

The Teaching-learning Processes in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Accreditation
Schools of Music (*Zema Bets*): The Cases of Bethlehem, Zur Aba and Gondar Baeta
Mariam Churches

SELAMSEW DEBASHU

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE CENTER FOR AFRICAN AND ORIENTAL STUDIES

PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTERS OF ARTS IN AFRICAN STUDIES
(AFRICAN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY AND CULTURAL STUDIES)

Addis Ababa University

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This is to accredit that the thesis prepared by Selamsew Debashu, entitled: The Teaching-learning Processes in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Accreditation Schools of Music (Zema Bets): The Cases of Bethlehem, Zur Aba and Gondar Baeta Mariam Churches, and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in African Studies (African Intellectual History and Cultural Studies) complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted stands with respect to originality and quality.

Signed by the Examining committee

Examiner _____ signature _____ date _____

Examiner _____ signature _____ date _____

Advisor _____ signature _____ date _____

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to explain the overall teaching and learning processes of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church music in selected Zema (church Music) accreditation Schools based on the narratives and experiences of teachers and students specifically on course procedures, weaknesses and strengths of the schools and the problems that the schools are facing today. Observations, interviews and document analysis were employed as data collection instruments. It was observed that there is no a readymade answer on prerequisite courses that a student is required to take before he joins the Zema accrediting schools. Some of the church's practices in preparing entrance exams, helping 'kotres' and allowing students to graduate by their own pace are exemplary practices of the schools; while lack of proper documentation practices and aloofness to the needs of disabled students are observed as weaknesses. Taking the major problems that the church schools are facing today, a very low admission rate of students is stated which is mainly caused by lack of accommodation, scarce textbooks, a very narrow job opportunity for graduates and some overall financial problems that is plaguing both the teachers and students.

Key Words: Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Zema Bet, Accrediting Schools, Church-Education

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Definitions

Aquaquam is a term for Ethiopian Christian liturgical dance and its instrumental accompaniment, integrated with sistrum, drum and prayer staff.

Dəggəwa: The Dəggəwa is the liturgical book of the Ethiopian Church which contains the hymns and troparions for the Divine Office; it is arranged in calendar order and divided according to the seasons of the liturgical year.

Käbäro: a large, two-headed, cylindrical drum that is played along with the Şänaşəl (and usually accompanied with another small sized Kebero) to accompany liturgical chants and Dances (Aquaquam).

Mäquamia: is a prayer staff made of wood or metal with a head of ivory, wood or metal (iron, copper, silver or gold). In the context of Aquaquam clergymen sway forward, backward, sideway, to the right and to the left when they are chanting and acts as a physical support for them during long ceremonies.

Masmeskeria Bet: Accrediting Schools in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Education System.

Mäşəhaf Bet: the general term for the School of Commentaries composed of four branches. Interpretation of Bəluykidan (Old testament, interpretation of Haddiskidan (New Testament) interpretation of the Liqawént (Church Fathers), interpretation of the three Mäşəhafət.

Mə'əraf : The name ' Mə'əraf ' is derived from a word that signifies 'rest' or 'halt' (e.g., after a walking distance), or the space between the end of one part of the book and the beginning of the next, 'chapter'. Mə'əraf is one of the five books in the collection Amməstuşəwatawəzemawoč.

Psalter:In Ethiopian tradition, the Psalter being a Christian prayer book used liturgically and for the Daily Office as well as for private devotions, is a volume composed of the Book of Psalms attributed to King David (Psalter called Mäzmurä Dawit, 'Psalm[s] of David', or simply Dawit), the Biblical Canticles (Mähaləyänäbiyat), the Song of Songs (Mähaləyämähaləyä, attributed to King Solomon; also Wisdom books) and usually additional devotional texts, the most common of which are the Wəddase Maryam and the Anqäsäbərhan, and The 15 Biblical Canticles of the Psalter.

Qəne Bet:'house of the Qəne' is a stage of the traditional church education, focus on the theory and practice of the composition of qəne.

Şänaşəl:Sistra used by clergymen to create jingling sound.

Zema Bets: the study of Ethiopian Orthodox Church music, divided into many specialized fields that cover music instrument playing, textual readings of the liturgy, vocal performance, and body movement.

Accreditation Schools of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (*Masmeskeria Bets*): the action or process of officially recognizing an Ethiopian Orthodox Church school student as having a qualified status on one of the Church's field of studies or being qualified in it.

Zema Accreditation Church Schools (*Zema Masmeskeria Bets*): the action or process of officially recognizing an Ethiopian Orthodox Church music student as having a qualified status on the Church's music or being qualified to perform it.

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

The history of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church goes as far back as the fourth century. Though how exactly it has taken its roots in the country varies due to numerous accounts, there seems to be a general consensus among historians that the church was established during the heydays of the Axumite Civilization in the 4th c (Sergew, 1972, Taddesse,1972, Geddes,1997).

In its long existence, the church and its creed have been threatened by contradictory forces within the nation and among these, two historical incidents had shaken the foundation of the Church from its core. The Fellashia (Ethiopian Jews) uprising which was led by the legendary Yodit Gudit was one of the immediate causes that contributed immensely for the demise of the Axumite civilization; which had been furnishing cushions to the state religion(Sergew,1972). Numerous churches were destroyed and the economic support of the state to the church drained as a result. Though there are various stories and educated guesses about the real identity of Yodit Gudit, as Belayenesh Michaela (2015) noted,

In addition to oral tradition there is considerable documentary evidence that c. 970 A.D. the ruling Aksumite dynasty was harassed by a non-Christian queen, who lay waste to the city and countryside, destroyed churches and monuments and sought to exterminate all members of the royal family, the House of David. Many traditional sources affirm that this queen was of the Jewish faith, or had adopted it from her husband (*p.1*).

The Church's privileges and its uplifted status during the subsequent years after the end of the Felasha uprising again had been shaken by the legendary Muslim Fighter Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi; as widely known as Gagn, meaning the Left-handed. The rise of Ahmed Gagn and his

perennial raids were perhaps the greatest blow not only against the existence of the church but also Christians and Christianity in general.

Many were forced to convert to Islam or risked their lives and confiscations of their properties. Numerous churches were looted and turned into ashes. Subsequently, books and written documents that belong to the church were in danger of extinction. Paul B. Henze (2002: 86) summarizes the impact of Ahmed Gagn saying, " In Ethiopia the damage which Ahmad Gagn did has never been forgotten... every Christian highlander still hears tales of Gagn in his childhood." After the Imam had been defeated through collaborative efforts of the Portuguese allied Christian forces and their Ethiopian counterparts, it became the focus of the Emperors to strengthen the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (Taddesse,1972). One of the measures taken was to reestablish traditional church schools.

The destruction of churches means the destruction of church schools; since in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church tradition, a church usually has got its own backyard for traditional schooling; which usually constitutes one teacher. Hence, if the allegations against the Imam hold true, then it would be plausible to deduce that the traditional schooling system had been disrupted during Gagn's reign and Orthodox Christians had to rely on newly reestablished church schools to let students continue their education.

Currently, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church School System can be broadly categorized into two levels: beginner's and the higher level (Hailegebriel. D, 2003). In the beginners' level students are instructed on Nebab and Qedasse while in the higher levels they are assigned either in the

Zema Bets, Quene Bets or Metsehaf Bets (ibid). Among these higher level schools, some of them train and give accreditation to students on some selected subject matters of the church.

At the very beginning of church schooling, the Nebab Bet which literally means 'reading school,' teaches students on identifying Geez Fidels (Alphabets); familiarize them to various religious texts and finally enable them read the Psalm of David (Sergew, 1970). Upon completion of the first stage, teachings in Qudasse Bet continue focusing on the liturgy of the church. The liturgy school prepares students that are going to be the altar priests in the church. The altar priests are known as the Semonegna (those who serve weekly) who administer sacraments and celebrate the mass (ibid). The instruction to prepare the altar priests is usually given by priests who have specialized in the liturgy of the church. At this stage, students depend on their day-to-day observation skills to understand the rituals of the church rather than depend entirely on academic texts for their learning (ibid).

The higher level of education in the church's school system focuses on instructions of advanced level that target graduating students in either of four specializations in Quene Bet, Metsehaf Bet and Zema Bet and Quidase Bet. Quene Bet teaches Church Poems and Metshaf Bet Prepares its students in advanced readings of religious literature while the focus of Zema Bet is helping students specialize in church music (Sertse,2006).

What makes all schools similar is that students are expected to memorize what they have been taught by heart and writing is not the main part of the education system (Balay, M, 2008). The beginner's level education can be found almost in all parishes of churches in Ethiopia, though

many of them are found in the northern part of the country (ibid). However, the advanced level studies can only be found in selected few church schools.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

To be well versed in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's music, one is required to get to know not only what to sing but how and when to sing as well. To illustrate, a typical church song has got a purpose it serves and usually is performed at some identified dates and occasions according to the church's creed (Shelemay et al, 1993). In addition, the movement of one's body should be rhythmically in line with the type of song and the various music instruments played.

Hence, only practice and years of hard mental labor enable a student to specialize in the Zema accrediting schools. In addition, specializing in style of body movement (Akuakuam) is different from specializing either in Degua (the main music text) and Zemare Mewasit (songs that are performed only on some occasions; such as, death and funeral ceremonies).

Researchers have been conducted on the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's schooling system focusing on various angles. To illustrate, Christine (2009) conducted a research focusing on the urgency of preserving the Ethiopian traditional schooling System; which is undermined by the death of well-versed teachers and the fact that the youth in Ethiopia are shying away from attending church schools for their rewards are becoming less attractive. Similarly, Shelemay et al. (1993) studied the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian chant and its notational system. In another research on the current status of music research in Ethiopia, Woube Kassaye (2009) assesses how scant such studies are including those studies conducted on church music.

In a nutshell, one can summarize the major concerns of the research undertakings described herein above as the need for preserving what is taught, since both instructors and students depend on memorization as the only means of teaching and learning and explaining how some factors such as, modern education and various internal and external conflicts undermined the church schooling system including the need to annotate church music. Based on the researcher's knowledge, no research has been conducted detailing the inner workings of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church music accreditation schools.

Thus, what the researcher sought after in conducting this study is mainly to be acquainted with what is going on in those accrediting schools of Ethiopian Orthodox Church music. Although there are researches on church education and church music in general, I have spotted a gap in such researches that they do not cover what it means to accredit, what requirements are required to be fulfilled before a student is admitted to these accrediting schools, on what basis did the Zema schools become accrediting ones, what the overall teaching-learning procedure looks like based on the very words of teachers and students in the Zema accrediting schools. To put it simply, my objective in conducting this study is to explain the overall teaching and learning processes of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church music in selected Zema (church Music) Accrediting Schools by taking the narratives and experiences of teachers and students specifically on course procedures, weaknesses and strengths of the schools and the problems that the schools are facing today.

1.3 Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to explain the overall teaching and learning processes of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church music in selected Zema (church Music) Accrediting Schools by taking the narratives and experiences of teachers and students specifically on course procedures, weaknesses and strengths of the schools and the problems that the schools are facing today. Thus, the major research questions are:

1. What qualities made the Zema schools accrediting ones?
2. What is the procedure of music training in the Zema accrediting Schools?
3. What are the major strengths and weaknesses of the Zema accrediting schools?
4. What are the issues that affect the Zema accrediting schools?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this research is to describe and explain the overall picture of the teaching-learning process of church music in selected Zema Bets. Accordingly, the research seeks to meet the following specific objectives:

- To explain the qualities that made the Zema schools accrediting ones.
- To describe the procedure of music trainings in the Zema accrediting Schools.
- To identify the major strengths and weaknesses of Zema accrediting schools.
- To elucidate the issues that affect Zema accrediting schools.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Capitalizing on the concerns of researchers on the necessity of preserving the church schooling system, this particular research will document the status of currently existing Zema schools based on the narrated experiences of students, teachers and the personal observation of the

researcher concerning the overall teaching-learning environment in those selected Zema accrediting schools. In addition, since what has been done up to now concerning music research in Ethiopia is insignificant, the researcher believes that it would be a contribution to the tradition of researching music in the country. Above all, for anyone who wants to undertake a research project on church music in Ethiopia, this particular research will be helpful in giving a clearer picture concerning essential information on Zema accrediting schools in the country.

1.6 Research Methodology

In order to answer the research questions, it is necessary to employ a qualitative research design. This design as (Natasha et al, 2005) explains, is strong in understanding “a research problem or topic from the perspectives of the local population it involves.”

1.6.1 Data Collection Instruments

To collect data, Semi-structured Interviews, observations and document analysis are used.

Semi-structured Interviews

Aside from the major research questions and some sub-questions prepared before the actual interviews (see Appendix A), open-ended questions and many other follow up questions were forwarded to the interviewees. Such a semi-structured way of interviewing allows a researcher to be open to new or emerging ideas and get elaborated answers from participants (Margaret et al, 2009). All of the interviews were conducted in a face-to-face manner, though, due to a busy schedule of one participant in Gondar, I was obliged to resort to a phone interview and take notes. The interviews were conducted in Amharic language.

Observation

Although I could not observe the actual teaching-learning process in church 'classrooms,' due to the absence of education for a break, I could take field notes concerning the overall conditions of the schools' environment. Hence, during my field visit, I have taken notes about the way students live by visiting almost all of the schools and the surrounding thatched roof huts which are the residents of students.

Document Analysis

To enrich and cross check facts acquired from the in-depth-interviews with my informants, I have used primary and secondary sources that mainly deal with history of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and further elaborations on the church's Schooling system. Thus, some of the interpretations in my analysis of the data are based on information I have got from such primary and secondary sources.

1.6.2 Sampling Techniques

Data was collected from January 25- to February 10, 2009 E.C. The interviewees selected for this study are teachers, students and individuals who are knowledgeable about the subject of the study. The students were selected using purposive sampling technique to get responses from various angles. Among others, students who have come from four regions in Ethiopia- Gojjam, Gondar, Wollo and Tigray have been selected since the experience of such students concerning church music is expected to be rich before they were admitted in the Zema accrediting schools. Traditionally, the stated regions have got their own Zema schools and a long history of attachment to the Orthodox Church education. To add one more, to answer questions concerning how disabled students are treated in the Zema accrediting schools,

disabled students have to be purposively handpicked as participants of the study; although only one was there during the data gathering period.

All of the teachers of three of the Zema accrediting schools (i.e. 3) are selected as participants. Aside from the teachers and students selected for interviews, people who are said to have in-depth knowledge about the schools and church education system in general were selected based on a snowball sampling technique through recommendations by teachers, students and individuals who are interested about the research project.

1.6.3 Sample Size

To carry out the research, three Zema accrediting schools were selected: Bethlehem, Zur Aba and Gondar Baeta; mainly because they are the most active ones currently. A total of 26 interviewees were selected, comprising 12 students (4 in each school), 3 of their teachers (one in each school) and eleven people who are in a position to talk about the subject under study. This sample size as Minicichiello et al (1997) explained is also sufficient for a paper conducted by a single researcher to carryout in-depth interviewing.

1.6.4 Method of Data Analysis

After conducting the interviews using a tape recorder, the responses were transcribed word by word and translated from Amharic into English. Then, I began to identify the units of analysis throughout all the transcribed data. Based on the recurring themes and other new ideas which are expected to emerge in a semi-structured interview (in what is called the first stage of coding), I began to identify the overarching themes to condense the data. After this, the data was categorized under major themes and sub-themes. Then I constructed a narrative analysis based on the codes and the themes by adding notes that I have taken from my observation and

documents so that they can support my discussion to adequately answer the research questions of this study.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

Although there are other Zema accrediting schools; such as, Tekle Akuakuam Bet, Lasta and Aksum Zema Bets, due to the short time given to conducting this study I was obliged to limit my research areas only to three of the well-known and active zema accreditation schools: Bethlehem, Zur Aba and Gondar Baeta church schools. Furthermore, during the data gathering period, I could only find few students at school; since the time was on the verge of the longest fasting period for Orthodox Christians when students usually leave school for a break.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

Though one can get a glimpse of the other Zema schools just by reading the research subjects of this study, I will not claim that the situation in other Zema schools in the country is the exact replica of the research findings of this particular study. Thus, the research findings are limited only to the selected Zema schools.

Again, even if many things do not change over years concerning the overall situations of the studied schools in this research project, I could only affirm that the research findings show the status of those schools at the time of data gathering period. Thus, one has to bear in mind that descriptions about the teaching-learning processes may not fit to the experiences of former graduates of the accrediting schools.

1.9 Structure of the paper

This paper has got four major parts: Introduction, Literature review and results and discussion and conclusion with recommendation. The introduction part gives the general overview of the research with its objectives, statement of the problem and research questions together with a detailed explanation of the methodology chosen by the researcher to answer the major research questions. In chapter two, various journals and books have been consulted to come up with major discussions, such as, traditional education in Africa, a brief history of education in Ethiopia and the current status of church education in the country. This part also discusses the various levels of church education.

Aside from the four basic chapters, the paper also includes list of tables, definitions of repeatedly used terms, appendices including the research questions that were forwarded to informants and list of informants detailing their position in the church or other activities related to the church. The APA style of citation has been used in both of the lists of bibliographies and the main bodies of this paper.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

2.1 Traditional Education in Africa

Since Africa is a large continent that is subdivided into more than 50 countries with hundreds of millions of people residing in it with various ethnic, cultural and historical backgrounds, it would be a hasty generalization to narrow down and draw conclusions about all of the discussions on traditional education in Africa under the mere name of the continent. The best approach to discuss on this subject would be to look for some common values that African countries share and then identify some variations that are distinctive features of each nations regarding education. For the purpose of this discussion, I have seen traditional education in Africa from three perspectives: the experiences in pre-colonialism period, the existence of written languages and the advent of Christianity and Islam.

It is obvious that due to colonialism, many of the African countries are detached from their original way of doing things. Among others, as Tekeste (2006) observed, colonialism brought new languages and a different system of education to Africa. Prior to colonialism, as it can be inferred from various accounts of European explorers and traders about some transactions made in gold and various artifacts, Africans knew how to produce such materials. Thus, it can be said that the knowledge of manufacturing various instruments and artifacts show that there was a non-formal type of education that helped people to pass on their knowledge to subsequent generations dominantly through words of mouth. Contrary to the formal type of education that was introduced later at the time of colonialism, traditional education in Africa assume every adult in a society as a teacher who is responsible for the development of children either in the mental, physical and attitudinal arenas so that the children are accepted in a

society (Baguma and Aheisibwe,2011). In briefly summing up the traditional education system in Africa, Adeyemi and Adeyinke (2002) wrote,

.... different kinds of games, including wrestling and running, training for healthy living, cooking, dressing, hunting, farming, carpentry, training to become a smith, drumming, dancing, marriage counseling and critical thinking form part of the traditional curriculum at different stages of the life of the youth. Even on becoming an adult, and after the usual rights [sic] of passage, the average African continues to learn from traditional education through a lifelong process. This process fosters unity and citizenship in the African man's or woman's immediate environment (p. 29).

However, the history of some African countries concerning education (in whatever form it appears) is distinctively different from other African countries. What makes these countries mainly different from the other African countries is that they could pass on their knowledge to successive generations in a written format or through monumental landmarks. To illustrate, as various authors wrote about Egypt (at the era of pharos), Tunisia (at the Carthage period), Sudan (when it was referred as Nubia), Ethiopia (at the time of the Axumite civilization) have got recorded histories on various monuments and inscriptions; which enable one to infer that there was an advanced level of education on various subject matters (Valbelle and Charles, 2007; Fatima Ali, 2013; Miles, 2004; Sergew ,1972).

The West, based on the source of knowledge and inspiration for the Greek City States, owes its civilization mainly to Egypt (The British Museum, 2010). Similarly, the Carthaginians, though they have got Phoenician roots, were mainly based in Africa and these people were “one of the first societies to have produced a comprehensive coinage system and well known for their exceptional skills of ship building (ibid).” In fact, the Roman Empire could build a major naval

force after it copied the secret of building the best battleship from Carthage after they suffer defeat at the first Punic Wars (Miles, 2004).

In addition to Egypt and Carthage, where there was a culture of passing on knowledge through written tradition, there were also other nations in Africa who have sophisticated knowledge in various subjects in the absence of a writing system. The Gada system of the Oromo people is a remarkable example for its similarity with democratic forms of government. In fact, one of the foreign advisors to Emperor Tewodros, Plowden, “declared the Gada system of democracy superior to all existing republican systems of government in the world.” (Plowden, *Travels in Abyssinia*, 1868, as cited in Claxton, 2011). Similarly, the bronze casting techniques of Igbo-Ukwu (Eastern Nigeria), the copper smelting skills of West Africa and Sahel, the most productive food production systems of West Africa (specifically on traditional plantation and banana production) including very inspirational and illuminating artifacts of West Africa are some of the examples that can be cited for the existence of knowledge and skills which necessitates some kind of education (Claxton, 2011).

Just like colonialism, the advent of two religions, Christianity and Islam, has hugely impacted not only on the way of life of their followers in Africa, but also the way people are educated. In countries where Islam is the dominant way of life, the Arabic language backed by the Quran continued to instruct people on various subject matters; such as, law, finance, economics, and family and so on (Nehemia, Randall and Pouwels, 2000). A well-known African civilization which can be categorized under the Islamic tradition is Timbuktu (a region in what is now Mali). According to Shuriye (2013), there were 150 schools in Timbuktu by the mid of the 16th century and,

.... these schools had well organized curriculum that gave students vast knowledge of different fields of study. The Islamic religious courses formed the core of the academic syllabus, including Quran interpretation (Tafsir), the traditions of the prophet (Hadith), Jurisprudence (fiqh), sources of Law (Usul) and doctrinal theology. Apart from the religious courses, students were also required to study Grammar (nahw), lettering style and rhetoric (Balagah) and Logic (Mantiq) (pp 697-698).

Aside from Islam, those who accepted Christianity prior to the ages of colonialism, such as Ethiopia, are widely influenced by the teachings and various instructions of the New Testament and the Old Testament too. Thus, with the advent of these religions, a more formal type of traditional schools run by churches and mosques started to define the educational systems of such countries in Africa.

2.2 Education in Ethiopia

Before the dawn of 20th c, the Ethiopian School System had been dominated by religious teachings. The educational schoolings of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Mosque were the dominant traditional educations (Teshome, 1979). However, it is undeniable that it was the Ethiopian Orthodox Church school system that used to have the upper hand.

Up until the demise of the Imperial Era, Ethiopia had been simply referred as an 'island of Christianity'(Getnet,1998). With this conception, the Orthodox Church used to have almost all the privileges which might be comparable to the advantages that the nobility class used to enjoy. The status of people who have gone through church education was also highly esteemed among both of the upper and lower classes of the society.

Many of the books that were either translated or indigenously created during the Imperial Era were the products of people who were taught under the church schooling system. The

Orthodox Christian Priests used to work not only as spiritual advisors and mediators to the mass, but they were also active participants in the business of government. Supporting this, Wagaw (as cited in Wuehibegezer and Gezae, 2015), wrote:

The emphasis on serving the church did not entail in the confinement of the traditional system to the formation of priests rather it extended to producing civil servants such as judges, governors, scribes, treasurers and administrators (p.39).

Aside from the major historical events that posed threat to the existence of the church and its schooling system, the introduction of 'modern' education system and Dergue's ascent to power within three score of the 20th c. diminished the privileges of the Church and its schools' graduates (Prokurat and et al,1996, ix). Although the modern system of education has eroded the demand of church schooling through time, its introduction to and acceptance by the Ethiopian society required persistent struggles by the then Emperor Menilik and Empress Zewdetu (Bahiru Zewde,2002, Paulos,2014). The leaders had to issue imperial decrees threatening to levy taxes on families who refused to send their kids to the modern school which was the only one at that time. To cite as an example, the 1929 education proclamation of Empress Zewdetu reads,

All those who do not send their sons and daughters to school so that they can learn writing and reading skills which are necessary to identify the good and evils and develop fear of God and the king, will be punished 50 Birr. The money solicited from punishment will be given to the church for the feeding and clothing of the poor. . . All God fathers should advice their religious followersto send their children to school and if they refuse to do so they have to report to local authorities as they have violated the proclamation. . .All church leaders in the rural areas apart from their religious

preaching should teach reading and writing (Ayalew, as cited in Bishaw and Lasser, 2012, p55).

One of the reasons for resisting modern schooling was that the Ethiopian Orthodox Christians did not forget the costs of accepting foreign-led teachings and impositions by Emperors. A typical example here is the imperial decree of Emperor Suseneyos (1606-1632) that demanded the Ethiopian people to accept Roman Catholicism as the official religion of the state (Tadesse, 1972). At that time, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church did not only represent a religion but also a way of life that used to dictate many of the actions of its followers (Loubser, 2002).

In fact, as Getnet (2008) observed, “church education in Ethiopia has pervaded the norms, values and culture of the existing society and it has been dominantly applicable until recently.” Thus, changing one’s religion was almost synonymous with changing one’s way of life; which was, of course, hard to swallow for the majority of Orthodox Christians by the time the Emperor issued the decree. Many people had to die before the ill-fated Emperor resigned from his post and the decree was curbed down (Tadesse, 1972).

This strong attachment between the public and the Orthodox Christian religion was known by leaders at the Imperial Era and it had been employed a lot to mobilize the public to fight against foreign-led enemies of the country. Many of the war decrees at that period include statements like, ‘a foreign enemy has come to demolish your religion, to take away your land and destabilize your family.’ Even Emperor Minilik, in recruiting soldiers to fight against the Italian Invaders at Adwa had to resort to a religious appeal to threaten any individual who would be

reluctant to fight by decreeing, "... if anyone is caught foot lagging in his duty to fight the Invader, I swear by the name of Mary, I will never show him mercy"(Paulos,2014).¹

Thus, it would not be exaggeration to say that anything foreign is looked upon suspicion by the Orthodox Christians- among both of the commoners and the nobility too. It was to mitigate such fears from the public, which usually was driven by the wordings of church leaders, that the first teachers, at the initial period of 'modern schooling,' were brought from countries where Orthodox Christianity was exercised, such as Egypt, while some Ethiopians were send to Tsarist Russia where there was a monarchical system in addition to a staunch support for Orthodox Christianity by its emperors (Kifle Selassie,1988).

This suspicion for foreign-led teachings which was driven by previous experiences and distant traumatic memories of the public had been proved fatal to the existence of the Orthodox Church and the Imperial institution five-to-six decades after the introduction of the 'modern' education system in the country (ibid).The overthrown of the last Emperor of the Solomonic dynasty, Haile Sellassie I, was inculcated by students who have passed through the modern education system and who ultimately started to make demands of reformations in ownership of land and the modes of government. Since the Church was the owner of a vast area of land, the questions forwarded by students to have a secular government was not a threat only directed against the Imperial institution but also to the privileges of the Church itself (Brown 1981, pp 50-55).

¹Translation mine.

The student movement together with public grievances against the ruling class for allegedly being exploitative, inept and callous, have finally resulted a full-blown opposition that helped the military Junta (Dergue) to remove the Emperor from his office on 11 September 1975 and assume power subsequently. Obviously, Dergue, backed by its Communist ideology, encouraged atheism and undermined the privileges of the Orthodox Christian Church (Mezmur,2011 and Brown,1981). As a result, the need for church school graduates and the privileged status accorded to church scholars began to diminish in noticeable ways.

As Brown (1981, pp 50-55) noted, “although the great cry of ‘land to the Tiller’ has been largely fulfilled through the nationalization of the land and compulsory collectivization,” it adversely affects the Church by draining away its major economic base. In addition, Dergue had stretched its hands into the affairs of the church and began to remove and appoint church officials at its will and in his article, Religion and Revolution in Ethiopia, Brown (1981), described the situation the Orthodox Church was in during the Dergue period as follows:

The Church is tolerated by the government provided that it does not criticize the revolution and supports the government's social policies. Many within the Church feel that they must accept the status quo in order to preserve the Church as an institution until there is a change for the better. And so they do not complain about the parades, political meetings and indoctrination sessions for youth which take place at the same time as church services (p55).

All the events that had happened as discussed in the aforementioned paragraphs which had paved the slippery road for people educated solely under the church schooling system caused many to shy away from joining such schools. Nowadays, the focus of researchers is on preserving the traditional way of the church schooling system; since the mode of teaching in the schools is dominantly of rote and memorization techniques which are fragile for obvious

reasons. Accordingly, the death of a well-versed church educated intellectual leaves a huge gap that would be hard to fill in. As part of the new awakening on the needs to preserve the traditional church schooling system, some researchers have tried to annotate Saint Yared's church music so that anyone who does not have a prior knowledge about the chants could play them (Shelemay et al, 1993).

2.3 Church Education in Ethiopia

According to Kidanemariam Getahun (1980), the entire teachings of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church schools can broadly be classified into four themes:

1. Reading (Nebab)
2. Music (Zema)
3. Poetry (Quine)
4. Book Interpretation (Masahafat)

Each of all the above stated teachings is further subdivided into four topics except the Quine Bet:

1. Readings: a) Quiter, b) Wured Nebab, c) Nebab and d) Dawit Medgem
2. Music: a) Tsome Degua and Meraf, b) Degua, c) Zemare Mewasit and Quidase, d) Aquaquam
3. Poetry: a) Semina Worq, b) Agebab
4. Books Interpretation: a) Old Testament, b) New Testament, c) Metshafe Liqawent and Abushaker, d) Metshafe Menekosat

As the name indicates, at the reading level, students are taught to identify each alphabet of the Geez letters (which are 240 characters) at the very beginning of church education and this stage is called Quiter Nebab (Siegebert Uhlig, et al, 2003). Once students have identified how to read the characters that are set horizontally from left to right, then they will resort to identify the characters while they are set in a vertical manner tilting down from up to bottom and this style of reading is known as Wured Nebab (ibid). The third stage in the readings section is Nebab where students begin to read words and chosen passages from the Holy Bible. The last stage in the readings level is designed to enable students to fluently read the Psalms of the Psalter through repetition and this practice is called Dawit Medegem.' Upon finishing the last stage of reading, a student is called literate and he might choose to continue his education at the next stage, church music (Zema Bet) or he might decide he has had enough (ibid).

The second category of Church Education is Zema Bet (Music education). Zema consists of the following branches: (i) the study of Meraf, Tsoma Degewa (Chant of the main fasting), and Degwa (the main chant book); (ii) Quidase ("mass music"); (iii) Zimmare (songs sung at the end of Eucharist), and Mewasit (songs related to commemorative services and funerals); (iv) Aquaquam (religious dance and movements in which drums and sistrums are used), (Woube kasaye, 2013). Similarly, Sertse, (2006), classified Qedase under the categories of School of Zema Bet. On the other hand, Christine (2009) and Belay (2008), wrote that the liturgy (Qudasse), and the prayers of the Hours (sä'atat) are studied separately.²

². Quidase is not included here although Basically it is similar with zema; since it uses Saint Yared's musical notations (melikets) just like the three independently held courses given for the zema: Degua, Akuakuam and ZemareMewaisit. What makes Quidase different is that its purpose is exclusive to church sacraments. In Quidase, the course content is divided into Seatat, Maelt and Lelit and the daily routine for a student in Quidase Bet from 6-10 Local time is dedicated to perform Zema. To make things clearer, a student who is well-versed in understanding

The third category of church schooling is Quine Bet. Constructing Quine (poetry) is one of the cornerstones of church education and in learning this course, as Kidanemariam (1980 E.C) explains, the student is expected to master constructing Quine (poetry) which needs to have two meanings: the surface meaning and the hidden one. The surface meaning of the poem (which is called 'seaum,' meaning wax) is what is presumed to be easily understood by anyone who reads or listens to the poem. The hidden meaning of Quine (which is known as 'worq,' meaning gold) is not easily decipherable by the audience without deliberation that might take quite some time to figure out the hidden meaning.

Under the books interpretation stage, students are expected to delve into extensive readings of both of the Old and New Testaments including books written by Orthodox Christians concerning various church teachings (such is Metsahfe Menekosat; i.e. Monastic literatures). Aside from extensive readings of such texts, students learn the various interpretations of the contents of the texts (Sertse,2006).

At this stage, though it is optional, students are also instructed on how time is calculated on the basis of minutes, hours and days. The text book for this education is widely known as Abu shaker (Bahere Hasab) and it is named after the Egyptian Author-Abu Šakir b. Abi I-Karam Butrus b. al-Muhañib. According to Siegebert and et al. (2003), the book in general is

...an overview of world history and a chronograph... and it is important for the practice of calendar calculations of feasts, and its chronology presents a picture of biblical and secular world history, which was of great interest for literate Ethiopians (P 56).

notes and techniques of zema is considered as knowledgeable in Quidase too; since he is already familiar with Yared's musical notes and chanting styles and techniques that are the basis for teachings in the Quidase Bets.

2.4 Development of Church Education in Ethiopia

In addition to the Old and New Testaments, a close look at the course contents of the Ethiopian Church Schools reveals that it is a result of accumulated experiences and works of various people that are both of the Ethiopian and foreign origin. Those works that have foreign origin were translated into Geez and became deeply engrained with the Ethiopian psyche as the Ethiopian literate class, according to Sumner (as cited in Woube Kassaye,2009) has a peculiar nature to “adapt, modify, add and subtract” to give the original material an Ethiopian color.

Accordingly, many people have shaped the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Education through various works. Among these, Saint Yared’s influence is dominant. In his book, *Ethiopian Civilization*, Belai G (1992) writes that Saint Yared was not only a composer of hymns but also “the originator of a new system of education, revealing his discoveries to the people in Geez which they could easily understand, therefore he is the father of Ethiopian Education and has greatly contributed to Ethiopian culture”.

Lisana worq (1997), further explains, “it is saint Yared who is generally credited as the supreme founder of a uniquely Ethiopian genre of poetry known as Quene.” However, in addition to Saint Yared’s contributions, the works of Yohanes of Gebela in Wollo and Tewanaei of D’ga Istifanos in Gojam are reputed to have enriched it [the works of Yared] and made it even more complex and rigorous (ibid.)

Aside from various points of views over the identity of individuals who have contributed to the development of church education materials, there are also debates among researchers about the originality of the materials (texts) and other practices (rituals and styles) that are typical of

the Orthodox Christian Church of Ethiopia. Siegebert and et al. (2003) stated that Ethiopian tradition attributes the ‘Weddase Mareyam’ to Ephrem the Syrian or to Simeon the Potter a Syrian poet of the 5th/6th cent. Christine (2009) also adds other books that are written in Syriac and translated in to Ge’ez:

“The books of the monks (Meshafe Menekosat) which include three works: Filiksios with works by Philoxenus of Mabug; Mar Yesak, that is Saint Isaac of Nineveh, a Syrian author of the 6th century; and the Elder or spiritual Teacher (Aregawi Manfasawi) by john of Saba another Syriac author of the 6th century (P,529).”

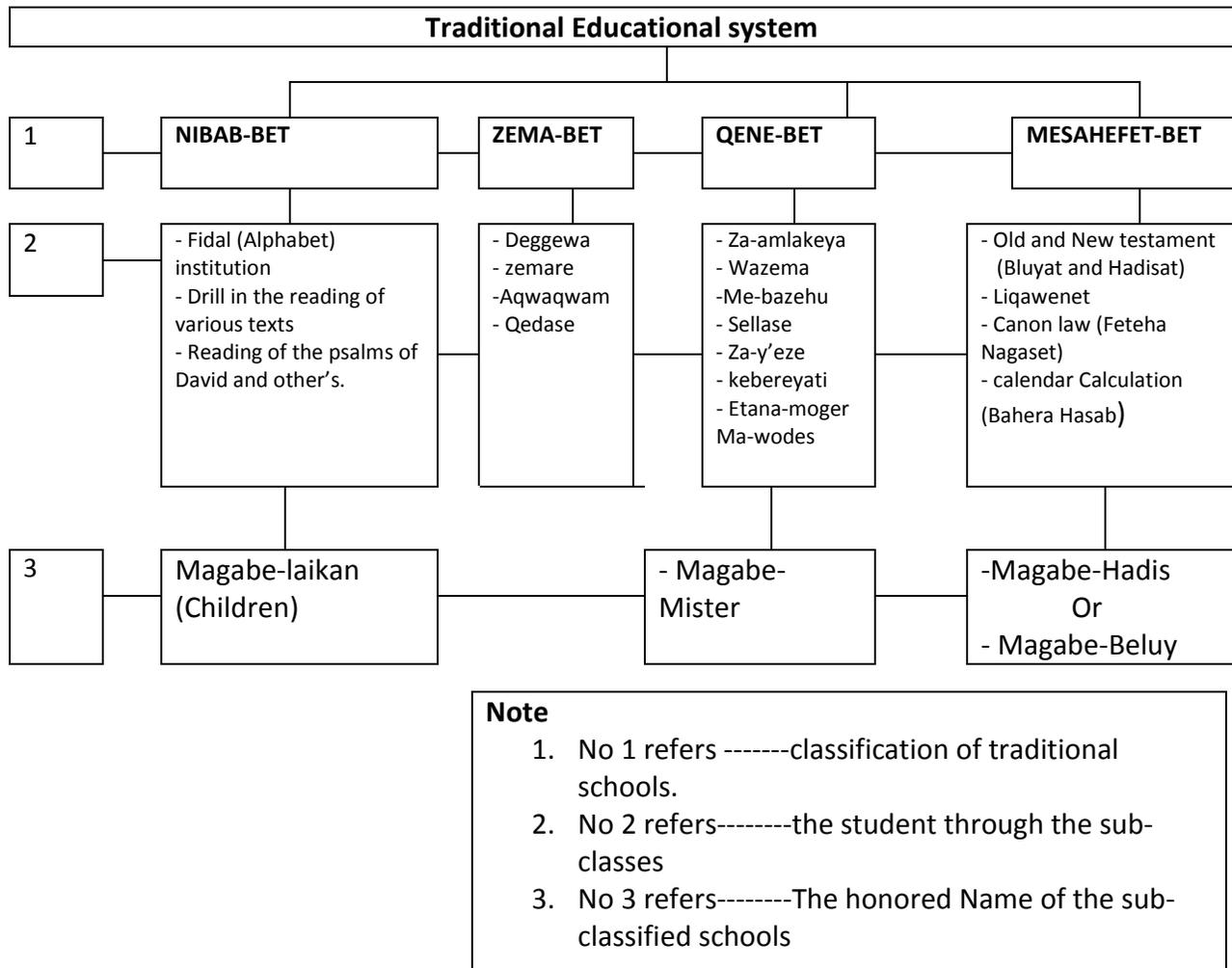


Table 1. An overview of the Ethiopian Church Education Categories (adapted from Sertse, 2006)

In the case of the Zema Bet, it is often said that Ethiopian church chant is borrowed from Egypt and Orthodox Christians of other countries. In refuting this, Assefa (2009), argues that the Ethiopian liturgy and religious customs are derived from the noticeable national cumulative cultural genius of the Ethiopian society.

2.5 Church Music Education in Ethiopia

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church music teaching comprises various parts and it is given at various levels. The origins of the textbooks and identity of individuals who have contributed to the development of Ethiopian Orthodox church music are also subjects of various researches.

In his article, *An African Writing System its History and Principle*, Bekerie (1997) observes that Yared was the first to study and develop the process of learning and performing Ethiopian Church music. Bekerie (1997) also believes that saint Yared was the one who codified the intonation of a sentence by marks which are read as sequences of musical pitches. In addition to this, according to Belai G (1992), "Saint Yared invented the musical notes: *Yazät, Därät, Rəkrək, Dəfat, Ch'rät, Qənat, Hidät, Qurət, Dərəś, and Anbər*, molded in the form of different shapes of lines: dashes, curves, and dots with their own particular meanings."

On the other hand, Taddese (1985), reports that the first book of Degua (text for church music) had been found without Mələkət³ at island monastery of T'ana Qirqos. This implies that Saint Yared could not be attributed as the author of the Melekets for church music. In line with

³The notation system used in Ethiopia's church manuscripts consists of a line of Gə'ez or Ethiopic syllabic characters combined with certain curved signs, dots and dashes, written above line of Ethiopic texts (i.e., Geez) of the liturgy, hymn and psalms. The letters used as musical symbols are called 'Mələkət,' while the symbols are known as 'Sərayä' (Siegebert et al,2003).

this argument, Shelemay, peter and Ingrid (1993) stated that although oral traditions credited Yared with creating at least some of the Melekets and a few written sources do mention music writing as one of his contributions, they have found no Meleket in any manuscript dating before the sixteenth-century.

In what seems to be a slight variation from such arguments, Lisane Worq (1997) argues that there are two melekets that were originally created by Yared and two other scholars of the 16th c added eight more; making the whole melekets of church music ten. He also acknowledges that King Gelawədwos (1540-59) has contributed to systemize and escalate the representation capacity of the sign in codifying pitches over the psalms of “Dəgg^wa by ordering two clerics of his court.

Lisane worq’s (1997) asserts, “Saint Yared’s notational systems were simply memorized, chanted and passed down orally and never graphically represented.”, he goes on saying,

...following the massive destruction carried out by Falasha queen Judith in 10th century, as the result of the period of the second destruction caused by the ottoman-backed jihad of Ahmed Gragh (Ahmed the left handed) in 1515-1532, churches had been destroyed, thereby Emperor Gelawədwos (1540-59) had rebuilt those ancient destroyed churches, among the rebuilt churches; the churches of Tedbabe Mariam in Wollo had been a prominent place that Gelawdwos had assembled 318 Priests, Deacons and Master cantors. Among these were two Axumite Masters of Yared’s educational systems: Memher Gera and Raguel. These two ‘Memeheran’ [teachers] furnished eight new musical notations to Yared’s previous two, making his notational system to be ten signs in all (xviii).

Although there are various assertions about the origins and development of church music education system, it is obvious that some of the texts, instruments and rituals of the church music (Zema) have got foreign origins. However, many of these materials were adapted and

blended with the Ethiopian sources so that the output represents the unique features of Ethiopian church music. It is based on such texts and rituals that the Zema accrediting schools train their students.

Chapter Three: Results and Discussions

The Zema accrediting schools train and accredit students in Dəgua, Akuakuam and Zəmmare-Mäwaśə'ət. Some of these subject matters are offered in various schools, although many of the schools have faded away through time. Specifically, Bethlehem accredits students on Dəggua which also includes revisions of Şomä Dəggua and Mə'əraf. Baeta Church in Gondar city gives Gondar Aquaquam as a specialized field of study. Zur Aba is the only monastery that gives trainings to accredit students in Zəmmare-Mäwaśə'ət. A student has to spend one and half years at Zur-Aba to graduate in Zəmmare-Mäwaśə'ət. Similarly, students at Gondar Bä'ata shall be trained for 2 years to graduate in Aquwaquam; while those enrolled in Bethlehem have to spend 2 and half years to graduate in Dəggua.

3.1 Merits that Made the Zema Schools Accrediting Ones

There are reasons for church schools' to be the Zema accrediting ones. Since many of the informants resort to mythology in reasoning out the historical foundations for the establishment of the schools, it is very hard to verify the truthfulness of some of their narratives. However, considering the fact that the location of all of the schools is in Gondar that served as the political center of the country for many centuries, it might be possible that the schools were favored by the Emperors and the nobility. In addition, the reputation of teachers draws flocks of students to the church schools and this might have contributed to the acceptance of these churches as accrediting schools of Zema. However, based on the repeatedly given explanations of the teacher informants, there are two justifications for the churches to become accrediting schools of Zema: historical reasons and the reputations of the founders of Bethlehem, Zur Aba and Gondar Bä'ata churches.

Bethlehem

According to the teacher in Bethlehem Zema school, Yätəbarek Kassayä,” the former name of Bethlehem was Abägätäm and the change in the name is linked with a church story that narrates the coming of the Arch of the Covenant to Ethiopia and he continues,

The Jews who accompanied king Minlik I (the son of Queen Sheba and King Solomon) in his journey to Ethiopia have travelled not only with the king but also the Arch of the covenant which was under the possession of King Solomon. The travelers had to pass through Gojam and Gondar before they reach at their destination- Axum, the capital city at that time. It was the Jews who were accompanying the king that renamed some of the areas that they have passed through and one of them was Abägätäm, which was renamed as Bethlehem. Similarly, there are many areas that designate place names of Palestine and modern day Israel in Gondar and some of them are Däbärätabor, Ephrata, Golgotha and Gaza. (Yätəbarek Kassayä).

However, another informant, Haimanot Dibekulu, believed the school became an accrediting one because of its success in managing to stay intact for centuries and preserve valuable church goods, despite various destructive attempts made by Yodit Gudite, Ahmed Gragn and the more recent raids of Därebush troops.⁴ Accordingly, he says,

The church having heard Gəraghn's success in destroying various Monasteries and Churches including the well-known Debre Libanos Monastery, a devoted Christian named Ləsanä Hafərät kept away the Dəggua (the major chanting book of the church) in a cave at Bethlehem. The man's consistency in keeping a watchful eye over the cave where the book was hidden away got the cave its name- Aəysäläch.⁵

⁴ . It is 'Dervish' though in the vernaculars it is pronounced differently. Dervish are Sudanese Islam jihadists who raid Gondar and destroyed 44 churches due to their resentment against the then Emperor, Yohannes IV, for his support of British allied Egyptian troops that were endangered in the Sudan by giving them a way-out across the Ethiopian border (Ghelawdewos, 2006).

⁵ . It literally means 'the devout who doesn't give up' in Amharic.

There were many schools that train and help students to specialize in the Dəggua. However, the most active one is Bethlehem accrediting school and many others had ceased to exist while some are resurrecting. Each of these Dəggua accrediting schools has developed its own style of teaching and adds a distinct flavor in vocalizing the church music notes; though the teaching material and the course contents are similar across all the schools.

Among the well-known schools of Dəgua that have got their own Dəgua Styles, the Täguläte which belongs to Shäwa and wänchäre of Gojam (Adetdistrict) have ceased to exist with their distinctive styles. Currently, Bethlehem of Bägəmədər (now South Gondar), Achabər of Däbrämarəqos and Qome of Fasilädäs Dəgua accrediting schools are in service; though, compared to Bethlehem the latter two are less influential.

Zur Aba

Zur Aba is a monastery where one type of Zema (i.e., ZemareMewasit) is taught. The head of the church, Fenta Afework, describes the historical foundation of the church:

One of the nine saints, Abunä Arägawi, who had established the Debredamo monastery in Tigray, came to Gojam to visit Lake Tana together with the well-known Saint Yared. During their visit, Angell Uriel ordered them to go to Bägəmədər and build a church there. However, they couldn't precisely locate the area; though they were wandering giving their back to the actual place that they were looking for. After the Angel, Uriel, saw how confused and worried the two people were, he told them to turn back their faces and head to East where the place is located.⁶

The only accrediting school of Zəmmare-Mäwasə'ət is Zur Aba Monastery. The subject 'Zəmmare-Mäwasə'ət' is a combination of two concepts. The term 'zemare' stands for chant

⁶ . People call the area ZurAmba, though the church story calls it Zur Aba which contextually means 'Turn around Aba.' Aba stands for 'a spiritual father and in this story it refers to the two founding fathers of the church according to this story.

that is performed during the church's rituals of the Eucharist. Whereas, 'Mäwäsə'ət' refers to chanting dedicated to various church and societal ceremonies' such as, a musical expression that is performed to express grief at times of deaths.

Gondär Bä'ata

Gondar Baeta teaches students who want to specialize in Aquaquam. According to a teacher at the school, Kəbur Tilahun,

It is difficult to assert when exactly 'Aquaquam' as a field of study started to be given as one of the specialization areas of Zema accrediting schools. However, it was the well-known hermit, Esrodos, after fleeing away from Gərag'n's persecution in Ankobär Shewa and took refuge in Ṭana Qirqos monastery of Gojjam, who had started teaching Aquaquam there. Then, during Emperor Adəiam Sgädəyəs'u's reign, Esrodos moved to Gondar and stationed at Ačänabər Mountain to teach Aquaquam. But, it was Dimeṭəros of Saint Rafael Church of Gondar who started to teach Aquaquam in an organized manner.

There are only two Aquaquam accrediting schools. The first and the earlier one is found in Semen Gondar and it is known as 'Gondar Aquaquam' accrediting school. The second is also found in Godar at the church of Jesus Christ at Däbərtäbor, and it is known as 'TäkäleAkuakuam' which is named after the son and one of the disciples of its founder, Aleqa Gebrehana.

Täkäle Akuakuam is an improvised version of the earlier Aquaquam style which is given at Gondar Baeta. It was the famous AläqaGäbrähana who introduced this new version of Aquaquam, who had improvised on the style of body movement together with the way musical instruments (a sistrum, Käbäro and Mäquamia) are rhythmically played during chanting. Täkäle

is the son of Aläqa Gäbrähana and the style of Aquaquam is named after him because he had been credited to make sure that the style continues after his father's death.

Täkäle Akuakuam school, according to a teacher of the style, Märi'geta Märasha,"is declining its influence compared to the Gondar Aquaquam style for two reasons,

First, it has got no teaching materials like the Gondar Aquaquam school. Although there is a teaching material written by one of the former student of Täkäle Aquaquam School, it does not represent Täkäle's style since his work is a blend of the Aquaquam styles of the two accrediting schools. The second reason for the declining number of students in this school is that it takes five years to graduate in Täkäle Aquaquam style while it only takes two years in the Gondar Aquaquam style. Now [by the time the interview was conducted] the school has got only five students.

There were no students at Täkäle Aquaquam School during my field trips to gather data and I have limited myself to study the Gondar Aquaquam style at Bä'eta Church. The Bä'eta school is further divided into two branches: *Lay Bet* and *Tach Bet*. The Lay bet (which sometimes is referred to as Fano), has got only few students; since the graduates of the school can only work in their specialization in 4 churches of Gondar that recognize such a style. However, the Aquaquam style of Tach Bet is a more active one; since graduates of this accrediting school have got the opportunity to perform in most of the churches in Ethiopia. It is the Tach Bet of Gondar Aquaquam style that this study focuses to get a good number of informants.

3.2 Objectives of the Zema Accrediting Schools

The major objective of the Zema accrediting schools is to make sure that students are well acquainted with the church's music teachings and techniques. To achieve this end, what teachers in the schools do is first to examine to what extent the newly enrolled students are acquainted with the techniques and styles of church music based on what they have acquired in

the lower level church music schoolings. The competencies of newly admitted students in their Zema skills may vary depending on the teaching styles and competencies of their teachers at various lower level Zema schoolings.

At the Accrediting Zema Schools, the students' competency is compared with the competencies of expected level of church musicians to examine what remains to be taught. After this, teachers train students till their students' competencies reached at an acceptable level; which usually is what is deemed to be the 'original' brand of the church's music. Students can only graduate and be licensed to be church music teachers when their competencies are comparable or equal to the teachers of accrediting schools.

The purpose of Zema accrediting schools, as many people assume, is not exam oriented. It rather focuses on enabling newly accepted students to reach at the peak of their competencies through rigorous trainings which might take one to two years to complete on average. However, what has to be stressed here is that a student in the Zema accrediting schools will not learn anything new that is different from lower level Zema education. Thus, accrediting schools are where students refine their knowledge and specialize on one of the branches of Zema education to get certificates of recognition from the accrediting school teachers.

Once a student in the Zema schools is accredited, he can have at least four options in the market. First, he can be a teacher of Dəggəwa, Aquwaquam or Zəmmare-Mäwāsə'ət in various lower level schools of Zema Bets or at one of the Zema accrediting schools; such as, Bethlehem, Gondar Baeta Church and Zur-Aba. However, being a teacher in the accrediting schools is once in a life time opportunity a student may get; since the church usually appoints only one teacher

per school. Once appointed, the teacher of Zema School will assume the position for life unless he is transferred to other areas due to promotion or leaves it for some other reasons.

Second, a student, though it is of his own freewill, is expected to conduct independent researches or participate in research undertakings concerning Zema (church Music). Third, a student can open his own private Zema school and prepare students so that they can easily be acquainted with what they are going to face in accrediting schools. Fourth, as many do, a newly graduated student will continue to serve the church by assuming various roles which he usually gets up on his request.

3.3 Course Procedures in Zema Schools

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church music schools teach various courses at different levels. The courses include five categories of chants (*Aməsətu Şəwatawä Zemawoch*) and Aquwaquam. The courses are given both in the lower and advanced levels of church music schools. At the advanced level, specialized trainings focusing either on one or two of the five categories of chants in the church will be given. A student who wants to specialize in one of these categories may or may not be required to take prerequisite courses depending on the field of specialization he chooses to study. However, a student is required to learn Qəne before he joins the accrediting schools so that knowledge in such a subject would make his effort to learn easier.

3.3.1 Subjects Covered in Zema Schools

The five categories of chants in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Music curriculum are ŞomäDəggəwa, Yəzəwätər-Mə'əraf, Dəggəwa, Zəmmare (which usually are called *Aməsətu Şəwatawä Zemawoch*) and each of these categories under the Zema School has got text books

and the courses are given at different levels of schools. Among the five categories of chants, *Ṣomä-Dəggəwa* and *Mə'əraf* are the basics for all the other teachings in the Zema schools.

Ṣomä-Dəggəwa

It is a prayer and chanting during fasting seasons; such as, *Abəy Ṣome*, *Hudade* etc. *Ṣomä-Dəggəwa* is prepared based on a section of *Degua* which is called '*Asätäməhəro*.' The '*Ṣomä-Dəggəwa*' book has got various parts partitioned according to chants sung at specific days. The day time text (*Ṣomä-Dəggəwa*) is predominantly of *Mäzəmurä-Dawit* (Psalm of David) together with some excerpts from books of the 15 prophets and five Songs of Solomon.

Mə'əraf⁷

Mə'əraf is a book which is known as '*Yäkal-Təmähərt*;' which means students are expected to memorize the text word by word. The text is prepared based on excerpts of the Psalm of David that focuses on prayer and thanksgiving.

Dəggəwa

It is the liturgical antiphonal book of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church which contains the hymens and troparions for the divine office. Unlike *Ṣomä-Dəggəwa* which is performed for fasting seasons, *Dəggəwa* focuses on hymens that are performed on various ceremonies as assigned to various Saints days that are arranged in the Ethiopian calendar order according to the Church's

⁷The major parts of the "school chants" of *Mə'əraf* are as follows: *Mästəgabə* (for chanting psalm versicles on the various days of the week); *Arba'ət* (for chanting selected psalms); *Aryam*, is hallelujah-chants (*Haletat*) *Säläst*; and the two Praises of Mary: *Anqäšä bərhan* for Sunday and *Wəddase Maryam* for the days of the week, neither of which has psalms. The students of the church music begin with the "school chants" because they contain all of the nuances and signs of the melodies of church chants (Siegebert and et al.,2003:910)

creed. It can have various nomenclatures as ‘Mäṣəhetä-Təbäb’ (Mirror of Wisdom), ‘Mäzəgäb’ (treasure) and ‘Mə’əlad’ or ‘Mädəbäl’ (collection).

Zəmare

The root word of ‘Zəmare’ is ‘Zämärä’ which means ‘praise’ in Geez language. It is a church chant which was said to be composed by Saint Yared; while he was giving church service in Zur-Abä monastery. ‘Zəmare’ is a church service which is chanted as a part of Qədasse. The service has got five parts; Həbəsət, Dəməṣ, Mänəfäs, Misəṭər and Akotet. Among these, the church choir sings Həbəsət, Dəməṣ and Mänəfäs in Qəne-Mahəlet; while Misəṭər and Akotet are songs that have to be performed by a Priest performing Qədasse.

Mäwaśśə’ət

This Chant is usually performed at times of deaths and during celebration dates assigned to Saints, Church Martyrs’ and Angeles according to the creed of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Just like ‘Zəmare,’ the book of Mäwaśśə’ət is said to have been created/prepared by Saint Yared at Zur-Abä Monastery.

Aquaquam

Aquaquam is one of the basic tenets of Zema schoolings. It is a type of subject where a student is expected to blend the style of his body movement with what he sings while he plays the church music instrument during chanting. The music instruments are Ṣənaṣəl (Sistrum), Mäquamia and Kəbäro which are dominantly used in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. The text book for Aquaquam, Mädaläwo-Aləbab, was prepared only recently in 1992 E.C by Henok Woldärufael. According to one of the teacher informants in Gondar Bä’ata Aquaquam

Accrediting School, Kibur Tilahun, the title of this text book-Mädaläwo-Aləbab- can be literally translated as, “a book which magnifies what is near and draws near what is far afield.” The book was composed based on the extracted musical theme of Degua with modifications of rhythm and melody (zema).

Qəne

Aside from the five categories of chants and Aquaquam, a student at accrediting schools is required to learn or presumed to have learned Quene at lower level Zema schools. In learning Qəne, students are expected to know how words are constructed in the Geez language so that they can finally create poems.

3.3.2 levels of Church Music Schooling

The Orthodox Christian church music education recognizes five levels (See table 2 below). Among these, a student should pass either through all or some of the levels, depending on in what subject he is going to specialize in one of the accrediting schools.

Basically, the presumption about Zema Schools is that wherever there is a Zema teacher, there is a Zema school. For example, if a father is a teacher of Degua, he may teach his son the basics of Zema at home or the child can get Zema education from nearby church schools. This shows that the church seems to believe that wherever there is a teacher there is a school or in simple terms the teacher is the school.

If a student wants to know more about the subject, he has an option to go on far away from his home looking for individuals or church schools that can give him a higher level of education for Zema. Some students even look for such schools out of their own free will, believing that it

would be advantageous to study Zema in schools or churches that are far away from one's locality or home; since there is a chance to be less burdened with chores at home and concentrate more on the subject.

First Level Schooling For all Types of Church Education	First Level Schooling for Zema Education	Second Level Schooling for Zema Education	Third Level Schooling for Zema Education	Fourth Level Schooling for Zema Education	Fifth Level Zema Education (Accrediting Zema Schools)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quṭər, • Geez, • Wərədə- nəbab and • Qume-nəbab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Şomä Dəggəwa (The day session), • YäzäwätərMə'əraf (Night Session) 	Qəne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquaquam • ZəmmareMä waśə'ət 	Degua (Revising elementary chant music and start the day session lesson of Degewa and the night session YetsomMeraf)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bethlehem (Mə'əraf, Şomä Dəggəwa and Dəggəwa) • Zur Aba (ZəmmareMäwaśə'ət) • North GondarBaeta (Gondar Akuaquam)

Table 2. Levels of Zema (Orthodox Christian Church Music) Education.⁸

First Level Zema Schooling

In the first level of Zema schooling (see table 2 above), a student is required to take Zema courses that are given in the day and night sessions. During day time Şomä Dəggəwa is instructed, while 'Yäzäwätər-Mə'əraf' is given at night sessions. It may take two to three years for students to finish schooling of Zema at the first level depending of the competency of a student.

However, taking the Tegrays' and Gojam's schooling experiences in teaching Zema, the first level of Zema schooling and the second level (which is quene schooling) may switch their places. Accordingly, the Tigray experience shows us that a student, upon finishing the first level education for all church schoolings is advised to skip the first Zema schooling and be enrolled in

⁸ . This table is prepared to show Zema education in the church holistically based on the in-depth interviews I have made with the research participants and their proposed best procedures (though they did not pass through such steps) to go on in learning Zema at different levels.

Qəne school so that his capacity to interpret books and preach in congregations is boosted; which automatically make him ready to serve the church.

The Gojjam region's experience is the opposite of Tigray's. For the Gojjam's a student upon completion of the first stage of church education, he has to begin to study the first levels of Zema (Şomä Dəggəwa and Yäzäwätər-Mə'əraf) before he attends Qəne schooling. It is presumed that if he learns Qəne and automatically begins to give church services by interpreting books and preaching to the congregation, then his initiative to learn more, allured by adulations from the laity, may vanish.

Second Level Zema Schooling

At the second level of Zema schooling students are expected to attend Qəne lessons. Some students who do not have prior knowledge on the basic Zema skills (Yäzäwätər-Mə'əraf and Şomä Dəggəwa) may directly attend the Qəne Bet School like the Tigray's schools are generally doing which is discussed in the aforementioned paragraphs. But this is not acceptable in principle because to attend Qəne which has got its own Zema, a student is expected to have some knowledge on basic Zema skills.

As Hailäloul explains, "I was advantageous in quickly learning the subjects given in Qəne Bet because I was acquainted with primary level Zema courses, Yäzäwätər-Mə'əraf, and Şomä Dəggəwa." For him, the advantage of learning primary chants to understand Qəne lies at the former's ability to let students memorize frequently-used words in church schools through the help of music. Therefore, a student who learns basic Zema lessons at primary level is already familiar with the words he has to memorize in Qəne Bet and he can spend his time in

understanding the meanings behind each words and their beautiful construction once he joins Qāne (second level of Zema education). Those who do not pass through such a path would have to struggle in memorizing words at Quine schools than deeply delve into understanding meanings of words and constructing poems.

Some students learn Qāne while attending Dəggəwa lesson (i.e., level four) and some even attend Dəggəwa lessons skipping the Qāne ones. One of the informant students, Beza Dagneu, confirms that he had studied Qāne after he attended the Dəggəwa lessons. But, according to a teacher at Bethlehem, Fänəta Afāworq, it is advised that it would be better to learn Quine first to easily understand Dəggəwa lessons.

A student that enrolled in Qāne Bet with a prior basic knowledge of first level Zema, can choose his future career paths based on the types of schooling he has got in a further education. One of the options is to go to Qədase Bet and be a deacon, if he wishes not to be a teacher of Zema. Through time, while he is giving service to the church as a deacon, he will be promoted to priesthood.

Third Level Zema Schooling

A student can learn Akuakuam and Zəmmare-Māwaśə'ət at two levels: the third level and the fifth level (at accrediting schools). To attend lessons at this level; the previous two levels are indispensable prerequisites. Taking Aquaquam specifically into consideration, those students who have passed through such procedure would complete the third level of Zema schooling within a year.

If, however, a student directly joins the third level without attending the first and second levels of Zema schooling, then it might take him four to five years to complete the lessons of Aquaquam that are given at the third level (a student informant, Hailelul). Confirming Hailelul's claim, another student, ZälalämTägabu, said that just because he has skipped the first level Zema schooling and began directly attending the third one it took him five years to finish learning the lessons at the third level.

Fourth Level of Zema Schooling

At this level, students are expected to revise the first level schooling of Zema, to learn Dəggəwa and Yäşom mə'əraf. Revision of the first level Zema schooling lessons is found important presuming that because of his four up to five years of lessons of the second and third levels of Zema Education (Qene, Zema Mewasit and Akuakuam), he often forgets what he had been taught at the first level of Zema lesson. Without such a revision, it would be hard for the student to finish learning the fourth level Zema education.

Therefore, at the fourth level students are advised to revise the first level Zema courses: Şomä Dəggəwa and Yäzäwätär-Mə'əraf. Otherwise, a student who does not revise such courses has to spend a lot of time studying both the fourth level subject-Dəggəwa and the primary ones (Şomä Dəggəwa and Yäzäwätär-Mə'əraf) side by side.

Fifth Level of Zema Schooling

Zema education at the fifth level (at Accrediting schools) is the highest level where students choose a specific field of Zema study and specialize and be accredited on it. Here, students choose any of the three subjects: Dəggəwa, Zəmmare-Mäwaś'ət and Aquaquam. Bethlehem in

south Gondar accredits students on Dəggua, Bä'ata Church in city of Gondar gives Gondar Aquaquam as a specialized field of study. Zur Aba is the only monastery that gives trainings to accredit in Zəmmare-Mäwaśə'ət.

A student, to be admitted in all of the accrediting schools, had to serve the Church as a deacon, learn the basic Zema skills (Yäzäwätər-Mə'əraf, and Şomä Dəggəwa), both in the second level (Qəne), and third level Zema schooling Aquaquam, and Zəmmare-Mäwaśə'ət (see table 2 above).

Bethlehem

Some students who did not pass through a step as discussed in the aforementioned paragraph, will face difficulties in Betlhem. According to a teacher informant, Yətəbaräk Kassayä, there are some students at Betlhem who do not have any Qəne schooling at all. For Yətəbaräk Kassayä, such students will pay dearly because they may have to spend five years to graduate which normally takes two and a half years to be accredited.

Such irregularities in the course background of students that are experienced by the Bethlehem Zema accrediting school have happened in Aquakuam and Zəmmare-Mäwaśə'ət accrediting schools too. For the head of Education and training Office of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Ǝrəsä Däbər Mähari, the schools are now admitting such students, which was not acceptable in previous times, because getting a qualified student these days is very hard since students may lack the commitment to attend Church Education for various reasons.

Gondar-Baeta Church

For One of the student informants, Alamu Samuel, “a student who does not have a prior training in Degua can acquire the knowledge just by attending the church’s ceremonies in accordance with the lectures drawn from MahəbäräQäläm”⁹ (a kind of seminar where students and any other interested person attend to listen to lectures given by various church scholars on various topics including excerpts from Degua). Thus, if a student attends many of these lectures through his stay in the accrediting school, then he can gradually learn what Dəggəwa is all about. He called this gradual mode of gathering of knowledge “Bəwəčəč.” However, in refuting the students claim, a teacher at Bethlehem, YətəbarəkKassayä, says that ‘Bəwəčəči’ is not a new concept and it has been practiced in the school for longtime but it is only allowed for students who quit their Degua education at some level in previous schools. It is generally advised that a student of Akuakuam should have some level of lesson in Degua.

Although he does not believe that Degua is a mandatory lesson to join the Gondar Akuakuam accrediting school, a teacher at the school, Kibur, believes that it is advisable if a student also learns Dəggəwa which is given at the fourth level before he decides to join in the Aquaquam accrediting school.

Zur Aba

Unlike the other accrediting schools, the requirement to specialize in Zəmmare-Məwaśə’ət is simple. Here, what a student is required to do is to join the accrediting school is just to complete the first level Zema lessons Şomä Dəggəwa and Yəzəwätər-Mə’əraf.

⁹The teacher explained to his student the meaning of the next holyday which should be the theme for their verses and prescribed the necessary form and melody.

3.4 Strengths and Weaknesses of Zema Accrediting Schools

Entrance Exam (Peer Examination)

Accrediting schools register the new comers in three rounds: Nehase 16-30, Ginbot 1-15 and Tahisas 20-30 E.C.¹⁰ What is interesting in the admission process is that senior students give entrance exams to the newcomers. Accordingly, five examiners are selected based on their birth places: from Gojam, Gondar, Tigray, Wollo and Gaint.

The chanting style and accent of individuals in performing Zema varies from one region to the other, though the text book is similar. Hence, it is presumed that examiners would easily spot the flaws in a student's performance specially the ones who came from regions that are the very origins of the examiners too. In addition to spotting flaws, examiners are also expected to defend the chanting styles of their respective regions so that the other examiners will not judge the performance of examinees only based on the experience they have got from previous schools in their respective regions.

At the time of examinations, all of these senior students jointly ask questions to an aspiring student. The exam question is oral-based and usually a new comer at Bethlehem will be asked to answer 6 questions from Degua and 4 questions on Meraf. At Gondar Akuakuam 10 questions will be drawn from the book, Mädaläwo-Aləbab. A student who scores 6 and above will be admitted to these Zema schools. If a student is applying to Zemare Mewasit school (Zur Aba), then he will be asked 4 questions on Zemare and 4 others on Mewasit. If He scores more than 50%, then he is qualified to be admitted.

¹⁰ Here the dates are written in the Ethiopian Calendar and the months are August, May and December respectively in G.C.

Variation

Though the very purpose of the Zema accrediting schools is to make sure that the ‘original’ church music is uniformly performed by all the churches and graduates in Ethiopia, some new styles of Zema may lurk in and be considered as variations of the ‘original’ style. A typical example is the case of “Zema Bet of Abara,” which was coined after its founder Yänta Abära. As a senior Dəggwa teacher at Bethlehem narrates,

Before he joined Bethlehem, Yanta Abera had been teaching Qəddase and Zəmmare Mäwasa’ət at various schools. He came to Bethlehem to be accredited after trained in the Degua. However, due to his long years of teaching of Qudasse, he could not depart his singing and intonation of style in Qudasee from that of Degua. Eventually, he formed a new type of Zema which actually is a blend of the Zema styles of Qudasse, Zemare Mewasit and Degua.

Though some of such variations in the ‘original’ zema exist in Zema church schools, they are not easily accepted and encouraged at all. To the teacher at Betlhem, Ytebarek Kasaye, if such variations are allowed randomly, the taste of the original Zema style will vanish.

Assisting ‘Kotres’

One of the exemplary practices in the schools is that senior students academically support junior students who are usually known as “Kotres.” In return, the ‘kotre’ is expected to assist the senior students in various household chores. To cite some, kotres collect firewood, fetch water from nearby rivers, and fetch foodstuffs they gather by begging from households around the churches’ locality. One of the Kotres at Bethlehem school, Leul, reaffirms such a practice; though he is not happy with his service in fetching water from a river which takes him 30 minutes of walking.

Graduation at One's Pace

A student enrolled in Bethlehem's zema school has to spend two and a half years to graduate. The time it takes to graduate in this Zema school is decided by a new directive issued by the central Orthodox Church office. However, a student, after attending two years in the school may apply for early graduation. Based on his request, his teacher will examine the student's competency giving him various oral-based tests and may let him graduate or decide to let the student stay in the school. To satisfy the demands of such active students, the church has schedules of graduation three times within a year so that those who ask for early graduation may graduate in either of these graduation dates.

Disabled Students

Nothing special has been done to assist a disabled student. One of the disabled students in Bethlehem, Hiruy Kibret, asserts that what he gets as a student from either the school or the teachers is similar with anybody else. In remembering an incident that led him to drop out of school for two years, Hiruy, says,

One day, I read an advertisement by the church to hire a teacher for its school who is also required to give church services; and one of the criterions listed in the notice reads, 'we want an individual who is not disabled.' It shocked me and made me question why I am staying in school. But, I have changed my mind after two years and returned back to school deliberating that I could at least be a teacher of Zema apart from Akuwakuam.

Akuakuam teaches the right way of body movement (which can be compared with dancing) while a church song is sung. The student in the aforementioned paragraph is unable to walk normally due to a birth defect on both of his legs.

Documentation

Generally, all of the accrediting schools studied under this research are poor in keeping recordings of profiles of their students. However, the Akuakuam accrediting school is better in documenting the profiles of its students. Based on my observation it is the teacher at this school who is currently keeping such records.

Although there were some attempts of documentations made by Bethlehem and Zur Aba accrediting schools, the practice could not last long. Even such documenting attempts were made by senior students in both of these schools.

3.5 Issues that Affect the Accrediting Schools

All of the problems that the schools are facing today, according to all of the teachers and student informants, are directly or indirectly related with financial problems which affect the admission rate of students. All of the teachers I have interviewed claimed that the number of students that the Zema Accrediting Schools admit showed a sharp decline for many consecutive years. Both of the teachers and students enumerate a number of reasons for this.

The teacher informant at Bethlehem said that the number of students in the Zema schools is declining at a very alarming rate. Mentioning Bethlehem as an example, he said,

The declining rate is very alarming. Previously, it was common to admit at least 200, 150 or 130 students within a year. But now it is dwindling to 80 and 70. There are various reasons for the declining number of students that we are witnessing today. One of the reasons is that those who have previously graduated from these schools did not get jobs according to their fields of studies. Many have gone back to farming. This is not a good news for prospective students; since it makes them reluctant to join the schools.

The second reason is the scarcity of the Degua (the main text book) in the market. According to Yetbark Kasaye,

The book was published by the church only two times: During the reign of Emperor Hailessilassie I and after the ascent of the existing government to power. However, the church is on the way to publish the book for the third time.

To make things worse, students have to look for the book from this scarce market and buy it before attending classes. This is an additional burden on many students who do not have the means to purchase the book easily. In supporting his teacher's claim, Muse Berihun, narrates, "In 1996 E.C [2006 G.C] the price of the text book was 95 birr and I had to depend on my relatives to purchase the Degua and I bought it travelling by foot to a market, which is very far from my home." Similarly, students in Gondar Akuakuam school have also claim that they have to buy the text book-Mädaläwo-Aläbab- which they could not easily afford to buy.

The third reason is related with the churches' official longest fasting season; which is called Arba Tsome (a 40 days fasting which ends at Easter.) Before the arrival of this fasting season, students are allowed to take a break. During the break, they are expected to collect money either from people who are willing to help them or by being hired as day laborers. Unlike the regular teaching and learning process, at this long fasting period, students are expected to stay at the church (and the school of course) and spend their time focusing on their education and performing rituals that are related with the fasting period. Some students may not get money at the right time before the end of the break and they might be forced to leave school, since they cannot afford to stay there during the Tsome Period; where less physical activity and too much of concentration on learning is required.

The fourth reason is that students have to prepare their own meals; which requires their time, money and actually their skills too. For example, preparing and baking *Injera*, which is the Ethiopian staple food, requires skills that students are usually not good at. To alleviate this problem, some students hire a local woman to bake injera and they jointly share the payment for her to the service rendered. However, not all students are capable of hiring women and they have to quit schooling unless they have the skill to prepare injera. One of the students at the school, Beza Dagenew, regrets his decision to stay at school. He says, “whenever I meet my friends who have dropped out of school, the first thing they mockingly ask me is ‘are you still there?’ I usually meet them when I go back to home at break time and many of them have become businesspersons.”

The fifth explanation given for the declining number of students is lack of adequate housing. Even if students want to learn in the Zema schools, they prefer to be admitted in other traditional church schools that can provide better housing. For example, those students who come from Shewa, after observing how poor the housing facility here is, they go back home to join newly opened boarding church schools of Debrelibanos, Addisalem (at the outskirts of Addis Ababa) and Baeta in Addis Ababa.

A close look at all of the above stated reasons reveals that financial problem is one of the foremost factor that contributed a lot to a diminished admission rate observed in the schools. Some institutions seem to have understood this problem and allocated funds to alleviate it as described below in detail.

Financial and Material Assistances

Recently, students as well as the schools are getting some help either in kind or money from some institutions. The Central Orthodox Church Office, Tabor and *Mahebere Qidusan* are some of these institutions.

According to one of the students in Bethlehem, Beza Dagnew and a student at Baeta, Hawaz Gebreegziabeher, the amount of money assigned to students varies based on the admitted number students. Thus, if the number of students increases, then the amount of money students will decrease. A student who gets 600 birr at a month may get 300 birr after three months when the church schools usually accept new students. Tabor, a German NGO, allocates 140 to 150 birr to each student which is payable once in three months. Though the amount varies from time to time, *Mahbere Qidusan* also allocates 200-300 birr per student quarterly.

Despite some of these financial assistance from the aforementioned institutions, students have to cover much of their living costs. However, the recent move by Mahbere Quidsan is very encouraging in its promise to solve or help the church's Zema accrediting schools' financial and other related problems. According to the Head of Quidsan Mekanat Development and Societal Services of Mahbere Quidsan, Ato Belachew Teshome, the Association has budgeted about 350 thousand birr that will be allocated to each school as of next year. The money is gathered from Ethiopian Diaspora living in Virginia and Chicago in the USA.

Besides the financial aid, *Mahebere Qidusan* also extends its help to the schools in constructing buildings and infrastructures. For example, it has built a classroom which can accommodate a large number students and a library in 2005 E.C (2013 G.C) at Bethlehem spending 700,000 birr.

The Association also constructed a building which comprises dormitories and classrooms at Gondar Baeta Church with a seven-million-birr budget. Despite some other plans of the Association, such as building houses for students at Betlehem, the poor qualities of paved roads made it difficult to finish projects on time (Belachew Teshome).

Accordingly, the Ethiopian Diaspora in Virginia allocates about 200 thousand birr and sponsored pocket allowances for a teacher and 71 students at Bethlehem. Similarly, Ethiopian Orthodox Christian Diasporas in Chicago have allocated about 70 thousand birr to assist a teacher and 30 students at Zur Aba; while those from Virginia again have allocated 280 thousand birr to cover the costs of one teacher and 55 students in Gondar Baeta. The financial assistance is a formal agreement among Church Schools and the US branch of the Association which will be renewable every two years.

Chapter Four: Conclusions and Recommendations

The major findings of the study are summarized and discussed in this chapter. Recommendations are also provided on basic issues that have to be addressed by stakeholders.

4.1 Conclusion

There are no clearly stated procedures that indicate what courses should be taken at lower levels of church education before a student joins in the accrediting schools. However, based on the narrations and experiences of both of the teachers and students of the Zema accrediting schools, the research elucidated that there are five levels of Zema schooling in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church education system.

It was observed that there was no documented evidence on why such schools became accrediting ones. However, based on information acquired from informants, it can be concluded that the success of some church schools in keeping valuable church materials, despite various wars and conflicts in the country that could destroy the documents in general is one of the reasons for the churches to be accrediting schools. The reputation of the founders of such schools (such as Yared, Abune Aregawi (one of the nine Saints as he is popularly known) and Dimetros could also be cited as a major influence in turning the schools to be higher institutions of the church. In addition, the fact that many of the accrediting schools and all of the schools that are selected for this research are found in Gondar shows that these schools were enjoying financial assistance from the Emperors of the Imperial era, since Gondar was the main seat of the nation for quite long period of time.

The Zema accrediting schools have very interesting practices that are taken as their major strengths. To cite some, active students can graduate at their own pace without waiting for the schedules of the church for graduation. However, some non-active students are also required to stay long until their teachers are satisfied with the competencies of the students. Such practice, however, seems to be curbed down in recent years by one of the church's recent decree which emphasizes on the necessity of allowing a student to stay on a fixed time for graduation. One of the exemplary practices in the Zema accrediting schools is that senior students are allowed to prepare entrance exam questions and participate in the process of selecting new entrants. These senior students are selected by taking places of their origins and the lower level Zema schools they had attended into consideration. One of the major reasons for the church schools to do this is to let students of various regions of the country to have an equal chance of admission.

Senior students, though it was the churches tradition for a long time, offer academic assistance for at least one of the junior students (kotres) among new entrants up until the student completes his study in the schools. Accordingly, he helps the senior students in household chores. In addition to this, although there is a little room for innovation in the schools, some pupil had been accepted for introducing their new style of Zema which has got some variation from the age-old or 'original' one.

Among others, poor accommodation, lack of text books in the market, aloofness to disabled students and having little or no documentation practice in the schools are cited as the major weaknesses of the accrediting schools. Lack of adequate financing and a very narrow employment opportunity for the schools' graduates are the major problems that the schools

are facing today. However, some institutions aside from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Central Office are helping the schools by allocating money according to the number of students and teachers of each schools. Although the material and financial assistance is good, many of the teachers and students claim that it could have been manageable if the money was given at a specific period of time pooled together from all assisting institutions.

4.2 Recommendation

The following recommendations are proposed based on the data collected and the discussion undertaken,

- The Church shall prepare a curriculum that clearly shows what a student is expected to learn before he decides to join the accrediting schools.
- Based on the amount of money both of the students and teachers at the accrediting schools are getting from other institutions per person, it is recommended that the Church can meaningfully resort the fund into building accommodation services (as cafeterias and dormitories) to students so that the coming generation of students won't suffer the same challenges that the existing ones are facing.
- Many Zema accrediting schools had vanished together with their unique styles of Zema before they were preserved and the same process, based on data gathered for this study, is happening to Tekle Akuakuam school which does not have its own textbook and where only few students are willing to join right now; and the church can avert the destruction through preservation before it is too late.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

1. What are the major strengths and weaknesses of Zema accrediting schools?
2. What are the issues that affect zema accrediting schools?
3. What have the zema accrediting schools done to contain the problems they face?
4. What is the procedure of music training in the Zema accrediting Schools?
5. What does the church music curriculum of Zema Bet Accrediting Schools constitute?
6. What are the criteria to be a teacher in the Zema Bet accrediting schools?
7. How are students admitted to Zema Bet accrediting schools?
8. What qualities made the Zema schools accrediting ones?
9. What are the subjects taught in the zema accrediting schools?
10. What are the objectives of the Zema accrediting Schools?
11. What are the levels of church music schooling?

Appendix B

List of Informants

N.o	Name	JOB
1	(Märəgeta Gərum, 2008/ 05/ 26	a senior Zema Teacher at Bahər'dar Cathedral Saint George, Interviewed at Bahər'dar; cathedral of Saint George church.
2	Kəbur T'əlahun, 2008/ 05/28	Director, teacher at south Gondar City Bä'ata Marəyam), interviewed at Gondar Bä'ata Marəyam
3	(Yətəbarək Kassayä, 2008/05/30	Liqä Məhurən Yətəbarək Kassayä. Director, teacher at Bethlehem, interviewed at Bethlehem.
4	Fänəta Afəwərəq, 2008/ 06/2	Director, Teacher at Zuraba interviewed at Zuraba.
5	Märəsha Mäbəratu 2008/06/3	Director, Teacher at Däbərätabor Eyäsus (Accrediting School for Täkälle Aq ^w aq ^w am) interviewed at Däbərätabor
6	(Fərezär, 2008-06- 3	One of the top management at South Gondar association of Mahəbärä Qədusan (youth association of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in south Gondar).
7	Lə'oul, 2008/05/29	Among these students who is called 'qot'äre' taking primary lessons from these senior students, assign with a task of helping the senior; Interviewed at Bethlehem
8	Bälättu Damətte, 2008/05/29	Servant hired by the students themselves to bake Enjera at Bethlehem; Interviewed at Bethlehem.
9	Erə'əsä Däbər Mähari 2008/07/20	The head of Education and training Office of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church,

10	Mäməhər Häimanot Dibäkulu 2008/07/18	Memher on Achaber and Qome style of Dəggəwa.
11	Danə'al Säyofämichael 2008/07/17	Director to EOTC broadcast Agency, teacher at HTTC.
12	Wäldägebreäl 2009/03/10	A senior Aquaquam teacher.
13	Bälachäw Täshomä 2009/03/18	Head of Quidsan Mekanat Development and Societal Services of Mahbere Quidsan,
14	Bäträhimanot 2009/03/20	Recently Graduated student of Bethlehem

Students of Bethlehem (Accrediting School for Dəgg^wa)

N.o	Name	Particular location of the schools	Subjects	Teachers' Name	Number of Study Year (s) in Ethiopian colander	the entire year (s)	Years of Dropout and Reasons
1	Afewerk Ngus (Tigray)	Maichew	Diakon	Memhr Mekonen	89-93	19	
		Mehoni	Qene	Memhr Teklehaymanot	94-96		
		Hwane	Zema	Memhir Yared	96-98		
		Shicomajo	Aquaquam	Yenta Yohans	98-2000		
		Dengolat	Dgua	Memhir Zeradawit	2002-2006		
		Betlehem	Dgua		2007-of now		
2	Beza Dagnaw (South Gonder)	South Gonder	Diakon	Mergeta Tadese	90-92	16	1993-94 serving church
		Gayint	Tsome Dgua	Memhir Fiseha	94-95		
		Debre Tabor	Dgua		96-98		
		Meket	Aquaquam	Memhr Samuel Gerawerk	98-2000		
		Raya Kobo		Yenta Haregeweyin	2001-2002		
		Bahirdar	Kine	Yenta Mengistu	2002-2004		
		Debretabor	Zema	Yenta Kinfe Nekiatileb	2004-2006		

		Bethlehem	Digua		2007- of now		
3	Muse Berihun (Gojam)	Bifeta Gebreal	Diakon	Mergeta Nekiatileb (Tera Debtera)	90-91	18 years	
				His own Father	91-93		
			Zema	Mergeta Hawaz Amare	93-95		
			Qine	Yenta Tewbo Mihret	95-98		
			Aquaquam	Yenta tibebu	98-2002		
			Dgua	Mergeta Grum	2002-2007		
		Bethlehem	Dgua		2007-of now		
4	Hiruy Kibret (welo)	Dessie	Diakon	Mergeta Ayele (Tera Debtera)	89-91	16 years	2005-2006 Economical problems
			Ajibar Wereda	Qine	Yenta Menberu		
		Dessie	Zema	Yenta Birhanu Alemu	94-97		
			Digua				
			Aquaquam	Yenta Askal	97-2000		
			Zimare Mewaseat	Yenta Muse	2001-2002		
			Revise Digua		2002-2004		
		Bethlehem			2007-of now		

Students of Gondar Bä'ata Miriam Cathedral (Accrediting school for Gondar Aquaquam)

N.o	Name	Particular location of the schools	Sub.	Number of Study Year (s) in Ethiopian colander	Years of Dropout and Reasons
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1	Hawaz Gebre Egziabher (Tigray Debre Damo)	Maeteb Qebele	Deakon	Qesis Gebre kirstos	1990-91		1993-2000
		Debre Damo	Qene		1991-93		
		Gorenko	Zema		2000-2001		
		Chila	Aqwaqwam		2002-2006		
		Gonder	Aqwaqwam		2007-of now		
2	Abyu Bere (Gojam)	Sekela	Deakon	Memher Waka	1996-97		
			Zema	Memher Birhanu	1997-99		
		Dangila	Qene		1999-2001		
		Durbete	Aqwaqwam	Memher Lisane werqe	2002-2004		
		Degela Gibi	Zemare Mewaseat	Memher Welde Gebreal	2004-2005		
		Bahirdar	Soma Deggwa	Memher Grum	2005-2006		
		Jigamo (Finote selam)	Revising Aqwaqwam	Memher Sahle	2006-2007		

		Gonder Baeta Maryam	Aqwaqwam		2007-of now		
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Students of Gondar Bä'ata Miriam Cathedral (Accrediting School for Gondar Aquaquam)

Alemu Samuel (wello)	Weggel Ttena	Zema and Deakon	Memher Alemu	1982-83	1997-98 (Church service)
			Memher Sisay		
	Wggel Ttena	Kal Timehert and soma Deggwa	Yeneta Demamu	1984-86	1998-2000 (Church service at Infranz parallel with accomplishing secular education 1-6 Grade)
	Azezo	Aqwaqwam	Memher Fkremaryam	1987-90	2001-2003
	Makssegnit	Rvising Aqwaqwam	Memhir loul	1991-92	(church service at Maksegnit Sendeba Eyesus, parallel with secular education 7-9 Grade.)
	Mkssegnit	Zemare Me was eat	Memhir Merhatsdeq	1992-93	
	G		lemhe	199	

		u r a m b a	e	r Hawaz	3-95		
		Q o l a d i b a (t s e d a)	Qed ase	Loul	199 5-96		2004- 2005 (quit the secular educatio n because of transport ation)
		Q o l a d i b a	Qed ase	Memhe r Laekem aryam	199 6-97		
		G o n d e r (A b y e a g z i K i d a n e m	Revi sing Aqw aqw am	Memhe r Fresebe hat	200 5- 200 7		

		i h r e t)					
		G o n d e r	Aq w a q w a m			200 7-of now	
	Lebsewer q Tesfay (South Gonder)	N e f a s M e w c h a	Dea kon	Mem he r y i h e y i s		199 6-98	
		N e f a s M e w c h a	Som a Deg gwa	Mem he r T s e g a y		199 8- 200 1	
		W a d l a D e l a n t a (w e	Qen e	Mem he r b e r e h m		200 2- 200 3	

		Il o)					
		W a r k a y e M a r e y a m	Aqw aqw am	Memhe r Gebrem esqel	200 4- 200 6		
		B a h e r d a r		Memeh er Nahuse nay	200 6 (Sep tem ber- May)		
		A z e z o		Memeh er Aeamer o	200 6 May - 200 7 Sept emb er)		
		G o n d e r	Accr am		200 7 Sept emb er- of now		

Students of Zur-aba (Accrediting School for Zəmmare, Mäwasä'ət)

	Name	Particular location of the schools	Subjects	Teachers' Name	Number of Study Year (s) in Ethiopian calendar	the entire year to accomplish (s)	Years of Dropout and Reasons
	Bä ṣə' a Am əb aw	Mehony	Feakon	Aba Berhanu	1996-98	7 y e a r s	1998-2000 at church service
		Mekelle	Qene	Yenta Gebre Tekle	2001-2002		
		Maychew	Zema		2002-2003		
		Sekotta	Aqwaqwanam	Yenta Dawit	2003-2005		
		Mekelle	Zemarete	Yenta Zera Dawit	2006-july 2006		2007-2008 economic al pro

			tso				ble m
		Zu r Ab a			Febru ary 2008- of now		
	Eṣu b Ad dis	Lal ib ela	Dea kon	Megab i Tsge	1969- 73	1 9 y e a r s	198 7- 200 6 ser vin g chu rch
		Na ku te Le ab	So ma Deg gw a	Yenta Haile marya m	1973- 75		
		Ku lm es k	Qe ne	Aleqa Stota	1975- 78		
		Go nd ar Fo ge ra	Aq wa qw wa m (Go nda r)		1979- 83		
		M ak et	Ze ma re Te wat so		1984- 86		
		Zu r Ab a	Ze ma re Me was et		2007- of now		
	Zel ala em Ttig abu		Dea kon	Memh er Meser et	1991- 92	1 1	199 6- 99 (Dif fer
				Memh	1992-		

				er Yeman e Birhan	93		ent rea son s)
		Go ja m	Qe ne	Memh er,Me ngstu Zelale m	1993- 95		(wit hou t acc om plis h ze ma cou rse s)
		Ba hir da r	Aqe wa qw am	Memh er Qetsal a Mengis tu	2000- 2004		
			Ze ma re. M		2004- 2005		200 5- 200 7 (rev isin g Ze ma re me was eat for the ent ran ce exa m at Zur Aba)
		Zu r Aba a	Ze ma re. M		2007- of now		

Students of Zur-aba (Accrediting School for Zəmmare, Mäwašä'ət)

	Me	Go	Qo	mArge	1991-	1	
--	----	----	----	-------	-------	----------	--

	rge ta Hail elo ul Asr e	ja m Qu ari t	me Ze ma	ta Ale mn eh	94	3	
		Jer so	Qe ne	Mem her Ne bye	1994- 95		
		M ott a		Mereg eta Kinetti beeb	1995- 96		
		Ch eg od e		Yenta yared	1996- 97		200 1- 200 2
		Ba hir da r	Tek le Aq wa qw qm	Yenta Mekiru	1998- 99		(Ec ono mic al pro ble m)
		De br e M ar ko s		Merge ta Fresib hat	1999- 2000		
			Ast ew ats o Ze ma re		2000- Dece mber 2000		200 3- 200 4 (sec ular edu cati on gra de 5- 8)
		Bu re	Ze ma re. M	Merge ta Qeda	2003- 2004		
		Zu r Ab a	Ze ma re. M		2008- of now		

Appendix C

Approximate Years of Graduation

Number of years it takes for a student to learn Zema from the lower classes up until graduation dates in the Zema accrediting Schools,

N.O	Beth	Aqw	Zem,Me
1	19	10	7
2	16	12	19
3	18	19	11
4	16	12	13
average	17.25	13.25	12.5