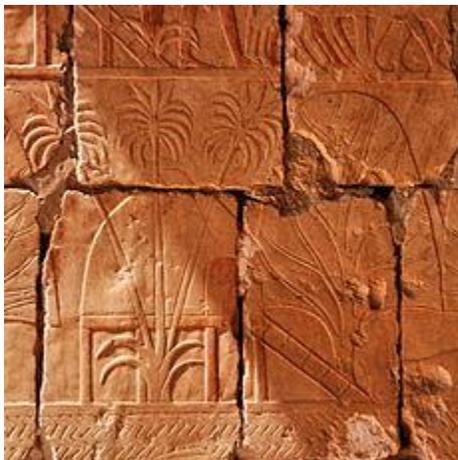


Prehistory

It was not until 1963 that evidence of the presence of ancient [hominids](#) was discovered in Ethiopia, many years after similar such discoveries had been made in neighbouring Kenya and Tanzania. The discovery was made by Gerrard Dekker, a Dutch hydrologist, who found [Acheulian](#) stone tools that were over a million years old at [Kella](#). Since then many important finds have propelled Ethiopia to the forefront of [palaentology](#). The oldest hominid discovered to date in Ethiopia is the 4.2 million year old [Ardipithicus ramidus](#) ([Ardi](#)) found by [Tim D. White](#) in 1994. The most well known hominid discovery is [Lucy](#), found in the Awash Valley of Ethiopia's [Afar](#) region in 1974 by [Donald Johanson](#), and is one of the most complete and best preserved, adult [Australopithecine](#) fossils ever uncovered. Lucy's taxonomic name, [Australopithecus afarensis](#), means 'southern ape of Afar', and refers to the Ethiopian region where the discovery was made. Lucy is estimated to have lived 3.2 million years ago. There have been many other notable fossil findings in the country. Near [Gona](#) stone tools were uncovered in 1992 that were 2.52 million years old, these are the oldest such tools ever discovered anywhere in the world. In 2010 fossilised animal bones, that were 3.4 million years old, were found with stone-tool-inflicted marks on them in the Lower Awash Valley by an international team, led by Shannon McPherron, which is the oldest evidence of stone tool use ever found anywhere in the world.

East Africa, and more specifically the general area of Ethiopia, is widely considered the site of the emergence of [early Homo sapiens](#) in the [Middle Paleolithic](#). In 2004 fossils found near the [Omo](#) river at Kibbish by [Richard Leakey](#) in 1967 were redated to 195,000 years old, the oldest date anywhere in the world for modern Homo Sapiens. [Homo sapiens idaltu](#), found in the [Middle Awash](#) in Ethiopia in 1997, lived about 160,000 years ago.

Bronze Age contacts with Egypt



Wall relief depicting an Egyptian expedition to the [Land of Punt](#) during the reign of [Hatshepsut](#).

The earliest records of Ethiopia appear in [Ancient Egypt](#), during the [Old Kingdom](#) period. Egyptian traders from about 3000 BC who refer to lands south of Nubia or Kush as [Punt](#) and Yam. The Ancient Egyptians were in possession of [myrrh](#) (found in [Punt](#)), which [Richard](#)

[Pankhurst](#) interprets to indicate trade between the two countries was extant from Ancient Egypt's beginnings. Pharaonic records indicate this possession of myrrh as early as the First and Second dynasties (3407-2888 BC), which was also a prized product of the Horn of Africa Region; inscriptions and pictorial reliefs also indicate ivory, panther and other animal skins, myrrh-trees and ostrich feathers from the African coastal belt; and in the Fourth Egyptian Dynasty (2789-2767 BC) a Puntite is mentioned to be in the service of the son of Cheops, the builder of the Great Pyramid. [J. H. Breasted](#) posited that this early trade relationship could have been realized through overland trade down the [Nile](#) and its tributaries (i.e. the [Blue Nile](#) and [Atbara](#)). The [Greek historian](#) and [geographer Agatharchides](#) had documented seafaring among the early [Egyptians](#): "During the prosperous period of the [Old Kingdom](#), between the [30th](#) and [25th centuries B. C.](#), the [river](#)-routes were kept in order, and [Egyptian ships](#) sailed the [Red Sea](#) as far as the [myrrh](#)-country.

The first known voyage to [Punt](#) occurred in the 25th century BC under the reign of [Pharaoh Sahure](#). The most famous expedition to Punt, however, comes during the reign of Queen [Hatshepsut](#) probably around 1495 BC, as the expedition was recorded in detailed reliefs on the temple of [Deir el-Bahri](#) at [Thebes](#). The inscriptions depict a trading group bringing back [myrrh](#) trees, sacks of myrrh, elephant tusks, incense, gold, various fragmented wood, and exotic animals. Detailed information about these two nations is sparse, and there are many theories concerning their locations and the ethnic relationship of their peoples. The Egyptians sometimes called the Land of Punt, "God's-Land", due to the "large quantities of gold, ivory, and myrrh that could be easily obtained".

Evidence of [Naqadan](#) contacts include [obsidian](#) from Ethiopia and the [Aegean](#).

Antiquity

Etymology

[Ancient Greek](#) historians such as [Herodotus](#) and [Diodorus Siculus](#) used the word [Aethiopia](#) (Αἰθιοπία) to refer to the peoples living immediately to the south of [ancient Egypt](#), specifically the area now known as the ancient [Kingdom of Kush](#), now a part of modern [Nubia](#) in Egypt and Sudan, as well as all of [Sub-Saharan Africa](#) in general.

In ancient times the name Ethiopia was primarily used to refer to the modern day nation of Sudan based in the upper Nile valley south of Egypt, also called [Kush](#), and then secondarily in reference to Sub-Saharan Africa in general.^{[12][13][13][14][15][16][17][18][19][20]} Reference to the [Kingdom of Aksum](#) designated as Ethiopia dates only as far back as the first half of 4th century following the 4th century invasion of Kush in Sudan by the Aksumite empire. Earlier inscription of [Ezana Habashat](#) (the source for "Abyssinia") in [Ge'ez](#), [South Arabian alphabet](#), was then translated in [Greek](#) as "Aethiopia".

The state of [Sheba](#) mentioned in the [Old Testament](#) is sometimes believed to have been in Ethiopia, but more often is placed in [Yemen](#). According to the Ethiopian narrative, best represented in the [Kebra Negest](#), the Queen of Sheba slept with King Solomon, resulting in a child, named Ebn Melek (later Emperor [Menelik I](#)). When he was of age, Menelik returned to

[Israel](#) to see his father, who sent with him the son of [Zadok](#) to accompany him with a replica of the Ark of the Covenant (Ethiosemitic: *tabot*). On his return with some of the Israelite priests, however, he found that Zadok's son had stolen the real Ark of the Covenant. Some believe the Ark is still being preserved today at the [Church of Our Lady Mary of Zion](#) in Axum, Ethiopia. The tradition that the biblical Queen of Sheba was a ruler of Ethiopia who visited King Solomon in Jerusalem in ancient Israel is supported by the 1st century AD Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, who identified Solomon's visitor as a queen of Egypt and Ethiopia.

D'mt

Main article: [D'mt](#)



Temple at [Yeha](#), possible capital of [D'mt](#).

The first kingdom known to have existed in Ethiopia was the kingdom of D'mt, with its capital at [Yeha](#), where a [Sabaean](#) style temple was built around 700 BC. It rose to power around the 10th century BC. The D'mt kingdom was influenced by the Sabaeans in Yemen, however it is not known to what extent. While it was once believed that D'mt was a Sabaean colony, it is now believed that Sabaean influence was minor, limited to a few localities, and disappeared after a few decades or a century, perhaps representing a trading or military colony in some sort of symbiosis or military alliance with the civilization of D'mt or some other proto-Aksumite state. Few inscriptions by or about this kingdom survive and very little archaeological work has taken place. As a result, it is not known whether D'mt ended as a civilization before [Aksum](#)'s early stages, evolved into the Aksumite state, or was one of the smaller states united in the [Aksumite kingdom](#) possibly around the beginning of the 1st century.

Axum

Main article: [Kingdom of Aksum](#)



[King Ezana's Stele](#) in Axum.

The first verifiable kingdom of great power to rise in Ethiopia was that of Axum in the 1st century AD. It was one of many successor kingdoms to [D'mt](#) and was able to unite the northern [Ethiopian plateau](#) beginning around the 1st century BC. They established bases on the northern highlands of the Ethiopian Plateau and from there expanded southward. The [Persian](#) religious figure [Mani](#) listed Axum with [Rome](#), Persia, and [China](#) as one of the four great powers of his time. The origins of the Axumite Kingdom are unclear, although experts have offered their speculations about it. Even whom should be considered the earliest known king is contested: although [Carlo Conti Rossini](#) proposed that [Zoskales](#) of Axum, mentioned in the [Periplus of the Erythraean Sea](#), should be identified with one Za Haqle mentioned in the Ethiopian King Lists (a view embraced by later historians of Ethiopia such as Yuri M. Kobishchanov and Sergew Hable Sellasie), G.W.B. Huntingford argued that Zoskales was only a sub-king whose authority was limited to [Adulis](#), and that Conti Rossini's identification can not be substantiated.

Inscriptions have been found in southern [Arabia](#) celebrating victories over one [GDRT](#), described as "*nagashi* of [Habashat](#) [i.e. Abyssinia] and of Axum." Other dated inscriptions are used to determine a *floruit* for GDRT (interpreted as representing a Ge'ez name such as Gadarat, Gedur, Gadurat or Gedara) around the beginning of the 3rd century. A bronze scepter or wand has been discovered at [Atsbi Dera](#) with an inscription mentioning "GDR of Axum". Coins showing the royal portrait began to be minted under King [Endubis](#) toward the end of the 3rd century.



Gold coin of the Aksumite King [Ousas](#)

Christianity was introduced into the country by [Frumentius](#), who was consecrated first bishop of Ethiopia by [Saint Athanasius of Alexandria](#) about 330. Frumentius converted [Ezana](#), who left several inscriptions detailing his reign both before and after his conversion. One inscription found at Axum, states that he conquered the nation of the [Bogoso](#), and returned thanks to his father, the god Mars, for his victory. Later inscriptions show Ezana's growing attachment to Christianity, and Ezana's coins bear this out, shifting from a design with disc and crescent to a design with a cross. Expeditions by Ezana into the [Kingdom of Kush](#) at [Meroe](#) in Sudan may have brought about its demise, though there is evidence that the kingdom was experiencing a period of decline beforehand. As a result of Ezana's expansions, Aksum bordered the Roman [province of Egypt](#). The degree of Ezana's control over Yemen is uncertain. Though there is little evidence supporting Aksumite control of the region at that time, his title, which includes *king of Saba and Salhen, Himyar and Dhu-Raydan* (all in modern-day Yemen), along with gold Aksumite coins with the inscriptions, "king of the [Habshat](#)" or "Habashite," indicate that Aksum might have retained some legal or actual footing in the area.

Toward the close of the 5th century, a great company of monks known as the [Nine Saints](#) are believed to have established themselves in the country. Since that time, [monasticism](#) has been a power among the people, and not without its influence on the course of events.



An Aksumite palace at [Dungur](#)

The Axumite Kingdom is recorded once again as controlling part – if not all – of Yemen in the 6th century. Around 523, the [Jewish](#) king [Dhu Nuwas](#) came to power in Yemen and, announcing that he would kill all the Christians, attacked an Aksumite garrison at [Zafar](#), burning the city's churches. He then attacked the Christian stronghold of [Najran](#), slaughtering the Christians who would not convert. Emperor [Justin I](#) of the Eastern Roman empire requested that his fellow Christian, [Kaleb](#), help fight the Yemenite king, and around 525, Kaleb invaded and defeated Dhu Nuwas, appointing his Christian follower [Sumuafa' Ashawa'](#) as his viceroy. This dating is tentative, however, as the basis of the year 525 for the invasion is based on the death of the ruler of Yemen at the time, who very well could have been Kaleb's viceroy. [Procopius](#) records that after about five years, [Abraha](#) deposed the viceroy and made himself king (*Histories* 1.20). Despite several attempted invasions across the Red Sea, Kaleb was unable to dislodge Abraha, and acquiesced in the change; this was the last time Ethiopian armies left Africa until the 20th century when several units participated in the [Korean War](#). Eventually Kaleb abdicated in favor of his son [Wa'zeb](#) and retired to a monastery, where he ended his days. Abraha later made peace

with Kaleb's successor and recognized his suzerainty. Despite this reverse, under Ezana and Kaleb the kingdom was at its height, benefiting from a large trade, which extended as far as [India](#) and Ceylon, and were in constant communication with the [Byzantine Empire](#).

Details of the Axumite Kingdom, never abundant, become even more scarce after this point. The last king known to mint coins is [Armah](#), whose coinage refers to the Persian conquest of Jerusalem in 614. An early [Muslim](#) tradition is that the [Negus Sahama](#) offered asylum to a group of Muslims fleeing persecution during [Muhammad](#)'s life (615), but Stuart Munro-Hay believes that Axum had been abandoned as the capital by then^[27] – although Kobishchanov states that Ethiopian raiders plagued the Red Sea, preying on Arabian ports at least as late as 702.^[28]

Some people believed the end of the Axumite Kingdom is as much of a mystery as its beginning. Lacking a detailed history, the kingdom's fall has been attributed to a persistent drought, overgrazing, deforestation, plague, a shift in trade routes that reduced the importance of the Red Sea—or a combination of these factors. Munro-Hay cites the Muslim historian [Abu Ja'far al-Khwarazmi/Kharazmi](#) (who wrote before 833) as stating that the capital of "the kingdom of Habash" was [Jarma](#). Unless Jarma is a nickname for Axum (hypothetically from Ge'ez *girma*, "remarkable, revered"), the capital had moved from Axum to a new site, yet undiscovered.^[29]

Middle Ages

Zagwe dynasty

Main article: [Zagwe Dynasty](#)



[Gebre Mesqel Lalibela](#), the [Zagwe dynasty](#) King credited with having constructed the rock-hewn churches of [Lalibela](#).

About 1000 (presumably c. 960, though the date is uncertain), a non-[Christian](#) princess, [Yodit](#) ("Gudit", a play on Yodit meaning "evil"), conspired to murder all the members of the royal family and establish herself as monarch. According to legends, during the execution of the royals, an infant heir of the Axumite monarch was carted off by some faithful adherents and

conveyed to [Shewa](#), where his authority was acknowledged. Concurrently, Yodit reigned for forty years over the rest of the kingdom and transmitted the crown to her descendants. Though parts of this story were most likely made up by the Solomonic Dynasty to legitimize its rule, it is known that a female ruler did conquer the country about this time.

At one point during the next century, the last of Yodit's successors were overthrown by an [Agaw](#) lord named [Mara Takla Haymanot](#), who founded the [Zagwe dynasty](#) (named after the Agaw people who ruled during this time) and married a female descendant of the Aksumite monarchs ("son-in-law") or previous ruler. Exactly when the new dynasty came to power is unknown, as is the amount of kings in the dynasty. The new Zagwe dynasty established its capital at Roha (also called Adeffa), where they build a series of [monolithic churches](#). These structures are traditionally ascribed to the King [Gebre Mesqel Lalibela](#), with the city being renamed [Lalibela](#) in his honour; though in truth some of them were built before and after him. The architecture of the Zagwe shows a continuation of earlier Aksumite traditions, as can be seen at Lalibela and at [Yemrehana Krestos Church](#). The building of [rock-hewn churches](#), which first appeared in the late Aksumite era and continued into the Solomonic dynasty, reached its peak under the Zagwe.

The Zagwe dynasty controlled a smaller area than the Aksumites or the Solomonic dynasty, with its core in the [Lasta region](#). The Zagwe seem to have ruled over a mostly peaceful state with a flourishing urban culture, in contrast to the more warlike Solomonids with their mobile capitals. David Buxton remarked that the Zagwe achieved 'a degree of stability and technical advancement seldom equaled in Abyssinian history'. The church and state were very closely linked, and they may have had a more theocratic society than the Aksumites of Solomonids, with three Zagwe kings being canonized as saints and [one](#) possibly being an ordained priest.^[30]

Foreign Relations

Unlike the Aksumites, the Zagwe were very isolated from the other Christian Nations, although they did maintain a degree of contact through Jerusalem and Cairo. Like many other nations and denominations, the Ethiopian Church maintained a series of small chapels and even an annex at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. [Saladin](#), after retaking the Holy City in 1187, expressly invited the Ethiopian monks to return and even exempted Ethiopian pilgrims from the pilgrim tax. His two edicts provide evidence of Ethiopia's contact with these Crusader States during this period. It was during this period that the Ethiopian king [Gebre Mesqel Lalibela](#) ordered the construction of the legendary rock-hewn churches of [Lalibela](#).

Later, as the Crusades were dying out in the early fourteenth century, the Ethiopian King Wedem Ar'ad dispatched a thirty man mission to Europe, where they traveled to Rome to meet the Pope and then, since the Medieval Papacy was in schism, they traveled to [Avignon](#) to meet the [Antipope](#). During this trip, the Ethiopian mission also traveled to France, Spain and Portugal in the hopes of building an alliance against the Muslim states then threatening Ethiopia's existence. Plans were even drawn up of a two-pronged invasion of Egypt with the French King, but nothing ever came of the talks, although this brought Ethiopia back to Europe's attention, leading to expansion of European influence when the Portuguese explorers reached the Indian Ocean.

Early Solomonic period (1270-1529)



[Lebna Dengel](#), *nəgusä nəgäst* (Emperor) of Ethiopia and a member of the [Solomonic dynasty](#).

Around 1270, a new dynasty was established in the Abyssinian highlands under [Yekuno Amlak](#) who deposed the last of the Zagwe kings and married one of his daughters. According to legends, the new dynasty were male-line descendants of Aksumite monarchs, now recognized as the continuing [Solomonic dynasty](#) (the kingdom being thus restored to the biblical royal house). This legend was created to legitimize the Solomonic dynasty and was written down in the 14th century in the [Kebra Negast](#), an account of the origins of the Solomonic dynasty.

Under the Solomonic dynasty, the [chief provinces](#) became [Tigray](#) (northern), what is now [Amhara](#) (central) and [Shewa](#) (southern). The seat of government, or rather of overlordship, had usually been in Amhara or Shewa, the ruler of which, calling himself *nəgusä nəgäst*, exacted tribute, when he could, from the other provinces. The title of *nəgusä nəgäst* was to a considerable extent based on their alleged direct descent from Solomon and the queen of Sheba; but it is needless to say that in many, if not in most, cases their success was due more to the force of their arms than to the purity of their [lineage](#). Under the early Solomonic dynasty Ethiopia engaged in military reforms and imperial expansion which left it dominating the Horn of Africa, especially under the rule of [Amda Seyon I](#). There was also great artistic and literary advancement at this time, but also a decline in urbanisation as the Solomonic emperors didn't have any fixed capital, but rather moved around the empire in mobile camps.

Under the early Solomonic dynasty monasticism grew strongly. The abbot Abba [Ewostatewos](#) created a new order called the Ewostathians who called for reforms in the church, including observance of the Sabbath, but was persecuted for his views and eventually forced into exile, eventually dying in Armenia. His zealous followers, also persecuted, formed isolated communities in Tigray. The movement grew strong enough that the emperor [Dawit I](#), after first trying to crush the movement, legalized their observance of the Sabbath and proselytization of their faith. Finally under [Zara Yaqob](#) a compromise was made between the new Egyptian bishops and the Ewostathians at the Council of Mitmaq in 1450, restoring unity to the Ethiopian church.^[34]

Portuguese influence

Towards the close of the 15th century the Portuguese missions into Ethiopia began. A belief had long prevailed in Europe of the existence of a Christian kingdom in the far east, whose monarch was known as [Prester John](#), and various expeditions had been sent in quest of it. Among others engaged in this search was [Pêro da Covilhã](#), who arrived in Ethiopia in 1490, and, believing that he had at length reached the far-famed kingdom, presented to the *nəgusä nəgäst* of the country, a letter from his master the [king of Portugal](#), addressed to Prester John.

Pêro da Covilhã remained in the country, but in 1507 an Armenian named [Matthew](#) was sent by the Emperor to the king of [Portugal](#) to request his aid against the Muslims. In 1520 a Portuguese fleet, with Matthew on board, entered the Red Sea in compliance with this request, and an embassy from the fleet visited the Emperor, [Lebna Dengel](#), and remained in Ethiopia for about six years. One of this embassy was Father [Francisco Álvares](#), who wrote one of the earliest accounts of the country.

The Abyssinian-Adal War (1529-1543)

Main articles: [Abyssinian–Adal war](#), [Adal Sultanate](#), [Sultanate of Ifat](#) and [Walashma dynasty](#)



The [Sultan of Adal](#) (right) and his troops battling King [Yagbea-Sion](#) and his men during the [Abyssinian-Adal War](#)

Between 1528 and 1540, armies of Muslims, under the [Imam Ahmad ibn Ibrihim al-Ghazi](#), entered Ethiopia from the low country to the south-east, and overran the Abyssinian Kingdom, obliging the Emperor to take refuge in the mountain fastnesses. In this remote location, the ruler again turned to the Portuguese. [João Bermudes](#), a subordinate member of the mission of 1520, who had remained in the country after the departure of the embassy, was, according to his own statement (which is untrustworthy), ordained successor to the [Abuna](#) (archbishop), and sent to Lisbon. Bermudes certainly came to Europe, but with what credentials is not known.

In response to Bermudes message, a Portuguese fleet under the command of [Estêvão da Gama](#), was sent from India and arrived at [Massawa](#) in February 1541. Here he received an ambassador from the Emperor beseeching him to send help against the Muslims, and in the July following a force of 400 musketeers, under the command of [Cristóvão da Gama](#), younger brother of the admiral, marched into the interior, and being joined by native troops were at first successful against the enemy; but they were subsequently defeated at the [Battle of Wofla](#) (28 August 1542), and their commander captured and executed. On February 21, 1543, however, Al-Ghazi was shot and killed in the [Battle of Wayna Daga](#) and his forces were totally routed. After this, quarrels arose between the Emperor and Bermudes, who had returned to Ethiopia with Gama and now

urged the emperor to publicly profess his obedience to Rome. This the Emperor refused to do, and at length Bermudes was obliged to make his way out of the country.

Oromo Movements

Main article: [Oromo migrations](#)

The **Oromo migrations** were a series of expansions in the 16th and 17th centuries by the [Oromo people](#) from southern areas of Ethiopia to more northern regions. The migrations had a severe impact on the [Solomonic dynasty](#) of Abyssinia, as well as being the death blow to the recently defeated [Adal Sultanate](#).

Gondarine Period

Early Gondar period (1632-1769)



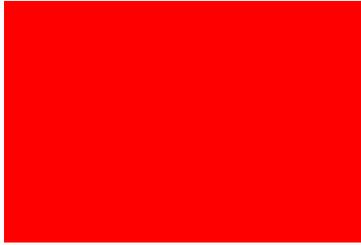
The Royal Enclosure ([Fasil Ghebbi](#)) and [Gondar](#).

The [Jesuits](#) who had accompanied or followed the Gama expedition into Ethiopia, and fixed their headquarters at [Fremona](#) (near [Adwa](#)), were oppressed and neglected, but not actually expelled. In the beginning of the 17th century Father [Pedro Páez](#) arrived at Fremona, a man of great tact and judgment, who soon rose into high favour at court, and won over the emperor to his faith. He directed the erection of churches, palaces and bridges in different parts of the country, and carried out many useful works. His successor [Afonso Mendes](#) was less tactful, and excited the feelings of the people against him and his fellow Europeans. Upon the death of Emperor [Susenyos](#) and accession of his son [Fasilides](#) in 1633, the Jesuits were expelled and the native religion restored to official status. Fasilides made [Gondar](#) his capital and built a castle there which would grow into the castle complex known as the [Fasil Ghebbi](#), or Royal Enclosure. Fasilides also constructed several churches in Gondar, many bridges across the country, and expanded the [Church of Our Lady Mary of Zion](#) in Aksum.

During this time of religious strife [Ethiopian philosophy](#) flourished, and it was during this period that the philosophers [Zera Yacob](#) and [Walda Heywat](#) lived. Zera Yaqob is known for his treatise on religion, morality, and reason, known as [Hatata](#).

Aussa Sultanate

Main articles: [Sultanate of Aussa](#) and [Mudaito Dynasty](#)



State flag of the [Aussa Sultanate](#).

The [Sultanate of Aussa](#) (Afar Sultanate) succeeded the earlier [Imamate of Aussa](#). The latter polity had come into existence in 1577, when [Muhammed Jasa](#) moved his capital from [Harar](#) to [Aussa](#) with the split of the Adal Sultanate into Aussa and the Harari city-state. At some point after 1672, Aussa declined and temporarily came to an end in conjunction with Imam [Umar Din bin Adam](#)'s recorded ascension to the throne.

The Sultanate was subsequently re-established by [Kedafu](#) around the year 1734, and was thereafter ruled by his [Mudaito Dynasty](#). The primary symbol of the Sultan was a silver [baton](#), which was considered to have magical properties.

Zemene Mesafint

Main article: [Zemene Mesafint](#)

This era was, on one hand, a religious conflict between settling Muslims and traditional Christians, between nationalities they represented, and on the other hand between feudal lords on power over the central government.

Some historians date the murder of [Iyasu I](#), and the resultant decline in the prestige of the dynasty, as the beginning of the Ethiopian [Zemene Mesafint](#) ("Era of the Princes"), a time of disorder when the power of the monarchy was eclipsed by the power of local warlords.



Early nineteenth century warriors in Abyssinia

Nobles came to abuse their positions by making emperors, and encroached upon the succession of the dynasty, by candidates among the nobility itself: e.g. on the death of [Emperor Tewoflos](#), the chief nobles of Ethiopia feared that the cycle of vengeance that had characterized the reigns of Tewoflos and [Tekle Haymanot I](#) would continue if a member of the Solomonic dynasty were picked for the throne, so they selected one of their own, [Yostos](#) to be *negusa nagast* (king of kings) - however his tenure was brief.

Iyasu II ascended the throne as a child. His mother, Empress Mentewab played a major role in Iyasu's reign, as well as in that of her grandson [Iyoas](#) too. Mentewab had herself crowned as co-ruler, becoming the first woman to be crowned in this manner in Ethiopian history.

Empress Mentewab was crowned co-ruler upon the succession of her son (a first for a woman in Ethiopia) in 1730, and held unprecedented power over government during his reign. Her attempt to continue in this role following the death of her son 1755 led her into conflict with Wubit (Welete Bersabe), his widow, who believed that it was her turn to preside at the court of her own son Iyoas. The conflict between these two queens led to Mentewab summoning her Kwaran relatives and their forces to Gondar to support her. Wubit responded by summoning her own [Oromo](#) relatives and their considerable forces from [Yeju](#).

The treasure of the Empire being allegedly penniless on the death of Iyasu, it suffered further from ethnic conflict between nationalities that been part of the Empire for hundreds of years—the Agaw, Amharans, Showans, and [Tigreans](#)—and the Oromo newcomers. Mentewab's attempt to strengthen ties between the monarchy and the Oromo by arranging the marriage of her son to the daughter of an Oromo chieftain backfired in the long run. Iyasu II gave precedence to his mother and allowed her every prerogative as a crowned co-ruler, while his wife Wubit suffered in obscurity. Wubit waited for the accession of her own son to make a bid for the power wielded for so long by Mentewab and her relatives from [Qwara](#). When Iyoas assumed the throne upon his father's sudden death, the aristocrats of [Gondar](#) were stunned to find that he more readily spoke in the [Oromo language](#) rather than in [Amharic](#), and tended to favor his mother's Yeju relatives over the Qwarans of his grandmothers family. Iyoas further increased the favor given to the Oromo when adult. On the death of the Ras of Amhara, he attempted to promote his uncle Lubo governor of that province, but the outcry led his advisor [Wolde Leul](#) to convince him to change his mind.

It is believed that the power struggle between the Qwarans led by the Empress Mentewab, and the Yeju Oromos led by the Emperor's mother Wubit was about to erupt into an armed conflict. Ras [Mikael Sehul](#) was summoned to mediate between the two camps. He arrived and shrewdly maneuvered to sideline the two queens and their supporters making a bid for power for himself. Mikael settled soon as the leader of Amharic-Tigrean (Christian) camp of the struggle.

The reign of Iyaos' reign becomes a narrative of the struggle between the powerful Ras Mikael Sehul and the Oromo relatives of Iyoas. As Iyoas increasingly favored Oromo leaders like [Fasil](#), his relations with Mikael Sehul deteriorated. Eventually Mikael Sehul deposed the Emperor Iyoas (7 May 1769). One week later, Mikael Sehul had him killed; although the details of his death are contradictory, the result was clear: for the first time an Emperor had lost his throne in a means other than his own natural death, death in battle, or voluntary abdication.

Mikael Sehul had compromised the power of the Emperor, and from this point forward it lay ever more openly in the hands of the great nobles and military commanders. This point of time has been regarded as one start of the Era of the Princes.

An aged and infirm imperial uncle prince was enthroned as Emperor [Yohannes II](#). Ras Mikael soon had him murdered, and underage [Tekle Haymanot II](#) was elevated to the throne.

This bitter religious conflict contributed to hostility toward foreign Christians and Europeans, which persisted into the 20th century and was a factor in Ethiopia's isolation until the mid-19th century, when the first British mission, sent in 1805 to conclude an alliance with Ethiopia and obtain a port on the Red Sea in case [France](#) conquered Egypt. The success of this mission opened Ethiopia to many more travellers, missionaries and merchants of all countries, and the stream of Europeans continued until well into [Tewodros](#)'s reign.

This isolation was pierced by very few European travellers. One was the French physician [C.J. Poncet](#), who went there in 1698, via [Sennar](#) and the Blue Nile. After him [James Bruce](#) entered the country in 1769, with the object of discovering the sources of the Nile, which he was convinced lay in Ethiopia. Accordingly, leaving Massawa in September 1769, he travelled via Axum to Gondar, where he was well received by Emperor Tekle Haymanot II. He accompanied the king on a warlike expedition round Lake Tana, moving South round the eastern shore, crossing the Blue Nile ([Abay](#)) close to its point of issue from the lake and returning via the western shore. Bruce subsequently returned to Egypt at the end of 1772 by way of the upper [Atbara](#), through the kingdom of Sennar, the Nile, and the [Korosko desert](#). During the 18th century the most prominent rulers were the emperor [Dawit III](#) of Gondar (died May 18, 1721), [Amha Iyasus](#) of Shewa), who consolidated his kingdom and founded [Ankober](#), and [Tekle Giyorgis](#) of Amhara) - the last-mentioned is famous of having been elevated to the throne altogether six times and also deposed six times. The first years of the 19th century were disturbed by fierce campaigns between [Ras Gugsa](#) of Begemder, and Ras [Wolde Selassie](#) of Tigray, who fought over control of the figurehead Emperor [Egwale Seyon](#). Wolde Selassie was eventually the victor, and practically ruled the whole country till his death in 1816 at the age of eighty.

[Dejazmach Sabagadis](#) of [Agame](#) succeeded Wolde Selassie in 1817, through force of arms, to become warlord of Tigre.

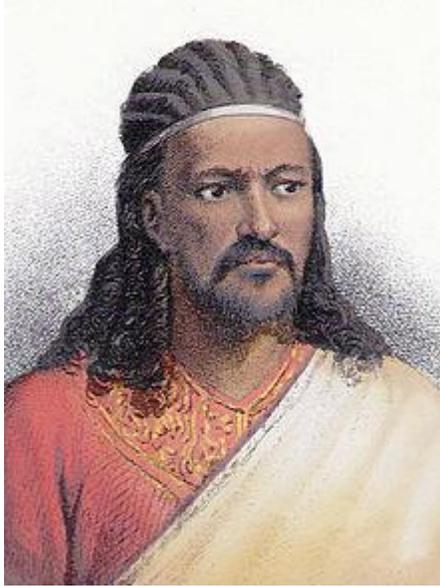
Modern

1855-1936

Under the Emperors [Tewodros II](#) (1855–1868), [Yohannes IV](#) (1872–1889), and [Menelek II](#) (1889–1913), the empire began to emerge from its isolation. Under Emperor Tewodros II, the "[Age of the Princes](#)" (*[Zemene Mesafint](#)*) was brought to an end.

Tewodros II and Tekle Giyorgis II (1855-1872)

Main article: [British Expedition to Abyssinia](#)



[Emperor Tewodros II](#)'s rule is often placed as the beginning of modern Ethiopia, ending the decentralized [Zemene Mesafint](#) (Era of the Princes).

Emperor Tewodros (or Theodore) II was born *Lij* Kassa in Qwara, in 1818. His father was a small local chief, and his relative (possible uncle) *Dejazmach* [Kinfu](#) was governor of the provinces of [Dembiya](#), Qwara and [Chelga](#) between Lake Tana and the northwestern frontier. Kassa lost his inheritance upon the death of Kinfu while he was still a young boy. After receiving a traditional education in a local monastery, he went off to lead a band of bandits that roved the country in a Robin Hood-like existence. His exploits became widely known, and his band of followers grew steadily until he led a formidable army. He came to the notice of the ruling Regent, Ras Ali, and his mother Empress [Menen Liben Amede](#) (wife of the puppet Emperor [Yohannes III](#)). In order to bind him to them, Ras Ali and the Empress arranged for Kassa to marry Ali's daughter, and upon the death of his uncle Kinfu, he was made chief of Kwara and all Dembea with the title of Dejazmatch. He turned his attention to conquering the remaining [chief divisions of the country](#), Gojjam, Tigray and Shewa, which still remained unsubdued. His relations with his father-in-law and grandmother-in-law deteriorated however, and he soon took up arms against them and their vassals, and was successful.



Map of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) in the 19th century.

On February 11, 1855, Kassa deposed the last of the Gondarine puppet Emperors, and was crowned *negusa nagast* of Ethiopia under the name of Tewodros II. He soon after advanced against Shewa with a large army. Chief of the notables opposing him was its king [Haile Melekot](#), a descendant of [Meridazmach Asfa Wossen](#). Dissensions broke out among the Shewans, and after a desperate and futile attack on Tewodros at [Dabra Berhan](#), Haile Melekot died of illness, nominating with his last breath his eleven-year-old son as successor (November 1855) under the name Negus Sahle Maryam (the future emperor [Menelek II](#)). [Darge](#), Haile Melekot's brother, and Ato Bezabih, a Shewan noble, took charge of the young prince, but after a hard fight with Angeda, the Shewans were obliged to capitulate. Sahle Maryam was handed over to the Emperor, taken to Gondar, and there trained in Tewodros's service, and then placed in comfortable detention at the fortress of Magdala. Tewodros afterwards devoted himself to modernizing and centralizing the legal and [administrative structure of his kingdom](#), against the resistance of his governors. Sahle Maryam of Shewa was married to Tewodros II's daughter Alitash.

In 1865, Sahle Maryam escaped from [Maqdala](#), abandoning his wife, and arrived in Shewa, and was there acclaimed as [Negus](#). Tewodros forged an alliance between Britain and Ethiopia, but as explained in the next section, he committed suicide after a military defeat by the British. On the death of Tewodros, many Shewans, including Ras Darge, were released, and the young Negus of Shewa began to feel himself strong enough, after a few preliminary minor campaigns, to undertake offensive operations against the northern princes. But these projects were of little avail, for Ras Kassai of Tigray, had by this time (1872) risen to supreme power in the north. Proclaiming himself *negusa nagast* under the name of Yohannes (or John) IV, he forced Sahle Maryam to acknowledge his overlordship.

In early 1868, the British force seeking Tewodros' surrender, after he refused to release imprisoned British subjects, arrived on the coast of Massawa. The British and Dajazmach Kassa came to an agreement in which Kassa would let the British pass through Tigray (the British were going to Magdala which Tewodros had made his capital) in exchange for money and weapons. Surely enough, when the British completed their mission and were leaving the country, they

rewarded Kassa for his cooperation with artillery, muskets, rifles, and munitions, all in all worth approximately £500,000 (Marcus 2002, 71-72). This formidable gift came in handy when in July 1871 the current emperor, Emperor Tekle Giyorgis II, attacked Kassa at his capital in Adwa, for Kassa had refused to be named a ras or pay tribute (Marcus, H. 2002, 72). Although Kassa's army was outnumbered 12,000 to the emperor's 60,000, Kassa's army was equipped with more modern weapons and better trained. At battle's end, forty percent of the emperor's men had been captured. The emperor was imprisoned and would die a year later. Six months later on 21 January 1872, Kassa became the new emperor under the name Yohannes IV (Zewde, B. 2001, 43).

Ethiopia was never colonized by a European power, but was occupied by Italians in 1936. however, several colonial powers had interests and designs on Ethiopia in the context of the 19th century "[Scramble for Africa](#)."

When [Victoria](#), Queen of the United Kingdom, in 1867 failed to answer a letter Tewodros II of Ethiopia had sent her, he took it as an insult and imprisoned several British residents, including the [consul](#). An army of 12,000 was sent from Bombay to Ethiopia [to rescue the captured nationals](#), under the command of Sir [Robert Napier](#). The Ethiopians were defeated, and the British stormed the fortress of Magdala (now known as [Amba Mariam](#)) on April 13, 1868. When the Emperor heard that the gate had fallen, he fired a pistol into his mouth and killed himself. Sir Robert Napier was raised to the peerage, and given the title of Lord Napier of Magdala.

The [Italians](#) now came on the scene. [Asseb](#), a port near the southern entrance of the Red Sea, had been bought from the local sultan in March 1870 by an Italian company, which, after acquiring more land in 1879 and 1880, was bought out by the Italian government in 1882. In this year Count [Pietro Antonelli](#) was dispatched to Shewa in order to improve the prospects of the colony by treaties with Sahle Maryam of Shewa and the sultan of [Aussa](#).

In April 1888 the Italian forces, numbering over 20,000 men, came in contact with the Ethiopian army, but negotiations took the place of fighting, with the result that both forces retired, the Italians only leaving some 5,000 troops in [Eritrea](#), later to become an Italian colony.



[Menelik II](#)

Meanwhile the Emperor Yohannes IV had been engaged with the [dervishes](#), who had in the meantime become masters of the [Egyptian Sudan](#), and in 1887 a great battle ensued at [Gallabat](#), in which the dervishes, under Zeki Tumul, were beaten. But a stray bullet struck the king, and the Ethiopians decided to retire. The king died during the night, and his body fell into the hands of the enemy (March 9, 1889). When the news of Yohannes's death reached Sahle Maryam of Shewa, he proclaimed himself emperor [Menelik II of Ethiopia](#), and received the submission of [Begemder](#), Gojjam, the [Yeju Oromo](#), and Tigray.

Menelik II (1889-1913)

Main article: [Battle of Adwa](#)

On May 2 of that same year, Emperor Menelik signed the [Treaty of Wuchale](#) with the Italians, granting them a portion of Northern Ethiopia, the area that would later be Eritrea and part of the province of Tigray in return for the promise of 30,000 rifles, ammunition, and cannons. The Italians notified the European powers that this treaty gave them a protectorate over all of Ethiopia. Menelik protested, showing that the Amharic version of the treaty said no such thing, but his protests were ignored.

On March 1, 1896, Ethiopia's conflict with the Italians, the [First Italo–Ethiopian War](#), was resolved by the complete defeat of the Italian armed forces at the [Battle of Adowa](#). A provisional treaty of peace was concluded at [Addis Ababa](#) on October 26, 1896, which acknowledged the independence of Ethiopia.

Menelik granted the first railway concession, from the coast at [Djibouti](#) (French Somaliland) to the interior, to a French company in 1894. The railway was completed to [Dire Dawa](#), 28 miles (45 km) from [Harrar](#), by the last day of 1902.

Under the reign of Menelik, beginning in the 1880s, Ethiopia set off from the central province of [Shoa](#), to incorporate 'the lands and people of the South, East and West into an empire'. The people incorporated were the western Oromo (non Shoan Oromo), Sidama, Gurage, Wolayta and other groups. He began expanding his kingdom to the south and east, expanding into areas that had never been under his rule, resulting in the borders of Ethiopia of today. He did this with the help of [Ras Gobena](#)'s Shewan Oromo militia.^[43] During the conquest of the Oromo, the Ethiopian Army carried mass atrocities against the Oromo population including mass mutilation, mass killings and large scale slavery.^{[44][45][46]} Some estimates for the number of people killed as a result of the conquest go into the millions.^{[47][48][49]} Large scale atrocities were also committed against the [Dizi people](#) and the people of the Kaficho kingdom.^{[50][51]}

Iyasu V, Zauditu and Haile Selassie (1913-1936)



[Iyasu V](#) (Lij Iyasu), Emperor of Ethiopia from 1913–16.

When Menelik II died, his grandson, [Lij Iyasu](#), succeeded to the throne but soon lost support because of his Muslim ties. He was deposed in 1916 by the Christian nobility, and Menelik's daughter, [Zauditu](#), was made empress. Her cousin, Ras Tafari Makonnen, was made regent and successor to the throne.

Upon the death of Empress Zauditu in 1930, Ras Tafari Makonnen, adopting the throne name [Haile Selassie](#), was crowned Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia. His full title was “His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, King of Kings of Ethiopia and Elect of God.”

Following the death of Abba Jifar II of Jimma, Emperor Haile Selassie seized the opportunity to annex Jimma. In 1932, the [Kingdom of Jimma](#) was formally absorbed into Ethiopia. During the reorganization of the provinces in 1942, Jimma vanished into [Kaffa Province](#).

Italian period (1936-1941)

Main articles: [Second Italo-Abyssinian War](#) and [Italian East Africa](#)

Emperor Haile Selassie's reign was interrupted in 1935 when Italian forces [invaded and occupied](#) Ethiopia.

The Italian army, under the direction of dictator [Benito Mussolini](#), invaded Ethiopian territory on October 2, 1935. They occupied the capital Addis Ababa on May 5. Emperor Haile Selassie pleaded to the [League of Nations](#) for aid in resisting the Italians. Nevertheless the country was formally annexed on May 9, 1936 and the Emperor went into exile.

The war was full of cruelty: the Ethiopians used [Dum-dum](#) bullets (prohibited by the [Hague Convention](#) of 1899, Declaration IV,3) and the Italians used gas (prohibited under the [Geneva Protocol](#) of 1922). Many Ethiopians died in the invasion. The [Negus](#) claimed that more than 275,000 Ethiopian fighters were killed compared to only 1,537 Italians, while the Italian authorities estimated that 16,000 Ethiopians and 2,700 Italians (including Italian colonial troops) died in battle.

Map of [Italian East Africa](#) after Italy's annexation of Ethiopia, as part of the [Italian Empire](#)

Italy in 1936 requested the League of Nations to recognize the annexation of Ethiopia: all member nations (including [Britain](#) and [France](#)), with the exception of the [Soviet Union](#), voted to support it. The King of Italy ([Victor Emmanuel III](#)) was crowned [Emperor of Ethiopia](#) and the Italians created an [Italian empire](#) in Africa ([Italian East Africa](#)) with Ethiopia, Eritrea and Italian Somalia. In 1937 Mussolini boasted that, with his conquest of Ethiopia, "finally Adua was avenged" and that he had abolished [slavery](#) in Ethiopia.^[54]

The Italians invested substantively in Ethiopian infrastructure development. They created the "imperial road" between Addis Abeba and [Massaua](#), the Addis Abeba - [Mogadishu](#) and the Addis Abeba - [Assab](#). 900 km of railways were reconstructed or initiated (like the railway between Addis Abeba and [Assab](#)), dams and hydroelectric plants were built, and many public and private companies were established in the underdeveloped country. The most important were: "Compagnie per il cotone d'Etiopia" (Cotton industry); "Cementerie d'Etiopia" (Cement industry); "Compagnia etiopica mineraria" (Minerals industry); "Imprese elettriche d'Etiopia" (Electricity industry); "Compagnia etiopica degli esplosivi" (Armament industry); "Trasporti automobilistici (Cita)" (Mechanic & Transport industry).

Much of these improvements were part of a plan to bring half a million Italians to colonize the Ethiopian plateaus. In October 1939 the [Italian colonists in Ethiopia](#) were 35,441, of whom 30,232 male (85.3%) and 5,209 female (14.7%), most of them living in urban areas. Only 3,200

Italian farmers moved to colonize farm areas, where they were under sporadic attack by pro-Haile Selassie guerrillas.

World War II

Main article: [East African Campaign \(World War II\)](#)



[Haile Selassie's](#) reign as emperor of [Ethiopia](#) is the best known and perhaps most influential in the nation's history.

In spring 1941 the Italians were [defeated](#) by British and [Allied](#) forces (including Ethiopian forces). On May 5, 1941, Emperor Haile Selassie re-entered Addis Ababa and returned to the throne. The Italians, after their final stand at [Gondar](#) in November 1941, conducted a [guerrilla war in Ethiopia](#), that lasted until summer 1943. After the defeat of Italy, Ethiopia annexed the former Italian colony of [Eritrea](#).

Post–World War II period (1941-1974)

Main articles: [Modernization under Haile Selassie](#) and [Eritrean War of Independence](#)

Population in 1976 Ethiopia, when Eritrea was the fourteenth province.

After World War II, Emperor Haile Selassie exerted numerous efforts to promote the modernization of his nation. The country's first important school of higher education, [University College of Addis Ababa](#), was founded in 1950. The [Constitution of 1931](#) was replaced with the [1955 constitution](#) which expanded the powers of the Parliament. While improving diplomatic ties with the [United States](#), Haile Selassie also sought to improve the nation's relationship with other African nations. To do this, in 1963, he helped to found the [Organisation of African Unity](#).

In 1961 the 30-year [Eritrean Struggle for Independence](#) began, following the Ethiopian Emperor [Haile Selassie I](#)'s dissolution of the federation and shutting down the Eritrean parliament. The Emperor declared Eritrea the fourteenth province of Ethiopia in 1962. The [Negus](#) suffered criticism due to the expenses involved in fighting the Nationalist forces.

By the early 1970s Emperor Haile Selassie's advanced age was becoming apparent. As Paul B. Henze explains: "Most Ethiopians thought in terms of personalities, not ideology, and out of long habit still looked to Haile Selassie as the initiator of change, the source of status and privilege, and the arbiter of demands for resources and attention among competing groups." The nature of

the succession, and of the desirability of the Imperial monarchy in general, were in dispute amongst the Ethiopian people.

Perceptions of this war as imperialist were among the primary causes of the growing Ethiopian [Marxist](#) movement. In the early 1970s, the Ethiopian [Communists](#) received the support of the [Soviet Union](#) under the leadership of [Leonid Brezhnev](#). This help led to the 1974 marxist coup of [Mengistu](#).

The government's failure to effect significant economic and political reforms over the previous fourteen years created a climate of unrest. Combined with rising inflation, corruption, a famine that affected several provinces (especially [Welo](#) and [Tigray](#)) but was concealed from the outside world, and the growing discontent of urban interest groups, the country was ripe for revolution. The unrest that began in January 1974 became an outburst of general discontent. The Ethiopian military, with assistance from the [Comintern](#), began to both organize and incite a full-fledged revolution.

Communist period (1974-1991)

Main articles: [Derg](#), [Ethiopian Civil War](#), [Red Terror \(Ethiopia\)](#) and [Ethio-Somali War](#)



High ranking [Derg](#) members; [Mengistu Haile Mariam](#), [Teferi Benti](#) and [Atnafu Abate](#).

After a period of civil unrest which began in February 1974, the aging Emperor Haile Selassie I was removed from his position. On September 12, 1974, a provisional administrative council of soldiers, known as the [Derg](#) ("committee") seized power from the emperor and installed a government which was socialist in name and military in style. The Derg summarily executed 59 members of the former government, including two former Prime Ministers and Crown Councilors, Court officials, ministers, and generals. Emperor Haile Selassie died on August 22, 1975. He was allegedly strangled in the basement of his palace or smothered with a wet pillow.

Lt. Col. [Mengistu Haile Mariam](#) assumed power as head of state and Derg chairman, after having his two predecessors killed, as well as tens of thousands of other suspected opponents. The new Marxist government undertook socialist reforms, including nationalisation of landlords' property and the church's property. Before the coup, Ethiopian peasants' way of life was thoroughly influenced by the church teachings; 280 days a year are religious feasts or days of rest. Mengistu's years in office were marked by a totalitarian-style government and the country's massive militarization, financed by the [Soviet Union](#) and the Eastern Bloc, and assisted by [Cuba](#). In December 1976, an Ethiopian delegation in [Moscow](#) signed a military assistance agreement

with the Soviet Union. The following April 1977, Ethiopia abrogated its military assistance agreement with the United States and expelled the American military missions.

The new regime in Ethiopia met with armed resistance from the large landowners, the royalists and the nobility. The center of resistance was largely centered in the province of Eritrea. The Derg decided in November 1974 to prosecute war in Eritrea rather than seek a negotiated settlement. By mid-1976, the resistance had gained control of most of the town and the countryside of Eritrea.

In July 1977, sensing the disarray in Ethiopia, [Somalia](#) attacked across the [Ogaden](#) in pursuit of its [irredentist](#) claims to the ethnic Somali areas of Ethiopia (*see* [Ogaden War](#)). They were assisted in this invasion by the armed [Western Somali Liberation Front](#). Ethiopian forces were driven back far inside their own frontiers but, with the assistance of a massive Soviet airlift of arms and 17,000 Cuban combat forces, they stemmed the attack. The last major Somali regular units left the Ogaden March 15, 1978. From 1977 through early 1978, thousands of suspected enemies of the Derg were tortured and/or killed in a purge called the "[Red Terror](#)". Communism was officially adopted during the late 1970s and early 1980s; in 1984, the [Workers' Party of Ethiopia](#) (WPE) was established, and on February 1, 1987, a [new Soviet-style civilian constitution](#) was submitted to a popular referendum. It was officially endorsed by 81% of voters, and in accordance with this new constitution, the country was renamed the [People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia](#) on September 10, 1987, and Mengistu became president.

The regime's collapse was hastened by droughts and [famine](#), which affected around 8 million people, leaving 1 million dead, as well as by insurrections, particularly in the northern regions of Tigray and Eritrea. The regime also conducted a brutal campaign of [resettlement and villagization in Ethiopia](#) in the 1980s. In 1989, the [Tigrayan Peoples' Liberation Front](#) (TPLF) merged with other ethnically based opposition movements to form the [Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front](#) (EPRDF). In May 1991, EPRDF forces advanced on Addis Ababa. Mengistu fled the country to asylum in [Zimbabwe](#), where he still resides.

The Federal Democratic Republic (1991-present)

In July 1991, the EPRDF, the [Oromo Liberation Front](#) (OLF), and others established the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) which was composed of an 87-member Council of Representatives and guided by a national charter that functioned as a transitional constitution.



Flag of Ethiopia.

Eritrea separated from Ethiopia following the fall of the Derg in 1991, after a long independentist war.

In 1994, a [new constitution](#) was written that formed a bicameral legislature and a judicial system. An election took place in May 1995 in which [Meles Zenawi](#) was elected the Prime Minister and [Negasso Gidada](#) was elected President. Also at this time, the members of the Parliament were elected. Ethiopia's second multiparty election was held in May 2000. Prime Minister Meles was one again elected as Prime Minister in October 2000. In October 2001, Lieutenant [Girma Wolde-Giorgis](#) was elected president.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ethiopia again turned to the Western powers for alliance and assistance. the Ethiopian army began to train with US forces based out of the [Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa](#) (CJTF-HOA) established in Djibouti, in [counterterrorism](#) and [counterinsurgency](#). Ethiopia allowed the US to station military advisors at [Camp Hurso](#).

[Meles Zenawi](#) died on 20 August 2012 and was succeeded by [Hailemariam Desalegn](#). [Mulatu Teshome](#) was elected president on 7 October 2013.