

# Abyssinia, Ethiopia, Axum, Meroe, Yemen, History and Modern Politics

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Several misconceptions diffused by colonial historians and totalitarian governments need immediate refutation.

## **Ancient Ethiopia and its borders**

Part of the Abyssinian state propaganda advances the idea that in the Antiquity “the Cushites populated the whole of Eastern Africa” and that “the majority lived in present day Abyssinia”. Even worse, these falsifiers diffuse the idea that at those days “Sudan and Ethiopia were one country” to add that “Abyssinians were just a few Sabaeen (Yemenite) refugees who intermingled with the Cushite population”.

This is absolutely wrong, although there are some correct elements in it. In addition, it is said in a very misleading way! Even more, it is self-contradictory.



The Cushites, as part of the Hamitic family, were living for millennia in the South of Egypt. We now know that the famous non-Egyptian Hyksos dynasties ruled Egypt to some extent thanks to their alliance with the people who developed the Kerma civilization in Sudan during the 2nd millennium BCE. These were the ancestors of the Cushites, who formed later (in the 1st millennium) their capital at Napata, the area of present day Karima.



We know that the term Kas was used by the Egyptians to describe the area, the people and the kingdom at the area of modern Sudan, long before the term is disfigured into 'Mat Kusi' in Assyrian - Babylonian, 'Kush' in Hebrew, and 'Hus' in the Greek Biblical text. Then, comes the introduction of the



Greek term 'Aithiopia' for the same land, people and state. In most of the cases, the Greek Biblical text renders 'Aithiopia' what stands in the Hebrew text as Cush.



But it is a state, namely the Kushite state of Napata, whose rulers reigned in Egypt for some time (Piankhi, Shabaka, Shabataka, Taharqa and Tanut Amon, the 'Ethiopian' dynasty according the term employed by Manetho for the 25th dynasty), before being expelled by the Assyrians emperors Assarhaddon and Assurbanipal, who annexed Egypt.



The same term is used in Greek for later phases of Sudan's (Ethiopia's) pre-Christian history. When twice in the sixth century Psammetichus II (595 BCE) and Cambyses, the Iranian invader of Egypt, (525 BCE), go so far in the south as Napata (Karima lies at 1050 km in the south of Aswan, so 1900 km in the south of Cairo – alongside the Nile) and destroy that city, the Cushites – Ethiopians transfer their capital further in the south, to the area of today's Bagrawiyah (1550 km in the south of Aswan), as if they wanted to ensure that nobody would undertake an attack against them from the north anymore! Then, rises Meroe (with its numerous pyramids built between 400 BCE and 350 CE and preserved today in Bagrawiyah), about which we have the valuable narrations of Heliodorus (in his 'Aithiopica', a description of the Sudanese Meroitic kingdom). Meroe was the capital of Aithiopia.



To respond therefore to the assumption that the Cushites “lived throughout Eastern Africa”, we must first answer the question of the southern limits of the Meroitic state of Aithiopia. All specialists would agree that the kingdom was extended until areas between Khartoum and Wad Madani. According to all the indications we have, the African jungle was reaching these points, preventing anyone from advancing further to the south.

So, never did Meroitic Ethiopia encompass the slightest portion of present day Abyssinian territory. Continental as it was, that state did not control either the mountainous confines of the north of Eritrea and Abyssinia nor the present day Sudanese coast, if we refer to authentic sources such as the *Periplus of the Red Sea* (written around 70 CE).

Certainly there may have been Cushitic populations not included in the Meroitic kingdom of Ethiopia, but we cannot identify them, since they did not leave any written monuments so that we possibly decipher, read, evaluate,



crosscheck, understand and judge. What was the ethnic origin of populations leaving in the 1st millennium BCE in the area of today's Abyssinia, Eritrea, Somalia is anyone's guess. We know nothing precise in this regard.



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Another serious point is that already in the area of the Hamitic Egypt, as well as in the Meroitic realm of Ethiopia, and certainly in other locations, Nilo-Saharan peoples (some of them were the ancestors of the modern Nubians) were living among the Hamitic Cushites. So, it is also wrong to assume that in the area of Eastern Africa only Cushitic populations were living.

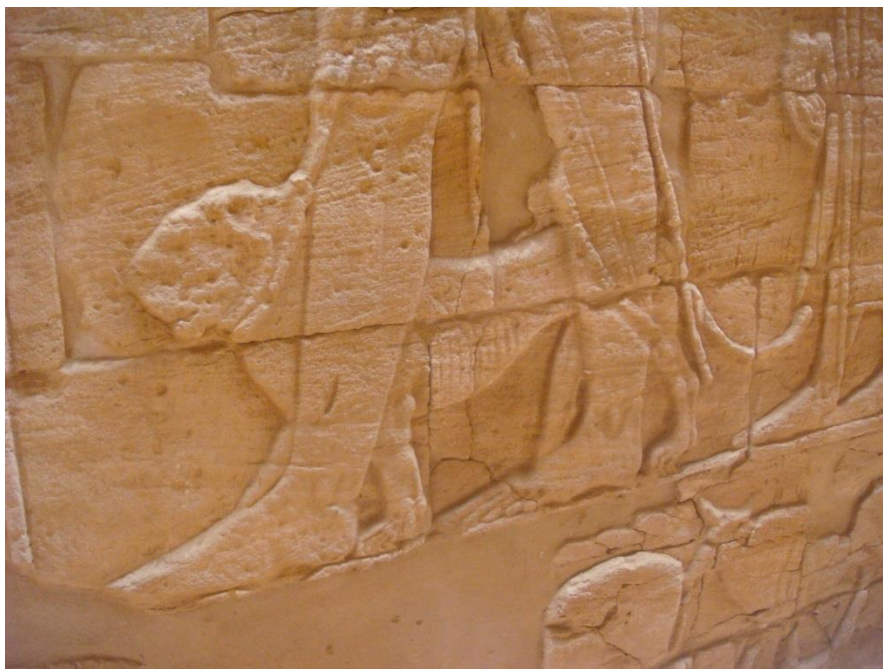
These forgers of historical truth seem to forget that the term Aithiopia in Ancient Greek sources is not an ethnic name only (so that they possibly generalize its use, and include populations inhabiting the surface of present

day Ethiopia); it is mainly and mostly the name of a state! And that state had capital Meroe and – surely – did not extend its borders as far as modern Abyssinia in the south.



*Note: In the picture we find bas reliefs from a temple at Mussawarat as Sufra (150 km northeastwards from Khartoum), one of the most important palatial cities of Ancient Ethiopia.*

So, there is no point in insisting on historical forgery, and keep employing the name 'Ethiopia' for present day Abyssinia.







### **Habashat were Yemenites but not Sabaeans**

There are other wrong points in the aforementioned official Abyssinian approaches – forgery of Historical Truth. First of all, the people of Sheba, the ‘Sabaeans’, must not be confused with the Aramaic ‘Sabians’, who were the inhabitants of the area of Harran (at Eski Sumatar, near present day Urfa in

Turkey) and were a Gnostic religious denomination with strong astro-symbolic characteristics.





The assumption that the Abyssinians are Sabaean Yemenites, and originate from the area of the state Sabaa is definitely wrong. Ancient Yemenite (deciphered) epigraphic documentation testifies to the existence in the area of today's Yemen of one tribe / ethnic group named Habashat. Probably in several waves during the 1st millennium BCE different parts of that group moved to Africa crossing the straits Bab al Mandeb. The entire story is solemnly reflected in the Abyssinian Christian epics Kebra Negast.



Even weaker point in this aberrational argumentation is the effort to undermine Abyssinians in their intermingling with earlier settled in the African plateau Cushites. We do not actually know whether the archeological evidence we have from Abyssinia before the introduction of Ge'ez (Gueze), which means before the arrival of the Yemenite Habashat, belongs to Cushites, Nilo-Saharan or even Bantu people. What is sure is that this intermingling was not extensive, and did not influence the Ancient Axumite Abyssinian civilization. Ge'ez as scripture is entirely derived from Ancient Yemenite, consisting in a more elaborate system. As linguistic evidence, Ge'ez is absolutely Semitic, with almost totally insignificant traces of Hamitic or Cushitic. So, even if a certain mixture took place, it was not of important scale and did not influence the formation of the Semitic Axumite (pre-Christian and Christian) culture that was practically speaking an alien element, an Asiatic culture on African soil.

Even limiting the subject at the pre-Christian periods, Meroe and Axum had

nothing in common, no similarities and no affinities. Axumite Abyssinia is culturally and religiously totally irrelevant of and unrelated to Meroitic Ethiopia. Axum and Adulis present – quite contrarily – many affinities with Safar and Mouza, the capital and the Red Sea harbour of the kingdom of Sabaeen and Himyarite Yemenites. When Meroitic Ethiopia and Axumite Abyssinia co-existed one next to the other for some hundreds of years, they were more different than Greece from Persia.



### **Christian Ethiopia unrelated to Christian Abyssinia**

It is interesting to notice that, although Abyssinia attacked and destroyed Ethiopia (at 370 CE, under King Ezana), Sudanese (Ethiopian) Christianity was not influenced by Axumite Abyssinian Christianity. Among the three Sudanese Christian states, the northernmost (Nobatia) was rather influenced by Coptic Egypt, whereas the central and strongest (Makuria) was interconnected with the Orthodox Greek speaking minority of Egypt, and with the Constantinople Patriarchate in order to oppose Nobatia. We have no clear indications about the southern and smaller state of Alodia around the area of Khartoum, but again we do not have a single evidence of Axumite Abyssinian influence. In Nobatia, Coptic was the official and religious scripture and language. In Makuria, the local Christian priests introduced a scripture based on the Greek alphabet for the language that seems to be the continuation of the Cushitic language of Meroe and Napata (for which an hieroglyphic and a cursive scripture had been used for more 700 years - before the collapse of Meroe). In Makuria, Greek was the religious language and scripture. For Alodia we have no evidence. Ge'ez has not been and cannot be found throughout Christian Sudan from the 4th to the 16th centuries.



Another historical forgery has to do with the heretic Christian character of Abyssinia and its diachronic role. Unfortunately, we cannot afford to take the royal propaganda of an ancient kingdom at face value today. As a matter of fact, gradually Christian Ethiopia (Sudan) became Muslim (Nobatia in the 10th century, Makuria in the 13th century and Alodia in the 16th century). But it would be totally irrational to assume that one country's adherence to another religion unchains events that end up in the usurpation of its name. This situation does not authorize any modern state to usurp the historical name of another. It does not transfer any authority over the name 'Ethiopia' to Abyssinia!



### **Colonial advisers of the Abyssinian quasi-illiterate rulers**

The usurpation of the name of Ethiopia by Abyssinia is absolutely of Western authenticity. Abyssinians believed that like this they would arrange a good

PR campaign in Europe and America. Unfortunately, the practice did not help at all!



The Western countries view Abyssinia transvestite into Ethiopia as a marginal, poor, and starving state, abandoned to permanent underdevelopment. Despite all the self-humiliating tactics, Westerners did not offer Abyssinia any guarantee that they would help the country build its dam in the Nile (nearby lake Tana). The country, plunged into terrible civil war as the oppressed Oromos, Ogadenis, Afars and Sidamas, is impotent and fearful even of Egypt, one of the weakest and poorest countries of the Middle East. They anticipate that if they build a dam, the Egyptians will bring it down.

Yet, the Western advisors of Haile Selassie, who convinced him to change the country's name, aimed at the Sudan mostly. I will help illuminate a story that has not been widely known. The key person in influencing Haile Selassie to rename his country was Jean Leclant, currently Permanent Secretary of the French Academie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres. Leclant was asked personally by Haile Selassie in 1952 to found the Service des Antiquites de l'Ethiopie, which he did at the same time another French Egyptologist, Jean Vercoutter, founded the Service of Antiquities of Sudan.

Jean Leclant was my professor for the period 1978 - 1981 in Sorbonne, Ecole Pratique, and College de France. There was another influential Semitologist



with Leclant in Abyssinia at those days; he was specialized in Ge'ez, Syriac, and Aramaic, and became later Professor at the College de France and academician: Andre Caquot. Leclant and Caquot explained to Haile Selassie the political benefits ensuing from the generalization of the use of the name Ethiopia by Abyssinia. I would like to report herewith that all Amharas working in the INALCO, like Argaw Mekonnen revered and venerated Leclant in extremis, because of his personal friendship with Haile Selassie. My great consideration for my former professor is still valid, limited exclusively in the academic sphere.



The story does not concern Abyssinia exclusively however; it hinges equally on Sudan, which would be the only correct user of the name 'Ethiopia'. The French did not want Sudan to make use of the name 'Ethiopia' as this would pull that country (as it should) far from the Arab League and the criminal French conspiracy to mount up - through long work that lasted decades -

Islamic terrorism. If Sudan was left to cultivate its Cushitic, African identity, the Pan-Arabist conspiracy carried out by France - through mentally, culturally, educationally and politically impotent proxies, namely the dictatorial, so-called Arabic, regimes - would be weakened. The terrible events of Darfur would have never happened, if Sudan had been called - correctly - Ethiopia.









#### About Prof. Muhammad Shamsaddin Megalommatis

*Orientalist, Historian, Political Scientist, Dr. Megalommatis, 50, is the author of 12 books, dozens of scholarly articles, hundreds of encyclopedia entries, and thousands of articles. He speaks, reads and writes more than 15, modern and ancient, languages. He refuted Greek nationalism, supported Martin Bernal's Black Athena, and rejected the Greco-Romano-centric version of History. He pleaded for the European History by J. B. Duroselle, and defended the rights of the Turkish, Pomak, Macedonian, Vlachian, Arvanitic, Latin Catholic, and Jewish minorities of Greece. Born Christian Orthodox, he adhered to Islam when 36, devoted to ideas of Muhyieldin Ibn al Arabi.*





*Greek citizen of Turkish origin, Prof. Megalommatitis studied and/or worked in Turkey, Greece, France, England, Belgium, Germany, Syria, Israel, Iraq, Iran, Egypt and Russia, and carried out research trips throughout the Middle East, Northeastern Africa and Central Asia. His career extended from Research & Education, Journalism, Publications, Photography, and Translation to Website Development, Human Rights Advocacy, Marketing, Sales & Brokerage. He traveled in more than 80 countries in 5 continents. He defends the Right of Aramaeans, Oromos, Ogadenis, Sidamas, Berbers, Darfuris, and Bejas to National Independence, demands international recognition for Kosovo, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, and Transnistria, calls for National Unity in Somalia, and denounces Islamic Terrorism.*