tried to console and cheer him by reminding him of all the mercies that Our Lord had done him since he had begun to uphold our holy faith and try to make everyone receive it, and how, without any effort on his part, He had delivered to him most of those who had risen up against him, and He would do so with this one {also}. He could also use this opportunity to investigate further and discover the enemies that lay concealed and to learn whom he could trust, and he should realize that God ordained everything for the best. He replied that he had noticed and discovered from experience that the {oppositions} <occasions> and uprisings that there had been against this holy faith had always been followed by its further expansion, and that none of those

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 7:6. Here the author has summarized the *Refuge of the Soul*, a Ge'ez text translated by Ludolf in 1695. Páez's summary was copied by Manuel de Almeida ('Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 338–40) and by Diogo de Matos, who included it in a letter addressed to the secretary general of the Society, dated 2 June 1621 (*RÆSOI* 11, pp. 479–80). For the connection between these authors and a comparison of this summary with the text of the treatise, see Pennec, 'Les Abrégés portugais du *Refuge de l'âme*'.

who oppose it remains unpunished. Even this Ionael had been struck by a thunderbolt after he began to interfere in these matters, and he was left like a madman for many days, but he did not recognize the Lord's warning and so he went ahead with what he intended until he came to do what he has been doing, to his greater harm.

Soon afterwards, the whole court knew that that viceroy had risen up, and many lords and ladies and some monks went to the palace to visit the emperor, but he showed that he was not concerned <[f. 431v/420v]> about that and, in front of everyone, told a lady named Elcatô, who was his cousin, 'If you want to find things that are important for your soul, go to the fathers; but if you are looking for worldly things, stay with me.' Continuing the conversation, he asked her, 'If 600 {say that they} are throwing out four', (that is, out of the Church, because he meant what the Chalcedonian Council<sup>1</sup> did to Dioscorus), 'or four say that they are throwing out 600, which ones should we believe?' She replied the 600. The emperor then said, 'Then we are the ones who have been thrown out of the Roman Church, because she is the one that throws others out, and nobody can throw her out.' When those people had left, the emperor stayed behind with some that he trusted and joked with his steward, who is called Cabâ Christôs and is now the viceroy of Tigrê, and has been confessing with us for a long time, 'If the courtiers get together and come against me because I uphold this faith, will you run away?' He replied, 'God knows who will run away then. But now I say that, in defending the faith, even if Saint George came with his lance on his horse, he would not beat me, for in these matters I am afraid of nobody.'

Not many days passed without it being discovered that some courtiers had known that that viceroy was going to rise up and that others had plotted with him, and the emperor had them all apprehended. A kinsman of his and {another} <a> captain, who were found to be most guilty, were condemned to death, and the sentence was carried out, and the rest were banished to various places. At this the court began to grow restless so that some serious mutiny was feared, and therefore the emperor had {[f. 476v]} all the captains and great men who were at court and many monks assemble in the palace and said to them, 'You first proclaimed Emperor Iacob, who broke crosses and did other things that were not fit for a Christian, and for this {vice} you banished him and gave the empire to Za Denguil. Afterwards you said that he had abandoned his faith and taken that of the Portuguese, and so you killed him. And having sworn me in as emperor and handed me the empire, you brought back Iacob and gave battle to me. But God granted me victory and since then I have never done anybody any wrong, but rather I have done everyone many honours and favours. Despite all that, people mutiny and rise up against me every day, saying that I have changed the faith. I have not changed it; I say that Christ Our Lord is <[f. 432/421]> perfect God and perfect man, because he has two natures, divine and human, without mixing or blending, and that the human nature is not equal to the divine. This is my faith. Be not mistaken, for I will die for it, but do not think that you will kill me without loss, because first a river of your blood will flow in front of me, for there are many who will help me, and my sons will not let you be afterwards. You had better give up these things and stay quiet, for there is no reason for that.' They answered that they were all very grateful for the favours that they always received from him, and that there was nobody there who would not serve His Majesty very loyally until they died. The emperor then

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (Council of Chalcedon).

said, 'So be it, swear on pain of excommunication that you will warn me of any treason that you hear is being hatched against me.' They replied that they were prepared for everything, and so seven of the chief monks that were there stood up and placed them under excommunication to faithfully keep what they had promised, for this is the custom they have when they want to give an assurance about something important. With this, all those who are on our side were very content and determined to die for the emperor.

At the same time a letter from the insurgent reached the emperor, saying that he would swear under excommunication to obey him faithfully on condition that he let him {be} <remain> viceroy as before and make the fathers actually return to their own lands, without any of us remaining in Ethiopia. The emperor was very upset at this and said, 'Where did this peasant get such insolence that he sets me conditions? What have the fathers done to him?' He called him a peasant because he is one by parents and grandparents, but since he had served him well in war he had gradually raised him up to that status. Even though he had sent two captains with men against him, he at once commanded his army to assemble and he went in person, but when he reached the mountain where he was he was unable to climb it because it was very well guarded. The people on top, however, at once started coming over to the emperor; when the insurgent saw this he fled with some men that were still with him and took shelter among the heathen Gâlas with whom he had previously {[f. 477]} plotted. Hoping for favours from the emperor, others of the same stock seized him and {were taking} <took> him to hand him over, but when the ones with whom he had plotted found out they gathered together, intercepted them, took him by force and led him very far away, and so the emperor returned without being able to lay hands on him.

On the uprisings and deaths that occurred in the kingdom of Gojâm  
for the keeping of the Sabbath, and what the emperor did  
about this

Not only did the monks of the kingdom of Begmêder stir up many people against the emperor because he was commanding them not to keep the Sabbath, but the ones in Gojâm were worse, because they assembled the main soldiery of that kingdom, who are called Damôtes, and persuaded them to rise up and fight against *Erâz* Cela Christôs, who was forcing everyone to work on the Sabbath, by telling them to die for the keeping of the Sabbath since this was a matter of faith that they were obliged to defend to the death. They also told them that members of the Roman Church, who wanted the Sabbath not to be kept, communed with camel, hare and rabbit brains, married their sisters and insulted Our Lady. With these and many other lies that they invented they made so many men join the Damotes that they very confidently took to the field against *Erâz* Cela Christôs, who is the viceroy of that kingdom. Even 1,500 of his own servants crossed over to them, and they say that among them were over 400 monks exhorting them to fight valiantly and constantly. They called them Soldiers of Mary and said that, since that is what they were, they should kill those who denied Mary, meaning all those who followed the {faith of the} Roman Church. When the soldiers saw that their masters – who in outward appearance were so scornful of honours and worldly things and wore just tanned cowhides like very thick chamois leather – were telling them those things about people of the Roman Church and that they had an obligation to die for the keeping of the Sabbath, they all of one heart resolved to fight *Erâz* Cela Christôs and his followers and to kill as many as they could. And they started at once to rob and use violence against those they thought were taking the viceroy's side.

When *Erâz* Cela Christôs learnt of what was happening, he sent some great men {[f. 477v]} and other kinsmen of his to make them stop doing that and to tell them not to let themselves be deceived by those <[f. 433/422]> ignorant monks, that keeping the Sabbath was not something Christians did, but Jews, and that he could not fail to carry out what his lord the emperor commanded, which was that it should not be <kept>, and that he would be very sad if they forced him to go so far as to use the sword, because there would necessarily be deaths and Christian blood would be shed. When those lords arrived, they tried hard to make them stop, but they could never

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 355–8.



achieve this, and so they returned to *Erâz Cela Christôs* and told him how stubborn and determined to fight him they were. They also sent word to him a short time later, just to show how little they cared about him, saying that they would make peace on condition that he delivered to them all the books that we had translated from Latin into their language – which are Father João Maldonado’s commentary on Saint John, Saint Matthew and Saint Luke; the Epistle to the Romans, by Father Toledo; Hebrews, by Father {Ribadeneira} <Ribeira>; Galatians, by Father Benedito Justiniano, and the rest of Saint Paul that he was still translating; the Apocalypse, which was already finished, by Father Brás Viegas; and part of Genesis, by Father Benedito Pereira – leaving nothing behind, so that they could burn them all, and that he also sent to them the father whom he had with him so that they could hang him at a large fair that is held on a certain day in front of a famous monastery in that kingdom, which is called *Dêbra Orc*, which means ‘Golden monastery’.

When *Erâz Cela Christôs* heard this message he was so furious at their arrogance and impertinence that he at once commanded his captains and men to assemble and began to march to where they were, but slowly and sending messages ahead to them all the time, telling them not to challenge him and oblige him to give battle, for he would be very sad if Christian blood were spilt; but they replied each time with great arrogance, because the monks exhorted them to do so and they could see that they were in far greater numbers than the men that *Erâz Cela Christôs* was bringing. He therefore continued his journey and, making his camp in sight of them, he sent word to them begging them for the love of Christ Our Lord and the Virgin <Mary> Our Lady, His mother, not to force him to give battle but to give up those things and obey the emperor, and he would go back at once <[f. 433v/422v]> without doing any harm at all to their homes and lands. They replied to that by sending a large squadron of men with bows and arrows to start a skirmish. When *Erâz Cela Christôs* saw that, he said, ‘Now there is nothing else to {[f. 478]} wait for.’ And he commanded his captains to attack, which they and their soldiers (who were almost all Catholics) did with such great impetus and they fought so valiantly that they soon made them turn tail, and many were left there dead, including ninety monks, while only one of *Erâz Cela Christôs*’s men died, and he was a heathen. Seeing that they were fleeing, *Erâz Cela Christôs* quickly had the retreat sounded, but the soldiers refused to obey, but instead gave chase for a long time, killing everyone they could find and not even sparing the monks. Thus they say that 188 of them died, and 3,000 of the other men, including *Erâz Cela Christôs*’s servants who had previously gone over to them, who numbered 1,300.

This was on 26th October 1621 <[October 1621]>, and the news travelled to the emperor so fast that it reached him on All Saints’ Eve. I went to the palace to congratulate him on the victory and he said to me that although he was very sorry that those Christians had died and he had lost many good soldiers, I should not think that the victory was unimportant because, had they defeated *Erâz Cela Christôs*, they would not have left him alone and many others would have joined them straight away. With this result, however, they had been left completely broken and the rest were so afraid that they would not dare to resist in future. Out of gratitude for this mercy that Our Lord had done him, he had decided [on the advice of the principal lords] to proclaim his holy faith again and to command that nobody teach anything against it on pain of severe punishment. He therefore wished it to be done at once in this manner:

Speech that Emperor Seltân Çaguêd commanded be made to all the members of his court on the matters of our holy faith

On All Saints' Day 1621, Emperor Seltân Çaguêd decided, on the advice of many lords, that a speech should be made to all the members of his <[f. 434/423]> court so that they would not believe the lies and falsehoods that were being spread to the discredit of our holy faith and would stop teaching things against it. He dressed magnificently the next morning and had a field tent set up on a large parade ground that lies in front of the palace, for the lords to enter, and {[f. 478v]} he commanded that there should be no market (for one is held every day at court) and people should not work at their trades, but everyone must gather on that parade ground. And so countless people went, wanting to know what novelty that was. When they were all gathered, the chief steward *Abeitahûn* Melca Christôs, the chief secretary *Azâx* Tinô, the chief overseer *Azâx* Cerçô Çambûl, the chief treasurer *Bageronde* Za {Michael} <Micharî>, the viceroy of Begmêder Za Christôs, the emperor's son-in-law, all Catholic lords, and many other Catholics and schismatics came out of the palace and together went to the tent. The chief steward stood on a high place and spoke at the emperor's command as follows:

*'Hear ye all the variety of the false doctrine that the monks teach. Some came saying that the manhood of Christ Our Lord reached as high as His godhead, and we convinced them by proving that it was not so, but it had a certain place in heaven like the stature of a most perfect man. Others said that the godhead died, and we also convinced them through many arguments, witnesses and likenesses of the holy fathers that that is false, because if one cuts down a tree on which the sun shines, one is not cutting the sun but the tree, and if one hammers a red-hot iron, one is not hammering the fire but the iron. Likewise, in Christ Our Lord, who is perfect God and perfect man, it was not the godhead but the flesh that suffered and died. Our soul, despite being a creation, cannot die, so how could the godhead? Others said that the divine person took up the human person and that there was just one nature in Christ. We convinced them as well, and showed how this is to put two persons in Christ, which is not the case, but instead the divine person took up the human nature and in this person these two things, godhead and manhood, are united. Iulios rose up saying that he would die for his faith, for there was only one nature in Christ. However, even though he said that on the outside, it was only because the viceroyalty of Gojâm and then that of Tigrê had been taken from him because of his treachery; but in the end he died in the war. Ionaël, too, knowing that the viceroyalty of Begmêder was going to be taken away from him, <[f. 434v/423v]> said that he would die for his faith in keeping the Sabbath as a pretext for rising up, and so he is now a traitor among the Gâlas and a heathen like them. If he had wanted to be just, he could have remained here {in the} <among> churches doing penance and praying. No Christian keeps the Sabbath, because it is a Jewish thing. Emperor Zerâ Iacob made a pact {[f. 479]} with the Jews and commanded that people should keep it and, because many people at that time refused to keep it, he had them killed. At the time of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, they had a book by the name of Abû Ferâgi<sup>1</sup> burnt, saying that it was a bad book, when it was good, and you falsely said that his son Iacob broke crosses and you therefore took away the empire from him and banished him. And the falsehoods did not end there. Now, three monks have come fleeing from Gojâm saying that Cela Christôs wanted to force them to commune with*

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (*Abû Ferâgi*/ *Adultério de Frangues*).

*the Portuguese, and when His Highness heard this, he sent a message to Cela Christôs saying that he should not force anyone to commune, but they fled before a reply came, because it was a lie and they were afraid it would be discovered that they used to go with many women and had children by them. Other priests stirred up the Damôtes by saying that members of the Roman Church communed with camel, hare and rabbit brains and married their sisters and insulted Our Lady. And they gathered many foot soldiers and horsemen, calling them Soldiers of Mary, and told them to kill those who denied her. All that is a great falsehood and lie. What hunters would not tire of hunting these animals? And if they tell you to commune with this, do not take it when they give it to you but throw it on the ground. And so with these lies the monk dressed in two cowhides (speaking of the chief one that was there)<sup>1</sup> had many people killed, and he died with them. Therefore, if henceforth you find anyone teaching lords and ladies in secret in corners and on house verandas with a jug of wine at his side, accuse him, and his possessions will be yours and his head will be for the law, because they only teach falsehoods. We go off to war and the monks stay with our women and take them from us and, instead of teaching them the truth, they put errors into their heads, and that there is only one nature in Christ Our Lord, the heresy of Dioscorus, who was separated and cast out of the Church by 630 patriarchs and bishops, the truth being that there are two <[f. 435/424]> natures in Him. And this faith was not brought to us over the sea by traders (meaning that it was not just the Portuguese who brought it to Ethiopia)<sup>2</sup> but it is in our books and it is the faith of {the holy} <our> ancient fathers and of the 318 of the Nicene Council.*

And when he had finished these words, he said, ‘This is the faith of the emperor and of us all.’ {[f. 479v]} *Azáx* Tinô then stood up and issued the proclamation, saying, ‘Christ Our Lord is a most perfect man and in Him there are two things: manhood and godhead, without exchanging and without mixing. Therefore, anyone who henceforth does not confess that there are two natures in Christ shall forfeit his property to the one who accuses him and his head to the emperor.’

After the people had dispersed, some gave thanks to God that the true faith had been {spread} <declared> and established, while others said, ‘What is different in what have they brought us from what our books say? Everything is in them.’ Others, falsifying this, said that they had issued a proclamation that in Christ there was no more than one nature, and that they should not receive the faith of the Roman Church. But this made little impression on the people, because they had all very clearly heard the opposite. In addition to this, the emperor soon afterwards commanded that they should scratch out the commemoration of Dioscorus, which they always perform in their Masses, from the church books (which are all parchment), and that they should not pray for the patriarchs of Alexandria in them. We had little expected, and the people of Ethiopia had much less imagined, that it would happen so swiftly that the emperor would command that Dioscorus – whom everyone had hitherto held as a saint and, as such, commended themselves to him – should be proclaimed a heretic and removed from the Church, and that he should no longer be commemorated.

Four days after this proclamation was issued, the emperor told me to go with him some three leagues from the court to see a site where he had decided to build a church like

<sup>1</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

<sup>2</sup> Interpolation by Páez.

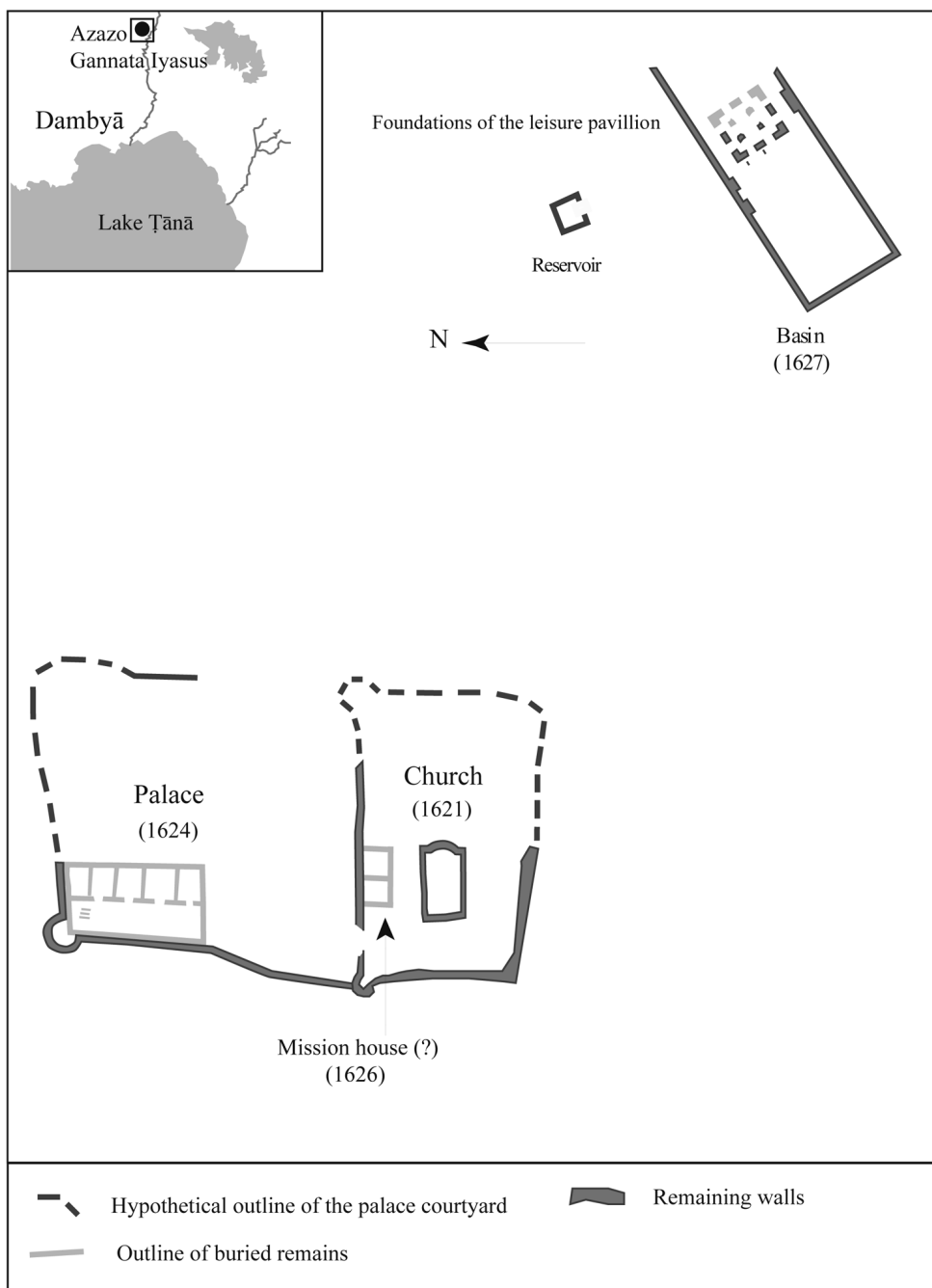


Figure 19. Layout of the former architectural complex of Gannata Iyasus and the modern Orthodox church, Azazo.

Drawn by H. Pennec and M.J. Ramos. Base maps: H. Pennec, *Les jésuites au royaume du P. Jean*; V. Fernández et alia, *Informe preliminar ... (Azäzo)*.

ours,<sup>1</sup> because theirs are all round with thatched roofs and so dark that even at midday one could not read inside the chapel without a candle. I went together with many lords who were accompanying him, and he chose a small hill because it had a very good view over broad plains and <a large> part of the Lake of Dambiâ, which they call a sea since it is very large, as we said in chapter ...<sup>2</sup> of the first book. A good spring rises almost at the foot of the hill, and a large river that waters many lands goes round it, and the emperor at once shared the lands out among the lords for them to make gardens. He commanded that a large plot be fenced off for himself, and on it they built houses for him and planted {many} trees such as peaches, pomegranates, <[f. 435v/424v]> Indian and Portuguese figs, sugarcane and many other things. The others began to plant and build houses straight away, in order to please the emperor. Thus {[f. 480]} it will later become something very cool and enjoyable.

Once the foundations of the church had been dug, the great men chose a certain day to lay the first stone, but the emperor wanted a different day, and agreed that it would be 9th November. I then told him that he had chosen a very good day, because it was the day of the dedication of the Church of the Saviour in Rome, and I recounted to him how the image of the Saviour had appeared to the people of Rome on its wall on that day; he was very pleased at that and asked me whether people in our lands held any festivities when they laid the first stone in churches. I replied that they held very great festivities and that, if there was a bishop in that land, he went dressed in pontificals to bless the stone, and if not a bishop then the prior of the church, and afterwards one or two of the chief people laid it in the place where it was to lie. He asked me to give him the blessings for doing so written down in his language, because they had no such custom in Ethiopia. I replied that it would not be possible, since the stone was to be laid the next day, and so he sent for the abbot of a large monastery nearby. He brought several monks and they recited all the Psalms over the stone, which was already prepared, in the emperor's presence. When they had finished, the emperor asked me, 'Who should lay the stone?' I replied, 'Your Majesty and the prince', who was there, a young man of about eighteen called *Abeitahûn* Faciladâz. They both then got into the foundations and, taking the stone, placed it in the corner of the chapel, on the Gospel side, and then the monks recited from Saint Matthew, starting with the words '*Venit Iesus in partes Caesareae*', etc., as far as '*portae inferi*', etc.<sup>3</sup>

After this, the emperor went to his tents, which had been erected nearby [and he had good alms given to the monks]. The next morning he returned and with his own hands laid another stone on top of the first, and the following day another on top of that one, in honour of the Holy Trinity. He had many craftsmen brought in, ordering them to do the work as quickly as possible and with great perfection, according to the plans that we had given him.<sup>4</sup> Although it is small, for the body of the church is no more than twenty-eight spans wide and eighty-four long (because he only intends to have it as a chapel, for when

<sup>1</sup> This was to be the church of Gannata Iyasus in Azazo (see Fig. 19). The date given by Páez for the foundation of the church, 9 November 1621 (ARSI, MS Goa 42, f. 480), agrees with the information given in the Chronicle of Susneyos [Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos, Rei de Ethiopia*, I (Ge'ez text), p. 199; II (Portuguese translation), p. 258]. See also H. Pennec, *Des jésuites au royaume du prêtre Jean*, pp. 188–203.

<sup>2</sup> A blank space has been left here in ARSI, MS Goa 42 and BPB, MS 778, to be filled in later.

<sup>3</sup> 'And Jesus came into the quarters of Cesarea ... the gates of hell shall not prevail against it', Matthew 16:13–18.

<sup>4</sup> See Introduction.

he comes to enjoy the gardens), it is very beautiful, <[f. 436/425]> because the side doors are highly decorated and the façade, apart from twelve fluted columns that it has, with fine pedestals, capitals and friezes, is covered with {[f. 480v]} large roses, fleurs-de-lis, very finely worked vases with flowers and roses coming out of them, carved in attractive stone – something never before seen in Ethiopia and thus highly praised by everyone and esteemed more by the emperor. He commanded them to set a stone more than four spans square above the main door (which is arched) and below the choir window (which is also beautiful), and to carve the name of Jesus on it {in Chaldean and Latin letters, and he commanded that it be called the Church of Jesus}, and they did so, putting fine ornamentation around the holy name. After staying there for a few days to watch how work was progressing, he returned to his court, where he spends most of the time reading the commentaries that we have translated into his language, which are those that I mentioned above. And he makes all the courtiers and monks look at them so that they can become fond of our things and understand better the truth of our faith. With this intent, he praises everything highly, without missing an opportunity to do so very deliberately. Thus the chief lords and all his household officials have become very fond of it and recently most of them have confessed. It is hardly surprising that they do so because not only can they clearly see the truth, but the emperor speaks to them in such a way that they have to.

Last March, 1622, <[March 1622]> his principal servants and many lords were in the palace one afternoon. He started to discuss the faith, and said to them, 'My faith is that in Christ Our Lord there are two most perfect natures, divine and human, and the latter is not equal to the divine. The Sabbath should not be kept, for it is a Jewish feast day. Anyone who keeps it or who does not hold this faith of mine shall not enter my palace because I shall cut off his head with this sword', for he had his in his hand, 'because he is my enemy. Why did Iuliôs rise up against me and try to kill me? This faith was his reason. Why were Zafam Ceno<sup>1</sup> and Ionaêl such great enemies of mine, if not for the sake of this faith? Thus anyone who does not hold it is certainly my enemy and should not come in here, because I will kill him. And I shall raise up anyone who does hold it and do him many honours and favours. And that is what I have told everyone.' The people who were there then took hold of their swords, including the pages (because it is the custom for them too to have them in their hands <[f. 436v/425v]> when they are in the emperor's presence), and said, 'Sire, we shall die with these for this faith and for Your Majesty.' He applauded them heartily, and then he called for his viols<sup>2</sup> to be played and held great festivities until nearly midnight. {[f. 481]} Because one of them had hesitated to take hold of his sword and speak like the others, he had him thrown out of the palace at once. But the following day he forgave him, because the great men entreated him and gave him plenty of excuses to do so.

This was a very great and very important proclamation, because it confirmed the one he had issued on 2nd November about the matters of faith, as we reported above, in the speech that was given {to the courtiers} <at court>. That day, therefore, when there were people from almost all the kingdoms in the palace courtyard and outside, they were saying, 'Before, some people thought that the men who made that speech to the {people} <palace> had added more than the emperor had commanded, but now we find that it is

<sup>1</sup> Copyist's error for Zafalam Ceno.

<sup>2</sup> Probably *masinqo*, a stringed instrument played with a bow.

all correct, because we have heard it from his own mouth.' By this means the emperor has made everyone disposed to receive all of our beliefs, so that if a patriarch of ours were here now they would certainly accept him and submit to him, and the emperor said so two or three times a few days ago. {In this situation} <On this occasion>, when there is no patriarch and these people are so well disposed towards the matters of the faith, if a patriarch came here from India, and even if he did not bring us the help that we requested before but just his own person, he would have them take orders from his hands and obey him in every way. May Our Lord God through His infinite mercy see fit to give one to this great people, which is lost, and to fulfil the desires of this good emperor during his lifetime, since He has seen fit to give him such fervent desires for the matters of His holy faith.

I think that what I have said in the last two chapters adds to the History of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, since very little is said in it about all his great efforts to ensure that his vassals receive our holy faith and obey the Roman Church, which will also be shown in what we shall say below. We shall now move on to see how he acted towards two fathers of our Society who were in the kingdom of Dambiâ when he first became emperor.

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<[f. 437/426]> CHAPTER XXIII<sup>1</sup>

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On how well Emperor Seltân Çaguêd acted towards the fathers the first time that they visited him, and how he gave them lands for their headquarters

After Emperor Seltân Çaguêd gained victory over Jacob, as he was coming to Cogâ, which at the time was the emperor's court, <sup>{[f. 481v]}</sup> Fathers Antonio Fernandez and Lourenço Romano travelled out two days' journey to visit him. He received them with great honour and displays of love, thanking them very much for the visit. After talking to them for a good while, he dismissed them saying that when he was in the city they should return and they would talk at leisure, for on the road he did not have time to do so. When they went to their tent, he commanded that they be taken five cows to eat and other things and, before supper, he asked his steward if he had given what he had commanded for the fathers' supper. He replied that he had sent everything, except for wine, which had already been shared among the captains and all that was left was what was needed for his own table, and he had not sent for more because the place from which they could fetch it was a very long way away. 'Then send the fathers what you have straight away,' he said, 'and give me water, because it is not right that you should make a mistake like that.' The steward therefore shared what he had with the fathers. From there they accompanied him until they were near the court, and while he encamped in sight of it on a large plain, the fathers went on to a Portuguese settlement, which is called Gambeloâ, to perform the offices for Holy Week there, as it was already beginning.

A few days later, on hearing that the emperor was not engaged on business, they returned there as he had commanded and he received them very well. He asked where they had their headquarters, and they answered that they had nowhere specific but went from place to place confessing and teaching the Portuguese, who were widely scattered, but they most often stayed in a land called Marabâ, since {many} Portuguese lived there. 'Well, see where you would like some land,' said the emperor, 'and I will give you some there.' They replied that they would be happy near Lake Dambiâ, where there might be an island to keep the church property, if it ever became necessary. He asked his people if there was <any> land in those parts that he could give, and they replied that there were some very good lands that a kinsman of his had exploited previously, and then <[f. 437v/426v]> a servant of his had taken over two shares of it, and there was an island nearby. 'That,' said the emperor, 'is just right for the fathers. The island shall be theirs and the two shares of land that my servant has, and I shall give him another piece.' The fathers kissed his hand for the

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 189–91.



favour and were very content, because they are lands certain to provide crops, firewood and grazing for livestock, which is difficult to find in Dambiã, and most of the Portuguese live all around. And it must be about half a league to the court, although the other new city that he has recently built<sup>1</sup> – because one winter there were serious diseases in this one – is more than a day's journey away.

While the fathers were at court this time, one of the emperor's servants, a close confidant of his, went to the house of a Portuguese, where <sup>{[f. 482]}</sup> they had left the church property, and when he saw the chest in which it was kept he wanted to know what was inside. They told him that it was the church ornaments and that nobody could touch them except the fathers, and they had the key. He forced open the chest and rummaged through everything inside, but did not take anything. When the emperor was told of this, he was so aggrieved that he had him arrested at once and told his magistrates to decide what sentence he deserved, because he would punish him in public. They ruled that since he knew that they were church ornaments and even so he rummaged through them and took the altar stone in his hands he should be beheaded. They took the sentence to the emperor, because without his confirmation it could not be carried out. And he said it was a good ruling and he should be beheaded. The fathers heard that he had been sentenced to death and that the emperor had confirmed it, and so they rushed there and begged him for the favour of pardoning him. He replied that had it been something else he would willingly have done so, but disrespecting matters of the Church had to be severely punished. But the fathers insisted so strongly that he commuted the death sentence. They were, however, unable to stop him being publicly flogged and thrown out of the lands that the emperor had given him. Everyone was highly edified by the fathers, seeing what efforts they had made for that man, and at the same time they were afraid of doing anything similar.

When the fathers took their leave of the emperor in order to go and take possession of the lands that he had given them, he told them to write to me in Tigrê, where I was at the time, for me to come to the court, because he wished to meet me. He was not content with just this but shortly afterwards dispatched a courier with letters summoning me to come. One of the fathers went with one of the emperor servants <[f. 438/427]> to give him possession of the land, and the other remained at court in case it was necessary to speak to the emperor again. When they reached the land, there was considerable resistance, because the man who had it came up with many excuses and delays and in the end tried to use force to stop the emperor's servant who was bringing the father from entering, relying on the fact that the emperor liked him very much because he was a very brave warrior and had served him for a long time. They would have come to blows if the father had not dissuaded the man who had brought him, {saying that} he should leave him and it was best to speak to the emperor. They did so, after seeing that the man was refusing to comply altogether. When the emperor heard what was happening, he was very angry and sent a great man to throw <sup>{[f. 482v]}</sup> him off the land and deliver it to the fathers, and he did so and reprimanded him strongly for what he had done. Considering himself very badly treated, he went off with the same nobleman to the emperor and made I know not what excuses to him, and afterwards he favoured him with other, better lands.

No sooner had the fathers got rid of this man than they began to have no less trouble with the one who held the third part of the land, because it was necessary to partition it,

<sup>1</sup> New Gorgorã, on a peninsula on the northern shore of Lake Tãnã. See Glossary (New Gorgorã).

and he kept avoiding doing so to see whether he could persuade the emperor that it should all be his, and as he was a great man the fathers trod carefully and tried to deal with him very gently. But after they had used all good courtesy and many days had passed without their being able to achieve anything – indeed, the man's servants were putting more and more pressure on the fathers' people, and they were afraid something terrible might happen – the father who was at court spoke to one of the emperor's brothers, who is called Emana Christôs, and asked him as a favour for that man to be content with his third and not to trouble the fathers' people. He went to the emperor and said, 'Sire, that man has still not agreed to partition the land<s> with the fathers and he is causing their people a lot of trouble in that regard. How will they be able to live with him?' The emperor said, 'You are right. If he is there, he will never leave the fathers in peace. Make him move out completely, and let the land be entirely for the fathers, and we shall give him land somewhere else.' The emperor's brother then commanded him to leave the land, at which he was very aggrieved and had the chief courtiers plead with the emperor to let him keep his third. But he replied to all of them that he was not going to take back what he had already given to the fathers. However, he gave him some land elsewhere, with which he was {satisfied} <very content>. When he returned to the land to pick up his belongings, the fathers showed him the best hospitality that they could while he was there, and he very much enjoyed listening to the disputes that they young boys had <[f. 438v/427v]> among themselves about Christian doctrine. A young nephew of his, whom he had brought with him, was so enchanted that he begged the fathers very insistently to teach him like those boys. They replied that if his uncle would leave him there they would be delighted to do so; he therefore spoke to his uncle so effectively that he made him ask the fathers to teach him, which they willingly agreed to do. He had such ability that he learnt the whole *cartilha* in a very short time and asked very wisely whether certain things that his teachers had taught him that were different from ours were in accordance with the Law, and in the end he very tearfully asked them to confess him. The fathers consoled him but, since he {{f. 483}} was a child and a great man's son, they put off the confession until they could see better what might happen later. At this time, however, a monk who had taught him previously went to his uncle and complained strongly that he had taken his pupil away from him without talking to him, and he said so many things that he made him come back to our house and ask the fathers to let him take him away for a time, and later he would bring him back himself. He took him away, but it was to the great sorrow of both the boy and the fathers. A few days later he ran away and came back to our house, but the monk took him away again and then put him in irons. He used to send messages from his prison to the fathers, saying that his imprisonment would not last for ever, but his good intentions would never fail, and he wished to move to the kingdom of Tigrê to the other fathers, where maybe that monk, his teacher, would stop pursuing him. It seems that they understood this, because they took him away to another distant land, where he would die, and we never again had news of him.

While the fathers were involved in these disputes about the land, their letter reached me in Tigrê, and soon afterwards so did the emperor's commanding me to come, so I decided to leave at once. But Viceroy Cafluhâd made me wait a few days so that we could come together, and afterwards he was delayed for a long time on the road because he received news {of the death} of the empress, his mother-in-law, and people came from many places to console him. When we arrived at court, I found one of the fathers there,

and the next day I went with him to visit the emperor, and he received us with great displays of love. Making us sit down, he spent a {long} time asking about <news> various matters, particularly relating to India, and then he dismissed us, saying that we would talk again at greater length. Two days later he called for us just for pleasure, and when we thanked him for the favour of giving the fathers such good, secure land, <[f. 439/428]> he replied that that was very little compared with what he would like to do. We remained there for many days because he enjoyed talking to us, particularly about matters of faith – not disputing, but asking questions. One Saturday afternoon we saw many armed men leaving the palace in a great tumult, and when we asked what it was they said that the emperor had commanded his men to arrest Za Cela <Christôs> cê (the captain that we said above {[f. 483v]} {in chapter ...})<sup>1</sup> had killed Emperor Za Denguil) inside the palace because he had discovered that he wanted to rise up against him, for his restless and false heart was always plotting treason.

When the courtiers saw Za Celacê apprehended they rejoiced greatly, since everyone who desired peace hated him for his evil nature and for being behind the revolts that there had been in Ethiopia in the previous years. And they shouted to the emperor from outside the palace, ‘Today, Sire, you have reigned. Do not let this trickster escape.’ He then commanded that he be taken as a prisoner to an impregnable mountain fastness in the kingdom of Gojâm, which they call Guzmân, and kept under good guard; but he was so sly and cunning that he even escaped from there and, after crossing the Nile, he entered a province called Olacâ where 200 or 300 men joined him. With them he returned to Gojâm and stole some cattle from the farmers and tried to seize a captain’s drums by force, as he happened to have very few men there, but he came out with them and some farmers and, when battle was joined, most of Za Celacê’s men deserted him. While he was fighting hard with those that remained, at the end of the encounter he received such a blow on the head from a stone that that great, arrogant giant who oppressed everyone in Ethiopia as Goliath had oppressed the Israelites fell straight to the ground. His opponents then rushed at him and, as they reached him, he begged them not to kill him but to take him to the emperor, to which they replied, ‘It is too far to carry you on our backs. We need only take your head.’ And so they cut it off and took it to the emperor, and he had it put on a stake in front of the palace. When the courtiers saw it, they gave thanks to God and said, ‘The Lord has rewarded him according to his works. His divine justice has not forgotten the blood that he shed of Za Denguil, a just emperor and a lover of truth.’ Who this Za Celacê was and how he rose up was told in chapter 19 above, and therefore I shall say no more about him here.

<[f. 439v/428v]> While we were with the emperor, he formed a good opinion of the matters of our holy faith, but he did not declare himself because, as I realised later, he was being very cautious and seeing whether we maintained anything contrary to the Holy Scripture or its councils. He asked some people that he trusted, who [came on purpose to] talked to us, to pay attention to this. As it was the beginning of winter, which in Dambiâ is very rainy, we asked him for permission {[f. 484]} to spend the winter in the land that he had given us. When these emperors give lands, it only means {until they see fit} <for as long as they want>, and thus they often take them away from one person and give them to

<sup>1</sup> A blank space has been left here in ARSI, MS Goa 42, to be filled in later. There is no blank space in BPB, MS 778.

another; when I took my leave, therefore, I said to him that, as he had given us such a secure base, we wished that he would do us the favour of giving it in perpetuity, so that we would not have to keep moving from one place to another. He replied that he would do so most willingly, which is something that emperors very seldom grant. He commanded at once that the customary ceremonies for this be performed, which involve a captain and two magistrates going round the lands while playing the drums and shawms of the emperor or the viceroy of that land, and making large piles of stone on their boundaries. In one of them they bury the head of a goat and proclaim that the emperor is giving it for ever, before witnesses and many children that they take there, so that they will remember in future times, because they do not use title deeds here. Afterwards he did much more still for us, which was to command that no officer of justice should enter our lands, but the judge that we appointed should judge, and if either party appealed against the ruling, then it should be taken to his magistrates. And that has been kept until now to our great comfort and the good of the people that we have, because the emperor's or viceroy's judges enter other lands for the slightest reason and fleece the poor.

Having taken our leave of the emperor, we went to the house that we now had in that land. Shortly afterwards, a boy of fourteen, the only son of his wealthy father, came to it. He had heard that the fathers taught the true faith and, apparently driven by some Portuguese blood that he had on his mother's side, had left home and wandered from place to place asking for us until he found us, and he said that since Our Lord God had given him a very great desire to learn the things of the Portuguese he had left his father's house and come in search of us like that. We took him in with the love <[f. 440/429]> that he deserved and he began to learn with the other boys, the sons of Portuguese, but we tried to instruct him in particular in the Catholic doctrine. Since his mother missed her son and nobody could give her any news of him, her sorrow was so great that she fell seriously ill, and when his father saw that he went off in search of his son, overcome with {[f. 484v]} grief, before we could send him a message, because he was a long way away and winter was already set in. After a few days he came across him playing with other boys near our house and, when he saw his father, he fled indoors and told us that his father had come to fetch him but that he would not go with him by any means. His father arrived and we received him very lovingly; we had the boy come and he kissed his father's hand and knee (as is the local custom). His father very gently and tearfully said, 'Son, why did you leave us like that? What have we done to make you run away? Your mother is close to death because of you, because she thinks you are dead, and if she does not see you she will pass away. Since she gave birth to you and raised you, go and kiss her hand and receive her blessing before she dies' – words that would soften a harder heart than a Moor's. But his heart was so strong despite his tender years that, without tears in his eyes or any sign of weakness, he replied, 'Sir, I am very sorry about my mother's illness and I shall beg God to give her health and shall always remember her, but it is not possible to go and visit her now.' On hearing this, his father said to him amid many tears, 'Are you my son and my flesh or not? If you say that you are not my son, I shall go home weeping because you have denied me and disowned me as your father; but if you recognize me as such, come, my son, with the one who fathered you and has raised and taught you until the age that you are now.' The boy replied, 'Sir, you are my father and as such I kissed your hand and knee

<sup>1</sup> Instruments associated with imperial power.

when you came in here. But I {have come} <am going> to seek the Father of my soul, who is God, in order to be saved. Since I have found Him, I have nothing to do there; please forgive me.' His father appeared very angry and said that he would take him by force. We then intervened with kind words, saying that he should sleep there that night, and everything would be done as he pleased. He calmed down at that, and then we persuaded him to leave him there until the rains subsided, and so the next day he left on friendly terms. When the boy's mother heard that he was with us, she was pleased, and afterwards the boy went and told her such things that both <[f. 440v/429v]> parents came to our house and, after seeing and understanding our ways, they were reduced to the holy Church, and he is now married to a daughter of a Portuguese.

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## CHAPTER XXIV

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### On how Emperor Seltân Çagued {[f. 485]} decided to write to the Supreme Pontiff and to His Majesty

In early August 1607, when it is the depths of winter here, the emperor said to the captain of the Portuguese,<sup>1</sup> ‘It was very remiss of me not to give Father Pedro Páez houses here so that I could talk to him every day. Write to him on my behalf to come at once, because I should like that very much.’ The captain replied that it did not appear possible to go, because the mires were very extensive and the rivers were so swollen that they could not be crossed. ‘Then let him come by sea,’ said the emperor, ‘since it is nearby.’ <( >They call Lake Dambiã a sea, as it is so large.<)> The captain sent me a message at once, and all three of us fathers decided to go in order to show him how grateful we were for the favour he had done us in giving us such good and secure lands. Taking two boats of the kind that they use here, which, as we said in book 1, are very small and flimsy,<sup>2</sup> we stayed close to land all the time, both so that the wind would not blow us off course and because of the great danger of the sea horses,<sup>3</sup> of which there are many at that time and so ferocious that if they find one of these boats some distance from shore they break it to pieces, as it is so flimsy, or they capsize it and kill everyone they can find, and sometimes they even come out of the water and run after people on land, as certain people who have sometimes seen it happen have assured me, including a Portuguese who was attacked by one a long way from the water, and it tore his left arm to shreds and would have killed him if Our Lord had not miraculously delivered him by means of a companion of his. Even so, when we reached a large bay, the ones steering the boats went straight across so as not to make a long detour and, shortly before reaching the other headland, a sea horse came up from under the water and attacked the boat that was further from land, in which one father was travelling, and by God’s will it missed and went past. But then it rose up a long way out of the water to see where the boat was and attacked ferociously three times, and we all thought <[f. 441/430]> the father was doomed, but Our Lord in His mercy delivered him by blinding the sea horse so that it never succeeded in directly hitting the boat, which was quite extraordinary. While {[f. 485v]} it was lunging around like this, the father reached land, and we stayed close to it after that for the day and a half that we took to arrive.

The following day we went to visit the emperor. A brother of his came out to take us inside, and said, ‘The emperor already knew that Your Reverences had arrived, and would

<sup>1</sup> It was João Gabriel at that time.

<sup>2</sup> See bk I, ch. 29, p. ???, for a description of how these papyrus-reed boats (*tānkwā*) are built and used.

<sup>3</sup> Hippopotami.

like you to dine with him today.' We came to where he was and he received us very joyfully. When we said how much we liked the lands, he replied that he was very pleased that they were to our liking, and asked whether the ones we had in Tigrê were good. We replied that they were very small, as in fact they were, so much so that although our slaves worked them the harvest was not enough to feed us, and so he added others that were continuous with them and said that they too would be in perpetuity. We kissed his hand and, after we had conversed for a while, they set a small table for the emperor and a larger one near it for us, but they hung a curtain between them and so we did not see how they served him. Even so, it was a favour and mercy such as previous emperors had never done for anyone, as people tell us, for the greatest and most intimate lords considered it a great favour when they were allowed to eat some leftovers from his table outside on the veranda, and not seated but standing. They gave us many delicacies in the local style and {he} <they> also sent some to us from his table. When he had finished eating, the curtain was removed and he kept us there talking familiarly until very late.

From that time onwards he called for us often and discussed our matters at length. One day, when we were alone, he said that he had decided to write to King Philip asking him to send some Portuguese, as the kings of Portugal had done in the past, and asked whether we thought that that might be effective. We replied that, if His Majesty intended to put into practice what his predecessors had desired and promised regarding the reduction of this empire to the holy Roman Church, we thought that they would come, but it was also necessary to write to the supreme pontiff and the viceroy of India, and if was possible for an ambassador to go it would add considerable weight. He replied that he did not think an ambassador <[f. 441v/430v]> would be able to get through, but he would give us letters in secret. Later, however, when he realized how important it was to understand the state of mind of the great men and to discuss a business of such great consequence with them, {[f. 486]} he had them assemble and he put this forward in council, in which several opinions were given. Most were that the Portuguese should not come, and therefore the emperor gave them to believe that he would not proceed, but in his heart he was determined to write in any case.

After this, and before there was time for us to meet the emperor, a brother of his called Emaná Christôs invited us to visit. After dinner, he told us in secret that the emperor very much wanted some Portuguese to come and had discussed it with the great men, but although some of them were of the opinion that it was good that they should come, and *Erâz Athanateus* {(who,} as we said above, {is} <was> a great prince) gave many reasons why every effort should be made to have them come, others were opposed, saying that they would want to be the only lords and would abuse their power, as the former ones did after the death of Dom Cristóvão da Gama; the emperor was therefore undecided. We replied that if those Portuguese had ever abused their power, it must have been because they had been left without a captain and had no fathers to keep them in check; but he must have heard that there had been no more excesses at all after the arrival of those fathers who had died some time ago, and that if they came it would not be to seek lordships, for they lacked for nothing in their country, but purely for the love of God to help the emperor in whatever way he might use them, if he decided to do what his predecessors had intended. 'Matters discussed,' he said, 'and journeys done become easier. I shall speak to the emperor again and have him call for Your Reverences {alone}. Tell him the same things and counsel him well.' From

there we went to visit *Eráz* Athanateus, and he too told us that the emperor had discussed the Portuguese and that some had been opposed, but he very much wanted them to come and would always be very indebted to them, because without them they would have no law and no empire.<sup>1</sup>

It was not long before the emperor called for us alone and said that he was determined to write, even though some {of his followers} were not of this opinion. And he did so at once, not only to His Holiness and His Majesty, but also to the viceroy of India and Archbishop Dom Friar Aleixo de Meneses. He gave us the letters in secret, saying <[f. 442/431]> that as soon as I thought it was time I should go to Tigrê so that from there I could better dispatch them to other ports if no ship came to the port of Maçuâ. With that we returned to our house and translated the one to {[f. 486v]} His Holiness into Latin and the others into Portuguese. A few days later, since I had found good company to go to Tigrê, I decided to bring forward my departure. When I went to take my leave of the emperor, he asked me again to forward the letters. I also visited *Eráz* Athanateus and told him that I was going to Tigrê. He replied that he was sorry that I was going so soon but that, since that was the case, I should wait a little as he had to speak to the emperor. He went straight away and asked him why he was allowing me to go without finishing what had been discussed about the coming of the Portuguese. Not wanting him to realize that he had written, the emperor replied, 'How can it be? Did you not see how strongly the others opposed it?' He said, 'Sire, if one has to wait for everyone's opinion, good things will never be done. Something so important for the service of God and the good of the empire should not be abandoned, however much men like those oppose it, or even if everyone in the council did.' 'Since that is your view,' said the emperor, '<I shall> write in my name and you too on your behalf in the way that you think best, and bring me the letters.' He also commanded the viceroy of Tigrê, who was called Cafluhâd, to write that he would come to the point of entry with men and whatever else was necessary. The translations of the letters that I have found are as follows. It should be noted, however, that when the emperor wrote these letters he called himself Malâc Çaguêd, and later he changed his name and is now called Seltân Çaguêd.

Copy of the letter that the emperor wrote to His Holiness

*May this letter sent by the Emperor of Ethiopia, Malâc Çaguêd, reach the holy Pope of Rome, with the peace of Christ Our Lord, qui dilexit nos, et lavit nos a peccatis nostris in sanguine suo et fecit nos regnum et sacerdotes Deo et Patri.<sup>2</sup> May this peace be with Your Holiness and all the Christian Church for ever. Amen.*

*For a long time we have had great love for the Christians from those parts, because of the benefits that this empire has received from them, when in the past the Portuguese delivered it from the tyranny of the Moors and restored it to its prior state and quietude, <[f. 442v/431v]> many of them later dying with my father because he wanted to fulfil what our forefathers had promised under oath. Therefore, as soon as we took the government of this empire by the mercy of God {[f. 487]} Our Lord, we resolved to renew our*

<sup>1</sup> A reference to the military expedition led by Cristóvão da Gama.

<sup>2</sup> 'who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us a kingdom, and priests to God and his Father', Apocalypse [Revelations] 1:5-6.



*friendship with that loyal people of Christ, because we found our empire in such a troubled state on account of the continual wars of these past years, for although we have subjugated some enemies at home even so there remain other more powerful ones, who are some heathens that they call Gálas who have conquered a large part of this empire and burnt many churches and, what is worse, they make new raids every day, performing great cruelties on widows, children and old men, to which we cannot respond without the aid of our brother, the emperor of Portugal. We therefore ask him to help us as in former times his predecessors the kings of Portugal helped our forefathers. But in order that this may not fail, we have decided at the same time to ask Your Holiness, the father and shepherd of all Christ's faithful, to write to our brother asking him to grant our request at once before these Gálas gain more strength. As for their entry into our lands, there is no difficulty, because those who guard our sea have no strength at all. And because we know for sure that Your Holiness will help us as our need requires, we dispense with further words. We have charged Father Pedro Páez with giving Your Holiness a longer account of our empire, of the love that we have for the sons of the Portuguese who are here, and of our care for the churches of the fathers, to whom I ask Your Holiness to give credence, and also to this letter of ours. We close by praying to Christ Our Lord to keep Your Holiness for many years for the good government of the universal Church. Written in Ethiopia on 14th October 1607.<sup>1</sup>*

He says here that many of the Portuguese died with his father because he wanted to fulfil what his {forefathers} <fathers> had promised, which was to obey the holy Roman Church; but it was not his father, but his uncle, who was called Tascáro, who was killed by the cruel emperor Adamâs Çaguêd, as we said in chapter ... of book ...<sup>2</sup> But because it is the custom in Ethiopia to call <[f. 443/432]> one's father's brothers 'father', he calls him father when he was in fact his uncle.

Of the other letters that he wrote, I have only found this one. The ones that follow it are those that Erâz Athanateus wrote afterwards at his command.

Copy of the letter from the emperor of Ethiopia to His Majesty  
 {{f. 487v}} *May this letter sent by the Emperor of Ethiopia, Malâc Çaguêd, reach the emperor of Spain, the holy land of Saint Peter, prince and chief of the doctors and of the Catholic Church of the Lord, of which the Apostle Saint Paul said, 'Despondi vos uni viro virginem castam exhibere Christo',<sup>3</sup> glory be to Him, and in imitation of the purest messenger Saint Gabriel, who when greeting Our Lady the Virgin Mary said, 'God save you,' and of Christ Our Lord who, on the Sunday evening after His resurrection, said to His assembled <disciples and> apostles, 'Peace be to you', and, as the Apostle Saint Paul wrote in all his Epistles, may the peace of the Lord be with Your Majesty, our brother in the faith that Saint Peter preached at the time when Christ Our Lord sent out his apostles, saying, 'Go ye*

<sup>1</sup> This letter and the three that follow are transcribed in their entirety from the 'Adiçãõ' by Fernão Guerreiro (ff. 31v–32, pp. 34–5). Manuel de Almeida copied them in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 197–202. On the route taken by these letters, see Pennec, 'La correspondance royale éthiopico-européenne de 1607'.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. 6 of bk III. Blank spaces have been left here in ARSI, MS Goa 42 and BPB, MS 778, to be filled in later.

<sup>3</sup> 'For I have espoused you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ', 2 Corinthians 11:2.

throughout the world and teach the Gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.<sup>1</sup> How is Your Majesty and your empire? We are in good health by the intercession of Saint Peter, the teacher of Your Majesty and ourself. May Christ Our Lord carry forward the goodness, mercy and goodwill that He began among us, for He is the beginning and the end of all things. The main reason for writing this to Your Majesty was our desire for that familiarity and communication, both temporal and spiritual, that there used to be between Your Majesty's forefathers, the kings of Portugal, and ours, in which familiarity we were ennobled at the same time by the adoption of the Holy Spirit, for which reason we ask Your Majesty to send us strong and valiant soldiers who can prevail over our enemies who are in {this port} <these parts>, for we are ready with arms, munitions and other things needed for war and lacking in nothing that we can provide, for it is more proper that Your Majesty should have a base there than those most irksome enemies of our holy faith. Your Majesty's forefathers also sent us an army of very strong <[f. 443v/432v]> soldiers when the Moors wished to destroy our faith and empire. We could now easily destroy these that have not received the Holy Gospel, with our army, trusting in the virtue of the mighty King who raises our hearts with the memory of heavenly things – because we are children of heaven, as Saint John bears witness in his Gospel, when he says that that which is born of the flesh, is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit<sup>2</sup> – but we are at war with our other enemies, who are called Gâlas, who hinder this enterprise of ours. Therefore, as swiftly as Your Majesty can, {[f. 488]} may you send us valiant soldiers who are zealous of our holy apostolic faith. As far as we are concerned, we have been ready for days, and when they come what we desire will not be impossible for you, because we shall unite with a chain of love like one soul and one body, because Our Lord is Your Majesty's master and head and ours, and thus we are His limbs, and the Heavenly Father begat us in a womb of baptism and in one of seed that becomes corrupt and perishes. What we have not written herein, Father Pedro Páez, filled with the Holy Spirit, will write to Your Majesty in his divine letters. Written in Ethiopia on 10th December 1607 of the birth of Christ Our Lord.<sup>3</sup>

#### Copy of one from Eráz Athanatêus to His Majesty

May this letter of peace and love sent by Athanatêus reach the noble and mighty emperor of Portugal with the peace of Christ Our Lord, who for the redemption of the world died crucified on the holy Cross. This peace be with Your Majesty for ever. The reason for writing this letter is the great desire that my lord the emperor and I have for Portuguese to come. And so we very earnestly beg Your Majesty to send us strong soldiers well experienced in warfare in order to take this port in which the enemies of our holy faith are, and when they arrive we shall help them with munitions, arms and whatever is necessary. Your Majesty's forefathers helped us at the time when the Moors came to destroy us, and those that came have left us the memory until today of what Christ Our Lord did through them. For the sake of Christ Our Lord, may Your Majesty send us warlike soldiers now as well, for I am ready and very willing for them to come, and I have a great hope in my heart that they will come. Father Pedro Páez will write to Your

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 28:19, 'Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

<sup>2</sup> John 3:6.

<sup>3</sup> Guerreiro, 'Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia', ff. 32v–33r, pp. 35–6.

*Majesty about what is lacking in this letter regarding <[f. 444/433]> this business. Written in Ethiopia on 13th December 1607.<sup>1</sup>*

Copy of another from him to the viceroy of India

{[f. 488v]} *May this letter of peace and love from Erâz Athanateus reach the great viceroy of India with the peace of Christ Our Lord, who died on the holy Cross to redeem us. May this peace be with Your Lordship and all your state for ever. Amen. Hear, Sire: my father was at all times a great friend of the Portuguese who came here, and favoured them in all their affairs and, after his death, I too have continued this friendship with their children, helping them with great pleasure in everything that has occurred to them and delivering some from death, both through my efforts and through my riches, for I have sometimes very willingly given what is necessary on account of the particular love that I have for them, and I desire that Our Lord grant me not only that the relics that remain of the first ones do not perish, but that others may come once more for the remedy of this empire. I have for a long time wished to write this, but I have been unable to do so because of the continual wars that we have had until now, from which Our Lord God has now seen fit to release us and to give us an emperor of sound understanding, who governs everything with considerable prudence. When I told him of my desire and of the good that {would} <will> follow for this empire, he thought it good and decided to write to the emperor of Portugal about it, and he commanded me to do so as well so that you may know how much we desire it and what service to God will follow from it. I therefore earnestly beg Your Lordship to make every effort for this to come about, by having at least 1,000 come as quickly as can be, so that Your Lordship may be the one who, before God, has the honour and reward of such a great enterprise. And once the way is cleared, we shall serve Your Lordship with everything that you may desire from here. I shall say no more in this letter, because Father Pedro Páez, with whom I have long discussed my personal affairs, will be able to reveal what is in my heart. May Our Lord God conclude everything for the best and give Your Lordship many years of life. Amen. Written in Ethiopia on 13th December 1607.<sup>2</sup>*

<[f. 444v/433v]> The reason why the emperor charged this prince with writing was that if he had him firmly on his side {in what he intended} many others would join him, since he was very well connected and a great lord, married to a princess daughter of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, the uncle of this Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, and when his father-in-law died he governed the empire for seven years, as we said above, since Emperor Iacob was a boy. After they handed the empire to Iacob, he still remained the chief or head of all, for that is what ‘erâz’ means: ‘head’. In the disputations that I had when I arrived here about the matters of our {[f. 489]} holy faith, with the main monks and scholars of Ethiopia in the presence of Emperor Za Denguil, he was always present, and he understood them so well that whenever we talked in private he said that our doctrine was {the} true {one}. He asked me very insistently to be his teacher, since their monks were useless because, as they were usually of low birth, even if they knew something they did not dare explain it to them. I too very much wished to continue with him, but I could not because once I started<sup>3</sup> with this emperor I did not have time, and the emperor also feared his

<sup>1</sup> Guerreiro, ‘Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia’, ff. 33r–33v, pp. 36–7.

<sup>2</sup> Guerreiro, ‘Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia’, ff. 33v–34, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Started catechizing.

power and began to bring him down by gradually taking away his positions and many lands, and he even took away the position of *erâz* from him and gave it to a brother of his called Emana Christôs. Since the latter started becoming very arrogant, he took it away from him and gave it to another younger brother of his called Cela Christôs, and he deserves it better than anyone, as we shall see later. Athanatêus therefore became angry and resentful towards the emperor, and he has now withdrawn to a monastery without involving himself in <any> affairs.

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## CHAPTER XXV<sup>1</sup>

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### Which deals with the uprisings that occurred in Ethiopia as soon as Emperor Seltân Çaguêd seized the empire

When Emperor Seltân Çaguêd found himself lord of the empire, he at once very prudently sought to consolidate his position and shared the government of his lands among the captains whom he trusted. In three principal kingdoms, which are Amharâ, Begmêder and Tigrê, he placed three of his brothers, <[f. 445/434]> Emana Christôs, Afa Christôs and Cela Christôs, and in the kingdom of Gojâm he put a son-in-law of his named Iuliôs, a very great captain. And he himself remained in Dambiâ, which is almost in the middle. In this way he preserved and consolidated his emperorship at the beginning, or rather with Our Lord God helping and protecting him, as was clearly seen in many events, for otherwise his prudence and government would have been to little avail because, although his brother Emana Christôs and his son-in-law Iuliôs {[f. 489v]} helped him a great deal for a while, they later rose up against him and put him in such difficulties that, if Our Lord had not miraculously delivered him, it would seem that he could not humanly have escaped, as we saw above in his History and in chapters 4 and 5 of the second book. But leaving aside these two, of whom we have already spoken, and some captains who also rebelled, there were sixteen to eighteen who rose up against him in various places over a period of two years, all of them claiming the empire. But, because it would be a very long business to discuss them all, and they are mentioned in the emperor's History that we referred to above, although not to the extent that the writer should have dealt with them, I shall only discuss some that gave him most trouble, much of which {affected} us.

In early June 1607 a young man of royal blood who was called Canâfra Christôs rose up. Straight away, many people started joining him and, I have been told, he had many of the great men on his side. He had arranged to marry a princess, a daughter of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, and if the agreement had finally been made effective the emperor would have had difficulty in dealing with him, because of the great power that that lady held. Before that came about, however, the people of the land where he was found him one day with little guard and captured him and brought him to the emperor, who commanded that he be beheaded. Soon afterwards another one came with many heathens called Gâlas through the kingdom of Begmêder, where the viceroy at that time was a brother of the emperor called Cela Christôs, which means 'Image of Christ'. Gathering his men, he posted some captains at one pass and he with the rest encamped close by at another. At

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 203–6.

nightfall he received news that, at the insurgent's bidding, the Gâlas were intending to fall on his camp that night, and that they would fight hard <[f. 445v/434v]> because he had promised them extensive lands once he found himself in possession of the empire. On hearing this he was very afraid that the men he had posted at the other pass would run away when the Gâlas came at night yelling in their usual manner. Calling a soldier whom he trusted, he told him to go in great secrecy and to say to those captains, as if out of friendship, 'The viceroy is afraid that when we start fighting the Gâlas your men will run away, and so he has decided to test you tonight by sending some men to come yelling like Gâlas. Think about what you will do. Do not be ashamed.' The soldier went and told the captains this, after first asking for {[f. 490]} their word that they would not reveal who had warned them. They thanked him profusely and said that if those men came they would force them back with their hands on their heads, and they then made ready very well. Later the Gâlas arrived yelling and, since they thought that they were the viceroy's men coming to test them, they attacked very confidently and began to fight hard. The viceroy, who was watching with the rest of the men, came at once very swiftly and, falling on the Gâlas from the other side, they soon routed them and slaughtered many of them, and those that escaped were so furious that the insurgent had led them there that they killed him. The viceroy and all his men gave thanks to God for doing them the favour of making it turn out so well and freeing them from that enemy whom they feared so much.

The following summer, another man rose up in the kingdom of Tigrê. This one was a monk and had lived in the desert for many years doing great penance, and the fruit he harvested at the end of it was that he wanted to reign. Since men in this land are fonder of novelties and revolts than of peace, some because they will rise higher and others because they will make themselves rich at such times through robbery, many men joined him at once and he appointed himself emperor. The one who was governing Tigrê at the time pretended not to notice, for his own personal reasons. Thus robberies, violence and mutinies grew by the day in that land, so that nobody felt safe in his own house [however strong it might be]. We in particular sometimes found ourselves in dire straits, because the bands of robbers who were roaming around at that time like brigands <[f. 446/435]> were always intending to attack our village {and house} of Fremonâ, spurred on by some opponents of the Portuguese who told them that they would find wealth beyond reckoning, and the only reason why they did not do so was that they never found an opportunity when the Portuguese living there were not ready with their weapons and determined to die in defence of our church and home. Meanwhile the insurgent was approaching us with the intention (as his chief counsellor later told me) of taking up residence in our house and slaughtering all the Portuguese that he found, but Our Lord God, who was looking after them, ordained things otherwise because, even though he was bringing many men, the day before he intended to come and sleep in our house, he went to sleep a captive with two chains and a good guard, not from the governor but from a great lord who, feigning friendship, went in with his servants to talk to him. Since the men that he had with him were all of low birth, they all abandoned him as soon {[f. 490v]} as they heard that that lord had apprehended him. He took him to the emperor, who commanded that they cut off his nose and ears and let him go.

On seeing this outcome, two of our opponents came to our house and entreated us not to make a complaint to the emperor or to pray to God against them, the older one of

them adding these words: ‘Since the time when Patriarch André<sup>1</sup> (who was a {father} <brother> of our Society) arrived in Ethiopia, I have never seen anything good happen to anyone who turned against this Church, and nobody can deny that your prayers have weight with God, because just you three brothers, unarmed, defend yourselves against all your enemies’ weapons.’

Soon after this, in the same kingdom of Tigrê, a young man rose up whom I knew to be so poor and low born that he accompanied low-born men, since he had nothing to eat or to wear. And he was the one who put the emperor in the greatest difficulties, because he found his way into a monastery, which is called Bizân, near the Red Sea, and told the monks that he was Emperor Iacob, who had miraculously escaped from the battle in which he had been defeated by Suzniôs (as we said above). They gave him so much credence that they at once announced that he was Iacob, at which many people joined him. So that no one would recognize him, because his face looked <[f. 446v/435v]> very different from the emperor’s, he always went around wrapped in a turban, saying that he did so because he had broken two teeth in that battle. When he saw that so many people were following him, he left those lands where the monastery {is} <was>, which are very harsh, and made his camp in a town called Debaroâ, where the *bahâr nagâx*, the governor of those lands, usually resides but had fled on seeing that he could not stand up to him. There he found some Christian and Moorish merchants who were going to the coast to do their business, and he sent word to them saying that they were well aware that he had always favoured them by not allowing any harm to come to them in any of his ports and, since his enemies had taken his treasury and empire from him, they might help him with a little gold {to make a crown}, and once he had regained his empire, which he hoped to do soon, he would know how to repay them. They held a collection among themselves and gave a good amount of gold, since they feared that if they did not do so he would take it all, and he made an emperor’s crown with it and put it on his head. He then sent out couriers with letters to the principal lords of that kingdom, promising them great commands and lands if they would help him, which many of them did.

At this point the emperor’s brother Cela Christôs, whom he had previously made viceroy of Begmêder, as we said above, had arrived in Tigrê as viceroy. He must have been {{f. 491}} twenty-five years old at the time, but highly accomplished in knowledge, prudence, valour and courage as a captain. When he learnt that the insurgent had left those lands where he had been previously and that many people had joined him and more were flocking to him every day, he very quickly gathered all the local men that he could and went against him, but almost all of those that he was taking were secretly in league with the insurgent, so that the only ones that remained loyal to him were 300 servants of his and the Portuguese, who I think numbered less than fifty. On reaching a broad plain with a view over Debaroâ, they saw countless men, which made the viceroy’s men very afraid, but he urged them on with many words and, to cap them all, he told them that they could clearly see that their salvation lay only in the spear and sword, for <[f. 447/436]> nobody could escape if they tried to flee because all the local people were against them, so it was better for them all to die {fighting} valiantly than to stoop to such a low and shameful thing as to flee, particularly when they could not even save their lives by doing so. He

<sup>1</sup> Andrés de Oviedo. See Glossary (first Jesuit mission).

then drew up his squadrons to give battle, although it was already after midday, since he was afraid that some of the men with him might go over to the other side that night. Drawn up in fighting order, they approached the enemy, who were already ready and waiting and caring little about them, as they were confident in their huge numbers. As he was about to attack, the two main local captains that the viceroy had brought moved to one side with their men, and his servants said to him, 'Lord, those captains are going over to the enemy.' He replied that they should let them go and not look at them, but attack instead, and he went ahead leading the Portuguese on his flank, and they fought so valiantly that they soon made the enemy turn. When they saw this, those two captains attacked from the other side, making it seem that that was why they had moved aside, but people said later that they did not kill anyone. The viceroy and his soldiers slew countless men and the insurgent escaped, because the viceroy chased a Moor on horseback for a long time thinking he was the one, since he was wearing a crimson caftan over his armour; on slaying him with his own hand, he was very pleased and had the retreat sounded, but afterwards they discovered that he was a Moor and heard that the insurgent had had time to withdraw to some secure lands nearby.

The viceroy and his men gave many thanks to God {[f. 491v]} for such a great victory, which they regarded as nothing less than miraculous, and they decided to follow the insurgent wherever he went so that he could not gain strength again. They therefore took up position at the entrance to the mountains where he had gone and sent in many spies, but they never received any certain news, because the mountains are vast and covered with dense bush, and their inhabitants were on his side. Meanwhile, a great man called Neberêd Thomas gathered 800 men near our village of Fremonâ, determined to attack our house and steal what he could find, and to go on from there, taking us and all the Portuguese <[f. 447v/436v]> that he could, six or eight of them in all, as prisoners to hand over to the insurgent, who had a very high opinion of us because the Portuguese had fought valiantly against him in the company of the viceroy. The latter soon received news of what Neberêd Thomas intended to do, and he therefore came in great haste, marching from morning till night for three days, and spent the night a league from our house on the eve of the day when that man was going to attack us, and therefore he fled. The viceroy arrived at our village very early the following day and waited for us outside, as he saw that we were coming out. We thanked him for the favour he had done us in coming so quickly, and we asked him to rest there for a while, but he preferred to press on at once as he wanted to catch up with that man. He did not succeed in doing so, however, because he had slipped into some very harsh lands that they call Torât.

When the insurgent king heard that the viceroy had moved so far away, he came out {in front of} <from among> those mountains and encamped on the plain, where many men gathered to him again. The viceroy was therefore forced to return there, but as he arrived and began to fight, the insurgent fled at once and went back among the mountains, while the viceroy stayed outside, for he was only able to chase him a short distance because darkness prevented him from doing so. Afterwards he made many enquiries to find out where he was, but he had moved on at once from the other side of the mountains through an area a long way from the viceroy. When he came out onto the plain, everyone joined him because the word was spreading that he was Emperor Iacob. He came directly to our village, determined to raze everything to the ground and put all the Portuguese that he found to the sword. He spent the night some three leagues from us and issued a



proclamation that everyone should prepare to fall on the Portuguese village the next day, because they would {[f. 492]} find plenty of riches there without any trouble or resistance at all. Very early in the morning he started marching towards us. People told us at once that he was coming and that he was bringing so many men that they covered the plains, and those who gave the lowest estimates were saying that there were over 25,000 men. We had nowhere to flee to, because the whole land was on his side and they would hand us over at once, and so we decided to die in the church – we three fathers who were there together with some elderly Portuguese and Catholics. But it was <[f. 448/437]> Our Lord's will that, when he was already very close, he was told that one of the viceroy's captains was camped with a few men by a monastery and he had some good tents, and because he was short of tents he left the broad, flat road to our village and went up among some mountains on a very rough, narrow track, believing that he could have us in his hands at any time. When they arrived, the viceroy's men fought hard and forced them back many times because the pass was very narrow, and they went on like this until the afternoon, when a monk guided the insurgent's men along a remote path and they fell on the viceroy's men from behind, killing some, and the rest fled through the mountains. The insurgent entered at once and plundered the place and took the riches that were in the monastery, for many people had left their property there thinking that it would be safe, because of the great respect and veneration that everyone had for the place. But the insurgent paid no heed to that because he took everything, including many things of the church, and he commanded that a Portuguese that they had captured there be speared to death at once in front of his tent.

Among those who escaped with the viceroy's captain was a nobleman by the name of Glaudeôs, *scilicet* Claudius, who had a swift mare. The sun had already set when he arrived at our house, which was half a league from where they had fought, and told us that it was all over and we should leave in great haste, and that we should not be afraid of the people of that land because he would take us to his, which was two and a half days' journey away, and nobody would dare do us any harm because he was very well known and well connected; from there, if necessary, we could easily go on to Dambiâ. Some of the Portuguese and Catholics who were there thought this a good idea, but the old men, women and children, who would not be able to follow us, wept at being left alone and defenceless, without confession, in such great peril, and so we decided that one of us would stay and the {[f. 492v]} others would go and take the chalices and church ornaments. Thus one Portuguese accompanied the two fathers who were going, and some Catholic men and women followed them, and even though most of them were on foot they travelled very fast because they were so afraid. At midnight they reached the edge of some very dense bush where they came across a great many bandits, <[f. 448v/437v]> who were waiting there to rob anyone fleeing, and when they saw them the nobleman went in front with his spear in his hand. He recognized some of them and said that he was leading those people under his care, and so they dared not do them any harm. Moving on, when the sun rose they came across some more, who would also have robbed them had it not been for that nobleman with them. The following day they reached the captain who had been defeated and, since those were his lands, he commanded that all those who were coming be given what they needed and that they should move on closer to that nobleman's home, which was a safer place, and there they stayed for a few days until the insurgent went back.

The father who stayed behind {in the house} that night hid the books and some things that the others had been unable to take, and when dawn came he closed up the house and, with a Portuguese who was with him and some other old people, he went into the church to pray, saying, 'We will be all right here if they want to kill us.' The insurgent soon learnt that the fathers had left and had taken the church property, and that just one father and one Portuguese had stayed behind, so he stopped and sent three captains with many men to raze everything to the ground and especially not to leave one stone of our house standing. As they drew very near, when they saw our house they were very frightened (as one of those captains recounted later, attributing it to something supernatural, because they had many men with them and knew that there was only one father and one Portuguese there). At this point, the insurgent sent him a message to return quickly, because he had had news that the viceroy was coming, so they went away without daring to go any further, for they could have come and burnt everything down and returned in plenty of time, since it was no more than half a league from our house to where the insurgent was. But they were all so uneasy in their hearts (as that captain said) that, no matter how fast they marched back, it still felt too slow.

Once they had reached him, the insurgent went directly to position himself next to a mountain stronghold where he could fight {[f. 493]} the viceroy better. As he camped at its foot that afternoon, two spies that he had sent out returned and told him that the viceroy was not coming and was a long way off, at which he was very relieved, because he was very aggrieved that those captains had not destroyed our house and village. <[f. 449/438]> He therefore decided to do it himself the following day and, to that end, he commanded that it be proclaimed at once that everyone who had property of little importance should leave it behind and get ready, because very early the next morning he was going to take them to a place where they would find enough riches for them all. When the cock crowed, however, two other spies arrived saying that the viceroy was already close, and so as dawn broke he climbed to the top of the mountain and made his camp there. The viceroy arrived the next day with his men, of whom there were very few, and set up camp near the mountain on the plain called Maiquelbaherâ, and he stayed there for two or three days since he was not able to climb up to where the insurgent was. Meanwhile, the local people held the passes, so that if he was defeated nobody could escape, and if the insurgent remained up there and used his men to reinforce the passes, which were very strong, since the plain was surrounded by high, rugged mountains, he could starve them to death there. But he was told that many of them were sick and others tired and he could therefore easily defeat them, and so he commanded his captains to go down with the men while he stayed with a good bodyguard on top of the mountain, for he always positioned himself in a place whence he could flee, explaining to his men that, even if he suffered a defeat, it did not matter provided he stayed alive, because he would not lack for men afterwards.

When the viceroy saw that they were coming down the mountain, he left the tents and drew up his men in a small valley nearby, where he commanded them all to sit down and not show themselves until their adversaries were very close. While they were there, he was told that many men were coming from another direction to attack their tents, and so he sent a captain with very few men, saying, 'God help you, because I cannot give you any more.' He went and fought valiantly against strong resistance until {[f. 493v]} he killed a great captain, and at that they all turned tail and he went after them cutting them down as

far as a nearby river. He stopped there because he dared not cross. Meanwhile, the ones coming in the viceroy's direction arrived, and they were so numerous that they covered the plain. He then attacked with his servants and the Portuguese with such great fury, and they fought <[f. 449v/438v]> so hard for a long time and killed so many, that the rest were unable to withstand his impetus and turned. Leaving the plain, they took up position on a hill near the mountain. The viceroy's men, who were pursuing them and slaying them in large numbers, tried to climb up when they reached it, but the ones on top charged down on them and pushed them back to the foot of the hill, and there would have been a great rout if the viceroy, who had been fighting in another part, had not very swiftly come to their aid. On reaching them, he at once started riding uphill on his horse, at which his men's spirits rose and they followed him and won the hill. From there they continued routing and slaying until they reached the foot of the mountain, where they turned back, because they were very tired. Seeing that that had been beyond all his strength, the viceroy gave many thanks to God and distributed many alms, and he even cut up a very fine {gold} chain that he had and shared out it among the poor. Indeed, there were such vast numbers of adversaries and the place where they were was so advantageous (as I saw myself soon afterwards, when I went to congratulate the viceroy on his victory) that it could be considered no less fortunate than the victory he had previously won in Debaroã. When night came, the insurgent fled over the other side of the mountain and slipped back to the mountains where he had been before, as he did not feel safe elsewhere, but the viceroy did not pursue him because his men were very tired, and some were injured and others dead.

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## CHAPTER XXVI

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### On how the emperor went to Tigrê, and what happened to him on that journey

Viceroy Cela Christôs could see that the people of Tigrê were so dull of understanding that, although they had often heard from people who {should} <could> be given credence that Emperor Iacob had died in the battle that he had fought in the land of Gôl and had been buried in sight of the chiefs of the army in the church that they call Naçaret, even so they held the word of {{f. 494}} a man who hid his face to be more reliable and followed him as if they clearly knew him to be Emperor Iacob. Nor could they understand that it was not the viceroy, with his very little power, <[f. 450/439]> who was causing such great damage and slaughter every day, but the hand of God, who was fighting to help him against them and punishing their hard-heartedness and stubbornness. He therefore thought that it would not be possible to find a remedy or put an end to such madness unless the emperor went there with force and they pursued the insurgent until they captured him. He therefore wrote to him about what was happening, as we saw above in chapter 19 of his History.

When this letter reached the emperor, he had it proclaimed that the warriors should assemble with great urgency, and with very few men he set off for Tigrê. After marching for two days, however, he received news that many Gâlas had entered the kingdom of Begmêder, and he therefore turned in that direction, undertaking long marches, thinking that even so his men would catch up with him. But since they were preparing for the journey to Tigrê, which was a very long one, they took so long that before they reached the emperor he encountered the Gâlas and was forced to fight, even though he had very few men, and he was defeated with the loss of a large part of them, and the Gâlas continued their incursion freely, causing considerable damage in the land. Once the emperor's captains had arrived, however, he went in search of the Gâlas again. He came upon them beside a river and gave battle and, after killing many of them, he took the booty that they were carrying and everything that they had brought from their land, as is recounted at greater length in the emperor's History that we related above in chapter 19.

This news that the emperor had been defeated by the Gâlas soon reached Tigrê and, no matter how much the viceroy tried to cover it up by holding celebrations and spreading rumours that the emperor had won and that he was already on his way to Tigrê with many men, it was to no avail; instead, people told the insurgent that not only had he been defeated, but he was so badly injured that he could not escape. He therefore came out from among those mountains and spread this news, adding that henceforth there was nothing to fear, because the chief courtiers were on his side. At this, countless men gathered to him again. Wherever he went, everyone obeyed him without any dissent at

all. In addition, it was stated as a very reliable fact <[f. 450v/439v]> that the viceroy had fled in such {[f. 494v]} terror that he had not even taken his tents with him, but had left them erected on the plain, and so with much celebration he at once set off for there. When the viceroy heard that, he decided to go out to encounter him, so that the insurgent would not think, were he to wait there, that he was doing so out of fear. On finding him in a land that they call Edequê, he gave battle, which was very hard fought and victory was uncertain, because both sides fought with great valour and courage. In the end, however, Our Lord saw fit that the viceroy should prevail; on gaining victory he slaughtered more men than in any of the other battles, because he followed up the chase for a long time without the enemy finding anywhere to hide. The insurgent escaped, however, because he always reached safety in time, and he slipped into his usual den in those mountains whence the viceroy could not force him out.

As the emperor was coming back from his victory over the Gâlas, which we mentioned above, he wanted to continue his journey to Tigrê, but all the captains and members of the council tried to dissuade him and make him stay, saying that it was enough for a son-in-law of his, who was called Iulios, to go with some men – something that he wanted to do and was requesting insistently. But the captain of the Portuguese, who is called Joam Gabriel, who was in the council because he gave very good advice, realized that that would not be in the emperor's interests because, if that son-in-law of his went, not only would the intended outcome not be achieved, but it was highly likely that some great revolt would happen, because he was a great adversary of the viceroy and so proud and suspicious that he would come to blows with him over the tiniest thing, as had almost happened on other occasions. When his turn came to speak, and seeing that there was no time to tell the emperor in private what he thought, because it would be decided there whether he would stay or not, in order to march the following day, he said, 'Sire, when the Turks or the Gâlas come, Your Majesty should take counsel with us, for we shall give it very impartially, because they not only come to kill us but to take our children and wives captive. But when someone rises up to take the empire from you, as this one in Tigrê intends, take counsel with yourself alone, because we shall follow whoever is the lord of the empire, as we have done until now. We obeyed Emperor Iacob while he was still <[f. 451/440]> a boy. After he was removed and Emperor Za Denguil came in, we went over to him, and when he was killed we went back to Iacob. And since he died we have been with Your Majesty.' The emperor understood at once what he meant and, although on the opinion of the {[f. 495]} others he was inclined to stay, he said, 'I have already taken counsel with myself that I shall go in any case.'

With this, it was settled that he would go, and they all went out. Later, however, some of them came back and entreated him to stay, because otherwise he would be sure to die in Tigrê, as many were prophesying. He replied that death and life were in God's hand, and he had already decided to go and would not stay. The next day, he told the Portuguese captain how much they had insisted that he should stay, the reason they gave being that he would die in Tigrê. The captain replied, 'They are right, because God has no power to take Your Majesty's life in Dambiâ, where you should stay, but rather in Tigrê. Why does the emperor lend his ears to these things?' The emperor said, 'I give it no credence, for I will not stay. I am only telling you this so that you know what superstitions these people put about.' He then continued his journey and, after marching for four days, he came down from a very high and rugged mountain that they call Lamalmô. When he reached

the bottom, someone told him in secret that some men had stayed in Dambiâ plotting to bring one of the descendants of the former emperors off the mountain that they call Guixên Amba in order to raise him as emperor, and that some of the great men who were there with him were involved in this plot, and the leader of the ones who had stayed behind was a man who had been Emperor Malâc Çaguêd's slave, by the name of Melquisedêc, but by now he had risen considerably and was the lord of lands. He commanded that they should not reveal this to anyone, and moved ahead without letting anyone realize that he knew. The man who wrote the emperor's History says that he only found this out in Agçûm, which is well inside Tigrê, but the emperor himself recounted it in this fashion. When he reached the border of the kingdom of Tigrê, the viceroy went to receive him and, as he passed close by our village, two of us fathers went with him to visit the emperor, for they said that he was going to take a different route. But afterwards he changed his mind and so we met him two days later, and he thanked us very much for our journey. We went with him as far as Agçûm, <[f. 451v/440v]> where he was crowned with the splendour and ceremonies that we described in chapter 12 of the first book, where we also related how he behaved towards us in going to our house.

While the emperor was in Agçûm, it became publicly known that Melquisedêc had risen up in Dambiâ and, gathering many men, had suddenly fallen on the captain that the emperor had left there on guard and routed him, and that {[f. 495v]} a prince named Arço, who had come down from Guixên Ambâ, had already entered the kingdom of Begmêder, saying that the empire was his and he was coming to Dambiâ to join Melquisedêc. This greatly frightened those who were the emperor's friends, while the rest were delighted. The emperor then sent off a brother of his, called Emana Christôs, with men, and he went in great haste. Meanwhile, Fathers Antonio Fernandez and Lourenço Romano, who were in Dambiâ, were facing many troubles and dangers, fleeing from one place to another with the church property without finding a safe place, because the whole land was in such turmoil that all one could see were robberies and violence, and people were unable to help one another. When the emperor's brother had just climbed the mountains that he would have to cross to enter the province that they call Oagra, Melcsedec said to his men that they should go out to encounter the emperor's brother without waiting for Arço, whose men were tired, and their opponents were so few in number that they would soon defeat them, and after they had shared out the horses and property they would come back and welcome Arço. They all thought this a very good idea and so they set off in great haste and encountered him on 14th April in a land called Debraçôr. They gave battle and many died on both sides; the emperor's brother was almost completely defeated but, when he realized that, he charged on his horse at Melcsedec, who had already got amongst his banners and drums, and fought hard until he put him to flight, and his men at once fled as well because most of them were peasants. Some horsemen rode after Melcsedec but could not catch him, and so they returned. Later, however, the local people brought him back captive and he cut off his head, and soon afterwards they also brought him Arço, who was claiming the empire, and he sent him to the emperor as a prisoner under good guard.

<[f. 452/441]> While these things were happening in Dambiâ, the emperor went to the mountains where the insurgent had hidden and searched a large part of them with great difficulty, because they are very rugged and steep. No matter how much he enquired, he never received any news of him because, as we said in chapter 12 of the first book, he

was hiding with just four other men that he trusted in a cave in the thickest part of the bush, living on the milk of some goats that they had taken with them. Because winter was coming, the emperor was forced to turn back to Dambiâ, because Tigrê could not support so many men and it was not good for him to spend the winter away from his court for many reasons. On reaching a land that they call Sirêi, he found Arçô there with a {[f. 496]} great man by the name of Za Christôs, who was helping him, and he commanded that they both be beheaded. He also seized twelve of the men in his camp, including some great men, who were secretly on Arçô's side, but he did not command that any of these be executed even though they were proved to be guilty of many crimes. Afterwards, he decided to take his brother Cela Christôs with him, because the people of Tigrê were already very frightened and would not dare join the insurgent as they had before. Thus, leaving a great nobleman called Amçala Christôs there as viceroy, he marched back as fast as he could, and even so he did not arrive at his court (which at the time was in the land that they call Cogâ) until July, when the rains are already very heavy.

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## CHAPTER XXVII

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### On some things that Viceroy Amçala Christôs did after the emperor left Tigrê

This nobleman was very prudent and wise, very generous and fond of honouring everyone without doing wrong to his fellow men. Few people, if any, in the whole empire were better governors, as he had already shown in many other positions that he had held. Realizing that that insurgent could not be taken by force of arms, he at once began in great secrecy to send messages to those who lived in those mountains and were on his side, together with some gifts, promising them many goods and that he would obtain a pardon from the emperor for them <[f. 452v/441v]> if they delivered the man to him or enabled him to capture him. While he was busy with these messages, however, he fell seriously ill with a fever in a place called Gabgâb, a league and a half from where we have our dwelling and church. Since that village is very small, he distributed his men around other nearby villages while he himself remained there with just a few of them. A great man, who was secretly on the insurgent's side and had been hiding from the emperor's justice for years on account of serious charges against him, heard about this and decided to kill the viceroy and then go on to our house and seize everything he could find in it and in the village and take us captive to the insurgent. To this end, {[f. 496v]} he gathered 1,500 men (as we were told later) and told them that the viceroy was very sick in bed and without any men, and they should go quickly before he received news, which they could do easily because it was no more than two days' journey away; they would take him without any resistance and afterwards there would be nobody left who could defend the kingdom. In that way, by joining Emperor Iacob (for that was the name he gave the insurgent), they would become lords of it without any trouble or opposition. They were very pleased at having such a good opportunity to get their fill of booty, since the people of that land usually are robbers.

Thus determined, they all took up their arms at once and set off before daybreak, marching at full speed until night so as to arrive by dawn watch. But a man from near that land who had heard of their deliberations ran ahead and arrived at nightfall, and told the viceroy what was happening. He replied that if what he said was correct, and if Our Lord delivered him, he would reward him aplenty for {such a good} <the> warning, but otherwise he would punish him, and he should explain everything truthfully. He said that he had taken the trouble to run there for His Lordship's sake, and if it was not as he said he should punish him as he saw fit, but they would certainly arrive that night. The viceroy then commanded a servant of his to give him good lodging and keep him under guard until the following day. He then called those of his men that he most trusted and the captain of the Portuguese of Tigrê, who had come to visit him, and told them what that



man had said. They replied that he should send spies out at once to the <[f. 453/442]> place through which they would come and, if it was true, they should go out onto the field to do battle so that no soldier might stay in the house. The captain of the Portuguese said that it was not a good idea to go and fight on the field, because the moon would be out before midnight and when the enemy saw how few of them there were they would attack with greater spirit and could easily surround them and finish them all off there and then; it would be better to position themselves outside the village in the shadow of the houses in absolute silence, and when they came some Portuguese that were there would fire their arquebuses and then {all} the rest would attack to the sound of drums; that would make them think that they were waiting for them with many men and they might turn back or at least not fight with as much spirit, and they themselves would have their backs protected.

The viceroy approved of this opinion and sent spies {[f. 497]} out everywhere. He dressed, sick as he was, and went out and commanded his men to assemble and, sitting on a chair, delivered a speech to them, encouraging and exhorting them to fight valiantly and to trust in Our Lord, who would not help those bandits, whose only intention was to rob.<sup>1</sup> And so it was, because His infinite mercy delivered him from death, together with us fathers and the Portuguese who were in Fremonâ, as we said in chapter 10 of the third book.

A few days later, the viceroy had recovered from his illness and continued sending the messages, gifts and promises to the inhabitants of the mountains where the insurgent was, placing him in such straits that, not feeling safe there, he moved on to other mountains [called Zancaranâ] where there were two great lords who had offered him their help, since it seemed to them that he really was Emperor Iacob, with whom they had been raised as boys. When he reached them they welcomed him with much applause, but they soon saw that he was not Emperor Iacob and so they decided to apprehend him, and they went with their men to do so. When he realized this he fled and hid in the bush, which was very thick. They then posted many men around all the points where he might come out, and on the third night the guards found him and killed him and took his head to their lords, and they sent it to Emperor Seltân Çaguêd. The emperor commanded that it be sent to the kingdom of Tigrê so that everyone might see that it was not Emperor Iacob and how foolishly they had given credence to an unknown man. And the men taking it there spent the night with it in our house in Fremonâ one year to the day from when he came with an army to raze it to the ground, as we said above. {[f. 497v]} <[f. 453v/442v]><sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The remainder of this folio in ARSI, MS Goa 42 is written in the hand of the author of the marginal notes.

<sup>2</sup> These folios are blank in both manuscripts.

On how Erâz Cela Christôs, the emperor's brother, was reduced to our holy faith and took a father with him to the kingdom of Gojâm

Among many other lords and persons of importance who were reduced to our holy faith, one was *Erâz* Cela Christôs, the emperor's brother. He, as we mentioned above in chapter 25, is a man of great prudence, valour, courage and sharp wits, and well read in the books of Ethiopia, for as a boy he was brought up at all times with fine teaching in the manner of this land. Since the only information he had about our affairs was what his monks told him, he considered us worse than Turks, as he later told me several times, and so he did not like to talk to us. When he sometimes came to discuss matters of our holy faith, he did not question us for his own betterment but to see whether he might find something in our answers that he could use to refute and discredit them among his people. He did this to the extent that, while he was still viceroy of Tigrê, he pretended that he was fond of us and liked to look at our books and sometimes went to our house to do so, all for the same purpose; even though our answers and our behaviour were to his liking and he applauded the disputations that the boys of the seminary held in his presence on Christian doctrine, he never lost the feeling in his heart that beneath it all we had hidden the poison of heresies, and that we would later make him drink of it by stealth, an idea that their monks put into their heads to stop them from listening to us. And so, long after he stopped being viceroy of Tigrê, when I was with the emperor in the kingdom of Gojâm and he had already fully acknowledged the truth of our holy faith, he said to him, 'What the father teaches appears to me to be the true faith. Why shall we all not receive it and unite with the Portuguese?' Although there was no other Ethiopian there other than him, his expression changed as if he had been told to receive the sect of the Moors, and he replied, 'Sire, there is no need to discuss that; we are very far apart in matters of faith', and he changed the subject at once.

On seeing this, I felt great sadness and grief in my heart because I thought he had a very different opinion {[f. 498v]} of our holy faith, from what he had shown previously when we had talked about it, and I was afraid he might put <[f. 454v/443v]> some notion into the emperor's head that would make him come to doubt what I had taught him. I was also sad because having such a great prince against us, and one reputed as a scholar among them, was a great impediment to the spreading of our holy faith and might cause considerable harm to those who had received it. Therefore, that summer and part of the winter in which he was with the emperor, I set out very deliberately to explain our holy faith to him and to show that what we instilled was expressed in the Holy Scripture and a large part of it even in a book of theirs to which they give great

credence, which they call *Haimanôt Abâu*,<sup>1</sup> which means ‘Faith of the Fathers’, because it contains parts of homilies by Saints Basil, Chrysostom, Athanasius and other ancient saints. With this he began to open his eyes and to ask about our ways with a different spirit. In addition, he discussed them with a great lord called *Abeitabûn* Bela Christôs, who was also held to be a scholar, and who by then already had a good understanding of our ways and often used to say, ‘What great torments Dioscorus must be suffering in hell for all the people that he led to perdition through his doctrine.’ By conversing with this man, who showed him the contradictions in their books and the falseness of what their monks taught, he came to fully understand the truth of our holy faith and to resolve to die for it.

At this time he was the viceroy of the kingdom of Gojâm, and he still is today, over fourteen years since he began. Seeing that I could not remain with him because the emperor would not let me go there, he asked me to give him one of the fathers to take with him. The lot fell to Father Francisco Antonio de Angelis, from Naples, a man of great learning and much greater virtue and zeal for the good of souls. Thus, through his doctrine and example, he confirmed the viceroy in his purpose and not only most of the captains and lords of that kingdom but also many of the chief monks are also today reduced to our holy faith. He at once gave him a site for a church and lands to which some widows and poor Portuguese, who were scattered around, could retire. Soon afterwards he sent a message to me in Dambiâ to go there, because he wanted to confess in general with me. Before I could do so, however, he was forced to cross the Nile with an {[f. 499]} army, because many heathens that they call <[f. 455/444]> Gâlas were coming to raid some neighbouring lands, and so he confessed with the father who was there, albeit in greater haste than he had wished since there was not enough time. And so on his return – for Our Lord brought him back with a great victory – he called for me again. I then went and, when I arrived, he said that although he had confessed it had been with less preparation and in greater haste than he had desired, and he wished to do so again more thoroughly. And so he prepared himself again and confessed with many displays of contrition. When he had finished, he kissed my knee with such humility that it touched me to see that such a great prince, whose knee others kissed, should kiss mine in that way.

The following day he called for me alone and told me that he had often talked about the matters of our holy faith with his wife, who is a very great lady, the granddaughter of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd, and she was happy with them, although in the matter of confession she had not fully decided. He asked me to try to get her to confess because he very much wished that, since they were joined in matrimony, they should also be in faith and obedience to the {holy} Roman Church. I started at once to talk to her {about this matter} and to explain to her how it was not possible to be saved without obeying the Roman Pontiff. Because of that, in a few days she showed that she was determined to confess and started preparing herself, but later I found her {cool} <outside> again, saying that she wanted me to explain things further to her. I told *Erâz* Cela Christôs, her husband, and he replied that I should not be surprised, because the monks had realized what we were intending and, as I came out, they used to go in and try to turn her away, bringing her many things in order to do so. I then went to <see> her and told her that I was surprised that she should be delaying something that she herself understood was so important to her, and that she should not be

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary (*Haimanôt Abbô/Häymānot Abaw*).

taken in by the monks with the things of worldly honour that they placed before her, for true honour lay in doing what was necessary for her salvation, without worrying about what her kinsfolk would say or other worldly concerns. With {this} <these> and many other things {and those} that her husband added, she decided to confess. And once she was well prepared, she did so with great devotion, first swearing always to obey the holy Roman Church in everything. Thus they were both very content and comforted.

{[f. 499v]} <[f. 455v/444v]> The Devil could not bear the fact that the matters of our holy faith should be spreading so prosperously. Thus, even before *Erâz Cela Christos* confessed, as soon as he announced that he was for our faith, the Devil moved the spirits of many clergy and lay people to act against them with all their strength and to seek to bring down not only *Erâz Cela Christos* but also the emperor. Matters reached the point that we described in chapters 4 and 5 of the second book and that we saw above in chapters 20, 21 and 22. Moreover, in March 1620 the Devil raised another storm by way of a monk who is like the general of the family of the monks of Taquela Haimanôt, and is called *icheguê* on account of his dignity, and has great authority among them all. He gathered many monks and went with them to the camp of the emperor, who, in the kingdom of Begmêder, had just won the greatest victory over the Gâlas that had ever been won in Ethiopia. Even the Portuguese who had been in the battle claimed that, if all the Gâlas that <all> the past emperors had killed in all the encounters they had had with them were counted, there would not be as many as those that died in this battle. While the emperor was celebrating his victory, the monk arrived with the others and stirred up great and small against us, saying that the whole kingdom of Gojâm had abandoned their faith and taken ours, that everyone was now confessing and communing with us and had abandoned their churches, which was the same as saying that they had no law, confession or communion. Afterwards they went to the emperor and told him the same things, and that we had even given communion to his brother *Erâz Cela Christôs*. They asked him to command that we should no longer give it to their people or teach them, and that those who had joined our faith should return to theirs. Since the emperor did not want to grant this, they became very angry and insisted strongly for two or three days. On the last occasion, the chief of the emperor's secretaries, who is called *Azâx Tinô*, and a great man by the name of *Caba Christôs*, who is now the viceroy of Tigrê, were present, and they had been Catholics for some time. So they said to the monks, 'What harm do you find in the fathers' doctrine? What do they teach other than what Saint Paul taught and we find in the Gospel, that in Christ Our Lord there are two natures, divine and human, united in the divine person?'<sup>1</sup> They then began to enter into a disputation, and the secretary, who is very sharp witted, inferred from what the monks <[f. 456/445]> were saying that Christ as God was less than the Father, {[f. 500]} and that the godhead had died. They had conceded the latter point so that he would not come and prove to them that there are two natures in Christ. On hearing this, the emperor said to the monks, 'The Moors are better than you people,' and, getting up very angrily, he left them in the tent and went into a wooden house that they had built for him nearby.

The following day they came back to the emperor and said that they had spoken like that in the heat of the moment, since the secretary was challenging them so much. He replied that in matters of faith it was no excuse to say that they had spoken in the heat of

<sup>1</sup> BPB, MS 778 makes a new paragraph here; ARSI, MS Goa 42 does not.

the moment.<sup>1</sup> They asked him again to have that proclamation issued, but he would not listen to them. When they saw this, a great many of them gathered and, entering with some great men, they insisted strongly yet again, otherwise he should stay where he was and they would all go elsewhere. With that, they left. The emperor was very aggrieved by their discourtesy and insolence, because they meant that they would not obey him but instead would raise up someone else. That is in fact what they had decided, as some of them later told me. The camp became so restless and disturbed and backed the monks so firmly that some great men, including those who are on our side, feared that things would develop into a serious mutiny, and so they told the emperor that he had to act promptly in some way. The ones who were helping the monks insisted strongly that that proclamation should be issued, or else the camp would not calm down. They importuned so much for three days that the emperor was forced to say that it should be proclaimed that the fathers should not give communion to their people. They wanted him to add that we should not teach, but he replied that by no means should that be said in the proclamation, but that we should teach everyone, because our doctrine was the true one. The secretary was present and even said, 'The emperor could issue a thousand proclamations that the fathers should not teach, but I would not stop asking them to teach me their doctrine.' The proclamation was issued in the camp, and they then asked the emperor to have it proclaimed in Gojâm as well, since the viceroy there was *Erâz Cela Christôs*, against whom the monks were very indignant.

When he heard about this, *Erâz Cela Christôs* was furious {[f. 500v]} and wrote a letter to the emperor in which, in many words, he showed <[f. 456v/445v]> how deeply aggrieved he was and, in the end, he said that he should not go ahead with that, because otherwise he would go to his camp and deliver himself like a lamb to slaughter for the faith of the holy Roman Church, and many others would die with him, and afterwards he would remain alone among his enemies and would find what Our Lord ordained. When the emperor saw this letter he was very sad, because he {loves} <loved> him very much, and he replied, 'If I haven't killed so-and-so, even though he is a great enemy of mine, shall I kill my own brother? I am amazed that you should write to me in this manner, since you know my heart and what we have agreed. I have done this only because the men in the camp were mutinous and forced me to. We shall meet soon and see what the best thing to do will be.' Shortly afterwards, when I went to visit him, he told me what had happened and said that no other means had been available to him to calm the mutiny, and that we should give communion to anyone we liked, but it should be in greater secrecy until that situation cooled down. When *Erâz Cela Christôs* met him afterwards, everything calmed down, and he has gone back to upholding and teaching our holy faith in public with so much fervour and zeal that he is like a Saint Paul. And so, with his help, two fathers who are in Gojâm have reduced almost all the captains and soldiers of his army and many of the lords and chief monks of that kingdom. There are now so many who come to confess that the fathers have no rest, day or night, and everyone wants to do so in general. It reached such a point in March this year [1622, when *Erâz Cela Christôs* wanted to go to war<sup>2</sup>] that, when a great lord saw the crush caused by people trying to push in front of one

<sup>1</sup> BPB, MS 778 makes a new paragraph here; ARSI, MS Goa 42 does not.

<sup>2</sup> The words 'when ... war' were written in the margin in a different hand in ARSI, MS Goa 42, but in the body of the text in the same hand in BPB, MS 778.

another to confess, he stood at the door and would only let people in in order. Later, one of the monks who had first been reduced took over this job, and he was not short of work, because some said that they had come from afar, and others that they had been waiting for so many days. Praise be to the Father of Mercies, who has done us such a great one as to see that those who had held us to be worse than Moors and Turks because of our holy faith and had shunned us as such now come in such numbers that we cannot satisfy their great fervour and devotion. The viceroy of Tigrê, Caba Christôs, also works hard <[f. 457/446]> for everyone to receive our holy faith, and brings so many to it that the two fathers that are there are kept very busy.

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{[F. 501]} CHAPTER XXIX<sup>1</sup>

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On how His Majesty King Philip wrote to the emperor of Ethiopia and then to Pope Paul V, and what he replied

During the first monsoon after Emperor Seltân Çaguêd had acceded to his empire, I wrote to His Majesty about what had been happening in it and the current state of affairs and how the new emperor was a man of such good understanding and qualities that one could hope for a very good outcome regarding the reduction of {this} <his> empire. I explained that, as soon as he had taken office and business had permitted, he had listened to the matters of our holy faith with great attention and pleasure and showed fondness for them. His Majesty therefore decided to write to him, congratulating him on his accession to his empire, in order thereby to instil greater fondness in him and to ensure that he would maintain friendship and correspondence with him as his forefathers had had with the kings of Portugal, which is so important for what is intended that it would be virtually impossible ever to {effect it} <instil fondness> without it. A copy of the letter is as follows:

*Most mighty emperor of Ethiopia. I, Dom Philip, by the grace of God King of Portugal, the Algarves on this side and on the other side of the sea in Africa, lord of Guinea and of the conquest, navigation, trade of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India, etc., send you many greetings as a brother whom I very much love and esteem. Because there has always been friendship and good correspondence between the emperors your forefathers and the kings of this kingdom, it seemed to me fair and right to write you this letter, to tell you that I rejoiced greatly at the news I received that you had succeeded to this empire, and that I shall always regard the success of your affairs as my own, and that I shall demonstrate this goodwill to you in whatever arises. In accordance with this goodwill, I shall be pleased to give you satisfaction in every way possible in whatever appertains to you in these kingdoms of mine and the state of India, and I charge the viceroy of it to do the same, for the sake of the {[f. 501v]} great pleasure that I shall have in that. For this friendship of ours to persist, I beg you very affectionately to write and tell me your news at all times, <[f. 457v/446v]> because I shall do the same, and I strongly recommend to your trust the religious who {reside} <live> in your kingdom <s> as a matter of my principal obligation, in particular the religious Pedro Páez, so that thus they and the Portuguese may be treated by you as is right. Most mighty emperor, whom, as a brother, I very much love and esteem, may Our Lord keep your royal person and state under His holy protection. Written in Madrid on 15th March 1609.*

<I> *The King.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 239–46.

<sup>2</sup> Páez must have had access to this letter in the Ethiopian royal encampment archive.

The emperor was delighted with this letter and held it in great esteem, since His Majesty had written to him before his letters had arrived there: although he had written in 1607, the ships at that time had already left for India, and so the letters did not leave here until the end of August 1608. He replied at once, with words of great love and gratitude, showing how pleased he was with the friendship offered to him, but I cannot put a transcript of the letter here because it was lost along with other papers in a revolt that took place. At this time, the emperor was already trying to send an ambassador who could give a more complete account of the situation and of his intention. On seeing this letter, he wanted to do so even more and made every effort to find a way, but the great difficulty that there is in getting such people from here to India prevented him until a reply arrived to the letters that he had written to His Holiness, which is as follows:

Copy of one from Pope Paul V to the Emperor of Ethiopia, Seltân Çaguêd  
*Dearest son of ours in Christ: health and apostolic blessing. We give thanks to God, Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who used His mercy on you and restored your royal throne to you, as you have written to us. We congratulate Your Majesty on this happy outcome to your affairs and we greatly praise your zeal in defending the Christian faith, with which you are burning, as we understand from your letters that we have received, both the earlier ones and the later ones that you have sent to us. And so, {[f. 502]} as you have requested, we have diligently recommended the present need of your kingdom to our dearest son in Christ Philip, Catholic and mighty King of the Spains, who, because of his excellent magnanimity and zeal for the Christian faith, we trust will effectively help you. But we have commanded our apostolic nuncio, <[f. 458/447]> who resides with His Catholic Majesty, to put forward your petition with diligence. For the rest, dearest son, we exhort you to remain constant and immovable in the fear of God, and to defend the Christian name piously and strongly, and to be at all times devoted to the holy Catholic and apostolic Roman Church, your most loving mother. And in the prayers that we offer to God before the most holy bodies of the apostles for our children the Christian monarchs and Catholic princes, we shall always remember you, entreating Him from whom all good things proceed to enlighten your understanding with the light of the Holy Spirit for you to do His will. And from the innermost depths of our charity, we lovingly give Your Majesty our blessing. Given in Rome at Saint Peter's under the ring of the Fisherman, on 4th January 1611, in the sixth year of our pontificate.<sup>1</sup>*

When this letter reached the emperor, he was not able to reply because the ships had already left for India, but the joy and contentment that he showed on receiving it were extraordinary, and the desires that he had to send an ambassador were renewed to such an extent that, seeing that he could not do so by sea on account of the Turks, he decided to send one overland to the Malindi coast, which is held by Portuguese, because from the information that he had been given about this route he thought he would be very likely to get through. He asked me for a father to go with him so that the ambassador would be given greater credence in all matters in Portugal and in Rome. I offered him Father Antonio Fernandez, a Portuguese, at which he was very pleased, because he had been at court for years and could give a good account {of the affairs} of this empire. In the presence of his brother *Erâz* Cela Christôs, he informed the father of everything that he intended, as well as some things that it was not appropriate to put in the letters. They both swore

<sup>1</sup> Páez must have had access to this letter as well in the Ethiopian royal encampment archive.



to obey the Roman pontiff in every way and always to receive <their> patriarch from him, and they declared their hearts with such fond words that they clearly showed the great desire that they had to see their empire reduced to obedience to the holy Roman Church. {[f. 502v]} They appointed as ambassador a very noble man of great character and prudence by the name of Fecûr Egzi, which means ‘Beloved <[f. 458v/447v]> of God’ – and I am sure that he is, because of the fervour and goodwill with which he accepted such a difficult and dangerous enterprise, leaving behind his wife and children, and especially the great zeal with which he defends our holy faith and labours for it to spread, and the constancy with which he has sometimes offered to die for it.

While the emperor was dispatching the ambassador and having the letters written that they were to take, which took him a few days since he was occupied with business, Father Antonio Fernandez duly prepared himself for such an arduous journey with fervent prayers, in which he continually begged Our Lord from the bottom of his heart for his journey to be successful, and he offered the Masses that he was able to say at that time for it, and the other fathers and myself also said many on account of the obligation we had towards the father and because the importance of the business required it. Since the emperor wrote the letters in his language, we converted them into Latin and Portuguese, and their transcripts are as follows:

Copy of one that the Emperor of Ethiopia, Seltân Çaguêd, wrote to Pope Paul V  
*May this letter from the Emperor of Ethiopia, Seltân Çaguêd, reach the Holy Roman Pope Paul V, the head and shepherd of the universal Church, with the peace of the Good Shepherd Jesus Christ. Holy and beloved Father, we have received your letter of January 1611, full of that paternal love with which the gentle father eagerly welcomed the prodigal son when he returned, but it came at a time when we were unable to reply because the ships had already left for India. We have, however, decided to do so by another route, which we trust in God will open up, and we are sending Father Antonio Fernandez of the Society of Jesus, who has resided in our court for some time, and our Ambassador Fecûr Egzi, desiring that Your Holiness hear promptly how, through the doctrine of the fathers of said Society who reside in our empire, we have understood the truth of the faith of the blessed Saint Peter, and we have decided to receive it and to give obedience to Your Holiness as the head of the whole Church, and to be governed henceforth by your patriarch. But for us to be able to give this obedience publicly {[f. 503]} <[f. 459/448]> we need the assistance of Dom Philip, the mighty king of Portugal, because without him we shall by no means be able to give it in this manner. We therefore humbly beg Your Holiness – since you have written to us that you have commanded your apostolic nuncio, who resides with His Catholic Majesty, to put forward our petition with diligence – to ensure now that it is carried out in all haste, so that our empire may find remedy during our days and your happy years and such a good opportunity is not wasted. In addition, since you are the father of all Catholic monarchs, we beg that you include us among their number and, when you pray to God for them before the most holy bodies of the apostles, you do so for this your humble son. Written at our court of Dambiâ, on 31st January 1613.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> The inclusion of this letter in the *History of Ethiopia* supports the idea that Páez only began to collect source material for his book in 1613. The correspondence he cites from before this date comes from Guerreiro’s ‘Adição à Relação das coisas de Etiópia’; see Introduction.

The reason why he says here that he could by no means give obedience to the holy Roman Church publicly was that he feared that, as he did not have warriors that he could trust to withstand those who opposed him, he feared<sup>1</sup> some treason or mutiny that he would not be able to pacify. He was quite right and had good grounds to fear this, as can clearly be seen from what we said in chapters 4 and 5 of the second book and in some parts of his History, which we reported above, for the matters of our holy faith at that time were not as they are now, by the Lord's mercy.

Copy of another from the emperor to His Majesty

*May this letter from the Emperor of Ethiopia, Seltân Çaguêd, reach our brother Dom Philip, emperor of the Spains, with the peace of Jesus Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords. Ever since Almighty God, whose hand shares out the kingdoms of the world, gave us this empire, we have at all times sought appropriate means to govern it in peace and true faith, as is our obligation, and we have encountered great difficulties in both things. But, having understood the truth of the faith of the Roman Church from the fathers of the Society of Jesus who reside in our empire, and seeing in Your Majesty's letter of 15th March 1609 the great desire that you have to please us in whatever may arise, we have decided to adopt the means used by our grandfather Atanâf {[f. 503v]} Çaguêd, who, seeing this empire, faith and churches almost ruined by the Moors, called upon D. Joam of Portugal for help. And so we wish <[f. 459v/448v]> to do the same with Your Majesty, as we have already explained in other letters, and now we do so again through Father Antonio Fernandez of said Society, who has resided at our court for years, and our Ambassador Fecûr Egzî, so that this business may take effect as soon as possible and also so that Your Majesty may intervene on our behalf with the Supreme Pontiff to include us among the Catholic monarchs and to be a father to us, as he is to Your Majesty, and for his faith to be ours. But for us to be able publicly to give obedience to the chair of Saint Peter and to receive a patriarch from it, we need up to 1,000 Portuguese from Your Majesty, without which we shall not be able to give it publicly. When they come, they will take the port of Maçuâ on the Red Sea, and I shall give them the coastal lands and sufficient help to keep it. For the remainder, we refer you to the father and our ambassador. Written at our court of Dambiâ, on 13th January 1613.*

Another from the emperor to the viceroy of India

*May this letter from Emperor Seltân Çaguêd reach our friend, the viceroy of India, with the peace of Our Lord God. Because we have understood the truth of the faith of the chair of Saint Peter from the fathers of the Society of Jesus who reside in our empire, we have decided to receive it and have sent Father Antonio Fernandez, one of them, and our Ambassador Fecûr Egzî in order to explain this desire of ours in greater detail. Through them, we have written about this matter to His Holiness and to King Philip, our brother. However, because we cannot make this determination of ours public without having up to 1,000 Portuguese here, we should like you to send them to us as swiftly as possible, for, as we have understood from a letter from our brother the king, you will thereby give him much pleasure and us great contentment. When they come, we shall give them the coastal lands and help to keep the ports. And may craftsmen come with them, skilled principally in weaponry and buildings. For*

<sup>1</sup> Sic, repeated in both manuscripts.

everything else, we refer you to Father Antonio Fernandez and our ambassador. Written at our court of Dambiã, 1st February 1613.

{[f. 504]} <[f. 460/449]> Copy of one from Eráz Cela Christôs to Pope Paul V  
*May this letter from Cela Christôs, viceroy of Gojâm, reach the holy father Paul V, Supreme Pontiff, successor of Saint Paul and head of the universal Church, with the peace of the eternal Shepherd. Most blessed Father, just as the Holy Scripture says that those who were far off were brought near,<sup>1</sup> I, who was very far off, have now been brought near through the doctrine of the fathers of the Society of Jesus who reside in this empire, because, at the command of Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, my lord and brother, I have been present at many disputations that the fathers have held with our scholars and I have understood the truth of the faith of the chair of Saint Peter, and that it is the head of the whole Church. I have therefore come to believe it and have made my lord the emperor receive it and give obedience to Your Holiness. But because it is not possible for the emperor to give it publicly without having with him up to 1,000 Portuguese from the mighty king of Spain, Dom Philip, and I understood from the letter that Your Holiness deigned to send to my lord that you had commanded your apostolic nuncio who resides at His Catholic Majesty's court to try to effect this business with diligence, I have dared humbly to beg Your Holiness to ensure that it is concluded while my lord the emperor lives, so as not to waste such a great opportunity to find the lost sheep and return it to its true shepherd. When the soldiers come, I am prepared to die on my horse, if necessary, for this faith, and I shall seek with all my strength that it be received and obedience be given publicly to Your Holiness. In the meantime, I shall strive by every means to make all of our people fond of this true faith, just as I now seek to do so by translating Father João Maldonado's commentaries on the four Gospels into our language, with the help of the fathers, and I hope to translate many others. Therefore, most blessed Father, consider me your servant who will defend your apostolic see both with the sword and with the doctrine that he has learnt, for which he will be greatly helped by the prayers that Your Holiness will have said for this humble servant before the most holy bodies of the apostles. Written in Dambiã on 2nd February 1613.*

<[f. 460v/449v]> Copy of another from Eráz Cela Christôs to His Majesty  
 {[f. 504v]} *May this letter from Cela Christôs, viceroy of Gojâm, reach the most noble and mighty lord Dom Philip, emperor of Spain, with the peace of Our Lord God. May this peace be with Your Majesty always. Amen. Seeing that Emperor Seltân Çaguêd, my lord and brother, greatly desired Your Majesty's friendship and to receive the Catholic faith and to give obedience to the chair of Saint Peter through Your Majesty's intercession, and since at that time I had not such perfect information about the faith of the Roman Church as I wished, I asked for one of the fathers of the Society who reside in this empire to come to my court so that I could understand it better. I sometimes had our scholars join him and, finding that his arguments were convincing and that many approved of his doctrine, I finally decided that the faith of the Roman Church was the true one. I decided to die for it and to help my lord with all my strength in such a noble and glorious purpose as he had. When I later told him of this resolution of mine, he was very pleased and asked me to declare it also to Your Majesty,*

<sup>1</sup> Ephesians 2:13, 'But now in Christ Jesus, you, who some time were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.'

*through the fathers, and to point out to you that it will not be possible to give obedience publicly to the Roman Church without the help of 1,000 soldiers, who will take the Red Sea port of Maçuâ, where there is no resistance at all, and it will remain forever in Your Majesty's hands. And my lord will give you the coastal lands and abundant assistance in order to keep it all. For now, I can only offer myself as Your Majesty's vassal, as I am to my lord the emperor, and ask you as earnestly as I can to send these men as swiftly as possible, so as not to waste, through delay, an opportunity of such service to God, the good of the Church, the reduction of this empire, and the immortal glory of Your Majesty's name, for, if they come while my lord is alive everything will be achieved, but if he dies beforehand, Lord forbid, a similar opportunity will not be found soon. Our Lord God keep Your Majesty for many years so that, <[f. 461/450]> with your help, during your happy days, the sheep that have been lost for so long may return to the true Shepherd. Written in Dambiâ on 2nd February 1613.*

The emperor handed these letters to Father Antonio Fernandez of our Society and commanded that he be given the men and expenses needed for the journey. Dispatching him with words of great honour and love, he was moved with great pity to see how long, difficult and dangerous a journey he was commencing. Father Antonio Fernandez then took his leave of us two fathers who were with him in Dambiâ, {[f. 505]} and we all shed many tears; his were of joy for the good fortune that had befallen him of a journey on which it was clear to see that he would suffer greatly for the {Lord's sake} <Lord>, and ours were of sorrow at his absence and at not knowing whether we would see each other again in this mortal life. So he left us feeling very disconsolate and no less edified by the fervour and zeal with which he set off on such a long and {dangerous} <hard> journey in God's service, knowing that he was about to pass among Moors and heathens that were exceedingly barbaric and cruel.

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## CHAPTER XXX<sup>1</sup>

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### On how Father Antonio Fernandez set off from Dambiâ for the kingdom of Gojâm and from there to that of Nareâ, and what happened to him on the journey

Once Father Antonio Fernandez had taken his leave of the emperor and of us fathers, he set off from Dambiâ a{t the beginning of} <on 1st> March 1613 for the kingdom of Gojâm, where *Erâz* Cela Christôs, who was to give him guards for the journey, was already, and the ambassador was also waiting for him there, since he had gone on ahead to arrange his household affairs and take his leave of his wife and kinsfolk who lived there. He took with him four sons of Portuguese, young men aged up to eighteen, who were to accompany him as far as India, and six other Portuguese and Catholics, who would return from the kingdom of Nareâ, which is the farthest part of the lands that the emperor governs in that direction. On the fifth day they crossed the River Nile and, entering the kingdom of Gojâm, they went to a residence of ours that we already had there at that time in a land that they call <[f. 461v/450v]> Colelâ, which was under the care of a father. They stayed with him for a few days, since *Erâz* Cela Christôs had gone with an army to attack some heathens from a distant land. As soon as the father received news of his return, he went with his followers as swiftly as he could and found him in a land that they call Ombermâ, where he welcomed him and gave him lodging for eight days with much love and contentment while waiting for eight heathens that {[f. 505v]} they call Gâlas to arrive, who were to accompany him until he had crossed certain deserted areas on the other side of the Nile, where the same Gâlas often fall on travellers who do not take guides belonging to their caste. Once he had these and other heathens that they call Xâtes, who would also accompany him through other lands of their nation, he took the father aside and spoke to him as a superior of the Society might, laying before his eyes the importance of the business that he had <in his hands and> in his charge, and the hardships and adversities that the Devil would cause so that such a glorious enterprise might not come about, but he should break through them all with valiant and constant spirit, for he could see the great service to Our Lord that would result from that, which was the reduction of this empire and, with it, the salvation of so many souls that were lost; and amidst the greatest hardships and adversities, he should set his eyes on the Lord and place his trust in Him, from whom he would certainly receive every assistance, since he had offered to perform those labours for His sake and the enterprise was purely His. And he strongly recommended to him that he should seek to conclude it as soon as he could because, if the

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 247-51.

emperor should {fail} <die> before then, there would be great difficulty in effecting what they intended. Finally, with great devotion and his eyes brimming with tears, he threw himself at the father's feet to kiss them, believing that he would gain a great deal by kissing feet that were going to walk such long and hard paths for God's sake. The father hurried to raise him in his arms, asking how he could do such a thing. He insisted, but the father made him sit down, much edified to see the piety of such a great prince. He then earnestly begged the father, if Our Lord took him to Rome, to kiss His Holiness's foot on his behalf and to bring him a thread from his robe, because he would keep it in great esteem <[f. 462/451]> as something from the Vicar of Christ, and it would always be a great consolation to him.

After this, he called for the ambassador and animated him for the hardships and adversities that he might find on the journey, and he sent off the heathens who were to go with them very contented, and recommended that if they took good care of the father he would do them many more favours. With that, they all took their leave, and there were forty of them, apart from the eight heathen Gâlas. Leaving Ombemâ in mid-April, they set their course for the kingdom of Nareâ. After travelling for three or four days, they reached a land by the name of Xinâx, inhabited by heathens that they call Gongâs, to whom *Erâz Cela Christôs* {[f. 506]} was sending a message through a heathen of that same land to give the father a very good guard until he had passed through they lands they governed. But when he gave them the message, they replied that he and his companions could pass, but they would not accompany them by any means, which was the same as saying that they would certainly kill or rob them. They were doing this because shortly beforehand *Erâz Cela Christôs* had had one of the main chiefs of those heathens brought to justice for very serious crimes, and so they were angry. When the father and the ambassador saw the heathens' determination and the danger they were in, they decided to write to *Erâz Cela Christôs* to send men-at-arms, for otherwise they could not pass through. But none of the ambassador's servants would take the letter, because the road was dangerous. One of the four sons of Portuguese who were with the father then offered, and taking the letter he very swiftly returned to where *Erâz Cela Christôs* was.

The heathens soon discovered that he had written and, fearing that *Erâz Cela Christôs* would have them severely punished [because they are his vassals], they went to the father and ambassador and, making excuses for what they had said before, took them with a good guard to the edge of their lands. From there they journeyed on for two or three days until they reached the River Nile, which they necessarily had to cross because, as we said in chapter ...<sup>1</sup> of the first book, it makes an almost complete loop around the kingdom of Gojâm. Although the current is very strong in those parts, they could not find any boat other than <[f. 462v/451v]> a sort of raft that had a number of gourds tied on either side. They all crossed on it, with two strong young men who were good swimmers taking it, one pulling it in front and the other guiding it and helping behind. Since this was such a slow and difficult process, they took from morning until night to finish the crossing, and so they slept near the river. The following day, the father dismissed a heathen Gongâ whom *Erâz Cela Christôs* had commanded to accompany them until they had crossed the river, and asked him to tell the young Portuguese who had taken the letter to *Erâz Cela Christôs* to return home in peace, since the Gongâs had let them pass and he would not be

<sup>1</sup> Bk I, ch. 26. Blank space left in both manuscripts.

able to catch up with them, and it was also a very great risk for him to travel through that land without any other company.

At this time, the young man was already coming with many men-at-arms because, when he had reached *Eráz Cela Christôs*, the latter was so angry that the Gongâs had delayed the father there because they had not given him a guard as he had commanded that he at once very swiftly {[f. 506v]} sent three captains – the best he has – with orders to punish the heathens that they found guilty of delaying the father, and to accompany him until he had crossed the river. Three days later, the heathen bearing the father’s message met them and told them that he had already crossed the river and was telling the young Portuguese to turn back, because he would not be able to catch up with him. The Portuguese asked him for the father’s letter, and he replied that he had not given him one because he was in a hurry and had told him that it was enough to give a spoken message. Then, weeping, he said to the captains, ‘I think this man has had the father and his companions killed in order to rob them, because otherwise he would not have omitted to give him a letter. Seize him until we find out the truth.’ The captains replied that they knew him, and that could not be the case because he was a very loyal man and he would not have returned with such a message. Even so, they enquired of others that were coming and found that what the heathen said was true, and so they turned back, with the Portuguese feeling very sorrowful because he could not get through to accompany the father.

The father and his companions had not gone three leagues from the <[f. 463/452]> Nile when they faced a very great danger, because one of the ambassador’s servants, who was lagging behind, seized two pages by force from a heathen of that land, where they are also Gongâs. The outcry that he made over this drew many men with their weapons, and they made the incident much more serious. Added to this was the fact that some other heathens whom they call Gâlas were at the same time insisting that they should pay them tolls, and the other Gâlas that *Eráz Cela Christôs* had given to the father as guards were saying that they would not pay since they were the emperor’s couriers. While they were in this dispute, the Gongâs arrived shouting that they had robbed them, and they took the Gâlas who were demanding tolls as judges. And all together they decided to take this opportunity to rob them of all the goods that they had. When the father understood this, through some companions who knew the languages of both groups, he decided to make friends with the Gâlas, who were like the lords of the Gongâs. Taking them aside, he told them that it was not the custom for the emperor’s servants to pay tolls but, out of friendship, he would satisfy them, and that those Gongâs were making much ado about very little, and he would see that they were paid more than what had been taken from them {was worth}. He ordered that the Gâlas be given some blocks of salt, with which they were happy, because there is none in that land, and they said that they could pass and those Gongâs could not do anything where they were. When the Gongâs saw that the Gâlas were on the father’s side, they returned home with very little that they had been given.

{[f. 507]} The father continued his journey, taking two heathen Gâlas from that land to guide him, and they went due south, for in Gojâm they had travelled west almost all the time in order to meet *Eráz Cela Christôs*. On the third day, they came across a caravan coming from Nareâ. When they asked them what the road was like, they replied that a small party like theirs could not get through and they were just going to their deaths, because, if they escaped from some heathens called Xâtes who were waiting on the road,

further on they would fall into the hands of some kafirs who were very numerous and used to robbing people. At this news, some merchants who had joined the father in order to go <[f. 463v/452v]> to Nareâ turned back, and even some members of his own company appeared to be afraid of the journey, but the father encouraged them with kind words. And so they all with one heart decided to go ahead, saying that God would deliver them through their prayers. Then {a Christian} <one of the Christians> from that caravan, a native of Nareâ, offered to guide them by another, alternative route, away from {the} <those> kafirs, because he too was going to go back, at which they were very pleased and promised him his reward, and they went ahead. Having travelled for a few days, they reached the {passes} <pass> where the heathen {Xâtes} <Xautês> used to attack, and the two men of that caste whom *Erâz* Cela Christôs had given began to ask for goods and act arrogantly, for which the ambassador's servants would have killed them if the father had not stopped them. They at once took up battle order, making two squadrons, and with the baggage in the middle and flying their standards they began to climb up to the worst of the passes, which was in a very high, rugged and steep mountain range. Seeing their battle order and determination, the robbers, who were waiting in the narrowest, most rugged part, went off into the bush without daring to attack. And so they crossed the whole land of the {Xâtes} <Xâutes> without any encounter at all.

The following day, they came to a river that they call Manguêr, in very thick woods, to rest. Since they thought that they were out of danger, they put the mules out to pasture and they all spread out along the waterside. But while they were off their guard like this, many kafirs came through the bush and surrounded them and began to sound their horns from inside the bush. When {[f. 507v]} our people heard this, they very quickly gathered to where the father was. Seeing that a kafir was already taking two of their mules, some of them rushed at him and make him leave them behind. Then they fought the others so valiantly that they made them run some distance away, even though there were many of them. Fearing that they would join up with others {ahead}, a man who knew their language {shouted} <went forward and said>, 'How can you do this to us, since we are the emperor's couriers?' When the kafirs heard this, they answered that they had thought they were Gâlas, but that since they were the emperor's servants they should give them something and go on in peace. So they gave them two little caps and some blocks of salt, and with that they let them be. The father and his companions continued travelling in battle order, so that they would not be caught <[f. 464/453]> off guard again. And it was Our Lord's will that heavy rain then fell, at which the kafirs took shelter without seeing which road they were taking, because they could have sent a warning to other kafirs further ahead, who were the ones that they most feared since there were many of them and they were arrant thieves.

After they had travelled a long way in the rain, the man from Nareâ who had offered to guide them said that it was now time to leave that road and cross to another so as not to encounter the kafirs. And so they went into the bush and with great difficulty went down very rugged hillsides, travelling as fast as they could until nightfall, when they reached the banks of a large river that they call the Malêg, where the guide said that he had missed the crossing place. Although they walked a good distance in search of it, they were unable to find it, at which they all felt very disconsolate, because they were in a very deep valley, surrounded by very high, steep mountains, with no idea of how to get out. In addition, those who knew him said that on another occasion, when he had offered to



guide a great man, he had led him to some enemies, where the great man met his end with those who were accompanying him, and so they began to suspect that he had also brought them there for that purpose. When the father heard this, he told them that on no account should they show any mistrust, and calling the man, he said to him, 'Why tire us now by looking for the crossing place? How will you find it at night? You will soon find it tomorrow, so do not upset yourself.' And he commanded that they should share with him what they had for supper, but he secretly entrusted four men with keeping a good eye on him during the night watches, without his noticing, because if he ran away they would all be doomed.

They were wet and very cold, but they {[f. 508]} dared not make a fire in case any kafirs who might be in the mountains saw them and stopped them from leaving. Nevertheless, the cold later gripped them so hard that it forced them to light a fire to keep warm, for they were not thinking much about their supper because they were so afraid. They became even more frightened because in the middle of that night, which was very dark, some large birds began to cry out on the top of the mountains in such a way that they sounded like people whistling signals to one another. At that they were thought they were utterly doomed, as it seemed to them that <[f. 464v/453v]> the kafirs had surrounded them and it was impossible for them to escape.

The spent the whole night in this anguish, and before dawn they put out the fire so that the smoke would not be seen afterwards. As day began to break, the guide went to look for the ford, but well accompanied in case he ran off, and it was God's will that he found it, at which he and his companions came back very happy. Everyone else was no less happy at the news, and they loaded up in great haste, each one trying to cross the river first, since nobody wanted to be left behind. When they saw themselves on the other side, they gave thanks to God and travelled on with great difficulty, since it was thick bush and a bad trail. The guide went ahead with some others to look for the road that they wanted and, having found it after midday, they came back celebrating loudly, since they had already passed the danger of the kafirs. They therefore rested at once beside a river and that night they slept much more peacefully and soundly than the previous one. The following day they entered the kingdom of Nareâ and came to a large, strong mountain which is called Gancâ, covered with settlements, where the chief of the captains of Nareâ has his seat, and the one who was there at the time was called Abecân. He received the father and the ambassador with great honour and celebration, because *Erâz Cela Christôs* recommended that he do so and sent him a good present, and he kept them there for three days to rest, providing for their needs very liberally.

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## CHAPTER <XXXI><sup>1</sup>

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### How Father Antonio Fernandez went to where the governor of Nareâ was, and what happened to him until he left the kingdom

They all set off from that mountain for where the governor was, [travelling very happily] since they thought that while they were going through that kingdom they were not {{f. 508v}} in any danger whatsoever, because the people are very good and the lords do not permit any robberies or violence. But as they went on through the lands they found no people at all, and even the villages were deserted. They were very surprised at this, but could not understand the reason for something so unexpected. On the evening of the second day they found one man alone <[f. 465/454]> in a settlement. When they asked him why it was all deserted he replied that six days previously the Gâlas had suddenly fallen upon the area and taken many cattle and people captive, and therefore everyone had fled to the mountains and dared not come down, for fear that they would return, and he asked them how they dared to put themselves in such great danger. They said that, as they had not had any news of that in the Gancâ mountains, they had set off from there, and asked him what counsel he could give them. He answered that they could take no better counsel than to go through the bush along the mountains, sending out good spies in front, because they still had two days' journey ahead in which there was great danger. They were all very sad and even more afraid than they had been of the kafirs previously, because they knew very well that if they encountered the Gâlas they would not be able to escape unless they happened to be near some mountain stronghold. And so they left the road on the plain and went through the bush at the foot of the mountains with great difficulty and no less hunger, because, since all the people were in the mountains, they could not find anything to eat. They travelled on like this for two days as fast as they could and, before the danger was fully past, the ones who were going in front spying out the trail came across some local men. Joining them, they went back a little so that they themselves could tell the others the news about the road. But when the father's party saw them, they thought they were Gâlas because not only were there many of them but they resembled them with their shields. They were so troubled by this that they did not know what to do or how they could flee. When the others noticed that they were afraid, they signalled to them with their shields to come. They then realized that they were their own men. When they met, they learnt that they only had a short distance to go to be fully out of danger.

When they reached a settlement they considered themselves safe and travelled on more slowly. They procured what they needed with the currency of the land, which is usually

<sup>1</sup> The chapter number appears in BPB, MS 778 but has been left blank in ARSI, MS Goa 42. Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 253–6.

salt blocks and some little pieces of iron four fingerbreadths long, a little more than a fingerbreadth wide and very thin, which they call *caerâ*. There is also fine gold, which they get from the rivers by washing the sand, and also find in the fields, as we said in the first book. They give this by weight, since {[f. 509]} they do not use coins. <[f. 465v/454v]> After travelling for four days through inhabited lands with good cultivated fields, they reached a town where the governor of the kingdom resided. He was called Benerô, and deserved more the title of king than governor because his forefathers had been kings, and only their descendants can govern that kingdom. But after the emperors of Ethiopia took control of it a short time ago, they were left with the name of governor. This Benerô had as his confessor and tutor a monk of this land, a companion of the first ones that Emperor Malâc Çaguêd took with him to that kingdom when they began to become Christians, which was in about the year ...<sup>1</sup> Fearing that the father was going to settle there and teach, he told Benerô not to meet him on any account and not to take any notice of him. And so he took very little notice when he entered his house, and he commanded him to sit some distance away on a carpet on the floor, while he and the monk sat together on a raised area. Although he commanded that he and the ambassador be given wine made from honey – for they drink no other kind there – to drink in celebration, he spoke very little. Afterwards, he dismissed them and commanded that they be given whatever they needed in abundance, because the emperor had strongly recommended the father to him in {the} <his> letters. In the evening he called for the father and, since the monk was not there, he spoke to him with greater familiarity and asked what his intentions were. He replied that he intended to pass through there to his own land, since he could not go by sea {because of the Turks}, and the ambassador was going in order, if he could find a way, to bring back some craftsmen skilled in armoury and building, which the emperor greatly desired. He asked why he was undertaking such a long and dangerous journey and leaving the land of Ethiopia, which was so good. The father answered that it was natural for everyone to love his native country, whichever it might be, for even the ape would leave the fields he found, however blooming and beautiful they might be, and would be pleased to return to his cave. He spent some time in this conversation, and afterwards he told the father to go and rest.

Benerô asked all this to see if he could glean from the father's words what the emperor's principal intention was, because he had told him in the letters only that it suited his purpose <[f. 466/455]> that the father and the ambassador should go {[f. 509v]} straight to India by the safest route that could be found, and that he should diligently seek it and provide for all their needs and that, when the ambassador returned, he should send him with a good guard so that the arms that he would be bringing for him would not be lost on the journey. He immediately put this to his council, and they agreed that on no account should they allow the father to pass through that way, because if he opened up a route the Portuguese would come and take away their lands, and they could not withstand such a warlike people. Afterwards he summoned the father and, when they were alone, he asked him if he had news of any route by which he could pass, because he could not find one. The father replied that he had been assured that he could go through a land that bordered his, which is called Cafâ, and he had decided to go that way. He said that he had been misled, because that was entirely a land of heathens where none of his men had ever been

<sup>1</sup> The date has been erased in ARSI, MS Goa 42 and a blank space has been left in BPB, MS 778.

and through which it was impossible to pass, and since the emperor had recommended to him so strongly to send him by a safe route, he could not allow him to place himself in such evident danger. The father insisted that there was no shorter or safer route than that, and that the emperor would be angry if he hindered him, because he was so sure that he would seek out the best route that there was for him, that at the time of his departure he had told him that he should rest assured that he would arrange it very well, because there was nobody else who would carry out his recommendations more diligently or willingly. He replied that that was true, but that he could not let him go that way without first informing the emperor what was best for his service and the good of that kingdom, and that in the time of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd a white man had wanted to go through there and they had detained him while he wrote, and the emperor had commanded that he should not go. They would therefore inform the emperor now, and afterwards they would do whatever he commanded. This white man was a Venetian called Contarino, who had come via Cairo with merchandise and, since he dared not return via the Turks, he tried this route. Since they did not let him, he embarked in Maçuâ <[f. 466v/455v]> and went to India, when Mathias de Albuquerque was viceroy. The father replied that he could not wait so long; he was wasting his journey, and he could be sure that the emperor would be angry. With that he took his leave that day.

After this, a man who was a native of that land went to speak to the father; he had been to Castile and had embarked in Portugal for India, and {from there} <later> came here with {[f. 510]} the intention of opening up a route to Angola, and he told him that he was going to die to no avail, because by on no account would he be able to get through to the Malindi coast, and he should look for another route. A great man, who seemed to be a friend, disabused him by saying that he should not insist, because they would not let him go that way on any account without a new message from the emperor. When the father saw this and realized that if he had to wait for a reply he would be forced to overwinter there, he agreed on the ambassador's advice to go a different way, fearing that if they stayed the ones who did not like our holy faith would stop them from going, as indeed they were trying to. Thus resolved, he went to speak to the governor and, finding him of the same opinion {as before}, he said to him, 'If there is no route through here, we shall go via Balî, which are other lands of the emperor, although a short while ago a Moor invaded them and the Christians have been retreating.' He replied that if there was a route through there he should go in peace, and he would command that he be given a guard until he had left his lands, and after that a servant of a heathen king through whose lands he was going to pass would accompany him, for he had recently arrived with a message from him. The father thanked him for this and asked to leave soon, because winter was already approaching.

At this point, the father was told that that monk, the governor's tutor, was still not convinced that he would move on but thought that he had come to settle there and take his position from him, and so he went to visit him and took him a piece of boffeta.<sup>1</sup> He received him sombrely and did not wish to accept it since he thought he had some important purpose. The father gathered this from his words and said that all he wanted was for him to make the <emperor> governor <[f. 467/456]> give him permission to move on at once, because winter was approaching and he would have difficulty on the road, and that he had brought that so as not to come to him empty-handed, as he was the

<sup>1</sup> Fine cotton fabric of Asian origin.

father of all those people. He showed at once that he was relieved and, taking the boffeta, recounted how he had come with the first monks who had started to make the people of that kingdom Christians and that, since they were heathens they had many wives, and they made them give them up, but they let them keep two because of the resistance they encountered in this matter. And so they all kept them openly, so much so {[f. 510v]} that the governor usually had two in his house sitting beside him. But this is because they have not been taught, for if they were taught they would readily give up this custom, because they are a very docile people of good <wit and> understanding, and {they have} great respect and obedience towards their teachers. When the father spoke to them, they listened very carefully and said that their monks had ordered them to do that, and they showed that they thought it was wrong, and that what the father said to them entered their hearts.

Afterwards, the governor summoned the father and told him that he wished to do him many honours, as was right, but he had not dared because his tutor had told him not to do so on any account. He asked him to forgive him and to understand that he had not done so out of arrogance or unwillingness. The father replied that he was not saddened by that at all, but rather he was very grateful for the favours he had done him, for he had lacked for nothing in almost a month that he had spent at his court. He wished only that he would give him permission to leave because it was already beginning to rain, and if the rivers rose he would not be able to pass. He said that he should go at once with the peace of Our Lord, and that he had already commanded a captain who was nearby to give him guards until he had left his lands, and afterwards he would be guided by the servant of that heathen king that he had mentioned to him, and others that he was sending there with a message. But there were some dangerous passes on that road, particularly one where there were usually Gâlas, so he should keep a good lookout ahead. With that, he took his leave of the governor and he at once sent him five weights of gold, {which make fifty *cruzados*,} asking him to forgive him, for he realized that such a small amount was not appropriate for the father to receive or for him to send, but for the time being he was very burdened <[f. 467v/456v]> by sending the emperor's revenue and having many servants of his there that he had to keep content. The father replied to him with many thanks and prepared to leave.

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## CHAPTER {XXXI} <XXXII><sup>1</sup>

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### How Father Antonio Fernandez left the kingdom of Nareâ and went to that of Zenyero, and from there to the land of Cambât

Father Antonio Fernandez wished to continue his journey so much that, once he had the governor's permission, he set off straight away with the {[f. 511]} ambassador for the place where the captain who was to give him guards was, which was a day's journey away. He received them well, expecting to receive plenty of goods from them, and when he saw that what they gave him was not as much as he had hoped, he made them wait for eight days and then passed them on to another captain, who was subject to him, and this one gave them eighty men to accompany them, and they journeyed eastwards for four days in the greatest haste through deserted lands and on a very rough road. On the last day they went in great fear and with a good lookout ahead, since it was the pass of the Gâlas. Having slept that night on the borders of the kingdom of Nareâ, those eighty men rose before dawn and told the father and ambassador to go in peace, because they had been commanded to accompany them as far as that, and then they ran back because they were so afraid. They were left no less frightened, but they put themselves in God's hands. When dawn came they marched on, keeping someone in front all the time to spy out the land so that if he found anything they could hide in the bush. After midday they began to descend a very long mountain, from which they could see vast plains, which they call Beterât, a land of Boxâ, where the Gâlas usually pasture their cattle, and it was the pass that the governor of Nareâ had said he greatly feared. They took counsel as to what to do, and the king of Zenyero's servant said that before they finished descending the mountain they should take to the bush and afterwards cross the plain by night in absolute silence, because if they happened to be seen or heard they would not be able to escape.

Everyone thought this counsel good and so, on reaching a suitable place, <[f. 468/457]> they hid until four o'clock in the afternoon, when they continued the descent. Soon after they reached the plain it began to rain and everything was covered in very thick, cold mist, which they considered a singular mercy from Our Lord because it seems that the Gâlas took shelter from it, and they even saw smoke in one place where the mist allowed. {[f. 511v]} Making the most of this good opportunity, they marched very fast, but when night fell they had great difficulty because there was no path and, apart from the rain, the night was very dark. The father in particular suffered greatly through walking, as it was not possible to ride the mule because of the many thorn bushes and trees that blocked the way with their branches. They walked in this way until nearly midnight, when they

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 257–66.

reached some large trees, and they settled down under them to rest and make a fire, because they were soaked through and so cold that they could not move. Then they also had great difficulty in lighting the fire, which would not catch because the tinder was damp. Their supper was just toasted barley, and there was very little of this for each of them because they had run out of everything, since they had been travelling for so many days through deserted lands.

Before dawn they {put out the fire and} journeyed on<, having first put out the fire>. Towards noon they came across some trees that they call *docomâs*, which have sweet fruit like ripe olives. Seeing them laden, the father's and ambassador's companions went over to them. No matter how much the others told them to hurry up, as they were still in great danger, they could not make them come, so they went on and left them behind. On seeing this, the father stopped to make them all come, and when he tried to move ahead he missed the path, which was very narrow, and ended up on some rocks, and so he turned back very fast and, catching sight of one of those who had stayed behind, he followed him. When he caught up with the others he saw that one of the young Portuguese was missing, at which he was very upset and made them turn back to look for him. By God's will, after a long time, they heard him shouting <[f. 468v/457v]> amidst the bush, for he no longer knew which way to go. They reached him and took him with them with great joy, and it was also a great joy for everyone who had feared that something terrible had happened to him. Once he arrived, they journeyed on in a more orderly fashion. That afternoon, after going down a long hillside, they came to a large river that they call Zebê, and the noise of the waters rushing with great force among rocks and cliffs was so extraordinary that they could not hear each other even when they shouted. There was no {[f. 512]} ferry or any bridge other than a very thin pole that was so long that it reached from one rock to the other, although it was a great distance. So it seemed a temerity to cross on it, because just one person made it shake as if it were a thin stick, and it was like hell if they looked down because it was so far down to the water. Even so, they at once began vying to cross, because they were too afraid to spend the night on that side. They importuned the father to cross at once, but he dared not until they cut down another tree, laid it across next to the other one and tied short sticks from one to the other so that it was like a ladder, at which the ones who had not yet crossed were very pleased.

When this hardship and anguish was over, there remained yet another for them, which was that they did not know how to get the mules across, because there was no ford there and they could not look for one because it was already dark. Nobody dared stay behind with them to guard them, because a fire could be seen on one side of the mountain and they were sure it had been lit by Gâlas. But since it would be utterly impossible for them to continue their journey without the mules, they begged two young men to guard them and, if they heard anything, they should leave them and cross over to them, since they could now do so without danger.<sup>1</sup> Thus the two young men stayed on that side with very little supper, because not even the others had anything better than the previous night, although they were not so afraid because from the river onwards were the lands of the king of Zenyerô. Thus, that same afternoon, his servant went ahead to tell him that ambassadors from the emperor were coming. In the morning two local men arrived there and, seeing that the mules were on the other side, offered to get them across if they would

<sup>1</sup> BPB, MS 778 starts a new paragraph here; ARSI, MS Goa 42 does not.

give them something. Having agreed on a small amount, they took them to the place they knew, but even there the current was so strong and made <[f. 469/458]> so many whirlpools that one of them was unable to keep away. Thus he and the mule went to the bottom in danger of being dashed to pieces on the rocks, but they came out a good way downstream. From there they started to climb a very high mountain, {[f. 512v]} and towards noon they reached a village, where they stayed for eight days because they could not go any further without the king's permission. And at that time he was not giving audience to anyone, because he was doing I know not what sorcery.

When he had finished his accursed ceremonies, he commanded them to come. Having travelled since the morning, they reached the place where he was in the evening and found him on a kind of tower or lookout that he had built on the plain near his palace, some twelve spans high, sitting alone up there on a carpet and dressed in white, although he was as black as jet, yet handsome because he had large eyes, a straight nose, thin lips and a good build. All the great men were standing below. As the father and the ambassador reached them, they made obeisance from there to the king and said that they were bringing a letter from the emperor. He came down at once and received the emperor's letter standing, asked how he was and then went back up. Sitting where he had been before, he started asking many things through an interpreter, and each time he asked one, the interpreter bowed his head and kissed the fingertips of both his hands, and then the ground, because he too was down below. Then he would go with the message to the father, who was a short distance away, and when he returned with the reply he would bow his head and kiss his fingertips before giving it. With these ceremonies, he stayed talking for a good while, and then he told them to go and rest, and he would diligently do everything that the emperor had written to him, which was that if the father happened to pass through his lands he should give him a guard and treat him well, even though he is not a subject king, but he is always friendly. When they reached the place where they were to be lodged, he sent them three cows, bread and honey wine in abundance along with everything else they needed, so that they lacked for nothing while they were there, which was for three or four days.

The next day the father presented him with some black cloths from India, for which he thanked him and he seemed to appreciate them highly, because this kind of clothing rarely gets there. Afterwards he visited his father and gave him a fine cloth; <[f. 469v/458v]> although his son was king, {he never had been} because that kingdom is not passed on {[f. 513]} from father to son, but is given by election by means of sorcery, in the following manner:

When a king of theirs dies, all the sons and kinsmen to whom the kingdom may belong flee to the bush, which is very thick, and each one hides far away wherever he thinks best, and a certain sort of men have the task of shrouding the king in a silk cloth, and then they slaughter a cow and sew him up inside and, leaving him thus in his house, they go with other companions of theirs and many weapons in search of the one who will be king. As they go into the bush, if they find a lion or leopard or snake or some other fierce animal near one of those who are hiding, they say that he is the one chosen to be king. They say they have another sign to tell who will be king, which is that many birds perch on the trees where he is hiding, and one, which they call *ibêr*, flies up very high and gives a single cry that is so loud that it can be heard very far away, and then it flies down and sits with the others, and they say that it is a bird of prey like an eagle and it is so strong that it can carry off a young goat in its talons. They know the place where he is hiding from these signs. It is



not surprising that it happens like that, as many people say, because those whose duty it is to look for the one who will be king are great sorcerers, but he does not allow himself to be taken straight away but instead fights and kills whomever he can. After they have caught him, they take him back with great celebration, singing and dancing. And there is another sort of men in this same kingdom who do not actually have the task of going and looking for the one who will be king but, if they can seize him by force when he is brought back, they and not the others proclaim him king and become great. Many men usually die in these disputes, and those that win take him and put him in a field tent, which they have already erected for him and furnished with carpets. Then they take the dead king out of his house and put him in another, and they burn all the houses in which he lived together with all his possessions, without leaving anything at all, however rich he might be, and they keep the body until the seventh day after his death, when they say a worm comes out through his nostrils, which they take and wrap in a little silk cloth and make the new king kill it with his teeth. Then, with great celebration, they {[f. 513v]} {elect} <raise> him as king. Certain great men go where they had put the dead king and drag him through the streets and across the plain to the place where the kings are buried, which is a wood some distance from the town, and they tell him to bless the land before entering it. When they reach it, they put him in the grave that they have already dug and slaughter cattle around it so that their blood pours onto him, and they leave him like that, uncovered. Even so, no animal or bird will come to <[f. 470/459]> eat him. From then on, they slaughter a cow over him every day at the moment when the sun begins to rise, for they get ready for this a little before, and this goes on until another king dies; and the men that kill the cow eat the meat.

Once the dead king has been buried, the new king commands that all those who were his counsellors and closest confidants be brought to him from wherever they might be. When they come, he tells them that since their lord, who honoured and esteemed them so highly, has died, it is not right that they should remain, but that they should accompany in death the one whom they loved so much in life. And he commands that they should all be slain at once, and he appoints other new ones for himself. Then they begin to build the house where the king is to live, which is round and very wide. Thus they always put a timber pole in the middle, and for this they look for a very straight, tall tree. Before cutting it down, they slay a man at its foot and anoint it with his blood. This man is the first one they find of a certain family which, so they say, does not pay tribute to the king, but I do not know what greater tribute there can be than this. Matters do not end with just one because, once the house is built and the king is about to enter it, they slay another man of that family at the door, or two if it has two doors, and they anoint the doors with the blood. Then the king enters with much celebration and commands that they very carefully check whether there are any scaldheads or lepers in his kingdom and, if they find any, they must take them over to the other side of the River Zebê and cut off their heads there, because if they stay in his kingdom or are killed in it, they will pass the disease on to others. And if thenceforth he does not leave his house before sunrise, he cannot come out at all that day nor can anyone from outside go in to talk to him, and {just} <not even> the ones who usually serve him can enter.

He has the custom of taking at will the {[f. 514]} sons of his vassals (except those of that family whom they slay at the foot of the post and the doors of the house) and selling or giving them as slaves to whomever he wishes. Thus, when some merchant goes to his land and sells or presents him with some goods, he commands his pages, who are numerous, to

bring him the first children they can find, and even though they are very young they go into the houses and take the ones they want, without the parents daring to resist or say a word. Once they have brought them, he gives them to the merchant as slaves in payment for the goods. On other occasions he has them brought from far away, and he gives them to the couriers that the emperor sends, because it is a custom <[f. 470v/459v]> not to dismiss them without giving them something. When someone dies, they take him to the fields to be buried, and when they return they burn down his house, and if he has some fruit trees planted around it they uproot them, because they say that, as he was accustomed to being there, he will return and kill those he finds in his dwelling-place.

When they go to war, if someone is wounded, however little, his brother or kinsman, if he is there, kills him at once, in case he dies of that wound and it is said that the enemies killed him, which they take to be a great dishonour, so much so that, no matter how much the wounded man entreats his kins{man}<men> and even his brother<s> they will not spare him. And if there are no brothers or kinsmen there, other people will kill him without mercy.

When the father was about to depart, having already taken his leave of the king, he sent him a young maiden as a slave who in her clothes, modesty and beautiful face seemed to be the daughter of great people. Some kinsfolk came with her, weeping, and they begged the father to treat her well, because she had been brought up tenderly. The father told them not to be sad because he would not take her. And he at once sent word to the king that he was very grateful for the favour, but it was not the fathers' custom to take women with them. When he heard this, he said that the girl should stay and sent a slave boy and, on hearing that a mule that he had had him given previously was not a good one, he sent another very fine one out to him on the road from his own household, as well as men to help them cross the same River Zebê that they had crossed before, because it makes a loop around a large part of that kingdom and strengthens and defends it greatly against the Gâlas, who are their neighbours. On the other side it also has large mountains and sheer {[f. 514v]} cliffs full of monkeys, and it seems that that is why the kingdom is called Zenyerô, which means monkey. But good wheat and barley also grow in many parts of the mountains and on the plains that they have, as well as other crops that are not found in Spain.

On the same day on which they had set off from where the king was, they reached the river for the night, but only with great difficulty because of a very long descent that was so steep that they had had to walk. There they slaughtered a cow, and with the skin they made a large bag in which they put the goods that would fit, and then they filled it with air and tied a long pole on one side and another on the other. They began to cross very early in the morning, three of them on one side holding on to the pole with their <[f. 471/460]> hands and three others on the other side, so that their whole bodies hung under the water with only their heads showing, for they did not put anyone on top of the skin. And a strong young man swam in front, pulling the end of one of the poles, with two others behind to help, and the ones hanging on the sides had to be equally balanced and not struggle or else they would at once tip the balance to that side and their heads would go underwater. Then, if one fell off, all the rest were at serious risk. They could not go straight across because the current was strong, and instead they had to go with the water, so they would come out a long way downstream. When the father saw this, he was very afraid of crossing, but he was forced to venture because there was no other way. One

Portuguese who refused to cross in that manner but relied on the fact that he was a good swimmer was almost lost, because the current took him and he went under two or three times, and once he reached the other side after a long time he was almost completely unconscious. Their crossing was so slow that they spent the whole day on it, and so they had to sleep beside the river that night.

The following day they journeyed on among very rugged mountains. They spent the night in a village called Jangrâ, which belonged to a great Christian lord – one of the emperor's subjects – by the name of Hamelmâl, and everything that he governs is called Cambât. There they told him that that lord was close by, but they should wait a little and go with the people who would be going from there to a {{f. 515}} market, because the road was dangerous, since some heathens, whom they call Guraguês, sometimes came out to rob people. They therefore stayed there for two days, and it seems that they made them wait on purpose in order to warn the heathens, because, as they later found out, those people were never going to that market. The next day they continued their journey as they had found no company, and shortly after noon seven men came galloping out on horses and brandishing their spears. But the ambassador and the others immediately placed themselves in front of the father and his companions and asked them what they wanted, since they were the emperor's servants. They then stopped, because they were Christian vassals of that lord, and replied that they were coming to see what people they were, <[f. 471v/460v]> and that they should go on in peace because the road was safe. Soon afterwards, however, five heathens on horseback came across with many men armed with bows and arrows. When the father's companions saw this, they drew up in order and, when they reached them, they fought valiantly. While the fighting was very fierce, one of the heathen horsemen drew apart and charged at the father, who was alone on one side. One of the ambassador's servants, a great horseman, then said, 'Go and help the father, because that man is going to attack him.' Just then, he uncovered himself a little and was wounded by a poisoned arrow in the neck. A servant of his at once ran on foot at the heathen and, as he tried to hurl his spear at him from so close that he could not miss, the father shouted to leave him, because he was the captain and if he killed him the others would not spare anybody.

When our men saw that their chief was so badly wounded, they told the father to hurry on with the baggage train, because they were close to the border that those heathens would not dare cross, and he did so. They then all charged together with great spirit, determined to die or to win, and their impetus was such that the heathens were unable to withstand them, even though they were in much greater numbers, and so they took to the bush, but as our men turned back, the heathens fell on them at once. However, by charging again with the same fury, they made them flee a second and third time until the {{f. 515v}} heathens saw that they had no chance and left the dispute, saying that they wanted nothing to do with men who fought so well. Our men then went to where the father was waiting, which was beside a river, and he was very sorry at that nobleman's misfortune and diligently tried to make some medicine and give him an antidote, and with that he was a little more relieved. They went to where Hamelmâl, the lord of Cambât, was in order to spend the night, but as it was already dark they were unable to talk to him until the next day. When they said that they were bringing a letter from the emperor, he came out of his house to receive it, as is the custom out of courtesy, and he commanded his people to give them all very good lodgings and to provide for their needs.

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## CHAPTER {XXXII} <XXXIII>

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Which deals with the adversities and hardships that the father had in Cambât, and how later a Moor tried to kill him

<[f. 472/461]> Since the Devil was fearful of the great harm that would result for him from the father's journey, he {sought} <decided> to prevent it by means of a Christian in name who was there collecting the emperor's revenue, and he was called Manquêr, which means 'Marvel'. And it was a very great one that the father escaped from his hands, considering the evils that he invented against him, because straight away the following day, without ever having been done any wrong by the father or by any of those who were traveling with him, he said to Hamelmâl, 'Lord, these men are fleeing from the emperor and are going to Adel to make the people rise up against him. Have them apprehended and their goods seized or else the emperor will put the blame on you and you will be in considerable trouble.' He replied that that could not be the case because they had brought him a letter. 'That means nothing', he said, 'because these Portuguese are very cunning. They will have written it. I demand on the emperor's behalf that you have their servants held separately from one another and questioned very well, because this is a matter of treason and requires careful examination.' In the end he said so many things to him that he made him begin to mistrust them and give him a judge before whom he could accuse them. He then went with the judge to where the father and the ambassador were and told him to apprehend them. The judge said that his lord had only commanded him to do justice, and that if he had anything against them he should put it forward. {[f. 516]} He then alleged the same as he had said to Hamelmâl. The ambassador replied that it was all false, as could clearly be seen because they had come to Nareâ with the couriers that the emperor was sending to Governor Benerô and he, because of the letters that they had brought, had done them many honours as the emperor had commanded, and had given them eighty men to accompany them to the borders of his lands, and others to guide them as far as the king of Zenyerô, and the latter too had done them many honours and had sent them there. Therefore, had they been fleeing, the emperor's couriers would have told Benerô and he would have sent them captive to the emperor. The judge then left the father and the ambassador and, taking their servants aside, questioned them one by one. And they all told the truth in exactly the same way, and no contradiction was found among them.

Once the judge had carried out this investigation, he went to Hamelmâl and said what the ambassador had replied and that, after questioning his servants and carrying out a very thorough examination, he had not found any contradiction at all among them. He

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 267–9.

believed that they were speaking sincerely and that everything that was being said about them was false. Hamelmâl thought the same, but that Manquêr made so many demands again that he should not let them pass but <[f. 472v/461v]> send them as prisoners to the emperor, and he had so much authority over him that he left him very confused. When the father and the ambassador saw that, and fearing that he might do so, they said that they had already come a very long way and would not go back, and that if he hindered their journey because of what that man said the emperor would be very angry. However, if he really wanted to take that upon himself, he should send one man and they another and Manquêr another, and they would all write to the emperor, and they would wait there for the reply. Hamelmâl finally resolved to do that and sent a servant together with another from Manquêr, and the father sent with them a young Portuguese and wrote to me about what was happening, so that I could speak to the emperor. Manquêr then demanded that they hand over all their goods to him {on account} <for the time being> for him to keep safe, and then to give an account to the emperor. The father replied that he had no objection to the goods being deposited until a reply arrived from the emperor, but that it would not be in his hands but {{f. 516v}} in Hamelmâl's, and that he should have them all fed from those same goods. Hamelmâl then commanded that the goods be counted and be left in the possession of the father and the ambassador, and that is what they did.

Manquêr was very angry at not being able to get his hands on the goods and, not content with the harm that he had done them, decided to make them hated by every sort of people that there were in <all> those lands. And to this end he used to say to the Christians that the father and the ambassador were false, and that they were going to bring back Portuguese, and they would make them change their ancient faith. He told the heathen Gâlas that they would bring back Portuguese, who were very strong men who fought with arquebuses and bombards and would destroy them all, and they should not let them pass through their lands but kill them instead. He tried to persuade the Moors of the same thing, and by deception he obtained permission from Hamelmâl to go and speak to a neighbouring Moorish captain through whose lands the father would have to pass, and he said to him, 'Look, a Portuguese is coming to your land to bring back warriors in order to destroy you all. You know very well that it was the Portuguese who in the past killed Granh and many of your kin.' (He was speaking of Dom Cristóvão da Gama and those who came with him.) 'Decide what you will do now. He will be coming through here. Seize him and have him killed, and you will find plenty of gold and goods <[f. 473/462]> that he is taking for this purpose.' The Moor thanked him for the warning and was very eager to have the father in his hands, both because of the goods that he hoped to find and because he thought that if he killed him he would be doing Mohammed a great service. In this way that accursed man went around stirring everyone up so that, if the emperor gave permission for the father to move on, he would be unable to escape.

At this time, which would have been about a month after they arrived there, the ambassador's brother-in-law died from the arrow wound he had received on the journey, but having confessed and prepared himself well like the good Catholic that he now was. Not only the ambassador {but also} <and> the father {and} <but also> all the others were very sad, for he had been very important to them as he was very prudent and so brave that he had never been seen to show any fear in any of the encounters they had had, but instead he encouraged the others and made them attack with great confidence and courage.

Manquêr's heart was not softened to see them all so sad, but rather he invented new things every day to trouble them, clearly showing the great hatred that he had towards them. But the father and the ambassador suffered everything with {{f. 517}} patience and always responded with very gentle words, and they had commanded their followers to do the same and on no account to have disputes with Manquêr's men, however much cause they might give them to do so. But even though they wanted to keep to this, they could not escape, because one night one of Manquêr's company went with spear and shield and for no reason at all began to speak very ill to two of the ambassador's servants ~~{and a very serious fight ensued}~~. They replied by telling him to go away, since they wanted nothing to do with him, and moved away. He followed them very arrogantly, saying whatever he liked, and so they turned round and started to fight. As the people nearby shouted, Manquêr came out with his weapons and said to the young man, 'Fear not, for I, Manquêr, have come to help you. Our time has come. Let us finish them off.' And other servants of his came out at once. Some of the ambassador's came as well, and a very serious fight ensued. The ambassador, who was dining with the father, heard the uproar and, thinking it must be his servants, he went with just a stick in his hand. When he saw that the affray was with Manquêr, he began to use his stick on his own servants and made them fall back, and he told Manquêr to stop and there would be no more fighting. But he only wanted to continue. The young man who had started the fight ran forward and wounded one of the ambassador's servants who had already <[f. 473v/462v]> moved back. Feeling the wound, he turned on him and speared him so hard that he fell at once and lay there dead, and the people who came up apprehended the killer.

The next morning Hamelmâl came and appointed a judge. Having gathered information he ruled that he should be hanged and wanted to take the sentence to Hamelmâl, because it could not be carried out unless he confirmed it. The ambassador demanded that the sentence should go to the emperor, because Hamelmâl could not be the judge of his servants except to hear witnesses regarding what they had done. While they were engaged in these disputes, the prisoner escaped from gaol, and so the accusations stopped, but not the hardships and persecution of the father and the ambassador, because Manquêr became even more enraged at this and would not leave them alone, coming up with new things against them every day. On two nights he had men assembled to attack their houses, which are single-storey with thatched roofs. Things became {{f. 517v}} so inflamed that they no longer knew how to calm them down. They were only consoled by the idea that when the emperor's reply arrived they would be free from that terrible {persecutor} <persecution>. However, three months after the men taking the letters to the emperor had departed from there, they returned without having gone more than three days' journey away, because a Moor had captured them and had often threatened to kill the young Portuguese, and in the end he had told them to return to Hamelmâl. When the father and the ambassador saw this, they were as sad and disconsolate as may be imagined from the affair and miserable state that they were in, with no other remedy to escape from it than that reply, for which they would have to wait yet again. And so they had Hamelmâl write to the emperor again and send another servant of his with the young Portuguese by another route.

These last letters did reach the emperor, and when he learnt what was happening he was furious and immediately dispatched a courier, who was called Baharô. He wrote to the father and to Hamelmâl showing how angry he was, and he reprimanded Manquêr as his wickedness demanded, and he commanded Hamelmâl to give {the father} at

once as much of his revenue as he would need for the journey, as well as two trustworthy men to accompany him as far as the sea and to return from there with a letter from him, and he would do them many favours. This courier and Hamelmâl's servant reached <[f. 474/463]> Cambât in June and, although winter was already beginning, the father decided to move on. But the ambassador first wanted to leave everything that Manquêr had done proven with witnesses, so that he could not later deny it to the emperor and with his customary lies hide the truth of what had happened. Thus he took him to justice and in the presence of Hamelmâl and the courier who brought the emperor's letters he {proved} <went over> everything that he had intended to do, and Hamelmâl arrested him at once to send him in chains to the emperor. He gave the father seven horses, which was the best thing he could take to present to the lords of the lands through which he would pass, for he had plenty for his expenses. While the father finished getting ready, the courier went to that neighbouring Moor, who was called Alicô, for whom he had also brought a letter and caftans from the emperor so that he would help the father on his journey and give him a guide.

Meanwhile, on considering more carefully the hardships and great perils that they had faced so far, even though {[f. 518]} most of their journey had been through lands belonging to Christian subjects of the emperor, and imagining that those that they would face afterwards among Moors and heathens would be much worse, many of them dared not venture any further. They thus stayed behind in order to return home with the first safe company that they could find. Some of the father's few companions decided to do the same. When he heard this, he encouraged them with kind words and exhorted them to place all their trust in God, for whose sake they had offered to accompany him on that journey. He said that they should not turn back on account of any difficulty that they might imagine or hardship that they would face, but they should persist in this matter of such service to Our Lord, for neither the people among whom they were going to pass, however barbaric they might be, nor even the Devil himself could do them any harm without God's permission. Thus when the Devil brought them greater fears and showed them greater hardships to make them give up doing the good thing they had started, they should not fear them so much as their own pusillanimity and lack of confidence in being able to continue God's service. Indeed, if God let them suffer in order to test them, He would crown them, and if it was to punish them, He would deliver them, and if it was to kill them, He would save them without fail, which was and is – as old Saint Tobias says in chapter 3<sup>1</sup> – the consideration <[f. 474v/463v]> of all the Lord's faithful servants in the greatest perils and hardships. This was shown well in the works of the one whose words were, 'Although he should kill me, I will trust in him,' Job 13.<sup>2</sup> 'He will take my life away, if it suits Him, but not my trust,' said the father. 'Thus I shall hope after death that He will raise me again to His glory, as I hope that He will deliver and save me through His grace for so long as I live.' Finally he said such things and with such spirit that, putting aside the fears and misgivings that they had had before, they all resolved with one heart to accompany him wherever he went and, if necessary, to die in front of him.

<sup>1</sup> Tobias 3: 'But this every one is sure of that worshippeth thee, that his life, if it be under trial, shall be crowned: and if it be under tribulation, it shall be delivered: and if it be under correction, it shall be allowed to come to thy mercy.'

<sup>2</sup> Job 13:15.

Once the father had finished preparing for his departure, he went to take his leave of Hamelmâl and asked him what he thought of that Moor Alicô, through whose lands he had to pass, for as Manquêr had been there previously he was afraid that he had told him some lies and that he might do them some harm. He replied that no matter what he had been told he would not dare do anything because, apart from being the emperor's vassal, {{f. 518v}} the courier had just taken him caftans and a letter commanding him to give him a good welcome. Nevertheless, the father asked him only to send Manquêr to the emperor once they had got past the Moor, in case he tried to hinder their journey with his falsehoods. He said he would do so. The father then departed with the ambassador and in a day and a half they reached the land that they call Labâ, where the Moor was, and he received them with a sullen expression, showing the evil heart that he had, but he commanded that they be given lodging and whatever they needed. And he sent two cows and kept them for two days without giving them a guide. On the third day, Manquêr arrived, since he had escaped from prison by plotting with someone who was in gaol with him. The father and the ambassador were very unhappy at this and asked the courier Baharô, who had brought the emperor's caftans to the Moor, to secretly find out if Manquêr was scheming anything against them. He discovered that he was counselling the Moor to take the goods and slay the important people and sell the lesser ones, but he said that they should not be afraid because he would not dare. Even so, the Moor did decide to do so and, because the courier would not side with him and in fact put up resistance, for he was a great horseman, he had him apprehended. And then they took the horses that Hamelmâl had given to the father and three mules that he had, with all the goods and gold that he was taking for the journey. <[f. 475/464]> And it was God's will that, although they stripped him to see whether he had more gold hidden away, they did not find the letters, because he had slipped them under his arm between his doublet and shirt. And it was a great mercy of the Lord, for had he found them he would not have spared them, because as they were also written in the Amharic language they would have seen the secret and felt that it confirmed what Manquêr was saying – that they were going to bring back Portuguese to destroy them. They also took the goods that the ambassador was taking and held him and the father in different houses under good guard.

The following day, some heathens came to raid that land in order to take the Moors' cattle, and so they all left with their weapons, leaving just two guards with the father. Thinking it a good opportunity to burn the letters, because he was afraid that they would search him again, as some people said they would, he asked them to have someone bring some fire so that he could take a little vapour, since he was feeling indisposed. One of them who had more compassion brought some, and, positioning himself so that they could not see what he was putting on the embers, he burnt the letters. Then he sent word to the courier that he should {{f. 519}} complain to the great Moors about the wrong that Alicô was doing him in keeping him a prisoner, since he had brought him a present and a letter from the emperor, because if he were not released there would be nobody to speak in their favour and they would have no remedy at all, so even if they were not put to the sword they would starve to death there, since they were not being given anything. He did so, and some of them told Alicô that the courier was complaining, and for good reason, since there were no grounds at all to hold him prisoner; instead he should be done many honours, and he {should} <was> therefore {be} released. Afterwards he spoke to Alicô himself and told him not to do the father or the ambassador any harm or he would be in serious trouble, for



the emperor had given him permission to go to his land and, because Manquêr had had him detained in Cambât, it would cost him very dear, and that was the only reason why the emperor had sent him to him. Despite all {that} <this> the Moor would not give in, relying on the fact that the emperor was very far away and that if any trouble came of this he would turn to some Gâlas to whom he had married his daughters. But when a servant of Hamelmâl and the chief Moors who were there spoke to him as well, they persuaded him to release them, for it was enough to have taken <[f. 475v/464v]> their goods from them, and to let them return to Dambiâ if he did not want them to go any further. Thus, after keeping them there for ten days, he commanded that they give the father the worst of the mules that he had brought and the ambassador another similar one, and that they should return to Dambiâ, but not by the road to Hamelmâl.

When Manquêr heard that Alicô had given the father permission to leave, he went to him and insisted strongly that, since he did not want to kill him but instead wanted him to return to Dambiâ, he should not let him take the Portuguese (who were two young men and a married man who had also wanted to accompany him), because he had no other means of obtaining a pardon from the emperor except by having someone ask him for a surety. He said he would take those Portuguese with him, and in the meantime they would be of great help to him in war, since they were very good at firing a harquebus. The Moor considered this an excellent suggestion and sent word that those three Portuguese would stay with him. When the father heard this, it hurt him more than if they had told him that they were going to kill him, because he had great love for those who had so willingly offered to accompany him on such an uncertain and dangerous journey, and who had served him so faithfully on the way. He therefore did everything he could to have them released, but he achieved nothing because the Moor was {[f. 519v]} now resolute that he would not let them go.

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## CHAPTER {XXXIII} <XXXIV>

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### On how Father Antonio Fernandez left Alabâ for Dambiâ, and on the perils and hardships that he faced on the journey

Seeing that he could not on any account make the Moor Alicô let him take the Portuguese, Father Antonio Fernandez decided to depart because the rest were hurrying him, afraid that the Moor might change his mind. As they were about to set off the three Portuguese, accompanied by their guards, came to say goodbye, and their visit again pierced the father's heart. On seeing their tears, he too shed many, and they all clearly showed at that point the great sadness and anguish of their disconsolate hearts. The father could see that they were remaining captives among Moors, and in such remote lands that it would be difficult to receive news of them afterwards, and he could imagine how much it would pain their fathers and mothers when the sad news reached them, and what sorrowful and anguished words <[f. 476/465]> they would say to him, if the Lord took him to see them. It was all a great torment to him and he embraced them one by one with so many tears and sighs that he could not speak, let alone finally leave them. The sadness and anguish that they too showed and their weeping were such that they rent not only the father's heart but also the ambassador's and all his companions'. But since their having to stay behind was an evil that they could not remedy, they made the father set off after he had delayed there a long time, and so they were left behind weeping and the father went away sighing and begging the Father of mercies and all consolation to have pity on those sons of His by consoling them [in such great tribulation] and delivering them from the power of such evil people.

After he had gone a short distance, the Moor Alicô came out on the road with two other Moors and asked the father how much gold {and goods} he had taken from him, not in order to return it to him, but to see whether his servants had given him all of it or had concealed some <for themselves>. After the father had answered everything he wanted to know, he said to him that since he would not let them return via Hamelmâl's lands, which was the safest route, but was forcing them to pass among the Gâlas in such evident peril {of death}, he might at least give them a servant to accompany them until they left his lands, {[f. 520]} because otherwise they would kill them straight away once they saw that they were travelling like that, completely unarmed. He then commanded one to go, but as soon as his master went away he said he would not go unless they paid him. So they were forced to give him some cloth that they had for their expenses on the journey, but his company would have been of little use to them had God not come to their

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 271–5.

aid because, as they found out later, some Moors had already plotted to attack them a short distance ahead. At this moment, however, it started raining very heavily, and so the Moors went back home, thinking that our people too would take shelter in some houses nearby and that they would catch them after the rain. But they did not want to stop; all of them with one accord (it seems that they were inspired by God) said that they had better carry on so that they could reach a village and not spend that night in the open. Thus the Moors who were going to kill them stayed behind, while they, travelling at full speed, reached a Moorish village to sleep, where in their view they were in no small danger. But it was God's will that they came across a Gàla there whom Baharò the courier, who was going with them, asked whether he knew <[f. 476v/465v]> another great Gàla called Amumâ Taquelô, and when he answered that he was his servant and that he was close by, he entreated him to go at once and tell him that his friend Baharò was there and that, if he wanted to find him alive, he should come in great haste and he would give him a horse, and he told the man who was taking the message that he would pay him for his trouble.

The Gàla set off at once as fast as he could in anticipation of his reward, and his master came <at once> just as fast when he heard that Baharò was there, as he had been a friend of his for a long time, since he had met him on other occasions when he was coming with letters from the emperor for Hamelmâl. Once this Gàla arrived our people felt relieved, because the Moors were very afraid of him as he was powerful. He said that he would take care of them and ensure that they passed through safely to some lands that they call Xâoa, where there are Christians. They then gave him the horse they had promised him and set off with him all together, and in two days they reached his house, where he gave them good lodging and made them rest for three days, providing for all their needs. From there he led them for three days among Gàlas who were his kinsfolk, who received them and gave them good lodging. But they had great difficulties on the journey because of the rain, since it was now winter. They stayed at the place they reached on the last day for eight more days, since the Gàla had business there.

At this time, some neighbouring Gàlas heard about them {[f. 520v]} and, thinking that another Gàla by the name of Audafên, who had joined them on the road shortly before, was taking them in his care, decided to slaughter them all because this man and his kinsmen had previously killed some Christians whom some of them had been taking through there in their care. On learning from their spies which day they were going to depart, many of them went with their weapons to wait for them on the road, but it was God's will that it took so long to fetch a mule belonging to Baharò the courier, which he had put somewhere else, that when it arrived it was no longer a suitable time to travel, and so they stayed there that day. The Gàlas who were waiting on the road therefore went home but came back to the same spot at dawn the next day, and at that time the father and his companions were about to depart, annoyed at waiting for so long. Nonetheless, the Gàla who was taking them made them wait, because another great man had come to talk to him, and he took so long that the men waiting on the road thought that they would not be setting off that day either, and so they went away. However, even though it was late, as they so much wanted to leave that place, they persuaded the Gàla to set off. When they reached the place where the others had been waiting earlier, they met a Gàla, who was a friend of the one taking them, who told him what had happened, and he furiously replied, 'Do they not know that I am bringing these people in my care? How dare they plan to do such a thing?' Afterwards, <[f. 478/466]> he tried to cheer up our people by saying that

they should not be afraid, for while he was there no one would do them any harm. But the truth is that if the others had found them nobody would have escaped except him, because they rarely kill one another and everything falls on the poor Christians that they are taking through in their care, because if some Gâlas kill the Christians that others are accompanying along those roads, the latter wait for a chance to kill the Christians that the former take in their care to pass through those lands, and with that they consider themselves satisfied.

With that great danger behind them, they travelled on over wide plains, and in the afternoon they saw many thousand cattle in the distance stampeding towards them. The Gâla said, 'They have caught the scent of something unusual. Let us get out of their way fast, or else they will run over us and trample us to dust.' They all at once fled to one side, and the cattle passed by with the same fury with which they had come, without the herdsmen ever appearing. Afterwards they journeyed on quickly and stopped for the night near a large river called the Aoâx. In the fields people had made many large huts from branches, in which, they said, were more than 5,000 Gâlas who had gathered from various places for a feast that they hold. And they sing and dance by night and day for more {[f. 521]} than a month. Once they had camped, the Gâla who was leading them said that he wanted to speak to those others, and while he was away two men came and asked them where they were coming from and who was bringing them that way, and they took good notice of how many of them there were and what they had with them. In the morning the Gâla returned and said that they should carry on and cross the river at once. But before they could reach it, many of those Gâlas came and insistently argued with him that he should hand over all those people to them. On hearing this, those of our people who could understand their language considered themselves doomed and went to the father for him to confess them. He started doing so at once as quickly as he could since he could see how resolute those men were and that they would very much like to spill Christian blood in that feast of theirs, because, even when they do it at other times, they think that they have offered a great sacrifice to their false gods. But the Gâla remained steadfast all the time that they would have to kill him first before getting to those who had trusted his word. Thus, since he was a great man among them and very well connected, they dared not take them by force. When the arguments were over, the Gâla told the father to go ahead and cross the river, and he himself with a brother of his and another Gâla that had come with him carried him across {~~on an inflated skin and two bundles of straw~~}, the water coming up to their mouths even though they were tall men, since they did not consider the father safe <[f. 478v/466v]> until they had him on the other side, and then the others came across by swimming or in any way they could.

Once they had all crossed those other Gâlas went away, and the one who was leading them told the father that the danger was now past and that he wanted to go back, and from there onwards they would be accompanied by a Gâla who was with him and who lived near a place where there were Christians. This Gâla had come from his land in search of a wife of his who had run away – for they have many – and he was going back because he had not found her. It seems that God had brought him there for the sake of the father and his companions, because although they entreated the other Gâla and promised to give him more goods as soon as they reached a place where there were Christians, he would not go any further, but he charged the other one to look after them well, and so they were forced to go with him. That day, while travelling in great haste because they were so afraid,

they crossed a trench that must be two lances deep and people said that it was very long and that the Moors had made it in the past to try to take that River Aoâx to the kingdom of Adel, which is very short of water, but they did not {[f. 521v]} succeed. They also say that although this river is large it flows no further than a land called Auçâ Gurlê, where it vanishes into the ground and does not appear again.

The following day they reached the place where that Gâla who was accompanying them lived, and he gave them plenty of milk and a large, fat cow, and shortly afterwards he brought another, asking them to forgive him for giving them little – a very unusual way for Gâlas to behave towards Christians and, what is more, without expecting any goods for that, since he could easily see that they had none to give. The father and the others thanked him profusely for the offer, but they did not accept the second one, saying that what he had given them that morning was more than enough for them. He also brought them plenty of milk, for there is no other food there because the Gâlas do not sow. When they were about to leave, a Christian boy was missing, as it seems that a Gâla had led him away by deceit saying that he would give him milk and had then hidden him; thus, however much they looked, he was not to be found. Some said that they ought not to wait even if the boy was left behind, but they should journey on in great haste before the neighbouring Gâlas found out that they were there. But the Gâla said that he would not go ahead on any account until the boy was found, because once they reached a Christian village they would seize him. They replied that he should not be afraid, because they would instead do everything they could for him since he had done so much for them, and they were well aware that he knew <[f. 479/467]> nothing about that boy and he could safely go on their word. Nevertheless he did not trust that, and so he said that if the boy was not found he would not go. The ambassador and others who knew the ways of the Gâlas saw that the boy would not be found and that however little they delayed there the neighbouring Gâlas would find out, and without the Gâla's company they would afterwards be unable to escape; they therefore decided to move on in great haste since they were already close to Christians. They said to the Gâla, 'Since you will not accompany us, we shall go alone. If any hardship befalls us God will hold you to account, and you will always be on bad terms with Amuma Taquelô, for he did not come himself to accompany us to our land because he trusted you.'

With that they set off in considerable apprehension, because very few men would be enough to put an end to them all since they were carrying no weapons of any kind, for the Moor Alicô had taken them. But God wished to take pity on their helplessness and moved that Gâla's heart so that he would not leave them in such great danger, and so, after {[f. 522]} they had gone a good distance, he came along with a brother of his, which caused them great joy and contentment because they then considered themselves safe from any danger. By travelling in great haste through deserts that day and the next, they reached a land of Xâoa that is called Zarmât. Having sighted a mountain stronghold where there were some twenty Christian households, the courier Baharô went there ahead of the others, because he knew those people. They, thinking they were Gâlas, were very frightened and made ready to fight. But as he came close they recognized that it was him and came down in great joy to welcome him. Because they were going to travel further that day, they brought out to the road a kind of beer that they make from millet and other grains, which they call çâoa, for them to drink. From there they went to spend the night on another very strong mountain, where there were sixty Christian households, some of

whom were that Baharô's kinsfolk. They therefore gave them good lodging in keeping with their poverty, and they gave many thanks to the Lord for delivering them from so many great dangers. They tried to borrow something to give to the Gâla in recognition of the good deed that he had done them, but they found very little, and at {that} <this> he went away, happy to have left them safe.

From there the father and the ambassador wrote to the emperor and to *Erâz* Cela Christôs, his brother, to say that they had reached that mountain and that if he <[f. 479v/467v]> gave them permission they would embark on the journey again by another route, for they considered their past hardships to be naught since they very strongly desired the intended outcome of an enterprise that would so greatly serve Our Lord. But the emperor replied that after all the great dangers and hardships that they had faced it was not appropriate for them to embark on others that were so evident, and as soon as the winter rains allowed – for winter had already set in – they were to come to where he was. *Erâz* Cela Christôs supplied them with what they needed, for the emperor had given him the favour of those lands as well, even though they do not belong to the kingdom of Gojâm, where he is the viceroy. The father sent some of those goods to the Gâla who had brought them, seeing how little they had given him in return for the great amount that they owed him.

They spent two months in that village and, at the end of winter, they set off for Gojâm very afraid, because the Gâlas were already beginning to overrun those plains, for although there are some Christian villages on mountain strongholds, they cannot stop the Gâlas from overrunning all those {[f. 522v]} lands at will, and they kill the Christians they find on the roads or capture them to sell them to the Moors of Adel, and they often even cross the River Nile and take people captive from the kingdom of Gojâm. There were two women travelling in that company who had been taken from that kingdom, and they had fled by various roads from very far away, and they had met in that village where the father had been for those two months. One of them said that she had found nothing to eat for three days other than earth, and she had lived on that. The other stated that she had fled from {near} Adel {[Aucâ Gurlê]}, and by day she had walked through the bush towards where the sun set and at night she had climbed trees for fear of animals. On the way, she had been seized by Gâlas three times in different places, and after she had been with them for a while and had put them at ease, she had taken something to eat and fled. The last time, her mistress had taken pity on her for the hardships she had faced in order to return to her own land and told her to flee, and she secretly gave her what she could for the journey. But when she reached the River Aoâx she felt very troubled, because it was very swollen and there was no way to cross it, and so she went a long way upriver, in great affliction, begging Our Lady to give her some remedy. And, when she least expected it, she found a tree that had fallen across the river from one side to the other, and she crossed over on it giving many thanks to Our Lord, and so she was delivered.

<[f. 480/468]> When the father and his companions had travelled for three days, they reached a mountain stronghold populated by Christians, which is called Merrahâ Beitê, which means 'Guides Me Home', which they could have reached in little more than one day if they had not gone around it for fear of the Gâlas. Two or three leagues further on they found a large river that they call Gemâ, and it comes from the direction of the kingdom of Amharâ to join the Nile, and they crossed it with great difficulty since there was no vessel and it was in spate. Afterwards they journeyed on for three days. The last night

they slept on a mountain called Oramô, the strongest one that there is in all those lands because it is surrounded by very high, sheer rock, with only one way up that is so narrow and difficult that it can only be climbed ~~{by the fathers in single file by holding on to some poles that they have put there for that purpose}~~ <in single file by holding on to some poles that they have put there for that purpose> [with great care],<sup>1</sup> and on top there is water and a large flat area that is sown, and therefore many people live on it.

From there they travelled for five days in great haste until they reached the Nile, which they also crossed with great difficulty on some logs tied together, because it is in full flood at that time, {[f. 523]} but their fear forced them to venture across. Once they were on the other side, they considered themselves safe, because they were now entering the kingdom of Gojâm. After travelling through it for six or seven days they reached a land that they call Colelâ, where we have a residence, and they were received by the father who was there with great joy, as if they had been brought back from death to life. After they had rested for a few days, the father and the ambassador went to another land nearby where *Erâz Cela Christôs* was already waiting for them, and he greatly celebrated their arrival and commanded that they be given everything they needed in abundance and the father be given a mule, for the one he had was really bad. The father returned from there to Colelâ and went on to Dambiâ to visit the emperor, who received him with great honour and displays of love and said how sorry he was for the hardships he had suffered and for the fact that he had been unable to {continue} <complete> an undertaking of such great service to Our Lord. The father replied that he could not describe the enormous sorrow he felt because of that and because those three Portuguese had remained in the Moor's power. The emperor told him not to grieve for he would arrange for them to come back at once and, after the father had taken his leave, he commanded that he be given 100 gold *cruzados* in case he needed them, and with that he came to our residence in Dambiâ itself, one year and seven months after he had left it.

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note written in a different hand in ARSI, MS Goa 42; in the body of the text in the Porto edition. This folio is completely illegible in BPB, MS 778.

Which deals with the efforts that the emperor made to bring back the three Portuguese who had remained in Alicô the Moor's power

The emperor was furious at the insolence of that Moor Alicô, who, despite being his vassal, had not let Father Antonio Fernandez pass and had made the three Portuguese who were with him remain there. However, since at that time he was busy with some great men of the empire who had risen up, and because the Moor was a long way away, he was unable to send anybody to punish him. Thus he decided to dissemble for the time being and wrote to him reprimanding him for his arrogance and commanded him to allow those Portuguese to come back at once and to give them mules and what they needed for the journey. Fearing that he might make some excuse, he secretly sent some Gâlas, whom he promised a large reward if they {[f. 523v]} brought him those three Portuguese, for they could easily get them out with the aid of other Gâlas who were the Moor's neighbours. He also wrote to Hamelmâl, the lord of Cambât – whose lands border on the Moor's, as we said above – to make every possible effort to get those Portuguese out and to give them a guide and whatever they needed for the journey. *Erâz* Cela Christôs, for his part, also did everything he could to bring them back. But before these letters arrived they had already escaped to Hamelmâl because, although the Moor had separated them and had strongly charged the people looking after them to guard them well and not allow them to talk to one another, they had found time to talk on two occasions when they went with him to war against some heathens, and they agreed to flee the first time that they went out on a sortie. They found a good opportunity soon afterwards, because one afternoon they were told to get ready because the next day they were going to raid a land of heathens that they call Guraguês. Since the Moors were busy preparing for that, they did not pay as much attention to them as they usually did, and so they got together and fled that night without being noticed.

The following day, when the Moor found them missing, he was furious and commanded that a thorough search be made for them, but it was in vain because, as they were not marching but fleeing, which is much like flying, his men were unable to catch up with them. In this manner they went to where Hamelmâl was, and he received them with great joy on account of the great joy that he realized that the emperor would feel at that. He told them to imagine that they were already in their own lands, because he would give orders for them to reach <[f. 481/469]> them safely. He commanded that they be given whatever they needed in abundance and he always treated them very well all the time they were there, which was a year, whereas they had spent no more than forty days with the Moor. Four months after they had fled from him, the courier that the emperor had sent arrived and gave him the letter and the verbal message that he had sent, and he made the



excuse that Manquêr, the Christian that we mentioned above, had made them stay, and that they were now with Hamelmâl. The courier was very pleased at that and, with the Gâlas that he had brought, went at once to where Hamelmâl was and gave him the emperor's letter, and he said that he would very willingly give the Portuguese everything the emperor commanded and would send them on their way at once, since Our Lord God had delivered them from the Moor's power without difficulty. He commanded the Gâlas to go and fetch other kinsfolk of theirs {{f. 524}} who were nearby, for the emperor wanted them to accompany the Portuguese and at the same time to bring him the tribute from those lands. Before these Gâlas returned, however, many other Gâlas of a family that they call Borên came determined to destroy Hamelmâl's lands, and he therefore went forth with his men and took the Portuguese with him. Even though there were many more Gâlas, he defeated them and killed so many that the field was strewn with them. Soon afterwards, one of the young Portuguese fell sick and died many days later, leaving not only his other companions very sad but also Hamelmâl, who had greatly desired that they should all reach the emperor in good health.

While these things were happening in Cambât, that Christian, Manquêr, decided to return to the emperor's court, relying on the fact that he had many great men on his side there who would placate the emperor and obtain a pardon for him. But when he arrived, *Erâz Cela Christôs*, who was at court at the time, had him arrested and later took him as a prisoner to Gojâm to face justice there. Fearing that he would have him hanged at once, he plotted with the man guarding him and they both returned to court, where he thought he could escape through the entreaties of those great men. When *Erâz Cela Christôs* learnt of this, he sent a message to the emperor asking him to have justice done there. The emperor appointed a judge and he was accused of what he had done. He denied everything, but they soon proved that he had arranged for the father not to be allowed through and for the Portuguese to remain in the Moor's power, and that he had been the cause of all the losses and hardships that they had suffered, and therefore the judge ruled that he should die and the emperor confirmed the sentence. When Father Antonio Fernandez learnt that he had been condemned to death, he went straight to the emperor and pleaded with him to do him the favour of pardoning the man. The emperor replied that he should allow him to do justice, because it was not fitting that a man who had done such great evils should live. The father said that if they executed him that Moor would hear of it and would harm the Portuguese whom he had there, for at that time they did not yet know of their escape. He pleaded so much that the emperor conceded that he should not die but be taken as a prisoner to a very secure mountain stronghold. However, as he was so cunning, he soon found a way to escape from his chains on the journey and went to hide among the Gâlas, where he remained for three months, and later he brought some with him to a Christian stronghold, pretending that he wanted to establish friendship with them. As some women came out to fetch water, however, he went with the Gâlas to seize them, but they screamed and the Christians came down from above with their weapons and put them to flight. As {{f. 524v}} Manquêr ran, he fell and broke a leg, and they say that since there was nobody to carry him he was left there alone and died after three days. Others claim that the Gâlas who were fleeing with him saw that they could not carry him and so killed him themselves, and thus his sad and hapless life came to an end.

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## CHAPTER {XXXV} <XXXVI><sup>1</sup>

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Which reports some letters that Pope Paul V and King Philip wrote to the emperor of Ethiopia and those in which he replied

*Pope Paul V to our dearest son in Christ, Seltân Çaguéd, illustrious king of Ethiopia: health and apostolic blessing.*

*Our dearest son in Christ, we were very gladdened in the Lord to read the letters that Your Majesty gave to the beloved, pious son and religious man {~~Pedro Páez~~ [Antonio Fernandez: nota correctionem hic factam esse mendosam, quia missio patris Antonii Fernandez non fuit facta ante annum 1613. Ideoque reponendum esse Petrum Pays; nam ut apparet ex responso Imperatoris, prima eius mens fuerat mittendi Petrum Pays, et hoc significaverat Pontifici per literas quibus hoc brevi Pontifex respondet, quumvis harum exemplum non inveniatur in hâc historiâ.]}<sup>2</sup> <Pedro Páez> of the Society of Jesus to bring to us, from which we understand what we greatly desired: that all your affairs might progress happily and that the Lord had made you powerful over your enemies, delivering into your hands the heathens called Gâlas, who are opposed to your empire, and defeating them not just once. We give great thanks to Almighty God, who has clemently heard our pleas for Your Majesty, because we very much desire that you be at peace and free from any disturbance so that you may occupy yourself all the more in spreading the divine rite and wholesome teaching of the Catholic religion. For that reason, with the pious zeal of our pastoral office and through the paternal charity with which we hold Your Majesty and the peoples subject to you, our beloved sons in Christ, in the depths of our heart, we are very sad and therefore find it troubling that our beloved son {~~Pedro Páez~~ [António Fernandes]} <Pedro Páez><sup>3</sup> has not yet reached us to tell us the things that we desire to hear and, at the same time, those that you have commanded him to say. We are always ready to help Your Majesty in whatever matters we can, and we believe you will have discovered this through experience, <[f. 482/470]> if you have already received our letters in*

<sup>1</sup> Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 309–19.

<sup>2</sup> 'António Fernandes: note made here to correct an error, since Father António Fernandes's mission did not take place before 1613. That is why Pedro Páez is replaced – although, as is made clear in the emperor's reply, the initial idea had come from Pedro Páez and that had been expressed in the letter to which the brief responds – so that there may be no case of a lack of truth in this report.' This marginal note in ARSI, MS Goa 42 is written in Latin in a different hand. The name 'António Fernandes' is incorporated in the body of the text in the Porto edition, whereas the corresponding folio in BPB, MS 778 is completely illegible. The lack of any marginal note at this point in BPB, MS 778 suggests that the note in ARSI, MS Goa 42 is later than the BPB copy of the manuscript.

<sup>3</sup> The name 'António Fernandes' is written in another hand in the margin in ARSI, MS Goa 42 and incorporated in the body of the text in the Porto edition. The corresponding folio in BPB, MS 778 is completely illegible.

*which, at the beginning of last year, we informed you that we were diligently seeking to carry out what you asked of us: that we should make your requests to our dearest son in Christ, Philip, the mighty king of Spain. We also say this so that this joy of ours may all the more confirm to you the trust {[f. 525]} that we wish you to have in us, and so that you may know that we have replied to your letters, since you appear to wonder whether they reached us. We pray that you may continually have an increase in divine grace, and from the very bottom of our heart we give Your Majesty our apostolic blessing. Done in Rome at Saint Peter's under the ring of the Fisherman, 1st February 1612. Year 7 of our pontificate.<sup>1</sup>*

Copy of the letter that the emperor of Ethiopia wrote to His Holiness in reply to this one

*May this letter from Seltân Çaguêd, emperor of Ethiopia, by the grace of Almighty God, a quo omne datum optimum et omne donum perfectum,<sup>2</sup> reach the most holy father Paul V with the peace of Christ Our Lord in quo habemus redemptionem per sanguinem eius.<sup>3</sup> May this peace be with Your Holiness and with the whole Church of God always. Amen. We received Your Holiness's letter of 1612 the following year and were unable to reply to it on account of the time, because the ships had departed, which we found troublesome since the same thing had happened the previous year. But we rejoiced greatly because it assured us of Your Holiness's health, and may God wish to increase it for many years, and also because we have found hope that our brother Dom Philip, emperor of Spain, will favour us, without whom we cannot achieve what we intend, as we have indicated to Your Holiness on other occasions and as you will have understood more clearly from the letters from Father Pedro Páez of the Society of Jesus, whom we would have sent so that he could give Your Holiness news of the state of our affairs. But, because we have need of his presence and counsel, we have sent Father Antonio Fernandez of the same Society with our ambassador Fecûr Egzi so that what we request may come about with the greatest possible haste and, at the same time, so that you may send us a pastor to teach us with truth and to govern us with integrity of customs. We also affectionately beg that there be no delay in this, because the present state of our empire so requires, and, seeing that we have asked Father Pedro Páez to put in his letters to Your Holiness what we have tried to do regarding matters of the faith and the outcome that it has had, we shall say no more in this one. May the author of this our desire and will, Our Lord God, by His will {[f. 525v]} produce the desired result during the happy years of Your Holiness, whom we humbly beg to include us among the Catholic monarchs, because neither death nor life will now be able to separate us from the holy faith of the Roman Church. Written in Dambiâ at our court, Debanâ, on 6th July in the year of Our Lord 1614.<sup>4</sup>*

<[f. 482v/470v]> Another from the emperor to His Majesty

*May this letter from Seltân Çaguêd, emperor of Ethiopia, reach our brother Dom Philip, emperor of Spain, with the peace of Christ Our Lord, who for the redemption of the world humbled Himself until death and crucifixion. May this peace be with Your Majesty and with your whole empire always. Amen. We have written to Your Majesty on several occasions via*

<sup>1</sup> Letter consulted by Páez in the royal encampment archive.

<sup>2</sup> 'From whom every best gift, and every perfect gift', adapted from James 1:17.

<sup>3</sup> 'In whom we have redemption through his blood', Ephesians 1:7.

<sup>4</sup> Letter probably copied out by Páez before it was sent.

*India, without having received any reply. We do not know whether it is because Your Majesty's letters or ours have been lost, and therefore last year we sent Father Antonio Fernandez of the Society of Jesus overland by the Malindi route, and with him our ambassador Fecúr Egzî, so that they could give a full account of the affairs of our empire and explain our desires better, which are to join with Your Majesty and to reduce our empire to the holy Roman Church. We have tried to do this many times with our vassals without having been able to achieve it because, although many are on our side, particularly our brother Cela Christôs and our cousin {Dom} <Deye Azmâc> Bela Christôs, the principal person in our empire, others resist in such a manner that they totally prevent it, and therefore it cannot come about unless Your Majesty sends the 1,500 men that we requested in our previous letters. This will be very easy for you, as we have understood principally from a young vassal of yours by the name of Jorge, who came here last year and gave us detailed news of your empire and of how much Your Majesty had your eyes fixed on the affairs of ours in order to favour them. Nor is there any great difficulty in the journey, and we therefore hope that Your Majesty will have none in soon concluding a matter of such great spiritual good for our empire and temporal good for both. And thus we close, begging Our Lord always to hold Your Majesty's royal person and estate in His holy hand. Written at our court in Dambiâ on 3rd July 1614.<sup>1</sup>*

{[f. 526]} Copy of one from His Majesty to the emperor of Ethiopia  
*Most noble and mighty emperor of Ethiopia.<sup>2</sup> I, Dom Philip, by the grace of God king of Portugal, of the Algarves here and beyond the sea in Africa, lord of Guinea and of the conquest and navigation and trade of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India, etc.,<sup>3</sup> send you many greetings as one whom I dearly love and esteem as a brother. From letters that I have received from the religious of the Society that, by my order, attend in those kingdoms of yours, I understand how willing you have been to give obedience through them to the Roman Church and, although thanks for this holy intention of yours are due to God, because this work is all His, who has moved your heart on the road to the salvation of the faithful – <[f. 483/471]> and therefore you in particular are highly obliged to duly acknowledge Him for setting you on the path towards that which is so good for you, for this is something that the kings who were my predecessors encouraged your forefathers so much to do, as you know, obliged by the alliance and love that they had for them – I have always thought that I should also give thanks to you through this letter, as I now do, and at the same time inform you hereby that this news that the fathers sent me was for me the most joyful that I could be given. Thus I affectionately beg you to carry out this determination of yours as soon as can be, in the certainty that Our Lord God, who inspired it in you, will help and favour you in performing it in such a way that every difficulty that opposes you will be made easy and all the obstacles that hinder the good treatment that said religious receive from you, of which they also inform me, will be overcome. I thank you very much and dearly beg you to continue it, because I sent them from such remote parts to your court so that they might accompany you and attend in your service, in the great desire that, through them, your vassals may come to the knowledge of the pre-eminence of the holy Roman Church, which the whole body of the faithful must recognize as their head on account of the arguments and admonitions that you will have heard from them, which,*

<sup>1</sup> Letter probably copied out by Páez before it was sent.

<sup>2</sup> BPB, MS 778 starts a new paragraph here; ARSI, MS Goa 42 does not.

<sup>3</sup> BPB, MS 778 starts a new paragraph here; ARSI, MS Goa 42 does not.

because they are the truth, are very {[f. 526v]} easy to understand. Because the authority that you may give to them in all matters among your people is as important as can be seen, I shall be especially pleased if you listen to them and favour them at every opportunity, so that everyone may see and understand the honour that you do to them. And I beg that you do the same to the descendants of the Portuguese who attend in your kingdoms, by preserving their privileges, for they are very much due to them, since they are the children and grandchildren of those that gave their lives in defence of your crown.

I am writing to my viceroy of India commanding him to correspond with you in private and to help you insofar as he is able with everything that may be in your interests for the good of your affairs, in which I am sure he will not fail. As for the help that you request from my state to regain that which some enemies have taken from your people, of which said fathers have informed me, you must be well aware of the exact duties in which the fighting men who are serving me there are at present occupied. Nevertheless, you may rest assured that, when circumstances allow, they will give you every satisfaction that there can be in this matter, in accordance <[f. 483v/471v]> with my great desire that everything in my kingdoms and states may be of use to you for whatever is in your interests. Most noble and mighty emperor, whom I greatly love as a brother, may Our Lord always keep your person and royal estate in His holy care. Written in Lisbon on 21st February 1613.

The King,<sup>1</sup>

#### Copy of one from Pope Paul V to the emperor of Ethiopia

Pope Paul V to our dearest son in Christ, Seltân Çaguéd, illustrious king of Ethiopia. Our dearest son in Christ, greetings and apostolic blessing. We have received Your Majesty's letter of 2 July of last year, 1615. It was certainly a great consolation to our spirit to hear of the pious zeal with which we see you desire the reduction of the peoples subject to your empire to the body of the holy mother Roman Apostolic Catholic Church. We give thanks to God, Father of mercies, who has raised in your spirit thoughts worthy of a pious and prudent king, and we congratulate Your {[f. 527]} Majesty with all the affection of our heart because, in the ardent desire that we see in you to seek the well-being of others, we find a strong indication of the particular mercy with which the Lord wishes to prepare an everlasting crown of glory for you in the Kingdom of Heaven, for he who seeks the well-being of his neighbour will obtain his own for himself, for with the same measure that we shall mete withal, it shall be measured to us again, as our Redeemer said.<sup>2</sup> We therefore exhort Your Majesty all the more to {persevere} <preserve> in the holy purpose and, even though you have so far experienced severe difficulties, nonetheless insist ever more strongly, thinking to yourself that you are working for the glory of Him who is rich in mercy and pays liberally. Be not at all disturbed if anything occurs that seems to hinder your counsels, because piously we must believe that it is permitted by Divine Providence, the judgments of which are a great abyss, so that the example of your constancy, especially in a matter that pertains both to the glory of God and to the veneration of the holy apostolic see and to the benefit of your souls, may lead all the more to the confusion of those who, forgetful of their own salvation and with no fear of God, have separated themselves from the communion of the holy Catholic Church and the from the devotion and obedience due to it. With this consolation, we console <[f. 484/472]> ourself in our very deep

<sup>1</sup> Letter consulted by Páez in the royal encampment archive.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 6:38.

*disquiet at the impediment which, you write, caused your ambassador to turn back from his path, when you were sending him to us in order to give obedience to us and this holy Chair on your behalf, in accordance with the custom of Christian kings. And we certainly console ourself even more in the fact that we have no doubt at all that you will ever desist until you laudably complete that which you have equally piously and prudently begun.<sup>1</sup> But we have written to our dearest son in Christ, Philip, the mighty king of the Spains, and, as you have asked us, we have most lovingly and effectively exhorted him by all means to give the help that you seek from him, and we have seriously commanded our apostolic nuncio to said king of the Spains to diligently seek the execution of your petition. Thus we want Your Majesty to be persuaded that we shall spare no effort to ensure that, as far as we are able with Our Lord's help, we show him that the paternal love and charity that we have for you in the body of Christ is special. But, although we keep you constantly in the bosom of our heart, there must be the opportunity and the ability, for you will certainly find no fault in the readiness of our spirit. In the meantime, while remembering you always in our prayers, we beg with all the affection of our heart {[f. 527v]} that Your Majesty may have further divine grace and perseverance in the holy purpose, and we lovingly give our apostolic blessing. Done in Rome at Saint Peter's, under the ring of the Fisherman on 23rd December 1616. Year 12 of our pontificate.<sup>2</sup>*

Copy of one from His Majesty to the emperor of Ethiopia

*Very noble and mighty emperor of Ethiopia. I, Dom Philip, by the grace of God king of Portugal, of the Algarves here and beyond the sea in Africa, lord of Guinea and of the conquest and navigation and trade of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India, etc., send you many greetings as one whom I dearly love and esteem as a brother. A few days ago I received, overland, a letter of yours, in which I was made aware of the state of affairs of your kingdoms and also learnt that for several years you have not been given those that I have written to you in reply to others that I have received from you by various routes. And although it now appears that you must have received some, I thought that I should inform you hereby, as I am now doing, that for all these years I have not failed in this correspondence, using all the routes that could be found and by which it might best be achieved. But since these routes are so obstructed, as you know and as I understand from this letter of yours, the dispatches might easily fall into enemy hands, and this may also be the reason why yours have not arrived. I have been greatly gladdened to learn of the willingness of your state and royal person and the spirit that you have to reduce your kingdoms to obedience to the holy Roman Catholic Church, whereby you are fully responding to the duty that you owe to the good memory of the emperors, your forefathers, who tried so hard to do what you intend, and you are doing what you owe to Our Lord God and to the emperor that you are. As for the reinforcements that you ask me to send to you so that you may more easily achieve this intention and, {[f. 528]} with their strength, prevail over those who oppose you, you must be aware of the goodwill with which I would have them given to you in order to achieve such a holy work as this, for at all times your past emperors experienced the goodwill that the kings of these kingdoms, my predecessors, had towards their affairs through the reinforcements that they gave them, with which they reduced their empire to their obedience and delivered it from the power of the Moors, and I too would follow them on*

<sup>1</sup> BPB, MS 778 starts a new paragraph here; ARSI, MS Goa 42 does not.

<sup>2</sup> Letter consulted by Páez in the royal encampment archive.

*account of the particular desire that I have that everything relating to you should progress happily, if India were not so surrounded by native and foreign enemies, with whom war has now broken out, so that it is not possible to divide its forces for the time being. However, I have commanded my viceroy, as soon as present circumstances permit, to come to your aid with everything that he can, without fail, as you may be sure he will. Until this becomes possible – and may God allow it to be very soon – you must preserve your good purpose with your whole spirit and continue as far as possible to dispose the spirits of the great men who deviate from it in the best possible way so that they abandon their bad opinion. And for all this it will be very important for you to grant every favour and assistance to the religious of the Society who live in your kingdoms, so that they may be as esteemed and respected as is due to ministers of God, whose office they represent, and to the spirit with which they offered to enter those lands for the salvation of your soul and the souls of your vassals, without fearing the great perils <[f. 485/473]> and long roads that they have faced while going so far away from their homeland, and understand that I too shall thereby receive particular contentment and especial favour from you, most noble and most mighty emperor, whom I very much love and esteem as a brother. May Our Lord always keep your person and estate in His holy care. Written in Lisbon on 10th March 1617.*

*The King,<sup>1</sup>*

Copy of one from the emperor to His Holiness

*{[f. 528v]} May this letter from Seltân Çaguêd, emperor of Ethiopia, reach the holy father Paul V with the peace of Christ Our Lord, qui dilexit nos et tradidit semetipsum pro nobis.<sup>2</sup> May this peace be with Your Holiness and with the whole Catholic Church always. Your Holiness's letter of 1616 has just reached us and we received it with due veneration. We were greatly gladdened to see the paternal love that you show us and the great zeal for the good and remedy of our empire, for which we give many thanks to the Father of mercies, who has consoled us and has done us this great mercy, that Your Holiness should take this business so much to heart. This has given us great hope that it will have the desired outcome, even though the delay that there has been until now makes us fear that death may befall us before it is accomplished, because not only is life so weak and brittle, but we have indispositions that give us indications of that, if the remedy should come too late. However, we trust in the liberal hand of Him who is rich to all those who invoke Him, that He will grant that we successfully achieve the desired outcome, for not only is this matter so much in His service, but He knows that we desire it with all our soul and heart. We have tried all possible means, not only explaining to Your Holiness and to our brother the emperor of Spain what was needed to conclude this business, but, because of the delay, we devoted all our efforts to putting it into practice at once. We did not succeed in this because, although we had many clergy and lay persons on our side, Patriarch Simon stirred up the people and great men against us, so that he had most of the captains on his side, even a son-in-law of ours to whom we had given a large force of men, and our own brother, to whom we had given power over all the empire after us. Seeing that they had such great strength, they came to give us a pitched battle, feeling quite sure that victory was theirs. But the Lord, in whose hand it always lies, saw fit to give it to us miraculously because, without our losing a single soldier, He saw fit to <[f. 485v/473v]>*

<sup>1</sup> Letter consulted by Páez in the royal encampment archive.

<sup>2</sup> 'who hath loved us, and hath delivered himself for us', adapted from Ephesians 5:2.

*deliver to us all the enemies, some slain in battle and others captured after it, as we have already written to Your Holiness. {[f. 529]} That should have been enough for them to realize that the faith that we desire to plant in our empire is the true one. But the great envy and passion that they have still blinds them so that they cannot see such a clear truth and do not listen to reason. For now, therefore, we are forced to conform ourself to them, until Your Holiness and our brother the emperor of Spain come to our aid with what we have requested, or until Our Lord God gives them true knowledge and turns their hearts. However, we shall not fail to do as much as we can by all possible means, nor shall we fail by one iota, until death, to do what we have declared and promised to Your Holiness, whom we humbly entreat to have us recommended in the holy sacrifices that are offered in the places of the holy apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul, and thence to give us your holy apostolic blessing so that everything may turn out favourably for us, because we attribute our success in past matters to this, and we hope that He will give us success in everything that is to come. Written at our court at Dehanâ on 15th July 1618.<sup>1</sup>*

Copy of another from the emperor to His Majesty

*May this letter from Seltân Çaguêd, emperor of Ethiopia, reach our brother Dom Philip, emperor of Spain, with the peace of Christ Our Lord, in quo habemus redemptionem et remissionem peccatorum.<sup>2</sup> May this peace be with Your Majesty and with your whole empire always. Amen. We heard from the fathers of the Society who are in this court of ours that letters were coming from Your Majesty this year, and we very eagerly awaited them, but until now we have not received them because the ship for Maçuâ put into Moca owing to lack of wind. Because they cannot now reach us in time for us to reply, we are writing this one so that Your Majesty may know that every day Our Lord gives us renewed desires to carry the reduction of our empire through to its desired conclusion, as we have several times described to Your Majesty alongside what you needed to send us from your empire for this purpose. Seeing that that was being delayed, we tried to put it into practice at once through our own efforts alone, but we did not {[f. 529v]} succeed in it because, although we had many clergy and lay persons on our side, Patriarch Simon stirred <[f. 486/474]> up the great men and the people against us, so that he had most of the captains on his side, even a son-in-law of ours to whom we had given a large force of men, and our own brother, to whom we had given the government of all the empire after us. Seeing that they had such great strength, they came to give us a pitched battle, feeling quite sure that victory was theirs. But the Lord, in whose hand it always lies, saw fit to give it to us miraculously because, without our losing a single soldier, He delivered to us all our enemies, some slain in battle and others captured after it, as we have already written to Your Majesty. That should have been enough for them to realize that the faith that we desire to plant in our empire is the true one. But the great envy and passion that they have blinds them so that they cannot see such a clear truth and do not listen to reason. For now, therefore, we are forced to conform ourself to them, until Your Majesty comes to our aid with what we have requested, which we hope will not be lacking, for it is a matter so worthy of an emperor who is so zealous of divine glory and the spread of the Catholic faith as Your Majesty is. By this means, you will not only have a great crown before God, but also a glorious name among all the Catholic monarchs, since through your agency an empire as*

<sup>1</sup> Letter probably copied out by Páez before it was sent.

<sup>2</sup> 'in whom we have redemption [through his blood], the remission of sins', Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14.



great as this one will join the holy Roman Church, something that your forefathers, the most serene kings of Portugal, who could not outdo Your Majesty in the zeal of a Catholic king, so much desired and sought but did not achieve, because it seems that God had kept it for Your Majesty. We too consider ourselves fortunate that God wishes to use us in such a great enterprise as this and to give us Your Majesty as our principal arm in it. But we hope that this will not take so long that death befalls us before we have carried it through to the desired conclusion because, should that occur, it will be difficult to effect it afterwards. Right now it will be very easy, because there is no difficulty in entering the port, and it seems there will be none in keeping it afterwards, because not only shall we give to those who come the lands of the bahâr nagâx, which supply abundant provisions {[f. 530]} and men, but we shall also assist with all the rest that we have, if the business so requires. And because Your Majesty has been well informed of all these matters by means of other letters, we finish by asking Our Lord to keep your royal person for many years and always to increase your estates. Written at our court at Dehanâ on 13 July 1618.<sup>1</sup>

The emperor also wrote others to His Holiness and His Majesty, the copies of which have been lost in the revolts that there have been here. But what he principally <[f. 486v/474v]> intended in them was to show the great desire that he has to reduce his empire to the obedience of the holy Roman Church, and what he needed for that. Even though he was very well aware that without Portuguese help it would be a long time in coming about, he did not stop trying every means open to him, seeking to win over the opinion of the principal clergy and lay persons with gifts and honours. Often, in private conversations and in general meetings, he used authorities from the Holy Scripture, saints and reasoning to prove to them how true the faith of the holy Roman Church is, and the obligation that everyone has to give it their obedience. He also had us translate into his language the Commentaries on the Gospels by Father João Maldonado of our Society, on the Apocalypse by Father Brás Viegas, on the Epistle of Saint Paul *ad Romanos* by Father Toledo, *ad Hebreos* by Father Ribeira, and *ad Galatas* by Father {Benedito} <Bento> Justiniano. And on his own behalf the remaining ones are being translated, and the Genesis by Father {Bendito} <Bento> Pereira, and a very {copious} <fine> treatise has been made on all the errors, which he himself is publishing, and he never stops praising all these works, extolling them in many words to everyone and saying that the Holy Spirit dictated to these fathers what they wrote, because it did not seem that human understanding could attain such elevated and wonderful things. To make people listen to our doctrine better and to ensure that it has greater authority among them, he gives us very considerable authority by doing us many honours and praising us highly in our absence whenever he has the chance, without ever wasting an opportunity to do so. Through the respect that we are given and through our intercession he gives them many things that they would not otherwise attain.

{[f. 530v]} He does all these and many other things with great care to make his people fond of our holy faith and to show the great desire that he has for everyone to receive it and submit to the holy Roman Church. Despite all that, however, he cannot carry out what he intends because, even though he has won many people over in this manner, most of the monks and clergy are very obstinate and continually go about stirring up the

<sup>1</sup> Letter probably copied out by Páez before it was sent.

ignorant people, and they even put it into the head of many of the great men that our faith is false and that there is excommunication against those who listen to our doctrine, and that the emperor and his brother *Eráz* Cela Christôs have abandoned their ancient faith and intend to make everyone abandon it, and by that means they cause dangerous new convulsions against the emperor to arise every day.

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{{f. 532}}<sup>1</sup> <[f. 487/475]> CHAPTER {[XXXVI]}  
<XXXVII><sup>2</sup>

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On how the second residence that we have in the kingdom of Gojâm  
was started

At the far end of the kingdom of Gojâm are some heathens that they call Agôus, whom the former emperors tried to subjugate but were unable to do so entirely because, apart from their being numerous and very bellicose, the lands where they live are very strong, rugged and mountainous. Nonetheless, since this Emperor Seltân Çaguêd is a great captain who is shrewd and highly experienced in warfare, he put them under such pressure by going against them twice in person that they decided to sue for peace, since they thought that they could not hold out any longer. In order to get the peace terms that they wanted, they investigated who might best conclude it for them and, on learning that the emperor rarely denies me what I ask of him, some of the chief men from that land came to our house in Dambiâ and entreated me to secure their friendship with him, and they would pay whatever tribute was fair, and they would also give me some goods. I replied that I would willingly work as hard as I could to achieve what they wanted without any self-interest at all, because we took nothing for the good that we did. Instead, if {they wished}, after peace had been made, I would go there and teach them what they needed for the salvation of their souls, and I would share what there was to eat with them, and while I was there they would be safe, because neither the emperor nor his brother the viceroy of Gojâm would ever go there with their men. They were very pleased to hear this and said that they would build a church at once in the place that I pointed out to them, for those who wanted to become Christians.

At that I went to the emperor and, reporting to him what they had told me, I added that I thought it would be good if he granted what they were asking since they were offering to pay tribute, but he replied that by no means would {{f. 532v}} he make such a peace, no matter how much tribute they paid, because he was very angry that shortly beforehand they had killed some servants of his whom he greatly esteemed, and he was determined to avenge their blood. However, when I laid out before his eyes the great service to Our Lord that would ensue, <[f. 487v/475v]> since they would become Christians and obey loyally and he would therefore be free to undertake other more important enterprises, he agreed that the accords should be discussed and sent two great men to talk to the heathens, who

<sup>1</sup> F.531 r and v is blank in ARSI, MS Goa 42.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter number left blank in ARSI, MS Goa 42. Manuel de Almeida took this chapter and recast it in his 'Historia de Ethiopia a alta', Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, pp. 325–30.

were waiting in the palace compound. Those men, who were friends of mine, arranged matters so that peace was concluded to the heathens' satisfaction. I then asked the emperor for the favour of giving me leave to stay with them and build a church there, because I hoped that Christianity would greatly flourish there. He replied that I should take counsel with the viceroy of Gojâm, not because he was not delighted with that, but so that people would not say that he was delivering that Christian land directly to me and paying little heed to their monks. I said, 'What better counsel can the emperor take than to seek to win so many souls for God by sending someone there to teach those heathens and make them Christians?' Some lords, friends of mine, who were present also helped me by saying that this was the Holy Spirit's counsel and that he ought to grant what I was requesting, but even so he would not give his permission. When I realized that, I said {as if} in jest, 'If the emperor will not grant me this willingly, I shall seek a judge against him.' {To which} he riposted with a laugh, 'From whom will Your Reverence seek a judge against me?' I replied from Our Lord God, who had so easily subjugated those heathens for him, something that none of the former emperors had been able to achieve, and even though he had an obligation to repay this favour by making them Christians straight away, he was putting it off. He said, 'Then I do not want legal disputes with Your Reverence. Go with Our Lord's blessing and see how things stand, and then you shall act accordingly.' A lady cousin of his, whom he very much likes since she is a prudent woman of good counsel, whose name is *Ite Amata Christôs*, replied to this that it was not good for me to leave him and that another father should go. The emperor said that she was {[f. 533]} right, and that the father who was in Gojâm, who is called Francisco Antonio de Angelis, from Naples, could go since his house was nearby. And he resolved that it would be so and would not listen to any further arguments. And so I was unlucky, but the heathens were very lucky indeed, because the father teaches them with much greater care, fervour and zeal than I could have done.

The father went to *Erâz Cela Christôs*, the viceroy of Gojâm, with this decision, <[f. 488/476]> at which he was delighted. To settle matters more firmly, he summoned the chief heathens of those lands. Twelve of them came, and he told them that the father whom the emperor and he were giving them as a teacher was there and that, if they would listen to his doctrine and give their sons and daughters for him to teach and to baptize those who so wished, he gave them his word that he would no longer go to their lands with an army or consent to any captain at all doing them any harm, because they used to raid them continually and would take their cattle, destroy their crops and kill and capture everyone they could find. The heathens were very pleased with this and asked him to swear to them what he was promising, and they would comply with {everything} <what> he commanded. The viceroy swore an oath and commanded his captains to do the same. The heathens also swore to remain loyal and to build churches for those who wanted to become Christians. With that, the heathens very contentedly took their leave and the father at once made ready for the journey. He departed {at the beginning of} <on 1st> January 1618 in the company of a captain that the viceroy appointed to take him so that the heathens would receive him with greater respect and goodwill.

When the Devil saw the great harm that would come to him from the arrival of the father in those lands, where he had always been so well served and worshipped, he sought to prevent it through his ministers, the sorcerers who were nearby. He also made use of some monks from some neighbouring Christian lands, because both sorcerers and monks

sought to persuade the heathen people not to receive the father on any account because they would certainly lose their lands, property and lives, for he and the other fathers of the Portuguese were enchanters and had such a pact with the devil that they would take the sight from the eyes of anyone they wanted and weaken their strength and make them go mad, and they would stop the herds {[f. 533v]} from moving from where they were so that their owners could not lead them elsewhere, and so anyone the priests liked would take them. Thus they would deliver everything to the emperor and to *Erâz Cela Christôs*, for that is what they intended with the father's arrival, and they had clearly seen how some 3,000 Gâlas who had submitted to the emperor before – having previously been so warlike that the emperor had been unable to subdue them – were now like slaves to him with their wives and children. 'You must realize that the emperor did not achieve this with <[f. 488v/476v]> anything other than these fathers' sorcery and enchantments, and therefore do not let them enter your lands, unless you want the same thing to happen to you as happened to those heathens.'

With these and other diabolical lies they corrupted those heathens' hearts, and they were possessed with such great fear that they all gathered together at once and decided not to receive the father, but instead to make him leave their lands. While they were occupied in this, however, other heathens that they call Gâlas came in great strength, determined to lay waste to all those lands. Their inhabitants came out to encounter them and fought with such great courage within sight of the father that they soon defeated them and seized many weapons and a large number of cows that they had brought. After that they spent eight days without a break slaying the ones who had hidden in the bush, which is very thick. The victory was so great and so unexpected for them, since the forces had been very unequal, that they attributed it wholly to the fact that the father was there. They said that what they had been told could not be true, because had it been true they would have been completely destroyed and their women and children taken captive, because those Gâlas were some that the emperor and *Erâz Cela Christôs* had put in the kingdom of Gojâm, and even though they had done this without permission, if they had been victorious the people of the land would have persuaded themselves that they had been defeated by the father's sorcery and that the emperor and his brother had sent the father there to destroy them. But as things had turned out so well for them, they changed the opinion that they had previously had and received him with great festivity. And they began to listen to the matters of our holy faith, and they found them so good that some of their chiefs became Christians and built churches as they had promised, and others became so fond that they gave their children to the father so that he could teach them the doctrine, and the children and women sing it not only in church but also on the roads and in the fields wherever they go. {[f. 534]} Thus, where previously only blasphemies against Our Lord God were heard, now His commandments and the articles of His holy faith are sung, and much praise is offered to Him.

The following summer, the emperor passed near those lands with an army and the father went to visit him with some of the chief heathens from there, who took him a good present of honey and other things <[f. 489/477]> that the land produces, for even though it is mountainous the part that is cultivated is very fertile. As the father entered the emperor's tent to offer him what they had brought, he received him with great kindness and displays of love. In front of the great men, he thanked him with words of great honour for the trouble he was taking and the zeal with which he was teaching those

heathens for God's sake. When he showed that he wished to know what he was teaching them and how ready they were to be converted, the father said, 'What I teach them is the name of the Holy Trinity, and I explain this mystery to them in accordance with their ability; that there is a single Creator of heaven and earth and that all the rest are the creatures and confection of this Supreme Artificer whom we call God; that souls do not die; and that there is another everlasting life and death, together with the other things that they need for their salvation. I also reveal to them the deceptions and falsehoods of their sorcerers and how everything they do is with the Devil's art and aid. Many of them already understand this well, and I am sure that it will be easy to make a very large Christian community here, if Your Majesty helps by continuing with the holy zeal to spread the Christian faith that you have always shown, and if you have it explained to these heathens {who have come here} <that they must believe> that it is your desire that they listen to what I teach, and that you will do many favours to those who are baptized.' The emperor replied that he was very pleased with the good news that he was giving him that the holy faith could be spread among those heathens, and that he would very willingly help as much as he could in such holy work and he would strive with all his strength to expand the kingdom of God, for His Divine Majesty was preserving and expanding his by doing him {new} <greater> mercies every day. He would speak to those heathens himself and explain to them how much he wanted them to become Christians and what favours he would bestow on them in return. Since it was already very late, he dismissed the father and commanded that {[f. 534v]} a very splendid supper from his own kitchen be taken to him and to those who were accompanying him. And this was done.

Very early the next day he called for the father, and when he came in he found the tent full of captains and great men. The emperor told him to see which of those heathens he wanted to come in. As he named the chief ones, they called them in, which was something quite extraordinary because the emperor does not readily show himself to such people, not even to ambassadors who come from other parts, who instead always remain in the first <[f. 489v/477v]> of the two large compounds that the palace has and, if he is in his tent, they remain standing a long way off, and certain great men go there to ask them questions and then return to the emperor to report everything. Sometimes they spend a long time coming and going with questions and answers, and in the end they take them the emperor's decision, or command them to enter, if the importance of their business warrants it. But these heathens came in at once and he received them with joy and displays of love. He said to them, 'Do not think that Cela Christôs', who is the viceroy, his brother, 'gave you the father as your lord and teacher, for I gave him to you, and it is my desire that you listen to his doctrine, because these fathers are true teachers who, in words and deeds, teach Christ's holy law, without which nobody can be saved. If you go on as you have started, you can be quite certain that my captains will not do you any harm at all, and neither my justices nor Cela Christôs's will enter your lands. With the father, you will overcome all your {differences} <difficulties>, and thus you will be at peace and safe from the war that I always used to command be waged against you and from the continual raids that my captains used to make on you, laying waste to your land and capturing your women and children. Be very happy, build churches and deliver your {children} <sons and daughters> to the father so that he can teach them, and I give you my word that I shall not go back on anything that I have said, but rather I shall do whatever the father tells me is necessary for the good of your souls and profit of your families.'

The heathens were astonished at the kindness and love with which he had spoken to them, for they had expected his manner to be very different. Thus, as a sign of their esteem and gratitude for such a great favour, they all kissed the ground. The oldest and chief among them rose and said, 'Everything that Your Majesty commands we shall carry out in full, for in our view what the father {[f. 535]} teaches is very good. We only have difficulty in that he obliges us not to have more than one wife, because our custom is to have three or four, because we are very fond of children. But what use is it to us to have many, since Your Majesty's men capture them and take them where we can never see them again? It is better for us to be in God's and Your Majesty's grace with just one wife, because then the few that we have will remain with us at home. Therefore we shall try to overcome this difficulty as well and fulfil everything else that Your Majesty commands.' 'You have spoken very well,' replied the emperor. 'Do so, and I shall also add <[f. 490/478]> more favours and mercies to those that I have mentioned.' And he at once had it proclaimed that the people of Ancaxa (for that is the name of the land) were his loyal vassals and everyone should receive them as such, and that they should be welcomed with much love and kindness wherever they went, and nobody should make claims against them for the ills that they had done in the past, because they had been in times of war, and henceforth anyone who had claims against them should settle them before the father or whomever he put in his place.

At that, the heathens left feeling very content and they considered themselves so obliged to the father, out of respect for whom the emperor had done them such great mercies, that they told him that they would not only deliver their children to him to teach but that they would be his slaves unto death. And so, when the father went there afterwards, they all received him with great festivities and brought many children for him to teach. And they also very happily listened to the matters of our holy faith and, having formed a good opinion of it, some asked for holy baptism. The father baptized them with their children and wives, making a total of [...] <sup>1</sup> and many more would be baptized if he could be based there with them. But *Erâz* Cela Christôs often calls for him and he usually keeps him with him in winter since it is a more suitable time for his captains and soldiers to listen to our matters, as well as the monks, for he also has many of them gather there. Thus, although there are now two fathers there, they cannot take care of everything, for not even a large number would be enough, for a great opportunity has now opened up again to make {[f. 535v]} many Christians among other neighbouring heathens, because of a notable victory that Our Lord God saw fit to give *Erâz* Cela Christôs over some heathens called Gâlas, and it happened in the following manner.

Many heathen Gâlas came from a province called {Bizamô} <Bizanô> and, after crossing the River Nile, entered the kingdom of Gojâm and fell on some lands of heathen Agôus bordering the land where the father was with those that had just become Christians. They slaughtered many people and carried out extraordinary cruelties, because they cut to pieces the men and many of the boys and girls that they seized, and they opened up pregnant women with their spearheads and pulled the babies out of their wombs. The people of that land therefore came to fear them so much that nobody dared resist them. They all fled in whichever direction they could, trying only to save their own lives by climbing <[f. 490v/478v]> up into the mountains and hiding in the bush, which

<sup>1</sup> Blank space in both ARSI, MS Goa 42 and BPB, MS 778.

is very thick. But not even this was to any avail, because they pulled them out of there and exercised their accustomed cruelty on some and captured others, principally women and children. They took plenty of cattle, mares and stallions as booty, and they remained there for almost a month as lords of the land. When the father, who was nearby, heard of the destruction they had caused and that they were coming closer, he wrote to *Erâz Cela Christôs*, who was in another province, about what was happening and the danger he was facing.

When the letter reached *Erâz Cela Christôs*, he set off at once with {just a few} <some> warriors that he had with him and travelled fast by forced marches. He sent a message to the father to come out to the road to confess the captains and soldiers who are Catholic, as he knew how hard that war was going to be. The father went out and stayed there confessing them until midnight, when *Erâz Cela Christôs* called for him and confessed with great devotion and displays of contrition, and he discussed some matters on which he was unsure, earnestly begging him to resolve it all according to the opinion of the most rigorous and certain doctors. Afterwards, the father went back to confess the ones who were left. At dawn *Erâz Cela Christôs* commanded his captains to draw up their men, and he called the father and, kneeling before him with great humility, begged him to bless him and all his army. {[f. 536]} After the father had done so, he kissed his knees and, rising, mounted his horse and set off, taking the father with him since he wanted to go too. At noon they came close to some *Gâlas* who were guarding their baggage train and the booty that they had seized, while all the rest had gone to raid the neighbouring lands. When these men saw the dust raised by *Erâz Cela Christôs's* horses in the distance, they thought there were many men coming and that they would not be able to withstand them, so in a great fury they slew many women, boys and girls. Afterwards the father, who saw them, said that it was a pitiful sight to see some with their throats cut, others with their entrails showing, and many of the women badly slashed and breathing their last, with their suckling children in their arms.

The *Gâlas* were busy with these cruelties when *Erâz Cela Christôs's* horsemen arrived and charged with such <[f. 491/479]> fury that they soon killed nearly all of them, {because they were only a small party} and were said to number less than 500, and they took all the booty that they had, which was 5,000 cattle and many mares and stallions, as well as many women and children, who had been left since they had not had time to kill them. *Erâz Cela Christôs* then heard that the *Gâla* army had gone to raid another land and that they were waiting for him the next day. He prepared himself that night by confessing again, and he armed himself with much prayer, as he always does. The following morning, 23rd January 1621, he put his men among some trees so that they would not be seen by the enemy, and waited there for them to leave the bush through which they were coming. The *Gâlas* (as some affirm) had also been told by those who had escaped about what had happened and that he had few men, and so they came in a great fury, eager to find them in order to avenge the death of their men. When they came out onto a large plain, *Erâz Cela Christôs's* cavalry suddenly fell on them from behind, but they fought so hard that they made them turn back. When *Erâz Cela Christôs* saw that his men were being defeated, he attacked with the ones he had left and fought with such courage that not only did he stop the *Gâlas' thrust* but he routed them and slaughtered many of them, particularly the foot soldiers, of whom they say there were 2,000, and he seized more than 6,000 cattle and many heathen captives that those *Gâlas* were bringing back. And so he



set these and the ones he had taken earlier {[f. 536v]} free on condition that they and their children listened to the father's doctrine and, if they liked it, became Christian. And as a sign that they would do so, they at once brought the father forty boys that their mothers had in their arms, and he baptized them in the middle of the camp.

A few days later, the father went to the lands of those heathens and they received him with great love and kindness, and many people gathered to hear the matters of our holy faith, and they continued there for many days, and afterwards very fervently asked for holy baptism. Since one father alone could not catechize so many and attend to many others in neighbouring lands who wanted to hear our doctrine, another father, who was very busy in that kingdom with the Portuguese, was forced to go and help, and they have baptized 2,400 and are catechizing many more. They have built some churches and others are being built in different lands, making a total of thirteen. According <[f. 491v/479v]> to the fervour and devotion that those heathens show in general, it seems that so many will become Christians that many more churches will soon need to be built.

{[f. 537] Duarte de Melo told me in Baçaim that, when he was coming from the kingdom in the year 1585 in the admiral ship *Santiago*, the captain-in-chief of which was Fernão de Mendonça, which was lost on the shoals of India, when they were travelling through Cafraria and most of his companions had died, among them four fathers of the Society, as All Saints' Day dawned he felt so weak that he turned to Father Pêro Martínez, who was coming as provincial of the Society and later was bishop of Japan, and said to him, 'My friend, remain in peace, for it seems that it is God's will to take me to Him.' Although he too was weak, he rose with renewed spirit and strength and said to him, 'You are not going to die now. God will take you safely home to see your wife and children, and you will enter your fortress in Diu, and in your first year our Society's house will be founded there.' That is what happened, and from here the fathers of the Society went on to Ethiopia, and in their time there were four: Father Francisco António, Father Luís de Azevedo, Father António Fernandez, and Father Lourenço Romano. Baçaim, 4th December 1624.

A. Patriarcha Aethiopiae}

{[f. 538] When Fathers Luís de Azevedo and Lourenço Romano went, Captain Duarte de Melo sent his offerings to the Pasha, and he therefore gave them very free passage, as I have seen in letters from those same fathers, who have already written to him from Ethiopia.}<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The annotations on ff. 537–8 of ARSI, MS Goa 42 were written by Patriarch Afonso Mendes. BPB, MS 778 also contains two additional passages (one sixteen lines long plus signature, and the other four lines long), which were not published in the Porto edition of 1945–6. Because the ink has damaged the paper in BPB, MS 778, it is no longer possible to identify more than a few words, which do agree with those of ARSI, MS Goa 42. In BPB, MS 778, these passages appear to be in the same hand as the rest of the text.

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## HISTORICAL GLOSSARY

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***Abba Çalamâ / Abba Salamá / Abbā Salāmā I / Fremonatôs / Frémenātos / Saint Frumentius (Tyre (?), c. 315–Ethiopia, c. 380).***

Frumentius was the first metropolitan of the Ethiopian Church, and was also known as Abbā Salāmā Kasāté Berhān (Father of Peace, Revealer of Light). The oldest known account of the role played by Frumentius in converting the king of Ethiopia to Christianity is found in the *Church History* by Rufinus of Aquileia.<sup>1</sup> The available information suggests that he was either a philosopher's disciple or the young servant of a Christian merchant from Tyre, with whom he travelled to India, ending up in Aksum in dire straits after a shipwreck. According to Ethiopian tradition, however, as set down in his *gādī* (hagiography) and in the first of the two catalogues of monarchs included by Páez in the *History of Ethiopia*, he 'came from Jerusalem'.<sup>2</sup> Frumentius was consecrated a bishop by Athanasius, the patriarch of Alexandria (c. 295–373, elected 328, four periods of exile in 335–7, 339–46, 356–61 and 362–3). He returned to Aksum with the purpose of founding the Ethiopian Church, which became affiliated to the Egyptian Church. Athanasius's *Apologia*<sup>3</sup> contains the transcription of a letter from Emperor Constantius to the lords of Aksum (King 'Ézānā and his brother, Prince Šé'azānā), sent soon after the election, controlled by him, of a patriarch of Alexandria who upheld Arian ideas (357), recalling Frumentius to Egypt in order to be assessed on doctrinal matters. That apparently never came about. He is venerated on 26 *Ḥamlé* (30 July) in the Orthodox liturgical calendar.<sup>4</sup> (See *Abuna / metropolitan*.)

***Abba Marcâ / Meherkâ Dengel (Ethiopia, 16th–17th centuries).***

*Abba* Meherkâ Dengel was *qays haṣay* (royal chaplain); he was the scribe who began to write the Chronicle of Susenyos.<sup>5</sup> He converted to Catholicism after intense discussions with the fathers of the **second Jesuit mission**. Missionary sources consider him one of the most erudite scholars in Ethiopia. A letter from Father Luís de Azevedo dated 30 July 1608 notes that he was particularly brilliant in defending the Roman faith.<sup>6</sup>

***Abexim, Habexim, Habexi (plural Abexins, Habexins, Habexis).***

The term used by Portuguese speakers in the sixteenth century and later for 'Abyssinian', as a synonym for 'Ethiopian.' The term was taken from the Arabic adjective *ḥabašī*

<sup>1</sup> Rufinus of Aquileia, 'Historia ecclesiastica'. Frumentius's brother Aedesius (or Sidrakos) was one of Rufinus's informants. See also the account by Sozomen (Sozomenus, *Church History*, pp. 274–5.)

<sup>2</sup> See book I, chapter 5, and R. Schneider, 'Les Actes d'Abuna Salama'.

<sup>3</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria, 'Ad imperatorem Constantium Apologia', and *Apologie à l'empereur Constance*, pp. 124–6.

<sup>4</sup> Budge (ed.), *Book of the Saints*, IV, pp. 1164–5.

<sup>5</sup> Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos*, II, p. 55.

<sup>6</sup> Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 11, p. 147.

(Abyssinian), of South Arabian origin, the stress shifting from the first to the last syllable in keeping with Portuguese phonology. The word first appears in writing at the time when they were making direct contact with the peoples along the Red Sea coasts: Tomé Pires referred to Christian 'abixins' or 'abexins' in his *Suma Oriental*, written between 1512 and 1515,<sup>1</sup> while Afonso de Albuquerque, in a letter of 4 December 1513 recounting the recent expedition to the Red Sea, used the variant 'Abaxis' alongside the form 'Abexim', which became widely adopted.<sup>2</sup> The term was used as a general name for the inhabitants of the Christian kingdom of Ethiopia. There, the term *ḥabašā* is traditionally applied to the inhabitants of the central highlands – the core of the old Christian empire – particularly the Amhara and Tigrinya peoples.<sup>3</sup> (See **Ethiopia** and **Prester John**.)

**Abramo (Abraão Abraham) de Georgis (Aleppo, c. 1550 – Meššewā' / Massawa, Jan. 1595).**

A Maronite Christian from Syria,<sup>4</sup> he went to Rome in 1574 to study languages and grammar and in 1582 began his novitiate in the Jesuit College in Coimbra. He pursued his studies in the humanities and philosophy in Florence and Rome. He received the tonsure in 1588 and priestly orders in 1591. At that time the Company of Jesus needed a missionary on the Malabar coast of India who had some knowledge of eastern languages, and Abramo de Georgis was sent there to the land of the Saint Thomas Christians; he disembarked in Cochin in 1593.<sup>5</sup> At the end of 1594, and apparently without the knowledge of the provincial of Goa, by order of the viceroy, the vice-provincial and the congregation of professed fathers decided to send him to renew the mission in Ethiopia, since he could speak Arabic and would therefore more easily pass unnoticed than a Portuguese or Spanish cleric. After reaching Meššewā', however, he was discovered to be a Christian and was beheaded by order of the Turkish captain of the fortress there.<sup>6</sup> Abramo de Georgis's origins and his knowledge of monophysite Orthodox dogmas are likely to have weighed in his selection for the Jesuit mission in Ethiopia. Another significant, albeit poorly understood fact is that he went without the provincial of Goa's approval, or at least confirmation: at the time the Jesuits were attempting to have the bones of Saint Thomas removed from Mylapore to Goa, while the Christian inhabitants of southern India were trying to maintain or even increase their independence from the Goan religious and administrative authorities.<sup>7</sup>

**Abû Ferâgi / Adultério de Frangues.**

Work of religious controversy produced in Alexandria and taken to Ethiopia by the Alexandrine metropolitan of the Ethiopian Church. The curious title in Portuguese might possibly be rendered as *Adulteration* [of the faith] *by the Franks*. In 1556 Father

<sup>1</sup> Cortesão (ed.), *A Suma Oriental de Tomé Pires*, p. 136. Cortesão rendered the word as 'Abyssinians' in his English translation, *The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires*, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Cartas de Afonso de Albuquerque*, I, pp. 229 and 232.

<sup>3</sup> Ramos, 'Ethiopia / Abyssinia'.

<sup>4</sup> This community and its expansion are discussed by Heyberger, *Les Chrétiens du Proche Orient*, pp. 13–16.

<sup>5</sup> S. Kuri, 'Vocations orientales à la compagnie de Jésus', p. 119.

<sup>6</sup> Bk III, ch. 22, above. Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 10, p. 374 and pp. 383–5; Teles, *História geral de Etiópia-a-Alta*, pp. 229–34 (abridged in Tellez, *The Travels of the Jesuits in Ethiopia*, pp. 158–9).

<sup>7</sup> Županov, *Missionary Tropics*, pp. 87–112.

Gonçalo Rodrigues sent King Galāwdéwos a letter requesting access to this Coptic treatise translated into Ge'ez, in order to compose a refutation of its content. According to Rodrigues, it condemned the Council of Chalcedon (451 CE), 'saying that it made four persons in the holy Trinity, together with many other errors that they falsely impute to us'.<sup>1</sup> The book was apparently burnt during the reign of Śarša Dengel (Ma'ak Sagad).<sup>2</sup> Merid Wolde Aregay suggests, however, that its title may have been changed, which would account for its apparent disappearance; he identifies it with the *Mazgaba Hāymānot*.<sup>3</sup> (See **Council of Chalcedon, religious controversy** and *Mazaguēbt Haimanôt / Mazgaba Hāymānot*.)

### **Abuna / metropolitan.**

*Abuna* literally means 'our father' and is used before the metropolitan's name as a sign of respect. He is the highest authority in the Ethiopian Church hierarchy and, until the death of *Abuna* Qérellos in 1951, was appointed by the patriarch of the Coptic Church of Alexandria. This dependence was justified by the thirty-sixth article of the Canons of Nicaea in the Arabic *Sénodos*, corresponding to the forty-second article in the Ethiopian version. This was included in the *Fethā Nagāst*, a body of laws produced among the Copts in the mid-twelfth century and introduced into Ethiopia according to tradition during the reign of Zar'a Yā'eqob, but more likely later, under Śarša Dengel.<sup>4</sup> It was the *abuna* who consecrated altar stones (*tābot*), ordained priests and maintained the Christian orthodoxy of the Church. Since this regulatory function was performed by men trained within the Coptic Church in Egypt and thus unfamiliar with the history and culture of the faithful of the Ethiopian Church, the relationship was not always peaceful.<sup>5</sup> The Jesuits' interest in the role and especially the political power of the metropolitan that emerges from Pedro Páez's account is directly associated with the way in which the missionaries tried to interpret the relationship between the Ethiopian Church hierarchy and royal power, against the background of their own strategy for converting the monarch to Catholicism. In their view, consolidation of Catholic influence at court ought to result in the replacement of the Orthodox metropolitan from Alexandria with a patriarch appointed by the pope in Rome. This agenda, established by Ignatius de Loyola,<sup>6</sup> reveals that Páez and the other writers in the mission were influenced more by the model presented in the **Letter of the Prester John** (in which the Indian ruler was aided by the

<sup>1</sup> See p. ??? above.

<sup>2</sup> See p. ??? above.

<sup>3</sup> Aregay, 'Legacy of Jesuit Missionary Activities', p. 41.

<sup>4</sup> *The Fetha Nagast*, ch. IV, pt I, 42, p. 18 ('As for the Ethiopians, a patriarch shall not be appointed from among their learned men, nor can they appoint one by their own will. Their metropolitan is subject to the holder of the see of Alexandria, who is entitled to appoint over them a chief who hails from his region and is under his jurisdiction.'). It was established at Nicaea that Christendom would have just four patriarchs (p. 17).

<sup>5</sup> Piovaneli, 'Les Controverses théologiques', p. 190; da Leonessa, 'La versione etiopica dei canoni apocrifi', pp. 34–6, 50 and 78; Getachew, 'Religious Controversies', p. 115, no 57.

<sup>6</sup> As a sign of the importance attached to the Ethiopian mission, Loyola sent a letter from Rome to João Nunes Barreto (*Epist. Ign.* 4645, 26 July 1554) confirming the appointment of a patriarch and two auxiliary bishops for Ethiopia. Such an appointment was exceptional and contrary to the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, which forbade acceptance of 'a dignity or prelateship within the Company' (*Constitutiones Societatis Iesu*, pars decima, 1583).

patriarch of Saint Thomas) than by the evidence before their eyes of the multiple tensions between the king, the Ethiopian clergy and the Egyptian *abuna*.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Acabe eḩât / acabeçaât / acabiçât / aqqābé sa'āt.**

Literally the 'keeper of the hours'. The role covered by this title has not yet been properly identified. This official apparently kept the royal lists and was responsible for announcing prayer times. It was an honorific position, which gradually became more politicized until, by the late fifteenth century, the *aqqābé sa'āt* was one of the three members of the regency council for the young King Eskender. The title was eventually granted as a privilege to the superiors of Dabra Hāyq, a monastery founded on an island in Lake Hāyq in the late thirteenth century, perhaps as a reward for the support the monks had given to Yekunno Amlāk.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Afonso de França (sixteenth century).**

One of the 'four hundred' – the military expedition led by **Cristóvão da Gama**. He was the sixth captain of the Portuguese in Ethiopia. He accompanied Father Gonçalo Rodrigues (1555–6), acting as his interpreter, and played an important role in receiving the **first Jesuit mission**. How he reacted to the edict issued by Bishop Andrés de Oviedo in early 1559 (excommunicating any Catholic who aided the king) is unknown, but later that year the new king, Minas, made Francisco Jacome the captain of the Portuguese, showing that Afonso de França may have fallen out of favour with the king. He died in 1562.<sup>3</sup>

#### **Agçûm / Aksum.**

The capital of the former kingdom of the same name, situated in northern Ethiopia at about 2200 m above sea level in the valley between the mountains of Béta Giyorgis and Māy Qoḩo. Its foundation can be dated on archaeological grounds to the second century BCE. In the fourth century, King 'Ézānā made Christianity the official religion of the kingdom. Aksum declined from the seventh century onwards, but regained its status as a holy city in the fifteenth century during the reign of Zar'a Yā'eqob, whose political genius perhaps involved establishing a link between the royal line of Aksum and the Amhara-Šawā dynasty. He gave the city back its central place in the ritual of royal consecration, reclaiming elements from its previous history.<sup>4</sup> Susneyos, too, went through the consecration ceremony in Aksum to affirm his legitimacy as king, 'being made king, just as the old kings who reigned before him were made kings.'<sup>5</sup> According to Ethiopian tradition, and as retold by Páez, the Ark of the Covenant was removed from Jerusalem by Menilek I, the son of Mākedā (the **Queen of Saba / Queen of Sheba**) and Solomon, and is kept in the sanctuary of Saint Mary of Zion in Aksum. (See **altar stone / tābot** and **Kebra Nagast**).

<sup>1</sup> See Ramos, 'Machiavellian Empowerment and Disempowerment', pp. 200–201; and Ramos, 'El mito del Preste Juan y las creencias ibéricas sobre Etiopía', 2007, pp. 44–5.

<sup>2</sup> Derat, *Le Domaine des rois éthiopiens*, pp. 92–5; Kaplan, "Aqqabe sā'at".

<sup>3</sup> Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 10, p. 144.

<sup>4</sup> Toubkis, *Je deviendrai roi*, pp. 429–30; Hirsch & Fauvelle-Aymar, 'Aksum après Aksum', p. 76.

<sup>5</sup> Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos*, II, p. 95. See also book I, chapter 12, and book IV, chapter 26, p.??? above. From the way he recounts the event, Páez seems to want to give the impression that the king regarded the ritual as an unpleasant but necessary formality.

**Aleixo de Meneses, Friar (Lisbon, 1559–Madrid, 3 May 1617).**

An Augustinian friar, he was appointed bishop of Goa in 1595, the year in which he took over the diocese. He promoted evangelizing work particularly by Augustinian missions, and focused his own pastoral activity on the task of re-evangelizing the Malabar Christians. He favoured the Ethiopian mission in response to royal requests, and tried to facilitate the sending of missionaries to Ethiopia.<sup>1</sup> He became governor of India in 1608–9, after the death of Viceroy Martim Afonso de Castro in Malacca in June 1607. Having been elected primate in 1610, he left Goa the following January to take up the diocese of Braga in the summer of 1612. Philip III (II of Portugal) appointed him viceroy of Portugal in 1613. He resided in Madrid as archbishop of Braga, viceroy and president of the Council of State of the Kingdom of Portugal until his death in 1617.

**Altar stone / *tābot*.**

The *tābot* is a representation of the Ark of the Covenant – the symbol of the alliance between God and Israel. There is one in every Ethiopian church, in the form of a wooden or stone slab on which is inscribed the name of the patron saint of the church. It is the *tābot* that makes the church, and not *vice versa*.<sup>2</sup> It is placed in the most private area of the church, known as the *maqdas* or *qeddusa qeddusān* (holy of holies), from which lay persons are excluded. Duly wrapped in precious cloths, it is one of the devotional objects carried on procession on religious feast days or at times of natural disaster when prayers are said to call for divine intervention. Father Francisco Álvares witnessed such a procession during the first few weeks of his long stay in Ethiopia with the Portuguese embassy under Dom Rodrigo de Lima, and he left a brief description of it.<sup>3</sup>

**Athanatêus / Atenâtéwos (Ethiopia, 16th–17th centuries).**

He apparently became the most powerful man in the kingdom at the end of the sixteenth century. According to the chronicle of Susneyos, he was appointed ‘minister of the kingdom’ shortly after the death of Śarša Dengel (in July 1597) and still held the same position in early 1602. He supported Yā‘eqob against Za Dengel but, eventually, on 14 December 1604, while Yā‘eqob was in exile in Ennāryā, the court headed by Atenâtéwos granted Susneyos royal power over the kingdom, and probably crowned him as well.<sup>4</sup> His political importance is based essentially on two aspects: his family links with the royal line and the position he won for himself in the court throughout this troubled period in the history of Ethiopia. He was ‘the son-in-law of Emperor Malâc Çaguêd’ and also of ‘Empress Mariâm Sinâ.’<sup>5</sup> The fact that Mal’ak Sagad gave one of his daughters (*wayzaro* Walatta Giyorgis) in marriage to Atenâtéwos reveals the connection between the king’s policy of creating marriage alliances and his need to control the region of Goğğām. In the political sphere Atenâtéwos combined his personal interest with loyalty to the king. Thus, after the king had stripped him of the position of *rās* of Goğğām in favour of Se‘ela Krestos in 1612, and although he was

<sup>1</sup> Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 10, pp. 388 and 400.

<sup>2</sup> Getatchew, ‘A History of the Tabot’, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Álvares, *The Prester John of the Indies*, book I, chapter 12.

<sup>4</sup> Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos*, II, pp. 11, 31 and 46.

<sup>5</sup> See pp. ???, ??? and ???.

well inclined towards the Jesuits, he changed sides in June 1617 and became a 'rebel', eventually to be exiled to Amhara.<sup>1</sup> (D. Toubkis)

**Atroné ʕa Mariām / Atronsa Māryām.**

Royal church founded by King Ba'edā Māryām in the Amhara region (Amhara Sayent). According to this king's chronicle, the church was the burial place of twenty-one kings and metropolitans,<sup>2</sup> to which the bodies of Yekunno Amlāk, the founder of the Solomonic dynasty, Newāya Māryām and Tēwodros were transported.<sup>3</sup> The church was destroyed twice: the first time by the army of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm on 3 November 1531, and the second by the Oromo in 1709–10.<sup>4</sup> The Portuguese ambassador, Dom Rodrigo de Lima, and his entourage visited it in September 1520 and again on 1 January 1521, when the bones of King Nā'od were transferred there.<sup>5</sup> (M.-L. Derat)

**Balatinôch gueitâ / blätténoččétâ (plural of blätténgétâ).**

They were a kind of prime minister of the royal household (or of the household of a *rās*), who controlled the royal treasury and whose duties were more domestic than warlike.<sup>6</sup> From the time of King Lebna Dengel until the end of the seventeenth century there were two *blätténoččétâ*: one *tällāq* (greater) *blätténgétâ* and one *teqāqen* (lesser) *blätténgétâ*.<sup>7</sup> The latter was subordinate to the former, and both held command over a number of *blätténočč* (civil and military officers of the king).<sup>8</sup> From the reign of Šarša Dengel onwards, the *tällāq blätténgétâ* took over the curial duties of the *rās-beḥt waddad* temporarily while the latter went to the region of his investiture.<sup>9</sup> Like the *teqāqen blätténgétâ*, he was also an officer in the royal army, as may be seen on numerous occasions in Susneyos's chronicle. Many *blätténoččétâ* are known from this king's reign: Yolyos (1609), Keflo (1610), Awnābyos (1614, 1621), Yonā'él (1609), Qebe'ā Krēstos (1620), Lābasi (1610), Malke'ā Krestos (1618, 1620, 1628–9), Walda Giyorgis (1628), Sutāf (1621) and Šarša Krestos (1624, 1627). (D. Toubkis).

**Behêt uādêd / behêt oadêd / beḥt waddad.**

It means 'the only beloved', but also 'he who has an independent will'.<sup>10</sup> The title had certainly existed since the fourteenth century. In the fifteenth and the first half of the sixteenth there were two *beḥt waddad*: one of the left and the other of the right, corresponding to the division of the royal camp into two halves. While the *beḥt waddad* of the right led the king's armies on campaign, the one of the left looked after the kingdom and

<sup>1</sup> See Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 11, pp. 426–7.

<sup>2</sup> Perruchon, *Les Chroniques de Zar'a Ya'eqob*, p. 171.

<sup>3</sup> Perruchon, *Histoire d'Eskenfer*, pp. 355–6.

<sup>4</sup> Basset, *Histoire de la conquête d'Abbyssinie*, I, pp. 307–8, n. 1, and 311–13; Kropp, 'Die Geschichte des Lebna Dengel, Claudius und Minas', p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Álvares, *The Prester John of the Indies*, chapters 64 and 95.

<sup>6</sup> See Guidi, 'Uno squarcio di storia ecclesiastica di Abissinia', col. 315, who drew extensively on the royal chronicles.

<sup>7</sup> Guidi, 'Contributi alla storia letteraria di Abissinia I', pp. 66 and 83.

<sup>8</sup> Conti Rossini, 'Historia Regis Sarsa Dengel', IV, pp. 119, 131, 166, 172, 179 and 187.

<sup>9</sup> Guidi, 'Contributi alla storia letteraria di Abissinia I', p. 82.

<sup>10</sup> Guidi, 'Uno squarcio di storia ecclesiastica di Abissinia', col. 339; Guidi, 'Contributi alla storia letteraria di Abissinia I', 1922, p. 70, note 1.

was responsible for administering the royal camp and justice.<sup>1</sup> The position was apparently suppressed by King Galāwdéwos. During the reign of Śarṣa Dengel they were replaced with a single *rās*, although the title remained, combined with that of *rās*. The first *rās-beht waddad* was Walda Krestos, perhaps in 1572–3 or in 1586–94.<sup>2</sup> Under Susneyos, two of the king's brothers were successively *beht waddad* without giving up the title of *rās*: Yamāna Krestos (1610–17) and Se'elā Krestos (1617 to the end of the reign).<sup>3</sup> Se'elā Krestos was replaced in 1632, the first year of the reign of Fāsīladas, by Za Krestos.<sup>4</sup> (D. Toubkis)

**Bernagaez / bahār nagâx / bahṛ nagâš.**

The title literally means 'governor of the sea' or 'king of the sea.' The power of the *bahṛ nagâš* seems to have been strengthened during the reign of Zar'a Yā'eqob in order to maintain access to the coast.<sup>5</sup> In 1557 he failed to prevent the occupation of Meššewā' (Massawa) and Ḥergigo (Arqīqo), but he brought the invasion by Zemun Pasha to a halt near Debārwā.<sup>6</sup> Meššewā' was then placed in the *šum* of Dahlak, subject to the Turkish *nayib* or governor.<sup>7</sup> Loss of control over the coastal region meant that access to the kingdom of Ethiopia became increasingly difficult. According to information gathered by Francisco Álvares (between 1520 and 1526), the area controlled by the *bahṛ nagâš* stretched north–eastwards from the northern bank of the River Marab. His main residence was in Debārwā, a settlement lying between the headwaters of the Bārka and the Marab.<sup>8</sup> Although the region he governed was peripheral, its location was highly strategic, and it was therefore essential for the kings of Ethiopia to ensure that the *bahṛ nagâš* remained loyal. (D. Toubkis)

**Çagâ Za Ab / Şaggâ Za Āb (Ethiopia, late 15th century–Cochin, India, Sept. 1539).**

A cleric, identified as a monk (*frade*) by Francisco Álvares;<sup>9</sup> he held the title of *liqa kâhnât* (superior of the priests, or archpriest). Some time before 1520 he went on pilgrimage to the holy sites and visited Venice and Rome. Having been appointed ambassador by King Lebna Dengel in 1524, he received the title of *rās* of Begwenā (near Lake Ašangé) and accompanied the embassy of Dom Rodrigo de Lima on its return to Portugal in 1527.<sup>10</sup> Şaggâ Za Āb's mandate was to foster a political alliance between Portugal and Ethiopia. Instead of that, he was interrogated by Portuguese theologians about the rites of the Ethiopian Church. The keeping of the Sabbath, priestly marriage, yearly rebaptism, circumcision and dietary prohibitions were all seen by Catholics as signs of Jewish influence. In 1533, while at court in Lisbon still waiting to be dispatched by King John III

<sup>1</sup> Guidi, 'Contributi alla storia letteraria di Abissinia I', pp. 77 and 81.

<sup>2</sup> Guidi, 'Contributi alla storia letteraria di Abissinia I', p. 82, n. 1; Guidi, 'Bahrey, Historia Gentis Galla', p. 204.

<sup>3</sup> Pereira, *Crónica de Susenyos*, II, pp. 106, 122–3.

<sup>4</sup> Perruchon, 'Notes ... Règne de Susneyos', p. 61; Basset, *Études sur l'histoire de l'Éthiopie*, p. 133; Béguinot, *La cronaca abbreviata d'Abissinia*, p. 48.

<sup>5</sup> Perruchon, *Les Chroniques de Zar'a Yā'eqob*, pp. 47–8.

<sup>6</sup> See Rego, *DHMPPPO – Índia*, 6, p. 321.

<sup>7</sup> Dombrowski, *Ethiopia's access to the sea*, p. 83.

<sup>8</sup> Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos*, II, p. 110.

<sup>9</sup> Álvares, *Prester John of the Indies*, e.g. pp. 227 and 236.

<sup>10</sup> Aubin, 'Le Prêtre Jean devant la censure portugaise'; Pennec, *Des jésuites au royaume du prêtre Jean*, pp. 33–5.



(1521–57), he met the humanist Damião de Góis, who suggested he should write a short treatise on Ethiopian Christianity. He did so, apparently in Portuguese. The text, *Hæc sunt quæ de fide et religione apud nos Æthiopes habentur et observantur* (These are what we in Ethiopia have and observe in the matter of faith and religion), the original of which has been lost, includes not only a profession of faith and an explanation of certain customs (apparently chosen as ones that Catholics found questionable), but also brief autobiographical notes that reveal the author's bitterness at the manner in which he had been treated. It was published in Leuven in September 1540 in a Latin version translated, corrected and adapted by Damião de Góis, in the second part of *Fides, religio moresque Æthiopum*.<sup>1</sup> He was finally dispatched to return to Ethiopia in March 1539, but died in India *en route*.

### **Câhua / coffee.**

The Arabic word *qahwa* for the hot beverage brewed from ground coffee beans was originally used to mean 'wine'. The coffee bush is indigenous to Kaffa, a region in the south-western highlands of Ethiopia, where the plant, the berry and the drink are called by the same name: *bun* or *bunnā*. Coffee had become popular in Yemen by the sixteenth century,<sup>2</sup> but there was little interest within Christian Ethiopia in producing, consuming or trading it before the eighteenth century. Pedro Páez mentions once having drunk coffee while captive in a town near 'Heinân' in Ḥaḍramawt,<sup>3</sup> but, like other Jesuit writers, he says nothing about its use in Ethiopia in the early seventeenth century. It was only when the Shawā kings rose to power in the nineteenth century that coffee production and trade expanded.<sup>4</sup> Coffee was traditionally traded in Ethiopia by Muslims and its consumption was discouraged by the Church and state, since it was traditionally prepared and consumed in a ceremony involving ritual elements identified with the *zār* ecstatic cult and beliefs regarded as pagan.

### **Çanâ / Çaanâ / Saná / Tānā Qirqos.**

An island close to the eastern shore of Lake Tānā on which the church and monastery of Tānā Qirqos stand. It is one of the oldest of the monastic houses on the islands in the lake and may have been established there in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century.<sup>5</sup> According to the chronicle of Susneyos, the church was reconstructed with support from the king in 1620, when the *tābot* of Qirqos was rededicated to Jesus.<sup>6</sup>

### **Cânhe azmâch / qaññazmâč.**

He was the general of the right hand, who commanded the right wing of the army. In 1617 Keflo was called *azzâž* (general) of the *qañ bêt* or 'right house', which seems to be the equivalent of *qaññazmâč*.<sup>7</sup> This rank is hardly mentioned in the chronicle of

<sup>1</sup> Boavida, 'Damião de Góis e "a frase caldaica e etiópica"', pp. 731–7.

<sup>2</sup> 'Kahwa', in *TEI*, IV, pp. 449a–453a.

<sup>3</sup> Book III, chapter 18, p.???

<sup>4</sup> Aregay, 'The Early History of Ethiopia's Coffee Trade', pp. 23–5.

<sup>5</sup> Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State in Ethiopia*, pp. 189–90. On this monastery, see the inventory by Claire Bosc-Tiessé in 'L'Histoire et l'art des églises du lac Tana', pp. 211–18.

<sup>6</sup> Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos*, I, pp. 235–6; II, p. 181–2.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, II, p. 128.

Susneyos, but it appears more often in that of King Iyāsu.<sup>1</sup> See also **Guerâ azmâch / gerâzmâč**.

**Cartilha.**

A Portuguese term for a catechism for teaching Christian doctrine to catechumens in general and children in particular. In addition, as Father Luís de Azevedo remarked, it was a ‘well-accepted work and a great help for the language that we all desire and seek to learn.’<sup>2</sup> In the *History of Ethiopia*, Pedro Páez claimed that he had translated the *Cartilha* into Amharic.<sup>3</sup> That is unlikely, since he had only recently arrived in the country, and the translation was probably done by João Gabriel, the Portuguese captain, under Páez’s guidance.<sup>4</sup> The exact text that was translated cannot be ascertained; it may have been a Portuguese or Spanish translation of one of the catechisms by Robert Bellarmine (*Dottrina cristiana breve perché si possa imparare a mente*, Rome, 1597; *Dichiarazione più copiosa della dottrina cristiana per uso di quelli che insegnano ai fanciulli e alle persone semplici*, Rome, 1598), which were exceptionally popular, running to 351 editions in 58 languages and dialects, and widely used in Catholic missions.<sup>5</sup>

**Cela Christôs / Se’ela Krestos (Ethiopia, 16th–17th centuries).**

Half-brother of King Susneyos on their mother’s side, who played an important role in both political and religious terms. The part of the chronicle of Susneyos that deals with the period between 1604 and 1616 emphasizes his military qualities, portraying him as a defender of royal authority always ready to support his brother in the wars against his various enemies:<sup>6</sup> in 1607 against rās **Atenâtéwos**, who had sided with Yā’eqob, the king deposed by Susneyos; in 1608 pacifying the northern parts of the kingdom; in 1609 crushing the rebellion led by Keflo and the *blätténgétā* **Yolyos**, who had been Susneyos’s protégé before his coronation; and from 1612 to 1616, as *rās* of Goġġām, leading several punitive expeditions against the Boorana Oromo. The second phase of Se’ela Krestos’s career, from 1617 onwards, was characterized by his increasing political dominance within the court and his support for Catholicism. Without losing his position as *rās* of Goġġām, he was also appointed to the highest civil and military rank of *beht waddad* (see **Behêt uâdêd / behêt oadêd / beht waddad**) following the dispossession of another of the king’s brothers, Yamāna Krestos.<sup>7</sup> By 1620 he was shown in both the chronicle of Susneyos and the *History of Ethiopia* as an essential figure in the ‘change of faith’, who publicly defended Roman Catholicism and encouraged people to abandon Orthodoxy. When King Susneyos proclaimed the edict abolishing ‘the Sabbath of the Jews’ in November 1621, Se’ela Krestos enforced the measure in his *katamā*. In April 1626, as a reward for reinforcing the king’s power, he received large land grants (*gwelt* or *gult*) in Goġġām (in the Amadāmit region) and between Emfrāz and Qārodā, near Susneyos’s

<sup>1</sup> Guidi, ‘Annales Iohannis I, Iyasu I et Bakaffā’, V, pp. 70, 118, 132, 154.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Father Luís de Azevedo to the provincial of Goa, dated 22 July 1607 (in Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 11, p. 126.

<sup>3</sup> Book IV, chapter 4, p. ???.

<sup>4</sup> Later, Páez reported that he used the services of an interpreter (book IV, chapter 5, p. ???).

<sup>5</sup> Tewelde Beiene, *La politica cattolica di Seltan Sägäd*, p. 182.

<sup>6</sup> Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos*, II, pp. 46–7, 72, 89, 101, 120.

<sup>7</sup> See Toubkis, *Les Blätténoçgétā*, p. 173.

*katamā* at Danqaz.<sup>1</sup> Mindful of the intricate arguments of the chronicle, which insists that Se'ela Krestos was responsible for the court's change of faith, the reader might surmise that an over-powerful *rās* posed a considerable danger to the king's authority and the stability of the Ethiopian political system.

**Cerāi maçarê / *šerāg ma'asaré*.**

He was 'the master of ceremonies, the man in silk robes', in charge of organization and protocol.

**Chronicle of Susneyos.**

The only known manuscript of the chronicle, which had been brought to Europe by the traveller James Bruce at the end of the eighteenth century and deposited in the Bodleian Library, Oxford,<sup>2</sup> was published in 1892 by F. M. Esteves Pereira, who published his own Portuguese translation of it eight years later. The chronicle is believed to have been written by three separate authors: *Abbā Meherkā Dengel*, Takla Šellāsé (known as 'Tino'), and an anonymous writer charged with finishing it at the beginning of Fāsīladas's reign or the end of Susneyos's. The text underwent many changes even while it was being written, revealing the importance attached to writing official history in court circles. Some corrections appeared to be the result of actual censorship, mainly due to the 'restoration of the Alexandrian confession.'<sup>3</sup> Susneyos's history focused essentially on the actions of the man, whose destiny was far more manipulated by historiographers than directed by divine providence. The first twenty-one chapters cover the period from his birth in 1576/77 to his investiture in 1604; chapters 22–30 the period from his investiture to the death of King Yā'eqob in 1607; and chapters 31–99 the period of his reign, the last chapter ending with his death in 1632.<sup>4</sup> The text shows a need to re-evaluate the political and administrative structure of the Ethiopian kingdom, since an excessively Eurocentric approach to historiography has long associated it with Western Christian systems, presenting Ethiopia as an empire and the *neguša nagašt* as an emperor or even *dominus dominantium*.<sup>5</sup>

**Confessio Fidei.**

A short work attributed to King Galāwdéwos, written at the time of the arrival of the first Jesuit mission in Ethiopia, when Father Gonçalo Rodrigues made his exploratory visit in 1555–6. The king's chronicle describes the **religious controversy** rekindled by the Jesuits in the following terms: 'This same year saw the discussions between the Jacobites and the Melchites, who are the Franks, revived, but they were quite different from the earlier discussions. The glorious King Galāwdéwos (peace be upon him!) responded to the Melchites with words taken from the books of Catholic law; he confounded them and covered them with shame. He composed a dissertation which he included in a book,'<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Huntingford, *The Historical Geography of Ethiopia*, p. 179; Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyo...*, II, pp. 221.

<sup>2</sup> Dillmann, *Catalogus Codicum Manuscriptorum*, ms. Eth. 30.

<sup>3</sup> Kropp, 'La Réédition des Chroniques éthiopiennes: perspectives et premiers résultats', p. 53, No 30.

<sup>4</sup> Toubkis, *Je deviendrai roi sur tout le pays d'Éthiopie*, pp. 107–16.

<sup>5</sup> For the influence exerted by the idea of the Letter of the Prester John on the formation of Ethiopian regional studies, see James, 'Kings, Commoners'.

<sup>6</sup> Conzelman (ed.), *Chronique de Galāwdéwos*, chapter 74, p. 169. For the 'earlier' discussions, see *ibid.* chapter 55, pp. 158–9.

beginning with the profession of faith, summarizing the Trinitarian and Christological dogmas, and then giving a defence of certain customs observed by Ethiopian Christians, such as dietary restrictions, circumcision and the keeping of the Sabbath.<sup>1</sup>

### **Council of Chalcedon (451).**

The fourth ecumenical council was convened by Pope Leo I with the backing of the Byzantine emperor in order to review the conclusions of the recent Council of Ephesus (431), which had adopted **Dioscorus's** Alexandrine proposals. Meeting in Chalcedon in October and November 451, the Council anathematized Monophysitism, which conceived of the hypostasis of the Word in only one nature, by acknowledging the only-begotten Son in two natures, 'united without confusion, without change, without division, without separation'. In addition to this definition of dogma, it declared the divine origin of Rome's primacy over the other patriarchates, but at the emperor's behest it gave the Church of Constantinople equivalent status. The Byzantine emperor's adoption of the ideas of Chalcedon led to a period of religious persecution, during which Ethiopia saw the arrival of a group of fleeing monks – the 'Nine Saints' – who devoted themselves to spreading the Gospel and founding hermitages, around which monastic communities sprang up. The effect of the Council of Chalcedon was to exacerbate the divergences between the Latin and the Oriental Churches to the extent that the Churches that accepted the Monophysite (or, more properly, Miaphysite) dogma never acknowledged this council's authority.<sup>2</sup> The **religious controversy** between the Roman Catholic missionaries and the Ethiopian Orthodox clergy should be seen partly as a restatement of this long-standing dispute and partly as a debate on what were regarded as heterodox beliefs that had arisen within the Ethiopian Church itself.

### **Council of Florence (1438–45).**

Convened by Pope Eugene IV (1431–1447), this council was split into three sessions held in Ferrara (1438–9), Florence (1439–42) and Rome (1443–5). It was attended by delegations from the Oriental Churches, the Byzantine Emperor John VIII Palaeologus, the patriarchs of Byzantium, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, the metropolitan of Kiev, and numerous bishops and monastic superiors. The Franciscan Alberto da Sarteano was sent as the legate of the See of Rome and the council to the Holy Land and Cairo, and returned to Florence in late summer 1441 with delegations from the Ethiopian community in Jerusalem and the Coptic Church so that they could participate in the council's conclusions regarding the reconciliation and reunification of the Churches.<sup>3</sup> In fact, Florence represented an attempt to heal not only the post-Chalcedonian schism that gave rise to the Coptic and Ethiopian Churches, but also the schism of 1054 in which they had not taken part, although it had arisen regarding the question of the *filioque*, or the Procession of the Holy Spirit, which was central to their doctrine in that they adopted the Nicene Creed without addition (in contrast to the Roman Church). Another important

<sup>1</sup> See Ullendorf, 'The "Confessio Fidei" of King Claudius of Ethiopia'; Lozza, 'La Confessione di Claudio Re d'Etiopia', pp. 67–78.

<sup>2</sup> See Grillmeier and Bacht, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*; 'Il Concilio di Calcedonia', *EC*, I, pp. 1883–90; Witakowski, 'Chalcedon, Council of'.

<sup>3</sup> See Santoni, 'Albert de Sarteano observant pontifical et humaniste envoyé pontifical à Jérusalem et au Caire', pp. 201–2.

point, which to some extent led the Oriental Churches later to reject union, concerned acknowledging the primacy of Rome over the other patriarchates.<sup>1</sup> As the Ethiopian delegation had been sent by the superior of the Jerusalem community, it did not in fact represent the Ethiopian Church and had no decision-making power, or at least such power as it had was not recognized later when news reached Ethiopia. The *negus*, Zar'a Yā'eqob, apparently received the bull of union that resulted from the council's decisions, according to the letters that Lebna Dengel sent almost a century later to Pope Clement VII (1523–34), which the pope received from the hands of Father **Francisco Álvares** in January 1533 together with a pledge of obedience.<sup>2</sup> Since the Jesuits assumed that the religious orientation of the ruler was binding on all his subjects, including the local Church, they were subsequently under the impression that the Ethiopian monarchs had twice given a vow of obedience to the Pope in Rome, only afterwards to refuse to abide by it.

### **Cristóvão da Gama (Évora, Portugal, 1516–Ethiopia, August 1542).**

The fourth son of Vasco da Gama, the first European to reach India via the Cape of Good Hope in 1498, Cristóvão da Gama left for India in 1532 in the company of his older brother Estêvão to serve in Malacca, the captaincy the Gamas had inherited. He made his second voyage to the Orient in 1538 in the fleet led by Garcia de Noronha. In 1541 he took part in the expedition to the Red Sea organized by his brother, then governor of India; while in Mesṣewā' (Massawa), Estêvão responded to the appeals from the Ethiopian monarchy for military assistance by appointing Cristóvão to lead an expeditionary force into Ethiopia. He was to die there at the hands of the Muslim emir of 'Adāl. His initial aims were twofold: to join up with Negus Galāwdēwos and to secure his supply lines, but when he was informed that the king was far away, he rescued the queen mother and took her with him, thus showing that he was there as a liberator rather than as an invader. To demonstrate his military superiority he decided to storm Ambā Sannāyt, the first mountain stronghold of the enemy that he apparently came across on his journey, in February 1542.<sup>3</sup> The Portuguese sources and Ethiopian oral tradition (which the Portuguese sources partly reproduce) made him a hero and a martyr and associate his death with a series of prodigious events, such as the sudden emergence of a healing spring at the spot where his head fell. Through this hagiographic rhetoric he was made to emulate Saint Paul: like the apostle, Gama continued to bear witness to Christ even after his death. When Francisco da Gama (1565–1632) was appointed to the Council of India in 1608, the first steps were taken to have Cristóvão da Gama canonized; these steps included finding and recovering his remains. Páez states that he himself tried to have 'the bones of that holy martyr' raised,<sup>4</sup> and makes no mention of the official initiative launched by the victim's relative. During his second governorship of India (1622–8), Francisco da Gama finally succeeded in obtaining part of Cristóvão's remains (evidence that his body had been quartered after he had been decapitated) with the aid of the Ethiopian king and the missionaries.<sup>5</sup> (See **Granh / Graññ / Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm el-Ghazi**.)

<sup>1</sup> 'Concilio di Firenze', *EC*, V, pp. 1417–23.

<sup>2</sup> See *Legatio David Aethiopiae regis*; and Góis, *Fides, religio, moresque Aethiopum*, ff. 16v–21 and 21–23.

<sup>3</sup> See Castanhoso, 'A discourse of the deeds of the very valorous Captain Dom Christovão da Gama...', up to chapter 20; Bermudez, 'Short account of the embassy', chapters 10–23.

<sup>4</sup> See p. ???.

<sup>5</sup> Carvalho, *Literatura e Poder no Período Barroco*, pp. 83–7; Ramos, *Histórias Etiópicas*, pp. 113–23.

**Cyril of Alexandria (c. 370–444).**

Patriarch of Alexandria and doctor of the Church, and the author of homilies and works of exegesis. He exerted considerable influence to have the third ecumenical council convened. Meeting at Ephesus in 431, it did more to demonstrate the rivalry that existed between the patriarchates than to put an end to the interminable disputes about the nature of Christ. The council approved the thesis of unity in Christ, defined by His nature at once divine and human. This lay the basis for defining Mary, mother of Jesus, as the Theotokos, a thesis that imposed the views of the Alexandrine school of theology and endorsed the formula of Cyril, one of the defenders of Monophysitism, that there was ‘one incarnate nature of the Word of God.’<sup>1</sup> His opposition to Nestorius, in which he was seconded by his disciple and successor **Dioscorus**, embodied the opposition between Alexandria and Antioch.<sup>2</sup> He is one of the fathers of the Ethiopian Church. A collection of theological texts translated from Greek into Ge‘ez in the fifth century became known as the *Qérellos*, after his name.<sup>3</sup> The *Haymānota Abbaw* also includes some of his works. He is celebrated on 9 February by Roman Christians and on 9 June by the Byzantine Churches. (See **Nestor/Nestorius**.)

**Dancas / Dencâz / Danqaz.**

Lying north of Lake Ṭānā at an elevation of 2,750 m, this location was chosen for the royal camp (*katamā*) after the rainy season in 1618, since it was cooler and healthier than places beside the lake.<sup>4</sup> In 1628, at the height of the ‘Catholic’ period, a Catholic church (or cathedral) was built here in stone on a cross-shaped ground plan, like the royal church of Marṭula Māryām.<sup>5</sup>

**Dargôt / Dahāragot Azmač (sixteenth century).**

He succeeded Sebḥāt La‘ab as *bāḥr nagāš*, but it is not clear exactly when. He already held the title in the rainy season of 1588. After being defeated by the Turks, who took Debār wā at that time, he was replaced in the same year by Aqubā Mikā‘él, who had been sent by the king to retake the town.<sup>6</sup> (D. Toubkis)

**Debra Antonz / Dabra Entons.**

A small islet in the southern part of Lake Ṭānā, close to Kebrān.<sup>7</sup> Its history is closely linked to that of this island monastery. According to the *gadl* of Za-Yoḥannes, the two fishermen who took the holy monk to Kebrān then settled on Entons. Afterwards, the site was occupied by a community of nuns.<sup>8</sup> Elsewhere, Pedro Páez mentions some other Lake Ṭānā monasteries that he does not include in the list here.<sup>9</sup> When

<sup>1</sup> Cyril of Alexandria, *Dialogues sur la Trinité*.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Cirilino d’Alessandria, santo’, *EC*, III, pp. 1715–24; McGukin, *St Cyril of Alexandria*; Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*.

<sup>3</sup> Bernd Weischer has translated and published most of the works in the *Qérellos*; see also Beylot, ‘Langue et littérature éthiopiennes’, p. 236.

<sup>4</sup> Book 1, chapter 20, p. ???; see Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos ...*, II, p. 157.

<sup>5</sup> Beccari, *RĒSOI*, 12, p. 381; Pennec, *Des jésuites au royaume du prêtre Jean*, pp. 212–20.

<sup>6</sup> Conti Rossini, ‘Historia regis Sarsa Dengel’, IV, pp. 145, 147–8.

<sup>7</sup> Bosc-Tiessé, ‘L’Histoire et l’art des églises du lac Tana’, p. 245.

<sup>8</sup> Schneider, ‘Actes de Za-Yohannes de Kebran’, LXV, pp. 14, 18.

<sup>9</sup> The list is given in book 1, chapter 23, pp. ???–???

discussing monastic orders, he mentions three monasteries on Lake Ṭānā as belonging to the Dabra Libānos monastic line: Dagâ (Dagā Eṣṭifānos, on a small island east of Daq), Çanâ (Ṭānā Qirqos) and Dēbra Mariam (Dabra Māryām) in the extreme south of the lake.<sup>1</sup> This information is interesting since it does not agree with Ethiopian sources, at least in respect of the first two. Ṭānā Qirqos always retained its independence from any monastic network, while the monastery of Dagā Eṣṭifānos had been founded by Ḥiruta Amlāk, a disciple of Iyasus Mo'a of Dabra Hāyq Eṣṭifānos, in the second half of the thirteenth century. However, the way in which Ethiopian documentation records the history of the site at different times has yet to be studied. (C. Bosc-Tiessé)

**Debtera / dabterâ / dabtara (plural debterôch / dabtarwoč).**

This is a secular class of people in between the clergy and the laity. They do not receive orders but instead are given a strong religious education, which enables them to oversee ceremonies and the liturgy that they attend, where they chant and perform the holy dances in the *qenē māḅlēt*, one of the areas into which the space of Ethiopian churches is divided.<sup>2</sup> *Dabtarwoč* also have attributes as faith-healers, countering the actions of *zār* spirits and the evil eye. They are feared for their knowledge of secret magic formulas (*asmāt*).<sup>3</sup>

**Dec / Daq.**

This is the largest of the Lake Ṭānā islands, located roughly in the middle of the lake. There are several villages on the island, whose inhabitants grow crops and raise livestock. The island now has five parish churches, the history of which is poorly known. For centuries Daq served as a prison, as mentioned in the chronicle of Susneyos.<sup>4</sup> (C. Bosc-Tiessé)

**Dioscorus I (late 4th century–454).**

He was the patriarch of Alexandria from 444 to 451 and the successor to Cyril, whose ideas he inherited, although along the lines of verbal Monophysitism. He took part in the ecumenical Council of Ephesus in 431. He defended Eutyches, who had been condemned as a heretic at the Council of Constantinople in 448, at the council that he presided in Ephesus in 449, which was abusively labelled by Pope Leo I (440–461) as a *latrocinium* or 'robber council'. Dioscorus became the champion of Monophysitism at the Council of Chalcedon. He is celebrated in Ethiopia on 7 *Maskaram* and 6 *Maggābit* (i.e. 14 September and 12 March).<sup>5</sup>

**Egziabehêr Ab / Egzi'ābeḅêr Ab (Ambā Gešan).**

The church of Egzi'ābeḅêr Ab was founded by King Dāwit I. It was the principal church on *Ambā Gešan*.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See page ???.

<sup>2</sup> Velat, 'Études sur le Me'eraf', pp. 21–4.

<sup>3</sup> See Mercier, *Asrès le magicien éthiopien*; Young, 'Magic as "Quasi-Profession"'.  
<sup>4</sup> Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos*, II, pp. 107, 145, 205.

<sup>5</sup> Dioscoro I, *EC*, v. 4, pp. 1680–81.

<sup>6</sup> Derat, *Le Domaine des rois éthiopiens*, p. 26.

**Ethiopia.**

The country and its inhabitants have been named according to two different etymological traditions: the Greeks used the term *aethiops* ('land of the burnt faces') specifically to designate the Nubian kingdom of Kush, whereas the Arabic word *aḥabiš* comes from a root apparently associated with the harvesting of incense resin. The term 'Ethiopian' was used to refer vaguely to the peoples of Africa, Arabia and India. Ethiopia's association with the 'East Indies' (in a generic sense covering the Indian subcontinent and the Indian Ocean) reflected a medieval cosmographic outlook that tended to isolate Ethiopia from the rest of Africa as the 'third India'.<sup>1</sup> Maps in the 'T-O' style – which represented the three parts of the world known to Europeans (roughly speaking Asia, Europe and Africa) in three blocks separated by a 'T' of waters within the circle of the ocean – visually fixed the classical notion that the River Nile formed the frontier between Africa and Asia, and gave shape to another geographical notion, the 'Indies', the meanings of which evolved in parallel to those of 'Ethiopia'. This was to have considerable impact on Western thinking. Marco Polo linked the two ideas in the last book of his *Travels*, where, after discussing the Greater and Lesser Indias, he wrote: 'Abash is a very great province, and you must know that it constitutes the Middle India; and it is on the mainland.'<sup>2</sup> Fra Mauro's *Mappa Mundi* of 1459, a magnificent synthesis of contemporary knowledge of the world, labelled the area south of the River Senegal as 'AFRICA ETHYOPIA' – that is, the Africa known as Ethiopia – divided into 'Ethyopia Occidental' and 'Ethyopia austral', while to the east of the River Nile, or the Gehon of Genesis, lay Abassia. Here Fra Mauro attempted a political map by marking kingdoms and cities, based directly or indirectly on information from Arab sources (in the Arabic geographical tradition, Abyssinia was a kingdom lying to the west of the Red Sea in what is now Ethiopia and Eritrea). Duarte Pacheco Pereira's understanding of 'Ethiopia' was supra-continental, as he applied it to a large part of Africa and Asia, divided up by the River Nile and the Cape of Good Hope; he distinguished 'Lower Ethiopia', extending from the River Senegal to the Cape of Good Hope, 'Ethiopia below Egypt' from there to the Horn, and 'Upper Ethiopia', separate from the others in that it began at the River Indus.<sup>3</sup> Portuguese map-makers, however, restricted the term to sub-Saharan Africa: in a representative set of charts and *mappae mundi*, Africa was divided into 'Africa' and 'Ethiopia', the latter containing the 'Empire of the Abexim' or 'Prester John'. This association of the Christian ruler of Ethiopia with the legendary Prester John of the Indies, which had been current since the mid-fourteenth century (as in the *Mirabilia Descripta* by Jordanus of Séverac, for example), led to a long-standing debate in Portuguese texts on Ethiopia. Jesuit writers denied the validity of the association – as is evident throughout Páez's work – but even so made use of it, as in the *História Geral de Etiópia-a-Alta do Preste João* ('General History of Upper Ethiopia of the Prester John') by Baltasar Teles (1660). Teles also published a map based on the sketches by Father Manuel de Almeida, which served as a model for the maps illustrating the works by Melchisédech Thévenot (1663), François Eschinard (1674) and Hiob Ludolf (1683), in which the names 'Abassia', 'kingdom of the Prester John', 'Abexim (Abyssinian) Empire' and 'Ethiopia' appear as synonyms. The Ethiopians themselves – at least, the politically

<sup>1</sup> Ramos, *Ensaio de Mitologia Cristã*, pp. 157–82.

<sup>2</sup> Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, II, p. 427.

<sup>3</sup> Pereira, *Esmeraldo de Situ Orbis*, 1988, pp. 25–8.



and culturally dominant groups – identified their country as *behera ge'ez* or *behera ag'azi* (land of the free men) or, in the Greek tradition, as *'Ityopyā*. Once Europeans, who had inherited the geographical concept of Ethiopia from the Greeks, made contact with Abyssinians, who had appropriated the same concept but modified it to refer to a political area, the original content of the word was gradually erased from the seventeenth century onwards. Thereafter it came to mean the kingdom of Ethiopia, in the same sense as the 'Abexim kingdom' or 'Abassia' of Portuguese documents of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>1</sup>

### **Exaltation of the Holy Cross / *Masqal*.**

The feast of *Masqal* (Exaltation of the Holy or True Cross) is held on 17 *Maskaram* (27 September). Although officially ranked as a minor feast, it is traditionally celebrated as one of the principal events in the Ethiopian liturgical calendar. It honours the cross that served as the instrument of Christ's passion and death, which was believed to have been found in 326 by Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, during the building of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.<sup>2</sup> As the first major feast after the end of the rainy season (*keramt*), it is associated with the renewal of nature, a profane substrate that has been fully assimilated but is still reflected in the customs of decorating doorways with garlands of flowers and lighting bonfires (*damarā*) at this time.

### **First Jesuit mission (1555–1597).**

Father Gonçalo Rodrigues was sent to Ethiopia in 1555 to find out whether the political and religious conditions in the country were suitable for establishing a Catholic mission there with a patriarch appointed by the pope of the Roman Church.<sup>3</sup> He returned to Goa the following year with the news that King Galāwdéwos would allow priests into the country only so that they could minister to the Catholics living in Ethiopia. In March 1557, a group of six missionaries – Bishop Don Andrés de Oviedo, fathers Manuel Fernandes and Andrés Gualdames, and brothers Francisco Lopes, Gonçalo Cardoso and António Fernandes – was dispatched to Ethiopia.<sup>4</sup> Soon after their arrival, access to the sea was cut and the mission was left isolated. Fulgêncio Freire was sent in 1560 to contact the mission, but he was captured in the Straits and sent to Cairo. The number of twelve missionaries for Ethiopia that had initially been proposed by Ignatius Loyola was later mentioned repeatedly in the writings of Jesuit priests, including Páez. In addition to the symbolism of this number, it also revealed the special status accorded to Ethiopia as a mission land, since not only a large number of priests but even a patriarch and two bishops were to be sent there. In Europe, however, the lists of priests who embarked for India in 1555 and 1556 suggest that the intention was to send at least eighteen Jesuits. Manuel de Almeida seems to echo the tendency to minimize the enthusiasm about Ethiopia in the

<sup>1</sup> See Relaño, *The Shaping of Africa*, p. 63; Medeiros, *L'Occident et l'Afrique*, pp. 25–33, 73–81, 128–32; Randles, 'Southeast Africa', pp. 69–88; Hirsch, 'Cartographies et itinéraires', pp. 91–122.

<sup>2</sup> Kaplan, 'Feasts', p. 512.

<sup>3</sup> See the letter from Dom Pedro de Mascarenhas, Viceroy of India, to Father Diogo Mirão, prepositus of the Company of Jesus for the Province of Portugal, written in Goa on 1 January 1555, in Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 10, pp. 44–5.

<sup>4</sup> *DI* 4, 1956, p. 442–63.

period just prior to the first mission.<sup>1</sup> The mission's departure for Ethiopia was widely publicised, as was usual in the Company of Jesus. The missionaries remained within court circles until January 1559, but removed themselves to a more remote area after Bishop Andrés de Oviedo published his edict excommunicating any Catholic who served the king or took communion with non-Catholics. They then settled in Tegrāy, where the the *bāḥr naqāš*, Yeshāq, granted them the village of Māy Gwāgwā.

**Fit aorari / fit awrāri.**

This was an officer of the vanguard in the royal army, with a body of troops under his command. He could also be in charge of erecting the tents when a new royal camp was set up. King Yā'eqob, between 1597 and 1603, appointed Za-Šellāsē as *fit awrāri*; Walda Giyorgis was *fit awrāri* in 1620.<sup>2</sup> This military rank is mentioned more frequently in the chronicles from the second half of the seventeenth century.<sup>3</sup> (D. Toubkis)

**Francisco Álvares, Father (c. 1470–Rome, c. 1540).**

He held the benefice of Santa Justa in Coimbra, Portugal, and later, in about 1530, another in the archbishopric of Braga;<sup>4</sup> he was also chaplain of the royal chapel. He wrote one of the fundamental works of European literature on Ethiopia, *The Prester John of the Indies* (*Verdadeira informação das terras do Preste João das Índias*), published in 1540. Although a scholar, he was not an intellectual and he probably did not have substantial theological training. He was above all a pious and pragmatic man, and certainly close to the court circle that favoured King Emmanuel's imperial policies. He was therefore chosen to accompany Duarte Galvão as chaplain to the Portuguese embassy to Ethiopia in 1515. After the ambassador's death in 1517, on the island of Kamaran (Qamarān) in the Red Sea, and the dissolution of the embassy, Álvares played an important role in successfully pressing for a new fleet and delegation to be prepared in 1520. Álvares's presence was crucial for the embassy to be accepted at the court of Dāwit II (Lebna Dengel) because, as a cleric, he was able – by means of liturgical ritual, prayer and his knowledge of the lives of saints – to prove that the Portuguese were truly Christians. He worked hard to make the embassy a success: he recounts, for example, that he deliberately adapted certain formal aspects of the mass to what he believed would be expected by the Ethiopian court, based on what he had observed, including artificially prolonging the service and placing all the books he had on the altar, since 'they are much given to asking for books.'<sup>5</sup> In 1524 the Ethiopian king appointed him as his legate to the Holy See. He returned to Portugal in 1527, but King John III only dispatched him to Rome in 1532. He was granted an audience by Clement VII in Bologna, an act that gave rise to the misunderstanding over the submission of the Ethiopian Church to Rome.<sup>6</sup> He was to die in Rome on a date as yet unknown. His work was published in Lisbon in an abridged and

<sup>1</sup> Pennec, *Des jésuites au royaume du prêtre Jean*, pp. 118–26.

<sup>2</sup> Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos*, II, pp. 87, 191.

<sup>3</sup> See Guidi, 'Annales Iohannis I, Iyasu I et Bakaffa', V, pp. 14, 60, 152, 155, 188, 228.

<sup>4</sup> Banha de Andrade, *Francisco Alvares e o êxito europeu*, doc. A, p. 44; Álvares, *The Prester John of the Indies*, II, p. 508.

<sup>5</sup> Álvares, *The Prester John of the Indies*, 1961, II, pp. 325–6.

<sup>6</sup> *Legatio David Aethiopiae regis*. See Lefevre, 'L'Étiopia nella stampa del primo cinquecento', pp. 52–60.

censored version,<sup>1</sup> but it was widely disseminated and translated into Italian, Spanish (the version read and cited by Páez), French and German during the sixteenth century.

### **Fremona / Fremoná / Fremonâ / Mây Gwāgwā.**

The place name 'Fremona' seems to be a direct allusion to Frémenātos (Frumentius), who brought the Gospel to the kingdom of Aksum and converted King 'Ēzānā in the fourth century. The choice of this name was apparently a Jesuit stratagem to link the site, which was the headquarters of the Catholic mission in the late sixteenth century, symbolically to the foundation of the Ethiopian Church.<sup>2</sup> The oldest occurrence of the name dates from the beginning of the seventeenth century, coinciding with Pedro Páez's arrival in Ethiopia. The name was given to the residence that Bishop (subsequently Patriarch) Andrés de Oviedo and his companions built on the land they were given by the *bāhr nagās* Yeshāq, which became their base in 1566.<sup>3</sup> By giving the name Fremona to the place locally known as Mây Gwāgwā, the Jesuits considered their presence in the province of Tegrāy to be legitimized, since naming the first Catholic residence in Ethiopia after the first metropolitan gave legitimacy to the place and the people in it. The patriarch and bishop Andrés de Oviedo was presented as a second Frémenātos bringing new light to Ethiopia with the Christian faith, this time in the form of Catholicism.<sup>4</sup>

### **Gāla / Galā / Gala / Galla / Oromo.**

A large number of migrations, invasions and raids by Oromo peoples into Amhara lands have been recorded since the fifteenth century. In the mid-sixteenth century, Ethiopia was slowly recovering from a long series of military conflicts (particularly with the Muslim sultanate of 'Adāl). The Barentuma and Boorana Oromo, semi-nomadic groups who had been living in the regions south of the Ethiopian kingdom, made the most of the areas abandoned by the Christians because of the Muslim threat and began to settle in the southern border lands of the Christian kingdom, later moving into the neighbouring regions of Gogḡām and Shawā. In the second half of the sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth century they were the main opponents of royal power.<sup>5</sup> 'Galla' was the term used for four centuries to refer to the Oromo people, and originally meant 'immigrant' in Amharic. As it had pejorative connotations of submission to the Amhara nobility, it gradually fell into disuse in the twentieth century. Their language, formerly known in Amharic as *Gallīññā* is today called *Oromiññā* (*Afaan Oromoo* or *Oromiffa* in the Oromo language itself). The Oromo make up what may be considered the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia, with about 35% of the total population. They comprise a dozen groups, living mostly in the southern, central and western parts of the country. Most of them speak mutually unintelligible dialects

<sup>1</sup> Aubin, 'Le Prêtre Jean devant la censure portugaise', pp. 196–7. The Italian translation by Ludovico Beccadelli is more complete, although still abridged.

<sup>2</sup> A narrative written in Venice in the early sixteenth century, describing a journey to Aksum, states that one day's journey from that city the road passes through 'Flemona'; this may represent the same place name with just a slight phonetic change (see Martínez, 'Færemona').

<sup>3</sup> Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 10, p. 203; letter from Bishop Andrés de Oviedo to the viceroy of India, dated Ethiopia, 11 May 1567.

<sup>4</sup> Pennec, *Des jésuites au royaume du prêtre Jean*, pp. 154–9.

<sup>5</sup> Abir, *Ethiopia and the Red Sea*, 1980; Hassen, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*; see also Guidi (ed.), 'Bahrey, Historia Gentis Galla'; Beckingham and Huntingford, *Some Records of Ethiopia*.

of their common language, and they differ in their religion (Islam, Monophysite Christianity, Protestantism and animist beliefs), economic activities and community organization. They are mostly nomadic pastoralists and belong to the same ethnic stratum as various 'Nilotic' groups of western Uganda, Rwanda and eastern Congo. The Amhara core of the Ethiopian empire, weakened after the Somali-Ethiopian wars of the sixteenth century, went into constant retreat until it was finally overwhelmed by the armies of Oromo warriors. An Oromo warrior nobility came to control the imperial court but, ironically, it was gradually absorbed through a process of acculturation ('Amharization'). As a result of its submission to the power of the revitalized Christian empire of Ethiopia in the late nineteenth century and its adoption of various aspects of Amhara culture, it was dispersed and became politically subservient until the late 1980s. Academic discussion of the allegedly egalitarian political structure of Oromo society (based presumably on the Oromo system of age cohorts or *gadaa*), in contrast to the hierarchical structure attributed to the Amharas, has led to heated debate about integrationist versus autonomist futures for the Oromo.<sup>1</sup>

### **Gálilā / Galilā.**

An island in the north-western corner of Lake Ṭānā. The monk Zakāryās is said to have founded a monastery there in the early fourteenth century.<sup>2</sup> The church was destroyed in 1537 by Muslim troops<sup>3</sup> and supposedly restored by order of King Śarṣa Dengel.<sup>4</sup> (C. Bosc-Tiessé).

### **Gelaldīn Acabar / Jalāl ud-Dīn Muhammad Akbar / Akbar the Great (reigned 1556–1605).**

Akbar was the grandson of the Turkic founder of the Mughal dynasty, Babur, who had defeated the sultan of Delhi's armies in 1526 to lay the foundations of an empire that dominated northern India from Sind to Bengal, controlling a vast network of trade routes and establishing 'a new political order.'<sup>5</sup> Akbar built his capital at Fatehpur Sikri (north of Agra), where he gathered scholars and artists; since he enjoyed debating ideas, he sent to Goa in 1579 for two Catholic priests.<sup>6</sup> The mission (1580–83), the first sent to the Grand Mughal, was entrusted to the Jesuits Rodolfo Acquaviva and Antonio de Montserrat, with Francisco Henriques as interpreter. This ecumenical gesture, which the Jesuits understood as a sign of his willingness to convert, reflected the spirit of *Dīn-i-Ilāhī* – the 'divine faith.' Rooted in Sufism, which emphasized tolerance and dialogue – it was proclaimed as the official religion in 1581–2.<sup>7</sup>

### **Gorgora Velha and Gorgora Nova / Old Gorgorā and New Gorgorā.**

The documented dates for the itinerant *katamā* or royal camps show that in 1609 Sunneyos moved his *katamā* from Qogā to Dakānā in the Dambyā region, close to the

<sup>1</sup> See Levine, *Greater Ethiopia*; Asmarom, *Gada*; Asmarom, *Oromo Democracy*.

<sup>2</sup> Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State in Ethiopia*, p. 194.

<sup>3</sup> Basset, *Études sur l'histoire de l'Éthiopie*, p. 106.

<sup>4</sup> Cheesman, *Lake Tana and the Blue Nile*, pp. 203–4.

<sup>5</sup> Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia*, p. 146.

<sup>6</sup> See a report on the request, with a copy of the letter, in 'Carta da Índia para a Província de Portugal, 1579', in Rego, *DHMPPPO – Índia*, 12, pp. 460–62.

<sup>7</sup> Choudhury, *The Din-i-Ilah..*

Jesuit residence at Gorgora Velha (Old Gorgorā).<sup>1</sup> An epidemic in 1611 forced the royal camp to move on once more, this time to Gorgora Nova (New Gorgorā), at the head of a peninsula on the north shore of Lake Ṭānā.<sup>2</sup> The king left Gorgora Nova at the end of the rainy season in 1618 and finally settled at Danqaz. Manuel de Almeida makes a clear distinction between Gorgora Nova (which he calls Cund Ambâ) and Gorgora Velha (or Ombabaqhâ).<sup>3</sup> The building mentioned by Pedro Páez<sup>4</sup> might be the first palace built at Gorgora Nova (corresponding to the local name for the site of Māryām Gemb), to the south-west of the church of Gorgorā Dabra Sinā (Fig. 17). Manuel de Almeida says that in 1614 Pedro Páez directed the building of 'some houses in the style of ours in Europe'.<sup>5</sup> Since later Jesuit writers like Almeida attribute the building of the palace and houses to Páez, it is surprising that Páez himself did not do so at all in the passage referred to above. Whether that was a sign of modesty on his part or a legend created by the writers who arrived after his death has been discussed above.<sup>6</sup> Everything suggests that the first stone church was erected in Gorgora Velha at the beginning of 1619.<sup>7</sup> Gorgora Nova began to be built only in 1626, under the supervision of João Martins (Fig. 16).<sup>8</sup> The site of the church of Gorgora Nova (or Māryām Gemb) is now known, although the church itself has been totally destroyed, but that of Gorgora Velha has not been identified to this day.

**Granh / Grāññ / Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ghāzi ('Adāl, c. 1506–Ethiopia, 22 February 1543).**

The military leader of the sultanate of 'Adāl, he waged a campaign of invasion and occupation of Ethiopian lands for sixteen years, for which he took the name of al-Ghāzi ('the Conqueror'). In the Ethiopian tradition he is known as Grāññ, 'the left-handed'. He is believed to have been of Somali origin, from the district of Hubat. He began his career in the service of *al-garād* Abun, and took over the leadership of the opposition to the peace-making policy of the Walašma' sultans on Abun's death in 1525, when he received the position of emir and the title of imam of the believers. He married the daughter of Imam Mahfuz, who was governor of Zayla' until 1517. He recruited his troops especially from among the Somalis and Afar. After victory at Šemberā Kuré (1529), he proclaimed *jihād* against the kingdom of Ethiopia and changed his strategy from seasonal raiding to effective territorial occupation. With the arrival in Ethiopia of a military force from Portugal, he requested help from the pasha of Zabīd, in Yemen, who sent him a corps of harquebusiers and further reinforcements during the rainy season of 1542. Their involvement was decisive in the attack on the adversary's camp at Waflā at the end of August that year, when the Portuguese captain, **Cristóvão da Gama**, was taken prisoner and killed. Six months later, Graññ was defeated by the army of King Galāwdéwos with

<sup>1</sup> On the distinction between Old Gorgorā and Dakānā, see Pennec, *Des jésuites au royaume du prêtre Jean*, pp. 204–7.

<sup>2</sup> Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos*, I, p. 132 *et seq.*; II, p. 102 *et seq.*; Almeida, 'Historia de Ethiopia a Alta', VI, pp. 233–4.

<sup>3</sup> Almeida, 'Historia de Ethiopia a Alta', VI, p. 234.

<sup>4</sup> Book I, chapter 20, pp. ???.

<sup>5</sup> Almeida, 'Historia de Ethiopia a Alta', VI, pp. 293–4.

<sup>6</sup> See Introduction, section 5.1.

<sup>7</sup> Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 11, p. 406.

<sup>8</sup> Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos*, I, p. 289; II, pp. 223 and 564; Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 12, p. 258.

the support of the remaining Portuguese at Zantarā, east of Lake Ṭānā, where he was killed.<sup>1</sup>

**Gubāi / Gubā'é.**

The place (the literal meaning of which is 'gathering', 'assembly' or 'council')<sup>2</sup> where King Śarṣa Dengel set up his royal camp after the rains of 1571<sup>3</sup> (although the short chronicle says he settled at Dobit).<sup>4</sup> Anfray identified Guzārā with the camp at Qogā or with the one at New Gubā'é (Gubāi novo), which is also mentioned by Páez.<sup>5</sup>

**Guerā azmāch / gerāzmāč.**

He was the 'general of the left', who commanded the left wing of the army, often acting in concert with his counterpart on the right, the *qaññazmāč*. The term is not mentioned in the chronicle of Susneyos or previous chronicles, but it occurs several times in those of Yoḥannes and Iyasu.<sup>6</sup> See also **Cānhe azmāch / qaññazmāč**. (D. Toubkis)

**Hâic / Ḥayq.**

A lake in the north-eastern part of Amhara region, surrounded by mountains, at an elevation of 1951 m. 'Its greatest dimension is east-west; it is calculated to be 83 km around [...]. To the north and west the shores of the lake are not high or steep, but to the south and east it is surrounded by high, sheer mountains.<sup>7</sup> It was an important centre for the spread of monasticism, from the monastery of Dabra Eṣṭifānos.

**Haimanôt Abbô / Hāymānota Abbaw.**

*The Faith of the Fathers* is a collection of patristic texts, basically composed of excerpts from apologetic or dogmatic works that the compilers considered significant. They were translated from the Arabic by Mabā'a Ṣeyon, son of Rās Amdu, during the reign of Galāwdéwos,<sup>8</sup> and were fundamental in defining Church doctrine on the Trinity, the Incarnation and the nature of Jesus Christ. The translation and dissemination of the manuscript may be connected with the resurgence of **religious controversy** about dogmatic matters. The book was regarded as suspect by the Jesuit missionaries both because of its content and because the Ethiopian monks were apt to manipulate it by erasing and changing parts of the text. It was corrected and recopied after Páez's death.

**Helen / Elléni (third quarter of the 15th century–c. 1522).**

There were two queens of this name at the Ethiopian court at roughly the same time: Queen Elléni, *qaññ ba'ältihāt*, princess of the Hadyā, whom Zar'a Yā'eqob married

<sup>1</sup> Muth, 'Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Ġāzī'; see also *TEI*, I, pp. 286–7; Vò Vàn, 'A propos du *Ġihād* dans le *Futuh al-Habasha*'; and the Arabic chronicle itself in a recent English translation: Šihāb ad-Dīn, *Futūḥ al-Ḥabaša: The Conquest of Abyssinia*, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary of Ge'ez*, p. 176.

<sup>3</sup> Conti Rossini, 'Historia regis Sarsa Dengel (Malak Sagad)', p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> Basset, 'Études sur l'histoire de l'Éthiopie', *JA*, 4, p. 110.

<sup>5</sup> Anfray, 'Les Monuments gondariens', p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> See Guidi, 'Annales Iohannis I, Iyasu I et Bakaffā', V, pp. 9, 10, 70, 118, 132, 154, 194.

<sup>7</sup> Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos* ..., II, p. 353.

<sup>8</sup> H. Zotenberg, *Catalogue des manuscrits éthiopiens (gheez et amharique) de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, p. 84.

prior to 1445,<sup>1</sup> and Queen Elléni, *qaññ ba'álteḥāt* of Ba'eda Māryām. The second, according to the history of Lebna Dengel, lived through the reigns of three kings, Ba'eda Māryām, Eskender and Nā'od.<sup>2</sup> She played a central role in Ethiopian politics during the crises that marked the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. She acted as regent for Lebna Dengel (Dāwit II) until he came of age. At her initiative, in conjunction with *Abuna Mārḳos*, a legate was sent to King Emmanuel I of Portugal to propose an alliance between the two kingdoms, based on the new balance of power in the region. Apparently, 'the Luso-Ethiopian alliance, aimed at abolishing Muslim dominion over the Red Sea, was directed against Egypt,'<sup>3</sup> yet peace with Egypt was a factor to be taken into account in the regional balance of power. Elléni possessed vast lands in Goḡḡām,<sup>4</sup> founded churches and is attributed with having composed hymns in praise of Mary.<sup>5</sup>

### **Ichegué / icheguê / eččagé.**

The primate of the Ethiopian regular clergy. The title was held by the abbot of Dabra Libānos monastery in Šawā, founded by Takla Hāymānot in the thirteenth century. In 1615 *Eččagé Za-Wangél* opposed the *abuna* with 'a new thesis: he, the abbot of Dabra Libānos, should confer holy orders, while the metropolitan would administer the sacrament of confirmation [...]. That went against the traditional customs of the Ethiopian Church, in which only the metropolitan could confer holy orders.'<sup>6</sup>

### **Iuliós / Yolyos (Ethiopia, 15th–17th centuries).**

He began his career in the service of the young Susneyos; after Susneyos came to power, he rewarded him for having been one of his loyal companions by marrying him to *Wayzaro* Malākotāwit, his daughter by Walda Sa'alā, and appointing him to several positions including *makwannen* of Tēgray and *baḥr nagāš*. In 1609, Yolyos, who had been *blattengétā* of the kingdom since 1602, and Keflo revolted against the king (see **balatinóch gueitā / blätténoččétā**). In book IV, chapter 20, Pedro Páez introduced a short biography of Yolyos into his translation of the chronicle of Susneyos.

### **João Bermudes (c. 1495–Lisbon, 1570).**

Bermudes arrived in Ethiopia in 1520 in the diplomatic mission led by Dom Rodrigo de Lima, in the post of 'master barber' or surgeon. When the embassy left the country in 1526, he stayed on, probably by choice. About nine years later, when the kingdom was facing growing difficulties due to the attacks by Muslim troops under Imām Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm, and also because the ambassador sent to Portugal was taking a long time to return, King Lebna Dengel decided to use João Bermudes's services by sending him to request military aid from the pope in Rome and the king of Portugal. He arrived in Rome

<sup>1</sup> Perruchon, *Les Chroniques de Zar'a Ya'eqob* ..., p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Kropp, 'Die Geschichte des Lebna Dengel, Claudius und Minas', p. 3, n. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Aubin, 'L'Ambassade du prêtre Jean à D. Manuel', pp. 140–51.

<sup>4</sup> Álvares, *The Prester John of the Indies*, chapter 118, page 425.

<sup>5</sup> Her prayers and hymns to Mary were translated and published by M. van den Oudenrijn as 'Helenae Aethiopiae reginae quae feruntur preces et carmina'.

<sup>6</sup> Cerulli, 'Gli abbati di Dabra Libanós', XIII, pp. 160, 165.

probably early in 1536,<sup>1</sup> and was in Évora, Portugal, in 1537, where he gave news of the serious crisis afflicting the Christian kingdom of Ethiopia and obtained a promise of military aid from King John III. On 9 July 1541 he disembarked at Meššewā' (Massawa, Eritrea) together with an expeditionary force of about 400 men at arms and 130 slaves, commanded by Dom Cristóvão da Gama. He presented himself as the Catholic patriarch of Ethiopia, but King Galāwdéwos did not recognize his authority. Instead, Galāwdéwos's opposition to showing any obedience to Rome rendered Bermudez's position difficult, and he eventually left the country in 1556 and returned to Portugal to stay in 1559. In 1565 he published an account of his Ethiopian adventures, omitting the period before his mission to Europe in the 1530s, and styling himself 'patriarch'.<sup>2</sup> He settled at São Sebastião da Pedreira in Lisbon, where he died.<sup>3</sup>

### **João Gabriel (Ethiopia, c. 1554–after 1626).**

His mother was an Ethiopian and his father an Italian who had arrived in Ethiopia with Dom Cristóvão da Gama in 1541 and had settled there after the military campaign. He was raised by the Jesuit fathers of the first mission at Fremona, but he also spent three years of education at Dabra Libānos, where he learnt the Ge'ez language. Later he was appointed captain of the Portuguese, taking over from António de Góis, and remained in this position for many years until about 1606–7. He may well have received a *gwelt* (or *gult*, a grant of rights over peasant production) as a reward for the services he rendered. He lived in the vicinity of Fremona. At the priests' request, he translated catechetic texts into Amharic, one of which was a *Cartilha*. He is believed to have been the author of the *Comentários do Império de Etiópia* (*Comments from the Empire of Ethiopia*), a work that has been lost.<sup>4</sup>

### **João Nunes Barreto (Porto, c. 1520–25 – Goa, 22 December 1562).**

Having served the Company of Jesus for six years in North Africa, he was appointed Catholic patriarch of Ethiopia in 1554. He embarked for India in 1556, arriving in Goa in September that year.<sup>5</sup> The Church and the Portuguese crown had expected Ethiopia to be quickly converted to Catholicism, which justified their sending a patriarch, but the information brought back from Ethiopia by Father Gonçalo Rodrigues forced a change of plan. It was decided that just six Jesuit missionaries should be sent, under the leadership of Bishop Andrés de Oviedo, and that the patriarch should wait until the situation inside Ethiopia was favourable to recognizing his dignity and authority.<sup>6</sup> As it happened, however, the Ethiopian elite resisted conversion to Catholicism and, in addition, access to the coast became more difficult after 1557, forcing Barreto to remain in Goa, where he died.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In March 1536 he had reached Valladolid in Spain, on his way to Lisbon (Matos, *L'Expansion portugaise dans la Littérature latine*, p. 190, n. 73).

<sup>2</sup> Bermudez, 'Short account of the embassy'.

<sup>3</sup> Pennec, *Des jésuites au royaume du prêtre Jean*, pp. 42–6; Kammerer, *La Mer Rouge l'Abyssinie et l'Arabie*, I, pp. 39–42.

<sup>4</sup> Boavida, 'Gabriel, João', pp. 632–3.

<sup>5</sup> Wicki (ed.), 'Documenta Indica (1553–1557)', *DI*, III, pp. 471–3.

<sup>6</sup> Pennec, 'Ignace de Loyola et le royaume du prêtre Jean: projet et malentendus', pp. 224–9.

<sup>7</sup> Boavida, 'Barreto, Dom João Nunes', p. 484.



***Kebra Nagast* (usually translated as 'Glory of Kings').**

This has been one of the most widely known works of Ethiopian written culture in the West since the end of the nineteenth century, at least. It preserves a long, scholarly version of the famous meeting between King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (considered to be of Ethiopian origin), the birth of their son Menilek, the legendary founder of the Ethiopian royal line, and the transfer (or 'theft') of the Ark of the Covenant to Ethiopia. The first translation of the text into a European language (in an abridged form) was produced by Pedro Páez in book 1, chapters 2 and 3, of the *History of Ethiopia* (and its first publication came in Baltazar Teles's reworked version of the *History*, in 1660). F. Prætorius published an edition in Ge'ez with a partial Latin translation in 1870. C. Bezold produced a new edition in 1909 and translated it into German, and H. Le Roux published a partial French translation in 1914. However, the text was most extensively popularized through the 1922 English translation by the Orientalist E. A. Wallis Budge. The first complete version in French, by G. Colin, appeared in 2002.<sup>1</sup> The text poses a number of interesting philological and literary problems that have not yet been fully resolved. While scholars generally agree that it has Egyptian origins (medieval and not sixth century, as I. Shahid claims),<sup>2</sup> was originally written in Arabic and shows a definite influence of Christian apocalyptic literature, it is not known when it was translated into Ge'ez. One hypothesis yet to be confirmed is that it happened in the early fifteenth century, when the scribe Yesḥaq wrote the colophon of the version that has survived until today. Alternatively, the *Kebra Nagast* may have been translated during the Zāgwé dynasty, between the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, since a contemporary Egyptian writer mentioned that the Solomonic legend was well known in Ethiopia, which is consistent with the need felt by the Zāgwé kings to associate themselves with the ancient royal lineage of Aksum and the cultural universe of the Bible. More generally, work is needed to elucidate the complex links between the Solomonic legend as known in Ethiopia, in its various forms found in both the written and the oral traditions, and the scholarly text of the *Kebra Nagast*, which until the late nineteenth century was known only within the restricted circles of Ethiopian scholars.<sup>3</sup> A more detailed study of cultural life during the reign of Menilek II (1865–1913) might provide an important key to understanding the importance of the Solomonic legend in the process of 'constructing the origins' of the Ethiopian nation, as that was the period when the text was dug out of the monastic libraries to be systematically reworked and adapted by Christian clerics in the service of the crown and by popular painters. Since then it has become the epicentre of a legendary aetiology of an Ethiopia which was rapidly expanding at the time and absorbing several previously independent lands, and it has established itself as an essential service book for Orientalists, travellers and tourists. (B. Hirsch)

<sup>1</sup> Prætorius, *Fabula de Regina Sabaea apud Aethiopes*; Le Roux, *Chez la Reine de Saba*; Bezold, 'Kebra Nagast. Die Herrlichkeit der Könige'; Budge, *The Queen of Sheba and her only Son Menyelek*; Colin, *La Gloire des rois (Kebra Nagast)*.

<sup>2</sup> Shahid, 'The *Kebra Nagast* in the Light of Recent Research'; see Munro-Hay, 'A Sixth Century *Kebra Nagast*?'.  
<sup>3</sup> Hirsch and Fauvelle, 'Aksum après Aksum'.

**Lake Dambiá / Lake Ṭānā.**

This lake lies at 1860 m above sea level and covers an area of 3,600 km<sup>2</sup>. It is 70 km wide and over 80 km from north to south. It serves as a natural reservoir for the Blue Nile (or Abbāy), which issues from its southernmost point in a series of rapids and waterfalls. It contains a large number of islands, many of which were (and are) occupied by monastic communities seeking isolation from the world. (See **Çanâ / Çaanâ / Sanâ / Ṭānâ Qirqos; Debra Antonz / Dabra Entons; Dec / Daq; Gâililâ / Galilâ; Quebrân / Qebrân; Remâ / Rémâ**).

**Leo I, Pope (440–461).**

Leo I developed an ideological system to glorify Rome as the seat of Christianity and defined the role of the pope, Peter's successor, as the primate of the Church. He fought against Eutyches' 'heresy' regarding the nature of Christ and, shortly before the **Council of Chalcedon** (451), had Bishop Eusebius of Milan and his provincial council approve his doctrinal letter (the *Tome to Flavian*), which lays down Roman Christology on the two natures of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

***Letter of the Prester John of the Indies.***

This was an anonymous text written in the late twelfth century, probably in the ecclesiastical circles of the imperial German court, which circulated widely throughout Europe. It contains fantastic visions of an imaginary millenarian eastern kingdom, bringing together two important literary traditions: the Revelation of Saint John (the Apocalypse) and the *Romance of Alexander*. Prester John, a clearly Christomimetic 'king of kings', appears as a powerful Christian monarch who also performs a priestly role (as a presbyter, or 'prester') reigning over a perfect society in a geographical environment typical of *mirabilia*. The Prester John letter was a source of inspiration for writers and cosmographers, since it combined a number of powerfully evocative literary motifs, including the earthly Paradise, the Mountains of the Moon, the fountain of youth and the lost tribes of Israel.<sup>2</sup> The possible origin of the Prester John among the Tartars or Mongols was mentioned by Marco Polo and several papal envoys (particularly Franciscan friars) to Mongolia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; it was related to the adoption of Nestorianism by Turkmen and Mongol nomads prior to the unification of the Mongol empire under Temüjin (Gengis Khan) and the expansion of Islam in the region.<sup>3</sup> In the late fourteenth century, Italian and Catalan cartographers and cosmographers collecting information and accounts from travellers began to identify the Orthodox Christian kingdom in the Ethiopian highlands with the Indies of the Prester John, based on the imagined proximity of the Horn of Africa to the Indian subcontinent. In fact, the region was often referred to on old maps as the 'third India', making it possible to adapt classical geography to fit the Biblical concept of an eastern earthly Paradise from which four rivers flowed, one of which was the Gehon or Nile. The association of Christian Ethiopia with the kingdom of the Prester John added a new dimension to the story: the king and his subjects were

<sup>1</sup> Fraisse-Coué, 'Léon Ier'; 'Leone I, Papa', *EC*, VII, pp. 1139–44; 'Eutiche e Eutichianesimo', *EC*, v. 5, pp. 866–70.

<sup>2</sup> *Carta do Preste João das Índias*. See also Knefelkamp, *Die Suche nach dem Reich des Priesterkönigs Johannes*.

<sup>3</sup> See Gumilev, *Searches for an Imaginary Kingdom*, pp. 117–28.

now black instead of white, and the religion was Christian but tinged with heretical doctrines and practices.<sup>1</sup> The vision proposed by the Prester John letter, although questioned and revised, remained a discursive and ideological mould for European writers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,<sup>2</sup> and was an important indirect source for both Ignatius de Loyola's writings on Ethiopia and the works by Friar Luís de Urreta, which were to be refuted by Pedro Páez in his *History of Ethiopia*.

**Lica memerân / liqa mambêrân; lica diaconât / liqa diyâqonât.**

*Liqa mambêrân* means 'elder' or 'chief tutor'; *liqa diyâqonât* may be translated as 'archdeacon'.<sup>3</sup>

**Mazaguêbt Haimanôt / Mazgaba Hâymanot.**

The book of *Treasure of the Faith*, written, according to Cerulli, between 1555 and 1559. This short work of religious controversy is formed of two distinct parts: the first is a summary of the four councils (Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon) according to the tradition of the monophysite Church of Alexandria and Ethiopia, and was probably translated from Arabic; the second is truly Ethiopian and is a direct response to the objections of the first Jesuit missionaries to various issues raised during the debates held at the court of Negus Galâwdêwos.<sup>4</sup> (See *Abû Ferâgi / Adultério de Franques*).

**Mecâna Çelace / Makânâ Sellâsé.**

Amhara royal church, north-west of Warra Illu. Building began during the reign of Nâ'od and it was completed under Lebna Dengel. Francisco Álvares was present at its consecration on 12 January 1521 and when Nâ'od's body was transferred there.<sup>5</sup> The church was destroyed by the troops of Emir Aḥmad ibn Ibrâhîm on 3 November 1531,<sup>6</sup> but its ruins were still visible at the time of the Italian occupation.<sup>7</sup> (M.-L. Derat)

**Miracles of Our Lady / The Miracles of Mary / Ta'âmra Mâryâm.**

The work was composed in France in the twelfth century and soon became popular throughout Europe and the Christian East. It was translated from Arabic into Ge'ez at the request of King Dâwit I. It was then padded out with accounts of Ethiopian miracles of the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Many of these miracles feature kings of Ethiopia, particularly Dâwit and his son Zar'a Yâ'eqob. As a result, the cult of Mary received a second boost in 1442 with the insertion of the *Miracles of Mary* into the Ethiopian liturgy and the obligation to observe thirty-two feasts of Mary each year. The book contains an account of the trial of the Stephanites in 1454 and references to 'heretics', such as Za-Mikâ'él and his disciples.

<sup>1</sup> Ramos, *Essays in Christian Mythology*, pp. 107–16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 117–27.

<sup>3</sup> Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary of Ge'ez*, p. 146.

<sup>4</sup> See the edition by Cerulli, 'La storia dei quattro concili', pp. III–VIII, 1–65 (Ge'ez text) and pp. 67–101 (Italian translation).

<sup>5</sup> Álvares, *The Prester John of the Indies*, pp. 338, 360–61.

<sup>6</sup> Basset, *Histoire de la conquête de l'Abyssinie (XVIIe siècle)*, I, pp. 310–11; Kropp, 'Die Geschichte des Lebna Dengel, Claudius und Minas', p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> Brielli, 'Ricordi storici dei Uollo (con note di C. Conti Rossini)', pp. 81–2, note 9.

**Mount Amharâ / *Ambā* Gešan.**

A mountain (*ambā*) in Amhara region, north of Ambāssal.<sup>1</sup> Pedro Páez reiterated<sup>2</sup> the story that Ethiopian princes – members of the royal line with a claim to the throne, such as the king's sons, brothers or uncles – were sent to live on this mountain, from which they were unable to escape. The purpose of this practice was to keep such pretenders to the throne at a distance yet under control, so that they could not threaten the king's sovereignty. Francisco Álvares was the first European to mention the mountain and the role it played in maintaining stability in the kingdom; he attributed the origin of the custom to the Zāgwé king Yemrehānna Krestos, in the late twelfth century.<sup>3</sup> Manuel de Almeida related a different tradition, according to which the *ambā* began to be used for that purpose some time after the reign of Yagbe'a Šeyon.<sup>4</sup> In Ethiopian sources, the first reference to the *ambā* as the place where members of the royal family were held occurs during the reign of Zar'a Yā'eqob (1434–68) in the *Maṣḥafa Tēfut*, a work alluding to the events of his reign that was kept in the library on *Ambā* Gešan itself.<sup>5</sup> The political function of the *ambā* must therefore have arisen prior to the mid-fifteenth century, when it appears as 'Amba Negest' ('mountain of kings') on Fra Mauro's world map (1460), based on information from pilgrims' itineraries to the Holy Land or the first Europeans to visit Ethiopia during the fifteenth century.<sup>6</sup> When a king died without sons, a member of the royal line would be brought down from *Ambā* Gešan to take the throne. Nevertheless, the recurrent conflicts over the succession show that the expedient of using the *ambā* to avoid them was a failure after the reign of Zar'a Yā'eqob. Fifteenth-century royal documents show that young princes were no longer imprisoned there.<sup>7</sup> Later, *Ambā* Gešan was laid waste during Grāññ's campaigns, a result that Taddesse Tamrat sees as being not unconnected with the political instability rife during the second half of the sixteenth century until 1607.<sup>8</sup> Certain references in Páez's *History of Ethiopia* suggest that the mountain was still in use at the turn of the century: he states, for instance, that some of his informants about the *ambā's* history were princes who had 'spent a long time on Guixên Ambâ.<sup>9</sup> Yet it no longer seemed to fulfil the role of a 'reservation' for the new kings: Za-Dengel was exiled on the island of 'Dec' (Daq) in Lake Ṭanā, Yā'eqob was banished to 'the kingdom of Nareâ' (Ennāryā), and Susneyos's own sons were not shut up on 'Guixên Ambâ.<sup>10</sup> Páez was no doubt right to stress that the reigning king's sons were not sent there, as his successor, Fāsiladas, certainly spent no time there at all. There are several testimonies from Ethiopian sources, however, that indicate that some collateral relatives of Susneyos and his predecessors still lived there. Some of these were descendants of kings in the male line, who could in fact be chosen to reign. Alongside them were others who were technically banned from taking the throne, not only female descendants

<sup>1</sup> Derat, *Le Domaine des rois éthiopiens*, 2003, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Book I, chapter 10.

<sup>3</sup> Álvares, *The Prester John of the Indies*, p. 237.

<sup>4</sup> Almeida, 'Historia de Ethiopia a Alta', V, p. 214.

<sup>5</sup> Caquot, 'Aperçu préliminaire sur le Mashafa Tefut'.

<sup>6</sup> Hirsch, *Connaissances et figures de l'Éthiopie*, pp. 123–5.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>8</sup> Taddesse Tamrat, *Church and State in Ethiopia*, p. 301.

<sup>9</sup> Book I, chapter 10, p. ???.

<sup>10</sup> Book I, chapter 10, p. ???.

but also, as Páez points out,<sup>1</sup> the sons of the daughters of those who were imprisoned on the *ambā*, such as the sons of a king's daughters. (D. Toubkis)

**Nestor /Nestorius (c. 386–450/1).**

As patriarch of Constantinople (428–431) and a theologian trained in the Antioch school, he was a good target for Alexandrian opposition. He rejected the dogmatic definition of Maria as Mother of God (Theotokos) that emerged from the Council of Ephesus in 431, arguing instead that the Word generated by God the Father could not be generated a second time. He conceived of Christ as a dual being – Word and man (Jesus) – and denied the hypostatic union. The attempt to rationalize the mystery of the incarnation of the Word was hindered by the difficulty of expressing Hellenic philosophical concepts in languages other than Greek. That led to misunderstandings and serious fighting. Nestorianism was victorious in Edessa and accepted as the valid doctrine by the Persian (Assyrian or Chaldean Syrian) Church.

**Oadeçalâ / Walda Sa'älâ (late 15th century–1661).**

The first of Susneyos's wives, she came from an ancient noble family of Walaqā and Marhābēt, regions of southern Amharā and northern Šawā. As the legitimate spouse and queen mother, her throne name was Śelṭān Moggasa, derived from her husband's throne name, Śelṭān Sagad.<sup>2</sup> They were married in about 1595 and had numerous children, of whom at least four sons and four daughters are known (see **sons of Susneyos**). Walda Sa'älâ founded a monastery linked to the Order of Ēwoṣṭātéwos, named Qomā Fāsīladas, in the southern part of Bagémeder.<sup>3</sup> The monastery archives state that building work began in 1621 and was completed in 1640. The queen died on 1 *Magābit* 1661<sup>4</sup> and was buried at Qomā Fāsīladas. (A. Wion)

**Oquêa / waqét.**

A word of Latin origin, *uncia*, disseminated through the Greek *unkia*; in Aramaic it is *'unqiya*, in Arabic *waqiyya* and in Amharic *waqét*. It means an ounce, a unit of weight.<sup>5</sup> The term is also used by Francisco Álvares in his *Verdadeira informação* in the spelling 'ouquia'; he estimated it to be the equivalent of ten *cruzados* – according to his editors, each *cruzado* weighed 3.56 grams.<sup>6</sup>

**Our Lady (Ambā Gešan).**

A church built on *Ambā* Gešan, next to the church of Egzi'ābeḥér Ab. Built by royal order, these churches indicate the importance of religion in royal politics from the fourteenth century onwards.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Book I, chapter 10, p. ???.

<sup>2</sup> Perruchon, 'Notes ... Règne de Susneyos', p. 77; see above, bk I, ch. 15, p. ???.

<sup>3</sup> Ramos, *Histórias Etiopes*, pp. 140–41.

<sup>4</sup> Basset, *Études sur l'histoire de l'Éthiopie*, p. 290; Béguinot, *La cronaca abbreviata d'Abissinia*, p. 52; Perruchon, 'Notes ... Règne de Fasiladas', p. 90.

<sup>5</sup> Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary of Gé'ez*, p. 616.

<sup>6</sup> Álvares, *The Prester John of the Indies*, pp. 123–4. See also Pankhurst, 'A Preliminary History of Ethiopian Measures Weights and Values – Part 3', pp. 59, 71.

<sup>7</sup> Derat, *Le domaine des rois éthiopiens*, p. 26.

**Our Lady (royal encampment).**

The church dedicated to the Virgin Mary in the royal encampment (*katamā*) was known as *gemḡḡā bēt* (literally ‘storehouse of the precious cloths’). According to Conti Rossini, it was part of the royal house where there was a chapel of the Virgin.<sup>1</sup>

**Prester John.**

The title of the ruler of an imaginary eastern Christian empire, according to millenarian and cosmographic traditions based on a work that circulated widely in European court circles, the *Letter of the Prester John of the Indies*. The geographical and sociological ambiguity surrounding Ethiopia and the existence of a centralized state and an ancient Christian faith in the region led to Ethiopia being identified with the legendary Indies of European cosmographic literature. The Prester John’s African empire was thought to exercise sovereignty over several other kingdoms stretching from the east coast to the west coast of Africa. At the end of the fifteenth century, the relations that Portuguese explorers began to develop with various African societies were based on the assumption that they were in some way subject to the Prester John. The title *Presbyter Iohannes [rex regum et] dominus dominantium* (Prester John, [king of kings and] lord of lords), analogous to that of the author of the canonical *Apocalypse* (*Presbyteros Ioannis*), recalls the priestly nature of the imperial ruler, who is ‘Lord of lords’ and ‘King of kings’ like the resurrected Christ (*Apocalypse* [Revelations] 17:14; 19:16). The Prester John is also referred to in the *Letter* as *Sumus dominus dominantium universae terrae* (supreme Lord of lords of the universe of the Earth), unequivocally endowing him with the characteristics of *Cosmocrator*, resulting from the merging of two ecumenical figures of power, Alexander and Jesus Christ (it should be noted that the works that most directly inspired the *Letter* were the *Romance of Alexander* and the final part of the *Apocalypse of Saint John*).<sup>2</sup>

**Quebrân / Qebrân.**

This small island in the southern part of Lake Ṭānā is home to a monastery founded in the first half of the fourteenth century, according to the *gadd* of its founder, Saint Za-Yohānnes.<sup>3</sup> (C. Bosc-Tiessé)

**Queen Saba / Queen of Sheba.**

The queen’s story forms the core of the Ethiopian national epic narrated in the *Kebra Nagast*. Mākeddā, the queen of an Ethiopian people subject to the oppressive Great Serpent cult, travels to Jerusalem in order to learn the wisdom of Solomon. After sleeping with him and learning the ways of the Semitic royal house, Mākeddā returns to Ethiopia and gives birth to a son, Menilek I. When he reaches the age of twenty-two, the queen abdicates in his favour, thus founding the Ethiopian Solomonic dynasty. This story arose out of the need to legitimize political power. In the Yemenite tradition, the ancient Sabaeen kingdom was located inland, in the north of the country, and its capital was Marib (MRB, in transcribed South Arabian inscriptions), a prosperous town on the incense road. While Páez and Montserrat were on their forced march through Yemen,

<sup>1</sup> Conti Rossini, ‘Historia regis Sarsa Dengel’, 188.

<sup>2</sup> Ramos, *Ensaio de Mitologia Cristã*, pp. 101–12 (*Essays in Christian Mythology*, pp. 64–72).

<sup>3</sup> Schneider, ‘Actes de Za-Yohannes de Kebran’, LXV, pp. 13–18.

they passed through a place of ruins where there were 'stones with ancient letters'; it was called 'Melqui's' and had belonged to the Queen of Sheba.<sup>1</sup> Assimilation of the two kingdoms is somehow made possible in Ethiopian historical tradition, which alludes to the conquest of Yemen by Abyssinian armies in pre-Christian times.<sup>2</sup>

### Religious controversy.

The differences between the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which follows a non-Chalcedonian tradition (like the Coptic Church of Egypt), and the Roman Catholic Church could, and still can, be seen in their liturgical practices and their doctrinal precepts. The differences were catalogued during the first half of the sixteenth century by a number of writers, particularly Father **Francisco Álvares**, the chaplain of the first Portuguese embassy sent to Ethiopia in 1520. Thirty years later, the superiors of the Society of Jesus took the trouble to send missionaries there who were well versed in theology and prepared to engage in debates, both orally and in writing, with Ethiopian theologians on a variety of religious topics. From the outset of the mission, therefore, the Jesuit fathers sought to combat cultural practices and theological ideas that they branded as heretical and contaminated by Judaism and Islam, such as circumcision and keeping the Sabbath, royal polygamy, communion *sub utraque specie* and Miaphysitism. The Orthodox clergy reacted violently, often with the support of the king (Galāwdéwos notably took part in the discussions between the Orthodox monks and Bishop Andrés de Oviedo; see **first Jesuit mission**). As the European missionaries came ever closer to the king and converted large segments of the court to Catholicism during the second Jesuit mission, the religious dispute with the Orthodox clergy became exacerbated and required the two sides to clarify their ideas. The discussion gradually focused on questions of Christology and, symptomatically, revived divergences that had become entrenched 1,200 years before at the **Council of Chalcedon**, where Coptic theologians had rejected the formula that held that the divine nature and the human nature of Christ were united in the person of the Son without confusion and without separation.

In the *History of Ethiopia*, Pedro Páez vehemently points out that his Orthodox adversaries adopted almost irrational and unsustainable positions in their attempts to defend the idea that there was a single nature in Christ, but he makes no mention at all of the complex problem of how to translate the terms on which the discussion was based. The dualist position of the Chalcedonian Churches, and particularly the Catholic Church, is perfectly intelligible when expressed in Greek or Latin and clearly harks back to Aristotelian metaphysical categorizations, but in the context of Semitic languages, and especially Ge'ez, it may be seen as largely artificial. Indeed, although the Ge'ez term *bāhrey* ('breath') may, as Páez indicates, be translated as 'nature' (Greek *ousia*), in the sense of quality or essence, it also has the meaning of hypostasis. The expressions 'divine nature' and 'human nature' may thus be considered close to *bāhreyā malakot* and *bāhreyā segā*.<sup>3</sup> Yet the Ge'ez term *akāl*, which refers to 'person' and 'body', and is translated as 'nature' in the sense of substance, may also be used to designate the hypostasis.<sup>4</sup> The terms *bāhrey*

<sup>1</sup> Book III, chapter 19, pp. ???.

<sup>2</sup> Boavida and Ramos, 'Ambiguous Legitimacy', pp. 85–92.

<sup>3</sup> Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary of Ge'ez*, p. 91.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

and *akāl* thus display a semantic fluidity and elasticity that their Greek and Latin counterparts do not have. Together with the use of the collective pronoun to express ideas of unity in plurality, this leads to a semantically ambiguous formulation of the relations between the persons of the Trinity and, concomitantly, a Monophysite (or rather, Miaphysite) characterization of the nature of the Son.

Another important dimension of the religious controversy between the Jesuit missionaries and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church is the symbolism expressed in the architecture and spatial design of their churches. Ethiopian churches emphasise the notion of the invisibility of the divine: often located on the tops of mountains, they usually have a concentric layout with the *tābot* inaccessible in the central *maqdas* or ‘holy of holies’ (see **altar stone** / *tābot*) and hardly any light penetrating from outside. In the churches they built in the European style – rectangular, with an altar, crucifix and iconology of Mary and Christ – the missionaries introduced windows to underline the importance of lighting the interior. Such architecture, which values the analogy between sunlight and divine light, contrasts strongly with the Ethiopian spiritual approach, which emphasises the notion of the invisibility of the divine presence by depriving the interior of material light.

When the missionaries were expelled, the religious controversies did not die out but flared up again. They gave rise to three competing theological schools (*kārrā*, *qeb’āt* and *saggā*) which reinterpreted both Monophysite dogma and the legacy of Catholic teachings and caused a schism that lasted for centuries in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Supporters of *qeb’āt*, who preached that Christ is the Son of God by unction, and of *saggā*, who considered that Christ is the Son by grace, are commonly called ‘Catholics’ by the dominant faction today, the *kārrā* school, who believe that Christ is the Son by the union (*tawāhēdo*) of humanity and divinity.

### **Remâ / Rémâ.**

This island lies close to the eastern shore of Lake Ṭānā.<sup>1</sup> According to the short chronicles written in the eighteenth century, the only royal tomb on Rémâ is that of King Śarṣa Dengel.<sup>2</sup> According to Páez, however, this king’s tomb was at Ṭānā Qirqos. (C. Bosc-Tiessé)

### **Saint Stephen’s / Dabra Eṣṭifānos.**

A monastery also known as Dabra Hāyq. According to the *gadd* of Iyasus Mo’ā, two churches had been founded on the site before the saint arrived there, but the monastery only developed after Iyasus Mo’ā settled there in 1248. It became closely associated with royal power.<sup>3</sup> The superiors of the community held the title of *aqqābé sa’āt* (see **Acabe eçât** / **acabeçaât** / **acabiçât** / *aqqābé sa’āt*) and acted as counsellors to the king from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century. (M.-L. Derat)

### **Saint Stephen’s, Rome.**

A church at the back of Saint Peter’s basilica, with an inn attached to it where Ethiopian pilgrims who arrived in Rome began to stay, so that the church became associated with

<sup>1</sup> See the recent inventory of the church of Rémâ Madhāné ‘Ālam, in Bosc-Tiessé, ‘L’Histoire et l’art des églises du lac Tana’, pp. 233–7.

<sup>2</sup> Perruchon, ‘Notes ... Règne de Sarsa-Dengel’, pp. 177–85, 273–8.

<sup>3</sup> Kur, ‘Actes de Iyasus Mo’ā’, pp. 18–28.



'Indian' or Ethiopian Christians.<sup>1</sup> It was a centre for the spread of Ethiopian Christian culture, particularly literature from the early sixteenth century onwards; with the publication of the *Psalterium David et Cantica Canticorum* in 1513 by Johan Potken, with the collaboration of scholars from the community, the Ge'ez *fdal* (syllabary) entered the printing era.<sup>2</sup> In the very shadow of the Catholic Holy See, the Ethiopian community used to celebrate mass in Ge'ez according to their own rite, which would be seen in a very different light by the Jesuits in the land of their mission.

### Second Jesuit mission (1603–1622).

See section 2 of the Introduction (pp. ???–???). The priests of this second mission revived the strategy that Andrés de Oviedo had eventually abandoned as unworkable almost half a century earlier, which was to gain the trust of the elite, whose conversion would ensure that the population would then convert *en masse*. The first to arrive in Ethiopia was Father Pedro Páez in 1603,<sup>3</sup> followed the following year, 1604, by Fathers Francesco de Angelis and António Fernandes<sup>4</sup> and, in 1605, by Fathers Lorenzo Romano and Luís de Azevedo.<sup>5</sup> Finally, two more Jesuits, Diogo de Matos and António Bruno, joined them in 1620.<sup>6</sup>

### Simon /Seme'on.

*Abuna* Seme'on arrived in Ethiopia during the reign of Susneyos and, according to 'List No 6',<sup>7</sup> he was the ninety-seventh Egyptian metropolitan. The list also states that he died on 13 May 1617 during the battle of Şaddā against the 'heretic' (*alāwi*) Susneyos.<sup>8</sup>

### Sons of Susneyos.

With the death of Kanāfra Krestos in 1622, Fāsīladas became the eldest son of Susneyos and Walda Sa'ālā, having been born in 1603, according to Susneyos's chronicle.<sup>9</sup> The second son was Mārḡos, who was born in 1604 and died in early 1626.<sup>10</sup> Of the other two sons of Susneyos, who were still children in 1622, the only one whose name is known is Galāwdéwos; the other one probably died young, since the written sources never mention his name.<sup>11</sup> Susneyos is not known to have had any other sons by Walda Sa'ālā, but he had many other children by other wives and concubines, even though he officially renounced

<sup>1</sup> Lefevre, 'L'Étiopia nella stampa del primo cinquecento', 1966, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Prior to this it had been partially engraved in the incunabulum of Bernhard von Breidenbach's journey to Jerusalem (*Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam*, 1486), but merely as an example of a different script, which European scholars would continue to call 'Chaldean' for another 200 years.

<sup>3</sup> Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 11, pp. 50–51.

<sup>4</sup> See book IV, chapter 10; Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 6, p. 363. Note that this is a different António Fernandes from the one who took part in the first Jesuit mission.

<sup>5</sup> See book IV, chapter 12; Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 11, p. 60; Cohen Shabot, 'Azevedo, Luiz de'.

<sup>6</sup> Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 11, p. 473.

<sup>7</sup> From Manuscript 7 (ff. 107r–112r) in Conti Rossini's Ethiopian collection, Accademia dei Lincei, Rome.

<sup>8</sup> See Ayele Takla Haymanot, 'The Egyptian Metropolitan of the Ethiopian Church', pp. 203–4.

<sup>9</sup> Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyo*, II, p. 36. This date was confirmed by Páez, who mentioned that Fāsīladas was about eighteen years old when the buildings at Azazo began to be erected, on 9 November 1621 (book 4, chapter 22, p. ???).

<sup>10</sup> Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 4, p. 63; 6, p. 420; *RÆSOI*, 7, p. 135; 13, pp. 291–2.

<sup>11</sup> Wion, 'Galawdewos'.

polygamy when he converted to Catholicism.<sup>1</sup> At the end of his reign, his two sons by Amata Mikā'él, Yā'eqob and Yosṭos, were protected by the Catholics, who saw them as better allies, should they inherit the throne, than Fāsīladas, who in fact succeeded his father and immediately restored the Orthodox faith and expelled the Jesuit missionaries from Ethiopia.<sup>2</sup> Páez did not mention Yā'eqob and Yosṭos, even though they would have been aged fourteen and fifteen in 1622. (A. Wion; MJR)

**Tascâr / tazkâr.**

A ceremony in memory of a deceased person, held forty days after the death and repeated annually thereafter.<sup>3</sup> It literally means 'commemoration' and has its origins in canon law, namely the twenty-first decree of the Clementine Canon on the Ascension, which ordered the faithful to hold a *tazkâr* every year for every martyr who died for faith in Christ,<sup>4</sup> and the twenty-third decree of the Letter from Peter to Clement, which extended the *tazkâr* to all the deceased and established the calendar of ceremonies marking the period of mourning on the third, seventh, twelfth, thirtieth, fortieth and sixtieth days after the person's death.<sup>5</sup> (M.-L. Derat; I.B.)

**Tedebâba Mariam / Tadbâba Mâryâm.**

Royal church founded by King Galâwdêwos (1540–59) in Amhara, near Atronsa Mâryâm.<sup>6</sup> He was buried there, as was his successor Minâs.<sup>7</sup> The reputation of this holy place endured, because King Iyâsu visited it more than a century later,<sup>8</sup> suggesting either that it was not destroyed during the campaigns of Aḥmad ibn Ibrâhîm or that it was rebuilt soon afterwards. (M.-L. Derat)

***Tratado sobre todos os erros de Etiópia (Treatise on all the Errors of Ethiopia).***

As soon as he arrived in Ethiopia in 1604, Father António Fernandes<sup>9</sup> set to work compiling a catalogue of the theological 'errors' of Ethiopian Christianity. The annual letter from the province of Goa for 1610 included a letter from him to the visitor of India complaining about the delay in writing a book refuting the 'errors of the Ethiopians' and in having it printed in Goa. He was sending the catalogue again, but felt it would be better for the book to be composed by the fathers who were in Ethiopia.<sup>10</sup> As may be gathered from what Diogo de Matos wrote, in 1621 Fernandes was still working on a work refuting Ethiopian theological 'errors', which it was important to finish in order to respond to the controversies that had arisen and never been resolved in the public debates.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Almeida, 'Historia de Ethiopia a Alta', VI, pp. 184, 359–60.

<sup>2</sup> Almeida, 'Historia de Ethiopia a Alta', VII, pp. 172, 310; Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 12, pp. 530–31.

<sup>3</sup> See also Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 4, p. 182.

<sup>4</sup> Bausi, 'Il Senodos Etiopico', CII, p. 12 (Italian translation.), CI, p. 25 (Ge'ez text).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., CII, p. 112 (Italian translation.), CI, p. 291 (Ge'ez text).

<sup>6</sup> Conzelman, *Chronique de Galâwdêwos*, pp. 150–53.

<sup>7</sup> Basset, *Études sur l'histoire de l'Éthiopie*, pp. 115–16.

<sup>8</sup> Guidi, 'Annales Iohannis I, Iyasu I et Bakaffa', V, p. 188.

<sup>9</sup> Boavida, 'Fernandes, António'.

<sup>10</sup> ARSI MS Goa 33 I, doc. 31, ff. 333–4. An excerpt from the annual letter was published by Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 11, pp. 201–3.

<sup>11</sup> Beccari, *RÆSOI*, 11, p. 484.

Contemporary notes, such as the one at the end of Father Manuel de Almeida's work,<sup>1</sup> apparently suggest a connection between the book that was still unfinished in 1621 and one that Fernandes is known to have written, entitled *Magseph Assetat / Flagellum mendaciorum*, which also concerns religious controversy.<sup>2</sup> Although the book was printed at Saint Paul's College in Goa in 1642,<sup>3</sup> Almeida pointed out that it had been started in Ethiopia and developed during Fernandes's stay there. It had been translated into the classical language of Ethiopia, Ge'ez, with the help of Ethiopian scholars who had fled with the Jesuits after they were expelled from the country in 1633, probably because they had stood up for Catholicism. The tenacity of the Jesuits in Goa was remarkable. Almost ten years after they had been forced out of Ethiopia, they had still not given up the theological fight. The translation into Ge'ez demonstrates their intention to reach an exclusively learned readership, because only Ethiopian monks could read the language and understand the meaning of this discourse.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 475–6.

<sup>2</sup> See Pereira, 'Notice sur le Mäqsäftä Häsetat'. There is a copy of this book in the Biblioteca Nacional, Lisbon.

<sup>3</sup> See Silva, 'Evangelificação e Imprensa nos séculos XVI e XVII na Índia', pp. 136–7. The author gives a list of publications printed at Saint Paul's College in Goa, including the *Magseph Assetat*.

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## INDEX

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