Ethiopian Muslims in the Public Space of Addis Ababa since 1991.

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Abbreviations

AAPO   All Amhara People's Organisation.

AIAI   al-Itihad al Islamiyya.

ANDM   Amhara National Democratic Movement.

AUUF   Addis Ababa Ulama Unity Forum.

ELF   Eritrean Liberation Front.

EPLF   Eritrean People's Liberation Front.

EPRDF   Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front.

EPRP   Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party.

EOC   Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

IIRO   International Islamic Relief Organisation.

IOLF   Islamic Oromo Liberation Front.

NGO   Non- Governmental Organisation.

OLF   Oromo Liberation Front.

ONLF   Ogaden National Liberation Front.

OPDO   Oromo People's Democratic Organisation.

SEPDF   Southern Ethiopia People's Democratic Front.

TPLF   Tigrean People's Liberation Front.

TFG   Transitional Federal Government.

UIC   United Islamic Front.

USA   United States of America.

Glossary

Abyot Seded	Meaning: Revolutionary flame. Only military party during *Derg* regime.
Âh'lel Kheyr	Refers to the funding of mosques and other Islamic institutions. In general three forms of funding can be distinguished.
Al-salaf al salih	Salafism is derived from this word. It means the pious forefathers, which refers to the first three generations of Muslims.
Al-Ahbash	Movement in Libanon which has its roots in Ethiopia, More specifically in Harrar.
Amir	To refer to members of the intellectual movement in Addis Ababa. Usually meaning someone of royal descent but in this case used as a form of respect.
Birr	Currency of Ethiopia.
Da'wa	"The Mission" referring to spreading the word of Islam and attracting new constituents.
Derg	Refers to the military communist regime which controlled Ethiopia between 1974 and 1991. Derg means: Committee.
Ferenji	A common word used for outsiders, which mainly refers to the inability of non-Ethiopians to understand their situation.
Gasht	A practice which encourages Tablighi to invite people into their mosque in an effort to introduce them to Jamat al-Tabligh.
Hadith	The tradition or saying of the prophet Muhammed.
Hajj	One of the five pillars of Islam. Obligated pilgrimage to Mecca.
Hijab	Headscarf for women, which covers the head except for the face.
Hijra	Forced migration of the first Muslims from Mecca to Medina.
Imam	A religious leader within the Islamic religion who manages a mosque and performs the prayer.
Isbal	Pants pulled up so the ankles are visible. Mainly done by Salafi men.
Jihad	Religious war against any enemy of Islam and its believers.

Jihadawi Harekat	Name of a documentary made by the Ethiopian government in relation to the Anwolia incident.
Juma'a	Friday prayer, the most important prayer of the week.
Khat	Local plant which is chewed in the Horn of Africa. It has an effect on the brain and is highly addictive.
Kûfiyyah	Scarf originating from the Middle East. Every nation has their own design.
Long duree	French word for long term. In this dissertation used to refer to trends and effects on the long term in contrary to short term trends and effects.
Macha Tulama	First Oromo organisation, mainly focussed on self-help.
Madrasa	Arabic word for educational institution.
Majlis	Local name for the Ethiopian Islamic Supreme Council. This organ represents all Ethiopian Muslims.
Mashreq	Refers to the Middle East, including Egypt. It's the Arabic term for the region.
Niqab	Is a dress which covers everything but the eyes most commonly worn by women in the Salafi movement.
Panchâyat	A traditional meeting of elders in a village in the Indian sub-continent.
Qur'an	The only recognized holy book for Muslims.
Tabligh	Work of the prophets.
Taqiya	Cap worn by Muslim men.
Thawb	Word which refers to a cotton piece of clothing. Which is commonly worn in the Islamic world.
Salafism	Salafism derives from the term the pious forefathers(al-salaf al salih), the first three generations of Muslims who had first-hand experience of the rise of Islam and are regarded as exemplary for the correct way to live for future Muslims.
Salat	One of the five pillars of Islam, it is the name of the ritual five times a day prayer.
Shari'a	the moral code and religious law of Islam.
Sufi	Tradition within Islam which focusses around shrine veneration. This tradition is considered typical for African Islam.

Umma	The Islamic community to which every Muslims belongs. It is a sort of International society. This *Umma* is central in the Islamic religion.
Wajib	Beard which resembles the beard of the first Muslims.
Warka	Is a tree which grows in Ethiopia. Referring to Ethiopian culture.
Woreda	Meaning district. This word refers to the administrational districts which are recognised within Ethiopia. *Warada* means the same.
Zakat	Another pillar of Islam. This one refers to donating to charity whenever the financial situation allows it.

Introduction

"The change of government in 1991 added a new dimension to the dynamics of Muslim public presence. Since the Ethiopian peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) certified religious freedom, the appearance of Islam in Ethiopia changed dramatically."[1]

I.   In general

This dissertation contributes to the notion that challenges the dominant idea of a Christian Ethiopia, and advocates that Ethiopia is just as much Muslim as it is Christian. It is concerned with Islam in Ethiopia, the second most prominent religion practiced in the country. Traditionally, the Ethiopian Muslim is Sunni and in many cases also adheres to Sufism, which is very common in Sub-Sahara Africa. Islam arrived in Ethiopia during the first *Hijra* in which followers of the prophet fled Mecca and found a safe haven in Medina from which Islam eventually reached the rest of the Arab peninsula. During the *Hijra* a small group of Muslims fled to Ethiopia following a recommendation of the prophet who stated that in Ethiopia they would find a just king who would welcome them regardless of their religious background.[2] Eventually, Islam became an important religion in Ethiopia. According to the national consensus of 2007 about 33.9 percent of the present Ethiopian population is Muslim. Because there is an extensive body of literature on Islam in contemporary Ethiopia, and because most of this literature touches upon the public space, it seemed evident to examine this topic of public space. Since it was impossible to conduct a nationwide study due to time constraints, this thesis will focus on a case study. The capital city was the logical choice, in this city all Ethiopians come together regardless of their ethnic or religious affinities. This means that the city is prone to tensions and conflict. Since the conflict between Muslims and the Ethiopian government has a huge effect on the public space in Addis Ababa, this will be the main focus of this thesis.

The present religio-political tensions take shape in a conflict between the Islamic fractions and the established political party of the EPRDF, which resumed power in 1991 after the

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[1] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism".* Palgrave Macmillan Ltd, 2013, 8.
[2] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Coexistence and/or confrontation?: Towards a reappraisal of Christian-Muslim encounter in Contemporary Ethiopia",* in: Journal of Religion in Africa, Vol. 36, Leiden, 2006, 2.

liberation movements in Tigray and Eritrea defeated the communist *Derg* regime. After the EPRDF's rise to power, the party guaranteed ethnic and religious equality. This implied that Ethiopian Muslims became full Ethiopian citizens for the first time. However there are still problems which the Ethiopian Muslim has to deal with in everyday life. In addition, the government has shifted its position on Islam over the past years, from a rather pro-Muslim attitude to being an important player in the War on Terror. This puts more strain on the position of Ethiopian Muslims on top of the usual issues they have to deal with, such as discrimination, limits on social mobility and lack of Islamic institutions.

The new dynamics which have emerged within the government as well as within the Ethiopian Muslim communities after 1991 have been researched by many authorities in the field. They have been mainly focusing on the social, religious and political aspect of this new trend. What has not received much attention so far, is how these dynamics have had an impact on the position of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space. Although many have cited the importance of public space in the issues concerning the population of Ethiopian Muslims, only a few, like Terje Ostebo, have considered what effects these issues have. The choice to focus on the public space of Addis Ababa as a case study may avoid an overly abstract or superficial study of the subject but does not necessarily limit the universality of what is discussed. The burden of Ethiopian Muslims in Addis Ababa is also present in other parts of the country, albeit showing obvious local differences. The reason why this thesis focuses on this contemporary issue between 1991 and 2014 is because the EPRDF brought considerable change for Ethiopian Muslims compared to the past, but the current political context may hardly be deemed an ideal one for Muslims. Current developments have resulted in a new trend in which Islam is institutionalized and freed from many restraints, which results in an increased visibility of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa. On the other hand recent incidents have countered this new trend.

To what extent can this new trend be observed in the physical characteristics of the public space today and the position of Ethiopian Muslims in this space? Has this trend always been an increasing one or did something change and if so, what changed and why? The objective is to identify the underlying causes and link these to the position of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa over the past twenty-three years. Whether they can be linked and how is part of the question which this paper will consider. The two main research questions focus on these fields of interest, the goal in mind is to discuss as many relating issues as possible and to provide an image of what is occurring today in the light of the past twenty-

three years. The first research question is: "What is the current position of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa and how did this evolve over the past twenty-three years to arrive at the contemporary situation?" The second one: "To what extent did events and issues of the past twenty-three years contribute to the contemporary presence of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa?"

The main body of this thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter will provide a history of several relevant aspects concerning Islam in Ethiopia: their arrival on Ethiopian territory, places they resided in, their social and political position and so on. In addition, the history of Addis Ababa and the *Derg* regime will be discussed. The second chapter outlines all relevant actors, both local and global ones, which had and currently have their impact on the position of Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa, in Ethiopia, and on an international level. The goal is to provide a background on these actors for the reader to understand the bigger picture around the issues discussed in this thesis. Chapter three will take a closer look at the conflicts which Ethiopian Muslims have had to deal with in the past twenty-three years: conflict between different Muslim communities, conflict with the government and conflict with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Chapter four then will discuss international issues and actors which are relevant and often crucial in order to understand the current position of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa. Chapter five will join all the previous chapters, in the sense that theory, context and research findings all come together in an effort to attain a full understanding of the situation.

II.   Theory

In this section we will provide the theoretical framework of this thesis. The first objective, upon preparation of the research, was to take a closer look at the events of the past twenty-three years and to see if these events had affected the visibility of Islam in the public sphere, such as in the prominence of mosques and schools. It was only during my time in Addis Ababa that I discovered how the situation in Ethiopia differed a great deal from my initial conception. The global as well as the local events which will be considered in this dissertation did rarely have an direct influence on the visibility of mosques and schools, Moreover, there are also internal dynamics within the Muslim community, within the government and within other religious communities in the country that proved relevant to the public sphere. In addition, religious, social and political polemics and financial and political support all play a

role in the formation of the public space today and the position of Ethiopian Muslims within this space. The first days in Addis Ababa I thus revaluated my research goals, the result was a new hypothesis which could help to explain these complex issues.

The hypothesis is as follows. After the fall of the *Derg* regime, a new political party came to power, this party promised equality and religious freedom, something which was quite unique and never been done before in the history of Ethiopia. The new constitutional rights had a considerable impact on Islam and on its position in the public space. The question remains however, exactly how these new liberties impacted on the presence and position of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa. Although freedoms might be guaranteed on paper and in theory, to what extent did this new government and constitution affect the position of Ethiopian Muslims in public space of Addis Ababa. To measure the presence of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa several aspects will be considered, which range from the construction and presence of Islamic institutions to religious expression performed in the public space of Addis Ababa and everything in between. Several researchers have pointed at a gradual change in the sentiments of the regime, in general as well as more specifically towards the Islamic movements in the country. But why did the government change its position towards Islam? And more importantly, how did this reflect on the position of Ethiopian Muslims and the presence of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa? I believe that the answer lies in contemporary events and in local as well as global discourses denouncing Islam as the enemy. Whether these events are of relevance and how they have influenced the public space of Addis Ababa will be extensively discussed in this thesis.

There are several academics and research projects which have concerned themselves with similar questions and research subjects. Anna Tsing is known for her research on the relation between the global and the local and the effects this relationship has on a specific space. She considered the relation between the local and the global in the formation of a frontier zone which has in growing amounts been transformed from a dense forest area accessible to everybody to a privatised landscape in which the local population lost its access to natural resources.[3] Her research is valuable for this dissertation because she offers a new theory to research the impact of the relation between the local and the global on a specific space and place. Focussing on the friction between the local and the global can help us understand a

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[3] Tsing, Anna. "*An ethnography of global connection*". Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2004, p. 313.

local situation which has been formed by local as well as global trends.[4] *"I stress the importance of cross-cultural and long-distance encounters in forming everything we know as culture."*[5]

Another academic who has focussed on the relation between the global an the local in the formation of space and place is Doreen Massey. Her theory will be the guideline for the research performed for this thesis. Her theory will be extensively discussed below. Further, this thesis will be concerned with place. There are several who have done research on the formation of place and space. More specifically, research has been done on the formation of these by Muslims. An academic collection edited by Patrick Desplat, discusses the formation of place by Muslims in a wide range of specific environments.[6] Subjects discussed range from the importance of a mosque in Tunis -not only as religious place but also in the light of commercial importance- to the formation of place around Sufi shrines in Bangladesh. The theoretical aspects discussed in this collection will be applied whenever possible.

On a less theoretical level, there are several who have done extensive research on multiple aspects concerning the public space and place. For example John Dixon, Andrès Di Masso and Enric Pol. They did extensive research on the formation of public space through contestation in Barcelona, focussing on a specific ideological group called the The Hole of Shame. Claiming space in a city is a contest between several actors that wish to claim a part of this space.[7] Katrine Landman on the other hand has done research on the enclosure of space in post-Apartheid South Africa, taking a closer look at the enclosure of several neighbourhoods in Cape town.[8] Landman thus discusses a very aggressive trend in claiming space by individuals living in these neighbourhoods. Finally, it is interesting to cite the article written by Monika Salzbrunn. She considers the formation of space by Senegalese immigrants

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[4] Tsing, Anna. *"An ethnography of global connection",* 4.

[5] Tsing, Anna. *"An ethnography of global connection".* 4.

[6] Desplat, Patrick Et. al. *"Prayer in the city: The Making of Muslim Sacred Places and Urban Life".* Bielefeld, Transaction Publishers, 2012, p. 314.

[7] Di Masso, A. et.al. *"On the contested nature of space 'Figuera's Well', 'The Hole of Shame' and the ideological struggle over public space of Barcelona",* in: journal of environmental psychology, Vol. 31, 2011, pp. 231- 244.

[8] Landman, Karina. *"Privatising public space in post-apartheid south African cities through neighbourhood enclosures".* in: Geojournal, Vol. 66, 2006, pp. 133- 146.

in New York. She puts emphasis on the religious and political events in this formation.[9] Her research nicely ties into the research topic of this dissertation, in the sense that a minority group is considered in the context of public space in a large city. The focus on religious and political events and their influences on the position of this group in the public space is also central to this paper.

Most anthropologists discuss the public space for Muslims with regard to the construction and maintenance of mosques and schools, and this appears to be a solid perspective. The difficulties involving these institutions will thus extensively be discussed in this thesis. They will most definitely be regarded as a crucial factor in the position of Muslims in the public space. It should however be stated that this is far from the only indicator which can be used to discuss this position. In this thesis, I chose to discuss as many relevant aspects as possible with the goal to be as accurate and complete as possible and of course to establish a convincing and honest answer to the questions discussed above. Doreen Massey helps us define public space and place. Space can be defined by three aspects: the first is that space is the sum of all our connections and these connections can go around the globe. It is this interrelatedness of the global and the local which is applicable to the subject of this thesis. *"First , that we recognize space is the product of interrelations [...] from the immensity of the global to the intimately small."*[10] During the fieldwork performed for this thesis this interrelatedness became apparent in multiple places, not only in the construction of mosques, but also in the global Islamic discourses held in periodicals and in religious expression in Ethiopia. Even the government's new policies, made to limit the position of Islam in the public space, are influenced by a larger global trend, namely the War on Terror. I believe that, if we wish to understand the position of Islam in Ethiopia –in public space as in other accounts- today and before, we have to take into account that this position is not just a creation of local actors but is often embedded in much larger trends and dynamics. Massey describes a second aspect of space as follows: *"In this case the argument is that the very possibility of any serious recognition of multiplicity and heterogeneity itself depends on a recognition of spatiality."*[11] As a third aspect she describes: *"Third, that we recognize space as always under construction precisely because space in this reading is a product of relations*

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[9] Salzbrunn, M. *"The occupation of public space through religious and political events: How Senegalese migrants became part of Harlem, New York",* in: Journal of religion in Africa, Vol. 34, 2004, pp. 468- 492.

[10] Massey, Doreen. *"For space".* Londen, Sage, 2005. 10.

[11] Massey, Doreen. *"For space",* 11.

between relations."[12] These three aspects will be held in account when discussing and answering the research questions of this thesis. Massey based her findings on the research she performed in England. She considers both urban (London), rural and natural spaces (Northern lake district). This however is not the only thing Massey contributes with her book. She also talks about how space is formed by practice. People who live their everyday life are part of shaping public space. In fact she suggests that without this we cannot speak of space or place. *"We are always, inevitably, making spaces and places."*[13] When this idea is applied in Ethiopia, it becomes evident that the public space is formed by all actors which perform their practices: the state through the presence of police or pictures of national projects, national ideas and so forth, and the various religions through their practices which are often performed on the streets.

To understand the position of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa, to understand space in itself and the actors which form space should all be considered. For example, the extent to which certain actors wish to allow Muslims in their space. Segal and Verbakel state: *"The public of today is better understood as a fragmentary interplay of multiple publics and multiple groups."*[14] Segal's and Verbakel's *Cities of Dispersal* a collection of research essays is combined on the new forms of urbanism which are decentralised, in constant expansion and contraction. They consider urbanism to be heterogeneous and diverse.[15] A new definition of public space is proposed, as can be derived from the quote. Of course it is impossible within the scope of this thesis to discuss all actors, so only the three most important ones will be discussed: Islamic movements, EOC (Ethiopian Orthodox Church) and the Ethiopian government. These are the most active participants in the formation of public space for Ethiopian Muslims in the capital city. Other actors will also be discussed but these are international ones which seem to have a less direct or distinct impact on the public space of Addis Ababa.

It should however be stated that it is difficult to agree with Massey's entire hypothesis. For example, in order to present her new view on space, she has to deconstruct the previous ideas on space. Several peers have reacted on this part of her book, stating that some of her assumptions are incorrect. These critics have cited some interesting points in this regard

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[12] Massey, Doreen. *"For space",* 11.
[13] Massey, Doreen. *"For space",* 175.
[14] Segal, R. and Verbakel E., *"cities of Dispersal".* London, Wiley and sons, 2008, 8.
[15] Segal, R. and Verbakel E., *"cities of Dispersal".* London, Wiley and sons, 2008, p. 163.

which this thesis deems valid. For example, the fact that Massey states that space is considered by many to be a-temporal and that history has a monopoly on the research on time.[16] It is obvious that this argument is one-sided and too generalised.

When we think about space we also think about place. For Muslims important places are mosques and Islamic schools which are usually located within the mosques. But how do we define these places? In Massey's book she defines place as always in process, a site in which multiple identities and histories are inscribed.[17] Massey's reading thus has a notion of place in which boundaries are not centralized. To the contrary, she emphasizes movement and connections in the same way she does in her definition of space.[18] What if place is discussed in the light of religion, the religious meaning of place? The formation of place and space in the Islamic context can entail a wide variety of practices, institutions, social traditions and so forth. These aspects vary in intensity depending on the region which is discussed and the position of Islam in this region, whether it is the dominant/state religion or a minority religion. As in the case of Ethiopia, Islam entails a minority religion which has to deal with several intrusions on its position in public space. In several occasions, they have to occupy and conquer space to guarantee their position in this space. Several have preoccupied themselves with this subject applying it in various places and occasions, each with different results and conclusions. Examples are: Simon Hawkins, Catherine B. Asher, Eric Ross and Patrick Desplat. Desplat states: *"The religious meaning of places, often initiated and maintained by Islamic scholars, ritual specialists, and so forth, is mostly accompanied by more subtle and routinely everyday activities and interpretations by people who may not participate in ritual activities but they live and work and interact at these places."*[19] Desplat thus states that religious places are not just made through religious practice but also by everyday life around these religious places. In this regard this thesis will mainly focus on religious expression in the public space because this is one of the central aspects of the presence of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa.

In historical discipline notions of time and space are very important. Especially time has been defined over and over again and has been subject to anachronisms and dogmatisation. In pre-

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[16] Massey, Doreen. *"For space",* 17.
[17] Massey, Doreen. *"For space",* 17.
[18] Desplat, Patrick Et. al. *"Prayer in the city: The Making of Muslim Sacred Places and Urban Life",* Bielefeld, Transaction Publishers, 2012, 21.
[19] Desplat, Patrick Et. al. *"Prayer in the city: The Making of Muslim Sacred Places and Urban Life",* 10.

Christian time, time was cyclical in relation to the cycles in nature. This was replaced by Christians to a teleological time conception.[20] Modern history redefined this Christian notion of time stripped of an end and reduced it to the idea of a structured process. Time thus carries away concrete moments in a flowing motion. This makes time destructive for both memory and history. Since the 1990s this all changed historians lost their credibility as interpreters of the present and the future because they failed to predict two world wars and the collapse of the USSR.[21] This loss in credibility forced historians to re-evaluate their stance to history. This led to, as Hartog calls it, "presentism", of which the only goal was to understand the present. It is within this framework that this historical/anthropological study is embedded.[22] To understand the present situation of Ethiopian Muslims we do not only have to discuss the past twenty-three years but also the period before that. This history is incredibly relevant to understand today's dynamics, opinions and trends. Lorenze states that *"presentism" however also holds something traumatic which won't disappear: "presentism since 1980 means the presence of a traumatic, catastrophic, and haunting past- of a past that won't go away."*[23] This is most definably the case with regard to this subject. In this case, it is the hard and unrecognized history of Islam in Ethiopia and more recently the effect of the *Derg* regime. *"Historical wounds are the result of historical injustices caused by past actions of states which have not been recognized as such."*[24] These experiences, memories and histories clearly still have their effects on the situation today for most of its important actors. The contemporary historical study performed in this dissertation, breaks with the common notion that temporal distance from the subject creates objectivity.[25] In accordance with Philips, who states that distance is a complex balance which has much to do with emotional or political uses of the past, every representation of history incorporates elements of feeling, doing, and understanding.[26] In reality, no true form of objectivity can be reached because the background of the historian is always existent. In this thesis, efforts have been made to reach a high form of objectivity regardless of the contemporary subject. However, pure objectivity has never

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[20] Lorenz, C., *"Unstuck in time. Or: sudden presence of the past".* In: Performing the past. Memory, History and identity in Modern Europe, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2010, 77.

[21] Lorenz, C., *"Unstuck in time. Or: sudden presence of the past",* 82.

[22] Lorenz, C., *"Unstuck in time. Or: sudden presence of the past",* 82.

[23] Lorenz, C., *"Unstuck in time. Or: sudden presence of the past",* 83.

[24] Lorenz, C., *"Unstuck in time. Or: sudden presence of the past",* 84.

[25] Philips, M. S., *"Rethinking Historical Distance: From Doctrine to Heuristic".* In: History and theory, vol. 50, 2011, 11.

[26] Philips, M. S., *"Rethinking Historical Distance: From Doctrine to Heuristic",* 14.

been the goal since it is impossible to reach. Simmel speaks of objectivity as the stranger conditioned by a combination of distance and nearness, indifference and involvement.[27] Lorenz states on this regard: *"Since then contemporary history has been silently accepted by the academic historical profession although its epistemological credentials have never been clarified".*[28]

III.   Status Quaestionis

Ahmed Hussein is the first researcher I wish to discuss regarding Islam in Ethiopia. Hussein has recently deceased but is regarded as a very important researcher for Ethiopian Muslims. He has conducted extensive research on the past of Ethiopian Muslims, something which is usually (accidentally or deliberately) forgotten whenever Ethiopian history is discussed. His writings have brought legitimacy to Ethiopian Muslims and their rightful Ethiopian citizenship, which is often questioned by individuals from another religious background (this issue will be discussed in chapter three). Hussein has received much recognition from the Ethiopian Muslims as well as from the international community of researchers on related topics.

Another important expert on the subject is Terje Ostebo. He is currently employed in ILPI research centre and at the university of Florida. He grew up in Ethiopia and has written multiple articles and an editorial on the subject in which he reveals the social and political situation in which Ethiopian Muslims have lived and live. Although he is mainly concerned with contemporary issues which he has discussed in a wider timeframe, he has written on multiple subjects regarding Islam in Ethiopia. Both Ostebo himself and his writings receive an incredible amount of trust from Ethiopian Muslims. Many consider him to be one of the few who dare to speak openly about the issues they face and to provide correct information. This is significant as Ethiopian Muslims are very suspicious of Western researchers. They believe an outsider cannot fully understand their situation because of its complexity. The fact that Ostebo has this authority among Ethiopian Muslims means that, in their opinion, he must be painting an accurate picture of the issues at hand.

Another important researcher to Ethiopian Muslims and for this thesis is Dereje Feyissa Dori. A native Ethiopian of Christian background, he has focussed on Ethiopian minorities during

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[27] Philips, M. S., *"Rethinking Historical Distance: From Doctrine to Heuristic",* 12.
[28] Lorenz, C., *"Unstuck in time. Or: sudden presence of the past",* 86.

his research. Ethiopian Muslims have received particular attention from Feyissa Dori. He has also received plenty of authority from researchers and Ethiopian Muslims and can rely on a large network of connections in Ethiopia and various sections of its population.

Patrick Desplat may be a less well-known name in Addis Ababa but he is certainly known within the international intellectual community concerned with Ethiopia. He has worked on two important books, the first written with Terje Ostebo is called *Muslim Ethiopia* and the other is titled *Prayer in the city: The Making of Muslim Sacred Places and Urban Life.* Both books address essential subjects for this thesis and both have been consulted extensively.

Jon Abbink is another name of importance. Not only is he well-known in the field, he also has put forward some interesting approaches to public space in Ethiopia. These will be taken into account whenever possible.

Then there is Erlich Haggai, an Israeli researcher who has done extensive research on the relations between Ethiopia and the Middle East, and more specifically on the connection with Saudi Arabia, a subject which is very sensitive at the moment. The relation with Saudi Arabia is considered dangerous because of the radical influence Salafism (an ideology adopted by the Saudi state) might have on Ethiopian Muslims. I do not fully agree with his work, as I believe he has taken a too one-sided approach to the subject and focussed his research too much on literary sources instead of relying on extensive field research. His conclusions do not coincide with the facts visible on the ground in Addis Ababa. Ethiopian Muslims who are aware of Haggai's work agree with my point of view. They even accuse him of influencing the Ethiopian government. It is commonly known that he has given lectures to government officials concerning this subject. This does not however mean that he is biased or hasn't done respectable research on the matter. Although I will be cautious in using his results, I will include them when relevant.

Finally, there are Ethiopian Muslims who have been actively involved in the creation of literature on the subject. These are both Muslims residing in Ethiopia as well as Ethiopian Muslims living in diasporas all over the world. An example of such research is the book called *Civil rights movement*. This is a collection of various articles written by academics and others in these diasporas. The articles mainly discuss the incident in Anwolia (2011) and the period after the incident, which will be elaborated further on in this thesis.

IV.   Methodology

The methodology used during my research to approach the subject is commonly deemed the ethnographic method. Currently, this method is mostly used by researchers who concern themselves with contemporary issues like anthropologists and political scientists. The reason why this method is so popular today is because of its wide field of interest in which the ethnographer will use everything at his or her disposal to research a subject in the field. An ethnographer is an omnivore with regard to sources. Almost any legitimate source can be used whether it is an interview, informal conversation or statistics.[29] One of the basic principles of ethnographic research is remarkably applicable to this subject. It assumes that the place which is researched is not formed by only local but also global relations.[30] To do ethnographic research about the globalism of a place is however, not a simple assignment. Luckily, Tsing has provided us with the means to do so. She states that if we wish to perform an ethnographic study of the global we need to research the friction between the global and the local in a certain location.[31] In Addis Ababa, this friction can easily be observed. One only needs to discuss Salafism in Ethiopia, which has been in conflict with other Islamic movements as well as the Ethiopian government and the EOC.

Ethnographic research is often divided into six aspects: 1.listening 2.questioning 3. observing 4. experimenting 5.speculating and 6. consulting secondary literature.[32] The goal of ethnographic research is to get intimately involved with the subject and the participants in the research. This proved not to be a mean feat from the start. However, I could rely on a snowball-effect of connections. The point of ethnographic research is not just to handle the subject, the goal is to use intimacy to make, apart from regular sources, personal observations, to hold informal conversations which might bring extra information afore and to affiliate oneself with the situation on the ground. The field observations I have made, ranged from personal impressions –smell, sound, architecture, colors, movement, etcetera- to events I have witnessed during my fieldwork, such as *Juma'a*. In addition, this method allowed me to gather a vast amount of different forms of information. I have implemented this methodology during my fieldwork, which was performed between 18 January and 10 March 2014. To fund

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[29] Lecompte, Margaret. "*Designing & conducting ethnographic research*". 11.

[30] Tsing, Anna. "*An ethnography of global connection*". Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2004, 4.

[31] Tsing, Anna. "*An ethnography of global connection*", 3.

[32] Lecompte, Margaret. "*Designing & conducting ethnographic research*". 35.

this fieldwork, I worked from September until December and received a scholarship from the Belgian State (VLIRUOS) which partly refunds the expenses made. In Addis Ababa, I first affiliated myself with the Institute of Ethiopian Studies. Here I received legal support in the form of a research permit and affiliation, in order to perform my research and consult all libraries. Many Muslim intellectuals who work at this institute helped me out during my research. I also contacted a local promoter, Dr. Dereje Feyissa Dori, one of the researchers discussed above, to whom I am greatly indebted. He aided my research in any way he could, most importantly by letting me tap into his extensive network which formed the basis for my research. I'm extensively grateful for his enthusiasm and relentless dedication.

During my fieldwork I struck on a few problems which need to be discussed here. The first is the sensitivity of the subject: many contacts hesitated to talk to me and others blankly refused to discuss the subject. The recurrent argument was that outsiders (non-Ethiopians but mainly non-Ethiopian Muslims) cannot understand their situation. Others even believed the international researchers would write articles and essays depicting Islam as something it is not. Being a *Ferenji* or foreigner, I had to deal with these limitations of trust. Sensitivity of the subject also translated itself in anonymity: all informants explicitly asked to remain anonymous, most commonly out of fear for future consequences. If the government were to know their involvement in this thesis or in other writings on the subject this might lead to detainment. The reason this subject is very sensitive is because of recent developments which led to growing tensions between the government and the Muslim community in Ethiopia (which will be discussed in Chapters Three and Five). In order to cope with these limitations I mainly made use of personal networks and asked people with whom I was already familiar to help with the recruitment of other participants in my research. I also avoided to be shut-down during street interviews by first asking general questions and questions which avoided the conflictual subjects.

Another obstacle was the limited timeframe. Originally, I had planned to map all mosques in Addis Ababa. It soon became apparent however, that given the timeframe of my stay this would be impossible. In addition, there is no full documentation which displays or lists all mosques in Ethiopia because a large amount of these mosques work on an informal basis and often do not have a permit from the government. On top of that, it became evident that not all mosques look like traditional mosques with a minaret and dome, some are in private houses. This in itself points to limitations in the public space, which will be discussed more extensively in Chapter Five. This obviously meant a big limitation for my research. Luckily

there were local Muslims who have conducted research on these mosques and their histories. I did not just consult their books but also managed to get in contact with these authors. They aided me by localizing mosques in the city, and I then used satellite images to confirm the locations. Other informants also aided in this regard, showing and discussing the location of the mosques they were aware of in the city. This however, proved challenging again. Most of these informants were limited at reading maps. Moreover, most street names were changed recently and did not sound familiar to Ethiopians because they still used the old or informal street names. Regardless, I was able to make accurate maps of all large and traditional looking mosques in the capital city. I chose to document only the spread of large mosques. To document all mosques would have been impossible within my timeframe. Moreover, the large mosques constitute more visibility in the public space then mosques in regular houses. This way the reader can visualize in which parts of the city Islam is most visible. yet another obstacle was the language. Although most informants spoke English, this was very limited for some. Especially during street interviews this became apparent. The subject in itself is very complex, on many occasions difficult to grasp as an outsider. Not only are there so many aspects to Islam in Ethiopia, these aspects are in most cases very complex in themselves. To close the gaps I found in my own research I used the guidance of secondary literature from various researchers. I also opted to write an extensive background on the subject and all different aspects and actors which contributed to the situation between 1991 and today.

For the spatial aspect of my research I used maps and satellite images, both to gather the information as well as to check its validity. The map used of Addis Ababa was a tourist map, the advantage being that some of the mosques were already located. Unfortunately, this was limited to the recognized mosques in Addis Ababa: two thirds of the mosques present in Addis Ababa where not displayed on this map. In addition, this map only showed the center of the city and not the outskirts, so I only used it on the ground. Mosques which fell outside the scope of this map were located through satellite images. I then introduced the information into a new smaller map to give the reader a visual of the patterns discussed in this thesis.

One of the main sources of information for this thesis are interviews. As already stated, finding willing participants was difficult on my own, so I made use of personal networks, which may imply that the participants mostly came from the same circles. Most of the insightful information gathered came from Muslim intellectuals who work or study at Addis Ababa university. Because this is a limited group compared to all Ethiopian Muslims, I ventured on the streets on various occasions to conduct simple street interviews, overcoming

these limitations. In addition, I tried to talk to ministers. I tried to get an interview with the Minister of Federal Affairs, Shifarai. Unfortunately, I was dragged into a large bureaucratic mess in which it soon became apparent that an interview was out of the question. It would have been very valuable to get a glimpse at the position of the government toward Islam and current issues. I have tried to make the base of participants as broad as possible. A further investigation of the government's take on things therefore remains an opportunity for further research.

I had the opportunity to have some interesting informal conversations with Ethiopians from which I was able to distill a broader point of view on some of the subjects discussed in this thesis. As already stated, secondary literature was important to try and fill the gaps in the story I have constructed. It was also important to evaluate my conclusions and to underpin them with information from experts in the field. The most important researchers on the subject have been discussed above. Statistics gathered by these researchers were also used in this thesis. To have a better idea of the relevant issues and the position of the government towards these issues I consulted government media. Two forms of media were particularly interesting because of the fact that I do not speak Amharic. I consulted The Ethiopian Herald, an English Ethiopian based newspaper, which seems to encourage Ethiopian unity and which may venerate the current government. The second media source is ETV, the only official Ethiopian television channel which is controlled by the government. However, the latter does not broadcast in English, so if I found a program or documentary of interest I had to rely on translations. I also made use of legal documents and proclamations, of which the most important is the Ethiopian constitution drafted in 2005. This is the single most important document of the current government for all Ethiopians. Other laws of relevance are the anti-terror law, freedom of mass-media and charity-law. Finally, the internet has proved an important source. I have consulted websites for Ethiopian Muslims as well as websites from the government. Both need to be approached with caution because the information provided might be biased or false. They are useful for a better understanding of certain kinds of discourses by different actors. Information taken from these websites has been compared with other information found during my fieldwork or with secondary literature. Further international websites have been consulted if they were relevant for the subject. Wikileaks for example, has various documents on Islam in Ethiopia which were leaked from within the American government. This again points to how global Islam in Ethiopia is.

Chapter one: Concise history before 1991

In this chapter, I will discuss several key aspects concerning the history of Muslims in Ethiopia: their arrival on Ethiopian territory, the locations of their places of residence, their social and political position and so on. Additionally, the history of Addis Ababa and the *Derg* regime will be discussed. Because of the complexity of this issue, providing a succinct background is crucial in order to present a convincing and comprehensive thesis about the position of Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa post-1991. Although issues surrounding Muslims in Ethiopia and their position in the public space seem to be relatively recent – and have escalated only in the last few years – there are, in fact, many contributing factors which started to develop well before 1991. Since this is not my actual research subject, this chapter is mainly based on secondary sources, of which articles and books written by Ahmed Hussein are principal. He is a celebrated researcher who has written multiple works on the position of Muslims in Ethiopia from the moment they arrived.

1.1   Islam in Ethiopia before 1991

The first arrival of Islam in Ethiopia can be traced back to 615 AD. A group of followers of the prophet arrived in Aksum having fled from Mecca after being persecuted by the Qurayshite oligarchy.[33] The arrival is thus closely associated with the *Hijra*, a forced migration which took place between Mecca and Medina.[34] They travelled to Aksum because the prophet had encouraged them, stating that there was a kingdom in the west where they would be received and accepted. This link with the first *Hijra* serves as a strong legitimization for Islam in Ethiopia, arguing that Islam is not a foreign religion but a local one. This group

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[33] Hussein, Ahmed. "*Trends and issues in the history of Islam in Ethiopia*", in: Islam in Africa: Proceedings of Islam in Africa in Ethiopia, 1993, 205.

[34] Hussein, Ahmed. "*Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview*", in: Journal of Ethiopian studies, Vol. 40, 2007, 3.

is thus part of the first generation of Muslims, or, to use the words of Dereje Feyissa Dori: *"Islam in Ethiopia is as old as Islam itself."*[35]

The *Hijra* to Aksum was first recorded by the biographers of the prophet, namely Ibn Ishaq (704-761 AD) and Ibn Hisham (828-933 AD).[36] In Aksum, the group of Islamic refugees were accepted and seemed to live in peace and tolerance with Christians until the fall of Aksum in the middle of the tenth century.[37] However, researcher Ahmed Hussein states that the conversion of one of these immigrants in to Christianity is a clear enough sign that there was indeed pressure on the immigrants to become Christian.[38] Jon Abbink, too, criticizes this idea of early tolerance by writing: *"One might even say that debates on religion started right in the infancy of Islam in the year 615, when a first group of converts to Islam arrived."*[39] From the seventh century onward, Islam spread to the east and south of the region. The heart of the country was much harder to reach because of the well established Christian state and church and the ban on propagating the new religion by Christian rulers and clerks.[40] Because trading routs flourished, several Arab merchants settled at the coast and started to push inland, propagating their religion to nomadic and sedentary people alike. As early as the ninth century the first Islamic sultanate was created under the Makzumite dynasty.[41] Eventually, the spread of Islam in Ethiopia accumulated into a few Islamic states at the Awash river. The first of these was the sultanate of Shawa.[42]

Between the thirteenth and the sixteenth century, Muslims were subject to hostilities from several Ethiopian kings. This hostility was generated by commercial rivalry and eventually led to armed conflict between the expanding Christian kingdoms and the Muslim principalities.[43] Amda Seyon, a Christian warrior king, launched a series of campaigns which

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[35] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"Muslims struggling of recognition in Contemporary Ethiopia"*, 2013, 27.

[36] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Trends and issues in the history of Islam in Ethiopia"*, 205.

[37] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview"*, 3.

[38] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview"*, 3.

[39] Abbink, Jon. *"Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia"*, in: African Affairs, 2011, 258.

[40] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Trends and issues in the history of Islam in Ethiopia"*, 206.

[41] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"Muslims struggling of recognition in Contemporary Ethiopia"*, 2013, 25.

[42] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Trends and issues in the history of Islam in Ethiopia"*, 206.

[43] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview"*, 4.

led to the defeat of Ifât, the strongest Muslim state in Ethiopia at that time. This caused the remaining states to form a coalition against the Christian king. The sultanate of Adâl defended itself by launching several devastating raids against the eastern and southern provinces, which eventually undermined the military and administrational control of the Christian kingdom over these regions.[44] This led to a large confrontation between the two and resulted in the defeat of the Christian army after which the Muslim army occupied the northern and central part of Ethiopia. Muslim forces however, were defeated in 1543 because of the military aid granted by the Portuguese.[45] All of these events led to a major surge of ideological rivalry. In turn, this demographic and economical pressure gave rise to several Muslim popular movements in which religious motives became the active force.[46] Jon Abbink points out how this is very apparent in Christian and royal chronics of that time.[47] Hussein claims that, despite these clashes, Muslims were employed as leaders of diplomatic and commercial missions. Their status as merchants also granted them an important position since this was a major source of revenue.[48]

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, a few regionally based Muslim dynasties emerged in the north, the south and central Ethiopia. It is only from this moment on that Islam started to play a significant political and military role in the region.[49] For example, the Yajju chiefs exploited the decline of the Christian monarchies to impose their power over the puppet emperors of the period.[50] When we take a closer look at the social history of Muslims it can be said that from the eighth century onwards Muslim communities lived scattered throughout the country, even in the central and northern part of the country where society was dominated by the Christian ruling and landowning classes. Muslims were most dominant in those professions which were traditionally despised by Christians: crafts and trade. For example,

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[44] Hussein, Ahmed. "*Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview",* 6.
[45] Hussein, Ahmed. "*Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview",* 6.
[46] Abbink, Jon. "*Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia",* 258.
[47] Abbink, Jon. "*Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia",* 258.
[48] Abbink, Jon. "*Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia",* 258.
[49] Abbink, Jon. "*Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia",* 257.
[50] Hussein, Ahmed. "*Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview",* 8.

Muslims practically monopolized long distance trade.[51] Another reason for this monopoly was that in many parts of the country they were not allowed to own land, they were restricted from serving in the army and from taking part in social and political endeavors. Furthermore, they were generally perceived of as second-rate citizens.[52]

Until the nineteenth century however, they were never subject to popular or state orchestrated persecution or forced conversion. This first occurred under emperor Tewodros in the mid-1860s. During the reign of Emperor Yohannes IV there was an official policy of converting Muslims of Wallo and Shawâ to Christianity.[53] Emperor Yohannes IV was faced with Egyptian and Sudanese Mahdist threats and wanted to create unity within his territory. In 1878, he issued an edict calling for mass conversion of Muslims and other non-Christian religions within Ethiopia.[54] This edict was rigorously enforced during the late 70s and throughout the 80s of the nineteenth century. Although thousands had been forcefully converted to Christianity, armed revolt and renewed aggressive religious rhetoric's arose.[55] So, in fact, this edict created much unwanted division in a time when external threats were imminent. Emperor Lej Iyyâsu, who reigned between 1913 and 1916, made multiple attempts to accommodate Islam and to integrate pro-Muslims policies in Ethiopian politics.[56] An example of these efforts is the agreement he made with the Ottoman dynasty and the Somali nationalist Sayyid Muhammad Hasan.[57] This was, however, interpreted by the EOC (Ethiopian Orthodox Church) and the colonial powers as an anti-Christian and anti-colonial alliance. Thus Lej Iyyâsu was removed from power through a coup d'état in 1916, in which even colonial powers were involved.[58]

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[51] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"Muslims struggling of recognition in Contemporary Ethiopia"*, 2013, 25.
[52] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview"*, 7.
[53] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview"*, 7.
[54] Abbink, Jon. *"Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia"*, 258.
[55] Abbink, Jon. *"Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia"*, 258.
[56] Interview Iziz 14/02/2014.
[57] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview"*,8
[58] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview"*, 8.

In 1935 the Italian colonial forces invaded Ethiopia. During their occupation (1935-1941) they wanted to aggravate the tensions between Christianity and Islam: they wanted to ally with the Ethiopian Muslims in the hope of weakening the Christian Ethiopian resistance. Aware of the long oppression of Muslims by their Christian rulers they declared a pro-Islamic policy. Through this policy the Italians wanted to pose themselves as liberators of Muslims from Christian oppression.[59] They guaranteed the construction of fifty mosques, of which the most important one was the Anwar mosque in Addis Ababa. After the emperorship was restored in 1941, the EOC launched an aggressive missionary policy against Islam in southern Ethiopia. Multiple missions were launched, of which the second one led to the conversion of twenty thousand people.[60] All this happened before, during and after emperor Haile Sellassie declared religious equality in 1945. Thus, behind the facade of tolerance, there were increasing tensions. During his reign, politics was dominated by an imperial and Christian ideology from which Muslims suffered a great deal. They were denied full citizenship and excluded from the possibility of receiving a legal title to land. High level political jobs were also out of the question.[61] However, Jon Abbink states that Muslims were allowed to practice their own religion without pursuing political goals during the reign of Haile Sellassie.[62] From all this, it is clear that several well or ill intended steps were taken that had little or no effect in practice. Muslims were continuously subject to discrimination.

After the revolution in 1974, the military *Derg* regime came to power. The revolution was fueled by a popular movement which consisted of minority groups that were discontent with their lack of advantages. Mass demonstrations held in April 1974 demonstrated Muslims' discontent and demand for radical change in the discriminatory policy by the state and its rulers.[63] The demands put forward in these demonstrations were separation of religion and state, and recognition of three Islamic holidays.[64] Moreover, the demonstrators publically denounced the discourse of Ethiopia being an Island of Christianity. As a result of these

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[59] Hussein, Ahmed. "*Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview*", 8.
[60] Hussein, Ahmed. "*Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview*", 9.
[61] Abbink, Jon. "*Religion in Public Spaces*": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia", 259.
[62] Abbink, Jon. "*Religion in Public Spaces*": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia", 259.
[63] Hussein, Ahmed. "*Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview*", 10.
[64] Hussein, Ahmed. "*Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview*", 11.

demonstrations, The military government issued a decree stating that three Islamic holidays would be recognized as national holidays for the first time in history. Muslims improved their collective circumstances in the early stages of the socialist regime: there was less job discrimination, more opportunities to build mosques and higher *Hajj* quota.[65] The regime separated state and religion.

For the first time, the Christian church lost its privileged position in Ethiopia. The *Derg* regime proclaimed religious equality and accused the EOC of being a bastion of feudalism.[66] Unfortunately, relations between Ethiopian Muslims and the regime gradually deteriorated because of the anti-religious turn the regime took, inspired by the Marxist/Leninist ideology. The economic position of Muslims was undermined because of communist policies and the regime caused a lot of opposition because of its hostility toward organized religious activity.[67] Muslims have been subject to various kinds of discrimination and maltreatment from different kinds of rulers in Ethiopia, from the moment they arrived in Aksum until the end of the *Derg* regime. Desplat and Ostebo state: *"The emphasis on religious tolerance is a rather new phenomenon in public discourses in Ethiopia and sheds light on the Christian-Muslim relations in the country. These discourses are usually dominated by the popular notion that Ethiopia is primarily a Christian country."[68]* All of this should be kept in mind when current issues concerning the Muslim population are discussed.

1.2 Addis Ababa

The city of Addis Ababa (New Flower) was founded in 1886 by emperor Menelik II after his wife Taytu chose the location based on a few hot springs in the area. In addition, the emperor found that Ontoto mountain, beneath which the city is located, was a useful base from which

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[65] Abbink, Jon. *"Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia",* 260.

[66] Abbink, Jon. *"Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia",* 260

[67] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview",* 11.

[68] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism".* Palgrave Macmillan Ltd, 2013, 2.

to launch military operations.[69] Menelik II was the first Emperor of Ethiopia. He was the one who conquered the different regions which are now part of the Ethiopian territory.[70] When Menelik II became emperor of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa became the capital city of the country.[71] After Addis Ababa had become the capital it evolved from a small town, in which only a few influential people owned houses, into a large city. As in most African countries, the capital city grew enormously from the 80s until today. People moved to the capital to escape from rural life, in search of new job opportunities and many more reasons, usually driven by poverty. The result is a one-city dominance. Indexmundi, for example, considers Addis Ababa the only major city in Ethiopia. The revision of the Addis Ababa master plan states that *"Addis Ababa is fifteen times the size of the second largest city in Ethiopia (Dire Dawa)".[72]*

Today, Addis Ababa is an enormous city which is still expanding. It currently consists of ten sub-cities: 1. Kolfe-Kerenia, 2. Lafto, 3. Addis Ketama, 4. Gulele, 5. Yeka, 6. Arada, 7. Akake Kaleti, 8. Kerkos, 9. Bole and 10. Lideta. Over the years, it has absorbed different towns in the vicinity of the city, for example Kera Kore. It has become the commercial and political centre of the country and of Africa. Commercially, Addis Ababa has an enormous economy which consists of formal and informal commercial activities. In this economy, more than 2.739.551 people have to find employment. However, there is a high rate of unemployment and many have lost their job in the past few years. A large part of the - recently - unemployed are now active in the informal sectors within the city. The city consists of forty-six formal and informal market places, of which the largest and most important one is Merkato.[73] As stated above, the city grew at an enormous rate over the past decades and this has resulted in a considerable uptake in informal settlements. In 2001 the writers of the Revision of the master plan stated that*: "An estimated 60 percent of the city core is*

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[69]History of the city of Addis Ababa as found on the website of the City Government of Addis Ababa
http://www.addisababacity.gov.et/index.php/en/about-addis/history consulted 05/04/2014.

[70] Marcus, Harold. *"A History of Ethiopia".* California, University of California press, 1994. 216.

[71] History of the city of Addis Ababa as found on the website of the City Government of Addis Ababa
http://www.addisababacity.gov.et/index.php/en/about-addis/history consulted 05/04/2014.

[72] Office for the revision of the Addis Ababa Master plan, *Addis Ababa revised Master Plan Proposals: Draft summary December 2000*, Addis Ababa, Addis Ababa city government , 2001, 14.

[73] Office for the revision of the Addis Ababa Master plan, *Addis Ababa revised Master Plan Proposals: Draft summary December 2000*, Addis Ababa, Addis Ababa city government , 2001, p. 20.

dilapidated, and about a quarter of all housing units have been built illegally and informally. In addition to creating ever expanding slum area's in and around the city, the lack of service provision exacerbates the already poor living and working conditions."[74] These informal settlements are still very visible today, no matter which sub city you go to. Over the past few years, a number of development plans have been put in motion. All over the city, you can see new buildings being built. Usually these new structures are destined for housing or commercial purposes. The contrast between informal housing on the one hand and the tall, modern buildings on the other lends the city a slightly confounding yet quite fascinating image. The city is obviously developing very fast but this is not unequivocally positive. Since these new buildings are being constructed where there used to be informal settlements, the people who were occupying these houses had to leave their homes in order for them to be demolished. A large amount of research has been done around slum-upgrading and many researchers have concluded that these construction plans have had a very negative social impact.[75]

In addition to the political and economical importance of Addis Ababa, religion plays a considerable part in the daily dynamics of the city since people with different religious convictions live in close proximity to each other. This causes a lot of tensions within and between communities, for example in the construction of places of worship. This will be discussed in greater detail in chapter five.

1.3   *The* Derg *regime*

1.3.1   *Commencement of the* Derg *regime*

In 1974, a popular revolution took place, in which several ethnicities and religious groups demonstrated against the deplorable conditions created by emperor Haile Sellassie. These demonstrations started after a severe famine in 1973. Although famines were a part of life in Ethiopia, people blamed the ruling forces for their inability to solve this problem. Haile Sellassie summoned an emergency committee which managed to resolve a lot of issues by

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[74] Office for the revision of the Addis Ababa Master plan, *Addis Ababa revised Master Plan Proposals: Draft summary December 2000*, 30.
[75] Hove, Mediel, Et. Al. *"The urban crisis in sub-Sahara Africa: A threat to Human Security and Sustainable Development",* in: Stability, Vol. 2, 6.

moving internal resources.[76] This, however, did not satisfy his people. Students of Addis Ababa University picked up on this and organised demonstrations and other forms of action against the government. Prices spiked in various economical sectors and other population groups also came to the streets to protest against the emperor and his counsellors.

On 21 February, the streets of Addis Ababa were labelled unsafe. From that moment on, the military was given full authority to control civil unrest. The emperor announced that any disturbance would be met with military intervention. Hereafter, the streets became peaceful again but the agitation then moved from civil to military.[77] Soldiers arrested their officers and demanded higher salaries and better living conditions. The government raised soldiers' wages, but it was not deemed sufficient and numerous similar incidents took place. The emperor announced that the country could not afford more pay raises and tried to regain loyalty by referring to the duty soldiers have to protect their country. This appeal to patriotism had little effect. Many garrisons joined the popular unrest, which was re-fuelled by the students. When the army joined the people it became abundantly clear that the emperor was incompetent without the help of his army. This led various military officers to think that they could bring revolutionary political change to the country. The army was thus politicising.[78] It was around this time that the army adopted a Marxist-Leninist ideology.

On 28 June, military representatives constituted themselves as the coordinating committee of the armed forces (*Derg*, meaning committee). They emphasized the unity between army and country. They also commissioned the removal of the emperor and his advisors. The government started to fall apart from that moment on because various advisors resigned and went into exile.[79] The emperor was consequently removed by the army in September 1974 on the grounds that he was unfit to rule because of his old age and on the accusation of abusing his power.[80] In addition, the *Derg* regime manufactured various stories about the wealth and extravagance of the ruling elite. The goal was to destroy the charismatic stature of Haile Sellassie.[81] The army dissolved the parliament on the grounds of not representing the people but the aristocratic elites. Furthermore, they suspended the constitution written by Haile

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[76] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia",* 182.

[77] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia",* 183

[78] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia",* 183.

[79] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia",* 187.

[80] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia".* Munster, Lit Verlag, 80.

[81] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia",* 188.

Sellassie and declared that the army would exercise governmental powers through the Provisional Military Administration Council until a new constitution was drafted and a new government was established.

Van der Beken, however, states that this revolution can hardly be called one. With the exception of the deposing of Haile Sellassie the regime remained loyal to monarchical state form. It had foreseen a replacement for the emperor, which was crown prince Asfa Wossen.[82] Soon the *Derg* regime came under pressure from various Marxist movements who wanted the end of the military rule and the formation of a civilian government. The military, however, increasingly followed a radical political course. This was very apparent in how they dealt with the conflict in Eritrea: instead of looking for a peaceful solution, the military opted for continuing military repression.[83] The more radical army officers were convinced that installing a civil government would end the revolution before it properly finished and that peace with Eritrea would give power to a liberation movement.[84]

In 1977, Mengistu Haile Mariam assumed all power by becoming the chairman of the *Derg* party, after the previous chairman was murdered and the EPRP was removed. This concluded the end of the power struggle within the party, which had started from the moment the emperor was disposed of.[85] Mengistu had managed to seize the power with the help of MAESON (Amharic acronym of All Ethiopia Socialist Movement) but he was not willing to share power. He removed all political parties from the political stage in 1978-1979, except for the military party Abyot Seded (revolutionary flame).[86]

The *Derg* regime saw the ethnic question in the light of class struggle. The Amharic ethnic group had been dominating the Ethiopian ruling elite before and during the imperial period, therefore the socialist regime, following the Marxist ideology, wanted to create class equality. This led to several attempts like the appointment of regional governors, who originated from the region in question.[87] However, because of the growing centralization of power applied by the regime these projects soon came to an end. Eventually, all the higher state organs were

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[82] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 80.
[83] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia",* 189.
[84] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia",* 189.
[85] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 85.
[86] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia",* 200.
[87] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 86.

dominated by the Amhara ethnic group.[88] The regime wanted to remove class differences by implementing various nationalisation measures. The *Derg* regime, for example, launched a land reform program called 'Land to the Tiller', which ended all capitalistic agricultural endeavours. Second, they nationalised all rural land and created peasant associations which were given control and a lot of autonomy over this land. Peasants in these associations were free to distribute the land among themselves. A similar strategy was applied in the cities.[89] These associations lost their autonomy fairly soon. Peasant associations were centralized and scarcely effective in the 1980s. Only four percent was communalised and because of the large amount of farmers in Ethiopia the lots per farmer decreased. This eventually led to over cultivation, land degradation and declining yields. In addition, farmers had to sell their yield below market price to governmental industries.[90]

When in the year 1983, the rains failed to fall, a famine was expected for the next year. This expectation was however kept hidden from the top leaders even after the drought of 1984. After the government was made aware of the crisis, which was growing worse and worse with about ten thousand people dying every week, the regime chose not to acknowledge the crisis and refused to use the funds reserved for their ten year celebration.[91] All of this eventually led to large dissatisfaction among the population. The complete dominance of the army, their inability to take care of several problems like ethnicity and the reinstatement of a civil government, led to the creation of several regional and ethnical liberation movements in various parts of the country.[92] Because an in-depth discussion of all liberation movements would lead too far and is, in the end, not relevant for this thesis, I will focus only on the three most relevant groups since they had such a significant impact on the fall of the *Derg* regime and on the formation of the current government. Most of them were created before the *Derg* regime and fought mainly for the liberation of their own territory and ethnicity. Eventually, however, the efforts of all these small scale movements evolved into the liberation of the entire country from the military regime as will be seen below.

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[88] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia*", 86.
[89] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia*", 192.
[90] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia*", 204.
[91] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia*", 205.
[92] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia"*, 87.

1.3.2 Decline of the Derg *regime*

The Oromo struggle is the first liberation struggle to be discussed, their struggle started before the socialist regime took power. The Oromo region had been conquered by emperor Menelik II and had since been part of the Ethiopian territory. The population in this region felt that they had been colonized by the emperor and had never wished to be part of Ethiopia. This sentiment is still very alive today and apparent in different independent movements. The actual resistance organized by the OLF (Oromo Liberation Front) was very moderate. In fact, their huge territory and lack of efficient communication made it difficult for the OLF to organise itself. Religious and regional differences also contributed to this.[93]

The second Liberation movements belong to the Eritrean peoples. After the revolution of 1974, there were high hopes of solving the Eritrean conflict. The socialist regime inherited this conflict from emperor Haile Sellassie. However, these expectations were soon crushed when it became clear that the *Derg* regime opted for continuing military repression. The Eritrean struggle for independence also started before the rise of the socialist regime. During the imperial period this struggle was led by the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and was primarily supported by Eritrean Muslims because of its pan-Arabic and pan-Islamic ideology.[94] This is also the reason why they estranged from the Christian Eritrean population. Eventually, it meant the end of this independence movement. The EPLF was founded in the 1970s. The movement had a socialist and nationalist ideology and was dominated by Eritrean Christians.[95] Because of the repressive attitude of the military regime, Eritrean nationalism was awakened, which resulted in high numbers of new recruits for the liberation movements. The EPLF could easily integrate these in their cause, the ELF on the other hand, was limited because of its pan-Arabic and pan-Islamic ideology.[96] None the less, both movements grew extensively and managed to hold various regions within Eritrea thanks to the weakened position of the army during the early years of the regime. This eventually led to the Red March in which the regime encouraged peasants to fight in Eritrea in exchange for monetary

[93]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia", 90.*

[94]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 91.

[95]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 91.

[96]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 91.

compensation. These peasants were, however, untrained and poorly equipped and thus, the Red march led to a landslide victory for the EPLF.[97]

Between 1978 and 1979, the *Derg* managed to reconquer many territories held by the two liberation movements because they received military support from the Soviet Union, and because they ended the war with Somalia. Ethiopian troops which had fought against the Somali army were re-stationed in Eritrea.[98] However, they weren't, able to completely erase the EPLF because of the regime's inability to withstand such a huge military deployment. The ELF, on the other hand, was almost completely defeated because of internal disputes which weakened the movement.[99] The ELF, eventually, completely disappeared in the 1980s, when it was defeated by a military cooperation between the EPLF and the TPLF.[100] Although the TPLF had good relations with both of the liberation movements, the relationship with ELF eventually deteriorated.[101]

The third liberation movement that opposed the *Derg* regime, the TPLF, evolved out of a student movement in the Tigray region. They adopted a socialist and nationalist ideology. Their main focus was on the self-determination of the Tigrians. The TPLF was very popular among the Tigray people and in a fairly short time the movement defeated rivalling resistance forces. Together with the EPLF, they formed a considerable threat to the *Derg* regime.[102] Their popularity was mainly generated by the powerful position of the Amhara ethnic group and the neglect which the regime had been showing towards their region. Tigray was where the first Ethiopian society was created and it had been the centre of the region for centuries. Frustration about the regime's neglect led to many new recruits joining the TPLF. Other recruits adhered the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, on which the TPLF had a considerable influence.[103]

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[97] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia",* 195.
[98] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia",* 200.
[99] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 92.
[100] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 92.
[101] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 97.
[102] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 94.
[103] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 96.

Relations between the TPLF and the EPLF were mainly military. The EPLF fighters had gained considerable fighting experience during their resistance of the imperial army. They trained the followers of the TPLF and helped them in their confrontation with the *Derg* army. This gave the TPLF much needed experience.[104] Because of this cooperation, one would expect that relations between these two movements were strong. There were, however, continuous tensions between the TPLF and EPLF. These were already visible during the civil war, as early as the mid 80s.[105] For example: in 1985 it led to a complete break between them. The growing power of the TPLF and their victories in battle went hand in hand with their growing irritation about the EPLF's paternalistic attitude. As TPLF kept evolving into a considerable military movement they felt confident enough to criticize the military strategies of the EPLF.[106]

The main point of difference between the two movements was their position on ethnic issues and their attitude towards the Soviet Union. As stated above, the EPLF wanted to decolonize the Eritrean region and become a sovereign country. The TPLF, on the other hand, believed that the right to self-determination should be implemented with all nationalities and ethnicities. This meant that the EPLF should also give the right to self-determination to the different ethnic groups inside Eritrea.[107] This would undermine the claim of the EPLF that Eritrea had been colonialized. The strength of the *Derg* regime was declining because of the exhausting toll the continuous deployment of the army took. Moreover, economical measures taken by the regime created a negative trend in revenue.[108] This led to many victories for both liberation movements, after they had decided to put their differences aside and join forces. Their lasting differences in ideology and convictions would eventually be an important factor leading to the war between 1998 and 2000 and to a strenuous relationship between the two countries ever since.

Gradually, the TPLF gained control over almost the entire Tigray region. The socialist regime was thus forced to suffer a humiliating defeat in the region, not only because of the growing

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[104] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia",* p. 209.

[105] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as aMechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 97.

[106] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 97.

[107] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia",* 98.

[108] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia",* 212.

strength of the TPLF but also because it could no longer afford to equip and maintain its forces in the region.[109]

The TPLF only received support from the Tigray people and to widen their support basis they founded the EPRDF in 1989.[110] The objective was to create a coalition party which could be supported by the various ethnic groups. During its first years, the EPRDF consisted of two parties: the TPLF and the EPDM, Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement. The name was later first changed to ANDM (Amharic National Democratic Movement), then one year later to OPDO (Oromo People's Democratic Organization). The latter was founded to represent the Oromo region. All this can also be considered as a move to counter the influence of the OLF.[111] The decision to expand the struggle to other regions of the country was a hot-button issue within the TPLF. Many considered the ousting of the socialist regime a victory and considered the liberation struggle to be over.[112] However, Van der Beken states that, soon, the Tigray constituency was convinced of the pan-Ethiopian agenda and the civil war regained momentum.[113]

The start of the fall of the *Derg* regime could be situated in 1987. The regime recognised that the liberation movements could not be defeated and thus they changed their strategy.[114] They tried to create a more positive climate in order to negotiate peace. This was done, among other things, by approving a new constitution in February 1987. Marcus, on the other hand, believes that the new constitution was not a sign of defeat but a sign of confidence from the *Derg* regime, citing their believe in victory.[115] This, however, seems very unlikely because the constitution could have been drafted in any of the previous years of their rule. Up until then, the regime considered military oppression to be a more effective way to handle opposition in the country.[116] The approval of the new document ended thirteen years of rule without a constitution. However, the new constitution was deemed too little, too late by the liberation movements. The constitution did not support regional administrations and thus they were still

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[109] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia*", 212.
[110] Van der Beken, Christophe. "*Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia*", 100.
[111] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia*", 213.
[112] Van der Beken, Christophe. "*Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia*", 100.
[113] Van der Beken, Christophe. "*Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia*", 100.
[114] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia*", 212.
[115] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia*", 211.
[116] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia*", 192.

very dependent on central government. Moreover, the constitution also granted the *Derg* regime considerable flexibility for intervening in the administration of autonomous regions.[117] Other attempts were made to create less tension and strain on the regime but none of them could make an end to the fire burning in the liberation movements.[118] The position of the Mengistu regime considerably weakened in 1988 and continued to weaken afterwards.[119] In addition to their growing inability to counter the liberation movements, the fall of the Soviet Union meant the end of their military supplies. After the Soviet Union fell, the *Derg* regime renounced their Leninist-Marxist ideology in 1990. They suggested the installation of a multi-party system in order to receive support of the USA. This, however, was never accomplished.[120] Because of their untenable position, the socialist regime was forced to negotiate peace with the liberation movements. In April 1991, the United States of America organised a peace conference in London: all liberation parties as well as representatives of the *Derg* regime were present. The conference came too late for the *Derg* however. Their fate was sealed in the first months of 1991.[121] This is illustrated by the march into Addis Ababa by the TPLF who took effective control of the country on 21 of April 1991.[122]

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[117] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia*", 100.
[118] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia*", 209.
[119] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia*", 101.
[120] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia*", 215.
[121] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia*", 101.
[122] Marcus, Harold. "*A History of Ethiopia*", 216.

Chapter two: Important Actors

This chapter considers all main actors related to the position of Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa, in Ethiopia itself as well as internationally. I aim to provide the reader with a better understanding of the different influences which impact the situation of Muslims in Ethiopia. The sheer number of different actors and influences elevates the local to a global scale. The main focus of this chapter is not to link the different actors with the issues handled in this thesis but rather to provide a comprehensive background of these actors. Although it might not always seem to be directly relevant, it is of indirect value to understand the larger picture which is necessary to understand the position of Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa. This chapter provides an in-depth look at their arrival in Ethiopia as well as their position in the country, their personal convictions and ideologies, and their importance regarding the position of Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa.

2.1.   *Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front*

In 1991, when the center of Ethiopia was conquered from the periphery, the TPLF was a resistance force representing the Tigray region. They had defeated the national army of the *Derg* regime after a long period of struggle. The regime had been responsible for multiple atrocities, topped off by the escalation of the famine in the 90s.[123] After the TPLF had risen to power with the help of the EPLF, they created a new party under the name EPRDF. This was a coalition of four parties, each representing a major ethnic group in Ethiopia: the Tigray region (TPLF), Oromo (OPDO), Amhara (ANDM) and the southern region (SEPDF).[124] This might seem like a functional system with a reasonable base of support, able to decentralize power in a federal governing system. In reality, OPDO, ANDM and SEPDF were all created under the guidance and auspices of the TPLF.[125] Because of this multi-ethnic strategy, the TPLF managed to establish power over all regions within Ethiopia.[126] The TPLF was the

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[123] Marcus, Herald. "*A History of Ethiopia*", 213.

[124] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 135.

[125] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 129.

[126] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 129.

dominant party in the EPRDF, and after the first elections it became clear that what had started out as a step forward toward decentralization actually became a system with one-party dominance.[127] The domination of the EPRDF and the TPLF stems from two main factors. The first one being military supremacy: both state defense forces as well as regional armies. Although it was decided by law that the EPRDF army would function as the defense force of the state it still threatened the opposition with intimidation and violence.[128] The second factor was control over local administrations. The EPRDF managed to seize control over almost all parts of the country through the intermediacy of ethnically based parties as government stooges.[129] Over the next five years (after 1991), the power of the EPRDF grew, not only because of its dominant position at the outset, but also because opposing parties boycotted almost all elections until 2005.

2.1.1 Ethic strategy

The two most prominent opposition parties, namely AAPO (All Amhara People's Organization) and OLF have both argued -over the past 23 years- that, because of the EPRDF's dominance in political and military aspects of the country, a free and honest election was impossible.[130] Moreover, the opposition accused the EPRDF of intimidation of their party members and supporters. Last but not least, they complained about the control of media by the EPRDF, since the opposition parties were not allowed to use any of the state-run media. These accusations were brought up again with every election, in which the opposition refused to participate.[131] Christophe Van der Beken concludes:

"The ethnic strategy has its flaws, but these do not invalidate this observation (which he makes in this quote). The critical comments on the ethnic strategy are primarily justified as far as they concern its restricted implementation. It is not the ethnic as such, but rather the ambiguous commitment of the rulers to fully accept its consequences, which could prove to be the major impediment to the success of Ethiopia's new nation and state building project. The Ethiopian peoples, who are designated by

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[127]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 129.
[128]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 117.
[129]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 117.
[130]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 118.
[131]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 119.

constitution as bearers of all sovereign power and consequently have extensive rights, have to accept a restricted autonomy in practice. They can only exercise their right to self-determination within the framework drawn by the EPRDF."[132]

This dissertation concurs with Van der Beken in the sense that the liberties extended to the Ethiopian people by the current government, mainly exist in theory alone. However, the positive achievements this government has delivered, in general and compared to previous regimes, should not be forgotten. There is, however, a clear lack of implementation of the constitution. This lack has a negative impact on the nation and state building project of current and future Ethiopia. The question is whether the framework offered by the EPRDF is sufficient for the Ethiopian people to exercise their rights. The people of Addis Ababa feel their government doesn't respect their rights.[133] In addition, compulsory taxes are being paid of which they claim the population does not get anything in return. Although none of the respondents contacted within this research provided clear evidence for these allegations, the fact remains that these feelings are present in all layers of the Ethiopian population.[134] Whether or not the EPRDF is able to provide for the rights and freedom of the Ethiopian population, this population at least believes that the party is not.

From the moment the EPRDF defeated the *Derg* regime, it became apparent that it aimed to create a federal government based on ethnicity. This had already been written into a transitional charter which functioned as the law from 1991 to 1992.[135] The proclamation in this charter recognizes sixty-three "nations, nationalities and peoples", each linked with one of the different regions of Ethiopia, plus two separate regions for Addis Ababa and Harar.[136] The EPRDF thus sought to redress the central politics of the past by providing the right of self-determination for other ethnic groups.[137] The goal of this arrangement was to create four ethnically homogenous regions: Afar, Oromo, Somali and Harari. Other regions were more

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[132]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 131.
[133] Street interviews 08/03/2014.
[134] Focus group different ethnicities and religions 04/03/2014.
[135]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 110.
[136]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 110.
[137] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. "*Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 4.

heterogenic.[138] Because of this, a second option was provided for ethnic groups to organize themselves in the form of a district. However, this was not applicable to small groups, so they in turn were guaranteed representatives in bureaucracy and politics. This federal system based on ethnicity was geared toward the decentralization of power and to create a form of democracy in Ethiopia in which the different regions and nationalities would have a great deal of autonomy.[139]

How did the EPRDF manage to exert this much control over national as well as regional politics? First, the EPRDF has been directly controlling four regions through the different coalition parties. On a national level, the EPRDF has been a coalition consisting of four major parties structured around ethnicity. In their respective regions, the parties have held all or almost all seats in the regional parliaments. Secondly in other regions, the situation has been somewhat different: other parties than the four core EPRDF coalition partners have been in power. All parties have, however, been closely affiliated with the EPRDF and have followed the same EPRDF program.[140] Van der Beken says this has had positive and negative aspects: the positive being that disputes are being settled within the party, which makes for a stronger government. For example: there are less problems between the regional and federal level. The negative aspect is that there is less regional autonomy and a large part of control is in the hands of one party.[141] So in fact, the EPRDF has direct and indirect control over national as well as regional politics. This all contributes to the argument that Ethiopia has a one-party state.

To conclude, it should be remarked that the EPRDF has been continuously evolving into a more authoritarian government ever since.[142] Ostebo states: *"Ethiopia has in the twenty-first century unfortunately moved in a critical direction[...] This has entailed narrower political processes, different legislative acts which have limited the space for the civil society, and an increasing omnipresent state- largely in the form of the ruling party."*[143] It has previously

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[138]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 110.
[139] Interview Van den Beken 18/02/2014.
[140]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 110.
[141]Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 110.
[142] Almost all interviews taken between 18 January and 10 March.
[143] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. "*Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 241.

been stated that the EPRDF already had a large amount of power during the first years of the Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, because of their involvement in all political and military levels. The party also enjoyed a fairly stable and unevenly distributed amount of power over the past twenty-three years. The only exception has been the elections of 2005 in which the EPRDF lost almost all seats in the large cities of Ethiopia, of which Addis Ababa was the most important and most extraordinary example. In 2010, the opposite happened: in this election the EPRDF was elected for almost all seats in parliament, which gave them virtually all political power.[144] In turn, this power gave them the opportunity to exert more influence in society through different organizations. Their growing power and authoritarian attitude is very apparent in their crackdown on mainly peaceful demonstrations and continuous arrests. It is also visible in their violation or lack of implementation of the constitution. Ostebo writes: "*The statement by Meles Zenawi [...] confirmed the regime's determination to buttress against any destabilizing forces, regionally or domestically, that potentially could threaten the power of the ruling party.*"[145] These statements are mainly based on examples of incidents having to do with the Muslim communities. But Muslims are far from the only ones who are affected by this. Popular opinion, regardless of religious background, is very aware of the growing influence the government has on society and, maybe more importantly, on religion.[146] Ostebo and Desplat state: *"Muslims in Ethiopia started to contest the federal secularity, demanding a more Muslim-friendly political environment.*"[147]

2.1.2   Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

The constitution that came into effect in 1995 is possibly the most important piece of legislation written in Ethiopia. On the basis of this constitution, the EPRDF aimed to build a modern Ethiopia in which all Ethiopian citizens are equal before the law, regardless of their ethnicity, gender or religious background. All rights and obligations of the people of Ethiopia are clearly stated in this constitution. It is, however, interesting to take a look at the political climate during the composition of the constitution. The OLF, for example, argued that a democratic constitutional process was impossible because of the political dominance by the EPRDF. Christophe Van der Beken says these accusations were not without ground since

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[144] Interview Van den Beke 18/02/2014.

[145] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam*". In: Journal of American Academy of Religion, Vol. 81, 2013, 21.

[146] Various casual conversations, personal observations focus groups and interviews

[147] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. "*Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism*". Palgrave Macmillan Ltd, 2013, 13.

there are indications that the EPRDF did have considerable influence over the council of representatives to which the constitution was to be submitted.[148] In the elections of 1993, the EPRDF held thirty-two of sixty-six seats in the Council of representatives. Add the seats of their affiliated parties and you see how they effectively held the vast majority in the Council of Representatives. Therefore, they had a considerable influence on this organ during the drafting of the constitution.[149] Even more so since the OLF, one of the major opposing parties, refused to cooperate. The EPRDF was the major power holder. Although the accusations of the OLF about the EPRDF's control of the house of representatives were correct, it is not only the EPRDF that should be blamed for this. By boycotting the elections, the OLF lost its opportunity to exert any influence during the drafting process.[150]

Discussing the constitutional aspects concerning religion is key in this thesis since this is one of the most central documents regarding the issues between Muslims and the government as well as the position of Muslims in the public space. Article 11 of the constitution asserts the division between religion and state: religion shall not intervene in state politics and vice versa. Article 27 grants the freedom of religion, belief and opinion. It states that each Ethiopian has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and opinion and the freedom to adopt and practice a religion of their choice.[151] This article grants Ethiopians the opportunity to build religious institutions, it prohibits forcing someone into a certain religion and it consolidates the parents' right to raise their children in their religion of choice. The only restriction possible on article 27 is by law and also by article 2 and 9 of the constitution.[152] This means that all religions can organize themselves through media, committees, leaders and so on, build institutions, raise funds, etcetera defended by the law and constitution of their country. The religious freedom

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[148] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 121.

[149] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 121.

[150] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 126.

[151] Ethiopian government, *"Proclamation No. 1: the constitution of the federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia",* 1995, 126.

[152] Art. 2 Ethiopian territorial jurisdiction discusses the territory which is internationally determined to be Ethiopia and the jurisdiction of the Ethiopian government over this territory. Art. 9 Supremacy of the constitution discusses the supremacy of the constitution over later created laws. These laws cannot change the guarantees which the constitution provides for the Ethiopian people.
Ethiopian government, *"Proclamation No. 1: the constitution of the federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia",* 1995, p.126.

created by this constitution was thus enormous, compared to the situation under previous governments and rulers. For the first time in the history of the territory that is now Ethiopia, all religions were defended and respected by law. As will be mentioned in various sections below this had a profound impact on Muslims in Ethiopia, who had been treated like secondary citizens ever since their arrival in Aksum.[153] The constitution is also one of the main subjects raised when people talk about the current issues concerning Ethiopian Muslims.[154]

2.2   Islamic movements in Ethiopia

When the current government took power in 1991, a comfortable environment was created for minority religions in Ethiopia. For Muslims this government meant a great improvement for their position in society when compared to previous governments and rulers. As mentioned before, Muslims had been subject to various kinds of injustice, of which one of the worst was under emperor Haile Sellassie, who tried to forcefully convert Muslims into Christianity.[155] In addition, Muslims had to deal with the dominating Christians, which regarded Muslims as a marginal and even profane part of the population.[156] The EPRDF was especially important to Muslims in Addis Ababa in the first five years of its existence. The reason being that the EPRDF wanted to make a break with the Amharic elite, the supporters of the previous governments of which the socialist regime was the most important.[157] They fought and defeated this regime before taking the power in Ethiopia.

The Amharic elite mainly consisted of Christians, and to counter their power in society the EPRDF started supporting Muslims. (Many Christians were until recently convinced that the EPRDF was pro-Muslim party.[158]) The impact of the new possibilities for Muslims created by the current government are most evident when we talk about Addis Ababa. Between 1991 and 1995 the mayor of Addis Ababa, named Ali Abdu, was Muslim. He created a lot of

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[153] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview"*, 5.
[154] Almost all interviews taken between 18 January and 10 March.
[155]   Informal conversation Rashid 08/03/2014.
[156]   Hussein, Ahmed. *"Reflections on Historical and Contemporary Islam in Ethiopia and Somalia: A comparative and contrastive overview"*, 6.
[157]   Interview Solomon 28/01/14.
[158] Interview Solomon 28/01/14

possibilities for Muslims regarding social and religious organisation and the building of religious institutions.[159] Although resurgence of Islamism after 1991 is considered by many as a new politicised Islam, Ostebo says that nothing is further from the truth. Both Tabligh and Salafi movements in Ethiopia can be characterised as reform movements.[160] Their main focus is to reform the religious sphere.

2.2.1 Salafism

Salafism has been the subject of a continuously negative discourse. Much has been said and written about Salafism and Wahhabism from the perspective of security studies. Such works emphasize the relation between Salafism and violence. This has changed in recent years and a more neutral stance is taken by current researchers.[161] Roel Meijer defines Salafism as follows: "*Salafism derives from the term the pious forefathers(al-salaf al salih), the first three generations of Muslims who had first-hand experience of the rise of Islam and are regarded as exemplary for the correct way to live for future Muslims.*"[162] In the first years of its existence, the creator of the movement, Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, decided to make a deal with one of the prevailing political powers. This political alliance was made with Amir Muhammed ibn al-Sa'ud in 1744, whose family eventually became the founders and leaders of Saudi Arabia from 1932, leading up to now.[163] Because of this decision Wahhabism/Salafism rose from an isolated sect to a global movement.[164] These days, it is very hard to describe the exact and, more importantly, the correct aspects of Salafism, not only in Ethiopia but also in the rest of the world. Media and governments have established

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[159] Interview Fatima 13/02/14 and Solomon 28/01/14

[160] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam*". 18.

[161] Meijer, Roel. *"Global salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement"*. United Kingdom, 2009, 2.

[162] Meijer, Roel. *"Global salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement"*. United Kingdom, 2009, 3.

[163] Meijer, Roel. *"Global salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement"*. United Kingdom, 2009, 8.

[164] Although many in Ethiopia regard Wahhabism and Salafism to be the same many researchers would disagree with this. It is argued that on a political level these movements have similar ideas but on an ideological level these vary remarkably. They are thus not exactly the same movements. However because in Ethiopia these two terms concern the same thing and because various researchers on a political level consider them to be the comparable, it will be opted to not make it more confusing than it already is. Thus both term will be used to describe the same movement in Ethiopia.

Meijer, Roel. *"Global salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement"*. United Kingdom, 2009, 7.

several discourses about Salafism which are frequently incorrect. In addition, the Salafi movement has become more diverse and heterogeneous.[165] The modernization of the oil-state of Saudi Arabia created tensions in the Salafi movement. The confrontation with modernity forced the Wahhabi's to adjust to the modern world. This was an adjustment achieved by a lot of different ideologists, who mixed their own traditions, ideology and background with the ideals of the movement. This diversified the movement and created internal tensions between the different convictions.[166] For example: in Ethiopia two youth movements split from the main Salafi movement. The core movement then mainly attracted older Muslim followers. Roel Meijer states that this fragmentation is visible in all cases, which means that wherever Salafism is present, it was subject to fragmentation because of the growing confrontation with modernity.[167]

Ostebo follows the distinction of Quintan Wiktorowicz by distinguishing three trends of Salafism. The first one is the purist trend, which represents the official establishment in Saudi Arabia and knows important figures like Abd al- Aziz Abdallah Bin Baz and Muhammed Nasr al-Din al-Albani.[168] This trend is characterized by its focus on moral issues and the purity of Islam as described by the *Qur'an* and the Sunna tradition. More important than the ideas put forward by Nasr al-Din al-Albani is their impact. He spoke out against the veneration of shrines and other pagan forms of worship which intruded Islam, because he was influenced by modern Islamic philosophers. But he went one step further: he claimed that Salafism should study *Hadith* (the tradition or sayings of the prophet Muhammed) and he upgraded this study to a scientific level. This caused a lot of friction as he endangered the original *Umma.*[169] The ideas of al-Albani also form the basis for the conflict between Salafism and the Muslim Brotherhood. The second trend of Salafism is political and is represented by al-Sahwa al-Islamiyya (the Islamic awakening). This trend has been influenced by the Muslim

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[165] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*, 422.

[166] Meijer, Roel. *"Global salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement"*. United Kingdom, 2009, 8.

[167] Meijer, Roel. *"Global salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement"*. United Kingdom, 2009, 12.

[168] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*, 422.

[169] Meijer, Roel. *"Global salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement"*. United Kingdom, 2009, 9.

Brotherhood from Egypt which made their entrance in Saudi Arabia in the 1960s.[170] The third trend Wiktorowicz distinguishes is the Jihadist trend, which advocates an armed struggle against Western powers. Main figures are Osama Bin Laden and Muhammed al-Maqdisi.[171] Salafism regards its own ideology as the pure Islam or the pure faith, making relations with outsiders and non-believers very strenuous. Salafis are encouraged to sever all ties with outsiders and feel hatred towards them.[172] The trend even led to the excommunication of the state Saudi Arabia by Muhammad al-Maqdisi because they had economical and political relations with the West.[173] This rather radical position is also the explanation for the large appeal of Salafism. Positioning themselves as the pure Islam, they grant their followers a supreme position. They feel privileged to practice the pure faith, which makes them feel superior to others no matter where they reside or which position they take up in society.[174] This strong sense of identity makes Salafis adopt a quietist attitude with which they fulfill the Salafi mission of *Da'wa,*.[175]

In 1940 the Salafi ideology was introduced in Ethiopia.[176] According to Ostebo, the trend of Salafism which is most dominant in Ethiopia was and is the purist trend.[177] According to Erlich Haggai, the introduction of Salafism took place in Harar and was mainly introduced by Muslims returning from the *Hajj*. Haggai puts the efforts of Sheikh Yusuf Abd al-Rahman central to the introduction and expansion of Salafism in Ethiopia.[178] Ostebo claims this is not entirely correct, as centers of Salafi teachings already existed in several places around Harar.

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[170] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*, 422.

[171] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*, 422.

[172] Meijer, Roel. *"Global salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement"*. United Kingdom, 2009, 10.

[173] Meijer, Roel. *"Global salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement"*. United Kingdom, 2009, 10.

[174] Meijer, Roel. *"Global salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement"*. United Kingdom, 2009, 13.

[175] Meijer, Roel. *"Global salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement"*. United Kingdom, 2009, 14.

[176] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 7.

[177] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*, 422.

[178] Haggai, Erlich. *"Saudi Arabia & Ethiopia: Islam, Christianity & Politics Entwined"*. 2007, 81.

Harar should be regarded as a bridgehead.[179] The introduction and spread of Salafism can be mainly attributed to the Oromo, the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia, because of the growth of *Khat* export which created more Islamic merchants, and the *Hajj* which many Oromo Muslims undertook. These factors played a crucial part in the further expansion of Salafism.[180] Like all movements in Ethiopia, Salafism had a difficult time during the rule of the *Derg* regime. One of the main goals of the socialist regime was to reach a secular state. Therefore, many restrictions were imposed on the Salafi movement. This led to a steep decline of the activities organised by the Salafi's but not to its end.[181] When in 1991 the current government took power, the Salafi movement experienced an impressive growth. The EPRDF created very liberal conditions for all religious groups. For Salafism, this meant better relations with Saudi Arabia and a greater availability of literature. A second aspect of the enormous growth of Salafism after 1991, is what Ostebo calls "the generation of the *Derg*". The socialist regime's main goal was to transform Ethiopia into a socialist/secular country. As a side effect, Ethiopians were estranged from their religion and adopted a socialist attitude instead. After the fall of communism and the *Derg* regime, this generation lost its ideological backing and returned to religion. This is a global trend that can be observed in many former communist countries.[182] In addition, a lot of Muslims returned from Saudi Arabia in the 70s and 80s of the twentieth century, after having studied there. This also contributed to the rapid growth of the Salafi movement in Ethiopia.[183]

During the 90s the Salafi movement in Ethiopia experienced an internal division between younger and older Salafi's. Two new movements created by a new generation of Muslims can be distinguished. The first is called Ahl-al-Sunna. This faction wanted strict regulations for practising Islam, which created friction with older members of the movement.[184] The second branch within Salafism grew out of the first one and is more extreme. The faction is called

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[179] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*,p 420

[180] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*, 422.

[181] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 22.

[182] De Cordier, Bruno. *"The (in)visible hand of Muhajirat: a field observation on labor migration, social change and religion in the Vakhsh Valley, Tajikistan"*, in: Handbook of research on development and religion, United Kingdom, 2013, pp. 521- 538.

[183] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 22.

[184] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 7.

Khawarij and is part of a global movement called Takfir wal Hijra.[185] Dereje Feyissa Dori discussed this faction under the heading of religious extremism in Ethiopia. Feyissa writes that Khawarij targets infidel Muslims as well as non-Muslim groups and it advocates violence against all religions in order to restore the unity of an Islamic world order.[186] The faction was created in Gondar in 1992 by Amin Muhammed who returned from exile in that year. Despite the fact that the Takfir wal Hijra faction was denounced by other Salafi movements, as well as by the intellectual movement, it grew quickly and was active within the Salafi movement all over Ethiopia during the 90s. This was also the case for the Ahl-al-Sunna faction.[187] After the death of Amin Muhammed in 2004, the Takfir wal Hijra faction lost a lot of its momentum but it did not disappear completely.[188] Salafism cannot be seen as a political movement. Ostebo states that even the radical faction of Khawarij is mainly a reform movement.[189] Many in Ethiopia, however, regard Khawarij as an anti-government movement. Their extreme ideology clearly came to the fore in 2009 when Khawarij publicly announced that their members would refuse to pay taxes and hold ID-cards.[190] It is important to note that, regardless of this schism within the Salafi movement in Ethiopia, it can still be called a Purist trend. The main movement -and in certain degrees the factions- are still primarily concerned with reforming the religious attitude of Ethiopian Muslims and, more specifically, the members of their own movement.[191]

In Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian Muslim Youth Association became the most important promoter of Salafism. Established in 1990, and led by two Muslims named sheikh Sayid Ahmed Mustafa and Muhammed Usman, the movement was at first only loosely related with Salafism. Later on, because of increased investments by Saudi Arabia, the Ethiopian Muslim Youth Association became more closely acquainted with Salafism. Salafism can be found in

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[185] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia"*, Addis Ababa, 2011, 7.
[186] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia"*, 7.
[187] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 23.
[188] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 23.
[189] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 8.
[190] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia"*, 8.
[191] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*, 423.

many Islamic institutions in Addis Ababa. A good example of this is the Anwolia college and mission center. This school is a central institute in the recent struggles with the government. 'Funding from Saudi Arabia flowed freely for individuals as well as organizations', a polemic which has been misused in order to justify suspicions of Salafist extremism among Ethiopian Muslims. Many are convinced that most of the mosques and Islamic schools are funded by Saudi Arabia, although Ostebo says this has drastically declined after 9/11.[192] Salafism in Addis Ababa is very present and very visible. One can distinguish Salafists clearly from others due to their strict dress code. The men can be recognized by their beards (*Wajib*), the caps (*Taqiya)* they wear and their visible ankles (*Isbal*). Women wear a *Niqab*, or head scarf. Several religious problems in the city involve the Salafists, this will be discussed later. The government regards their movement as an extremist group. Their strict dress code makes them easily identifiable and thus a link with extremism and radicalism is facilitated. Although many prominent researchers have argued this to be incorrect, inhabitants of the city still associate the two. The focus on this group of the population might also be attributed to their great visibility in the public space. The more extreme group, Takfir wal Hijra, also managed to get a foothold in Addis Ababa around the Terro mosque, from which it spread throughout the city. However, it lost much of its influence after the Salafi movement and a number of Muslim intellectuals denounced Takfir. After the death of its leader in 2004, Takfir lost its real strength. More recently, in 2006, a new movement called Madkhaliyyah, named after the Saudi Arabian scholar Rabi ibn Hadi al-Madkhali, rose around the Merkato area. Little is known about this movement, except for the fact that they preach a strict and pious lifestyle.[193]

2.2.2   Jamat al-Tabligh

The main figure of Jamat al-Tabligh is Mawlânâ Muhammed Ilyâs. He was the founder and the first leader of the movement and is also responsible for its ideology, methods and strategy.[194] There is an ongoing debate between numerous experts about when exactly the movement was officially founded. Most experts situate its birth in the late 20s of the previous century. Ostebo, for example, situates in 1929.[195] Muhammad Khalid Masud, on the other

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[192] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*, 422.
[193] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*, 423.
[194] Masud, Muhammad Khalid. *"Travellers in faith"*. Leiden, BRILL, 2000, 4.
[195] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*, 423.

hand, says that their conclusions are wrongly based on the start of the first *Tabligh* (communication of the call, missionary work) in 1926. But in fact, he says, the movement was officially founded much later during a *Panchâyat* (a traditional meeting of elders in a village) where Mawlânâ Ilyâs launched the full program of *Tablîghî Jamâ'at*[196].

The Tablîghî Jamâ'at consists of fifteen points. These were later reduced to seven points which closely relate to the five pillars of Islam.[197] The first point states that one should not worship any deity other than Allah. The second point -particularly relevant to this research- states that Muslims should pray five times a day in congregation within the mosque.[198] This indicates the centrality of the mosque within the Tabligh movement. As will be shown later on, the Tabligh movement has organized itself around multiple mosques in Addis Ababa. The third point puts knowledge and remembrance of Allah to the forefront. It states that knowledge is a requirement for a good Muslim. The fourth point states that you should be respectful to other Muslims and live as a collective.[199] Point number five is sincerity of purpose, it states that for every action you take the end goal should be earning the pleasure of Allah. The sixth point is about spare time: one has to take time off from worldly endeavors to invest this time into *Tabligh.* One shouldn't waste time on activities that don't bring one closer to Allah.[200] As for their methodology, the Tabligh movement puts emphasis on participation, communal work and improving one's social environment. This translates in different practices which I will not be able to go into in this thesis since it would be too elaborate to discuss them all. Suffice to give a small example, namely the *Gasht,* a practice which encourages Tablighi to invite people into their mosque in an effort to introduce them to Jamat al-Tabligh.[201] The movement has a loose organizational structure, based on working within the community and networking. There is however a form of hierarchy which is usually temporary.[202] Tablighi refuses welfare from outside sources and puts emphasis on self-financing. It sees the world as a very dangerous place in which they have to move carefully and take as little part in as possible: *"A true believer stays in the world like a wounded patient who abides by the medical prescriptions (maintaining distance with the world) for quick*

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[196] Masud, Muhammad Khalid. "*Travellers in faith*", 9.
[197] Masud, Muhammad Khalid. "*Travellers in faith*", 21.
[198] Masud, Muhammad Khalid. "*Travellers in faith*", 21.
[199] Masud, Muhammad Khalid. "*Travellers in faith*", 22.
[200] Masud, Muhammad Khalid. "*Travellers in faith*", 24.
[201] Masud, Muhammad Khalid. "*Travellers in faith*", 25.
[202] Masud, Muhammad Khalid. "*Travellers in faith*", 28.

recovery and swallows bitter medicine (engaging in the world strictly for survival) to pre-empt the spread of his disease."[203]

The ideology of the Tabligh movement is based on the Tabligh performed by the first followers of the prophet, who based their claims on *Hadith* and *Qur'an.* These are however not the only sources of legitimizing their ideology, they also support it by the so-called Tabligh literature. This literature consists of books written by members of the movement, books that are recommended by the movement to its members, and a collection of speeches and letters from important figures.[204] Under the second leader, Mawlânâ Yûsuf, also the son of Mawlânâ Ilyas, the Tabligh movement became transnational. This was its goal from the beginning but was only really achieved during the leadership of Yûsuf. Three large centers were created by the movement. The first was located in South Asia, where the movement was founded. The second center was in the Middle East, located in the two most important cities: Mecca and Medina. The third center is located in London, in order to have a bigger influence on European countries, such as France, Belgium, Germany and so on.[205]

Jamat al-Tabligh is the biggest Islamic group in Ethiopia, their main purpose is the task of *Da'wa* ("the mission").[206] Researchers know very little about the origins of the Jamat al-Tabligh movement in Ethiopia. Some claim the movement was introduced by Indian missionaries living in diasporas in South Africa and Kenya in 1970, within which Sheikh Musa is seen as the most important figure.[207] During the *Derg* regime in Ethiopia, the Tabligh was active on a very small basis, being a very isolated movement that was mainly focused on internal issues and reforming the religious environment. After 1991, under supervision of Sheikh Musa, the movement grew to be one of the major movements of reform in Ethiopia because of their systematic organization.[208] Missionaries were sent out to various parts of the country in order to make house calls and set up a Jamat in different villages and cities. They were completely self-reliant and did not receive any external funding like the Salafi

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[203] Masud, Muhammad Khalid. "*Travellers in faith*", 73.
[204] Masud, Muhammad Khalid. "*Travellers in faith*", 79.
[205] Masud, Muhammad Khalid. "*Travellers in faith*", 130.
[206] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives*", 7.
[207] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*,423.
[208] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*,424.

movement before 9/11. Together with the Salafi movement, they can be categorized as the Reform Islamists according to Ostebo.[209]

Haggai on the other hand states that politicized Islam took high ground in Ethiopia after 1991.[210] These Islamic movements emphasized exterminating a-religious practices and promoted individual piety within the Ethiopian Muslim population. Ostebo concurs but states that, although the main focus of these movements is not on politics, their exclusivism and religious purity ultimately leads to a political agenda.[211] Occasionally, their discourse of religious purity led to political implications and caused internal and external religious tensions and communal unrest.[212]

In Addis Ababa, the Jamat al-Tabligh movement can be closely linked with the ethnic group of the Gurage: a very exclusive and inwardly oriented group, linked with a chain of mosques in the city.[213] The Gurage ethnic group makes its wealth in the business sector. They are usually the richer part of the Muslim community, although this claim must not be generalized.[214] Because of its very exclusive convictions and its ethnical background, the Gurage live mainly in the same part of the city, named Kolfe.[215] New members are almost exclusively recruited in urban areas like Addis Ababa and from within the urban Gurage community. They are primarily merchants and can be found in the Merkato area.[216] Contrary to Salafism, the Tabligh movement does not engage in a discourse of criticism towards traditional Islamic practices. Even rural Gurage coming to the capital city take their rural rituals to the city. This shows the pragmatic character of the movement which seeks to combine local traditions with the rereading of Sufi elements in a Tabligh framework.[217]

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[209] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 8.

[210] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 187.

[211] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 18.

[212] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 18.

[213] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 7.

[214] Interview Abdu 24/01/2014.

[215] Interview Mahmoud 12/02/2014.

[216] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia,*427.

[217] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia,*427

Visually, the Tabligh are not as present as the Salafi, but it is the largest Islamic movement in Ethiopia, so they are a big part of Muslim presence in Ethiopia and, more specifically, in Addis Ababa.

2.2.3   Intellectual movement

The third movement of great importance in Addis Ababa consists of students and professors in the Addis Ababa university. Emerged in the 1990s, Ostebo calls this the intellectual movement.[218] This movement is highly informal and unstructured, which makes it difficult to properly categorize. Their origins can be found at the Addis Ababa University itself and more specifically around certain individuals referred to as *Amir*. The movement quickly became very popular among Muslim students and soon began to act as an unofficial Muslim student movement.[219] It also managed to acquire influence outside the university, through public lectures, written articles in *Bilal* magazine and books published by the Najashi Publishing House. The movement has lost much of its strength over the past few years since it became elitist and was mainly adhered to by university graduates and urban intellectuals.[220]

Although at the start of the movement its members were linked with Jamat al-Tabligh, the intellectual movement gradually became more attached to the Muslim Brotherhood and its great thinkers Qutb and al-Banna from Egypt.[221] Because in Western popular discourse the Muslim Brotherhood is usually related with extremism and terrorism and because the *Amirs* did not want to be associated with any specific movement in order not to provoke interventions from the government, they were careful to avoid forming any direct link with the Muslim Brotherhood.[222] They did not establish a Muslim Brotherhood cell in Ethiopia, but only selected ideas that were applicable to Ethiopia and that they agreed with.[223] For instance, the *Amirs* did not long for an Islamic state since they realized this was not applicable to

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[218] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia* , 419-426.

[219] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*,425

[220] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*,425.

[221] Interview Solomon 28/01/14.

[222] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*,425

[223] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*,425

Ethiopia.[224] They do not wish to overthrow the government because they believe that a secular government is the best option for the diverse religious landscape in Ethiopia.[225]

Over the years, the movement started to lean more and more towards neo-Sufism, because they brought their reformist ideas together with the indigenous Sufi traditions. They preached their view of Islam as a comprehensive religion applicable to all aspects of life.[226] For example: Muslims should actively participate in politics and the Ethiopian society. This movement is what most intellectuals now follow and agree upon.[227] This group contributed much to my research as its members are very engaged in the religious issues now taunting the Ethiopian society. Moreover, they usually seem to have a nuanced perception of it. They are also most active concerning political issues.[228] They promote themselves as advisers and try to actively engage in politics. The goal is to improve the position of Ethiopian Muslims by giving them more representation in the government and by representing them in the public life of Addis Ababa.[229] Other Islamic movements refrain from political activity. The intellectuals want to change this for the sake of the Ethiopian Muslims.[230]

2.2.4   al-Ahbash

Last but not least is the government-introduced Islam, called al-Ahbash. This is a Lebanese organization which slowly entered Lebanese politics during the 80s and officially entered parliament in 1989. It does not advocate a political Islam but emphasizes political stability, religious plurality and serving the Lebanese nation-state.[231] During the 1980s it also became a transnational Islamic organization with offices around the world (with the exception of Africa). It is labeled as one of the most controversial contemporary movements, drawing its ideology from Sunni and Shi'a traditions. But its most important aspect is its focus on Sufi spiritualism. It defends Sufi practices and holds a very strong view against extremism

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[224] Interview Ahmed 03/02/2014.

[225] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 8.

[226] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*,425

[227] Interview Solomon 28//01/14

[228] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 8.

[229] Ostebo, Terje. *The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia*,426.

[230] Interview Ahmed 28/01/14.

[231] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 17.

wherever it may appear. The movement actively singles out Salafism/Wahhabism and the Muslim Brotherhood as the most dangerous forces.[232] It claims that these movements are not following Islam and tell their followers, as well as different *imams,* not to engage with non-Muslims. Many Ethiopian Muslims regard al-Ahbash as a very extreme form of Sufism, which is definitely not the 'correct' form of Islam for Ethiopia.[233] Ethiopian Muslims call al-Ahbash the Takfir movement of Sufism. Even Sufi Muslims in Ethiopia disregard the movement as a government imposed foreign sect.[234] The reason for this is the involvement of al-Ahbash in conflict and violence in Lebanon and Ethiopia. They are, for instance, implicated in the murder of the Lebanese prime minister.[235]

Al-Ahbash regards itself, however, as the leading force for moderation with the main goal to civilize the Islamic world. The connection of al-Ahbash with Ethiopia is the scholar Sheikh Abdallah ibn Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Harari. Forced to flee Ethiopia because of tensions in Harar in the 1950s, he arrived in Lebanon and eventually ended up becoming the longtime spiritual leader of al-Ahbash.[236] Al-Ahbash had always been present in Harar but it had never spread across the country since all attempts to introduce it as an official and correct form of Islam had failed.[237] In 2011, however, this changed when fifteen representatives of al-Ahbash, under supervision of Dr. Samir Qadi (the organization's vice-president), were invited to Ethiopia. They attended a large conference organized by the *Majlis* and the Ministry of Federal Affairs.[238] In conclusion, al-Ahbash is a Lebanese organization cooperating with the Ethiopian government since 2011, as a strategy to combat extremist Islam.[239] With this strategy, the government moved from containing Islam to promoting its own version of the religion. Or, as Ostebo puts it: its "governmental Islam."[240] The 'good' African Muslim is a

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[232] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 17.
[233] Interview Ahmed 03/02/2014.
[234] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 17.
[235] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia",* 30.
[236] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 17.
[237] Interview Ahmed 03/02/14.
[238] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 18.
[239] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 2.
[240] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 2.

Sufi or, in other words, a traditional Muslim. In Ethiopia, this is definitely the case. All over the country, different Sufi shrines can be found which are honored and taken care of by the local Muslim communities.[241] The perception of Islam, in the horn of Africa, deteriorated within the Ethiopian government and the non-Muslim population because of continuous conflict and religious violence in the region.[242]

2.3   Ethiopian Orthodox church

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church was introduced in the middle of the fourth century, when two merchant sons from Syria arrived in Aksum and resided at the court. One of these sons, namely Frumentius, started converting locals during his stay there.[243] He returned to Alexandria to ask for help in converting the Ethiopians. With the help of Alexandria, Frumentius converted king Ezana.[244] Afterwards, Orthodox Christianity became the church of the Axumite kingdom. As it is unlikely that everybody was converted after this, there is no doubt that pagan religions still survived in Aksum.[245]

Because the Ethiopian Orthodox Church was in close contact with the Egyptian Coptic Church, it can be concluded that the EOC had been influenced greatly by the Coptic Church. For example: during the schism between the Catholic Church and the Coptic Church -which lead to the counsel of Chalcedon in 451- the EOC followed the Coptic Church and adopted Monophysitism, to which it has been loyal until the present day. With the exception of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, [246] during which Catholic Christianity tried to get a hold in Ethiopia but never really managed to succeed.[247] Orthodox Christian leaders and elites remained in control for many centuries. During this time, Muslims were treated like a inferior population group.[248] Since the eighth century and maybe even before that, Ethiopian society

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[241] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Coexistence and/or confrontation?: Towards a reappraisal of Christian-Muslim encounter in Contemporary Ethiopia"*, 3.
[242] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 10.
[243] Moore, Dale. *"Christianity in Ethiopia"*, in: Church History, Vol. 5, No. 3, Cambridge History Press, 1936, 273.
[244] Moore, Dale. *"Christianity in Ethiopia"*, 274.
[245] Moore, Dale. *"Christianity in Ethiopia"*, 275.
[246] Moore, Dale. *"Christianity in Ethiopia"*, 276.
[247] Moore, Dale. *"Christianity in Ethiopia"*, 279.
[248] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Coexistence and/or confrontation?: Towards a reappraisal of Christian-Muslim encounter in Contemporary Ethiopia"*, 5.

was dominated by the Christian ruling- and landowning classes.[249] The Ethiopian Orthodox Church had created a powerful position for itself in society as well as in politics, which assured their survival and elitist position. With one exception: emperor Lej Iyyasu (1913-16) made numerous attempts to accommodate and integrate Islam into Ethiopian policy. This was mistakenly interpreted by the Christian elite and the colonial powers as anti-Christian and anti-colonial.[250] He was removed by a coup d'état with the help of Britain and France.[251] This illustrates that the ruling elite was Christian, wielding a lot of power. Christian rulers and elites held the power in the territory which is now Ethiopia, until the *Derg* regime. However, even during this regime the elites managed to stay. When the current government came to power they actively worked with Muslims to give the Christian Amharic elite as little power as possible.[252] As I have stated above, one of the worst moments for Muslims in Ethiopian history was under emperor Haile Selassie who, after the Italian occupation, launched two campaigns to forcefully convert Muslims to Christianity.[253]

As mentioned above, the initial relationship of the EOC with the new government was one of antagonism. Originally, the government actively worked together with Muslims and wanted a secular state. The EOC officially lost its position as a state religion. The combination of these two events when the EPRDF came to power, made the Ethiopian Orthodox Church very suspicious of the new government. The EOC claimed the EPRDF was a pro-Muslim government because of the many opportunities this religious group received from the new government. But these freedoms were not directly granted to the Muslim community, but to all Ethiopians. The EOC implemented various countermeasures to limit the opportunities granted by the government, ranging from prohibition of the *Hijab* and ritual prayer in Christian schools to creating popular unrest during the building of mosques.[254]

In recent years, the government has increased its influence on all religious institutions in Ethiopia. This is also the case for the Ethiopian Orthodox Church: the religious officials are in

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[249] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Coexistence and/or confrontation?: Towards a reappraisal of Christian-Muslim encounter in Contemporary Ethiopia"*, 6.
[250] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Coexistence and/or confrontation?: Towards a reappraisal of Christian-Muslim encounter in Contemporary Ethiopia"*, 5.
[251] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Coexistence and/or confrontation?: Towards a reappraisal of Christian-Muslim encounter in Contemporary Ethiopia"*, 8.
[252] Interview Solomon 28/01/14
[253] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Coexistence and/or confrontation?: Towards a reappraisal of Christian-Muslim encounter in Contemporary Ethiopia"*, 9.
[254] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Coexistence and/or confrontation?: Towards a reappraisal of Christian-Muslim encounter in Contemporary Ethiopia"*, 17.

close contact with the government and in various occasions are very active in political affairs.[255] This has created dissatisfaction among all parts of the population, Muslim as well as Christian. The relationship with the government changed in the past few years as the church had been propagating that the growing presence of Islam in Ethiopia posed a significant threat, claiming it is a political Islam and making various notions of extremism and terrorism.[256] The church wanted to limit the expansion of Islam because of aforementioned reasons, which are rarely based on actual evidence. Recent actions of the government toward the Muslim community, for example the al-Ahbash incident, have created common ground between the government and the EOC.[257] During the al-Ahbash meeting, church officials were invited to attend the meeting in the Ghion Hotel. This meeting not only confirmed their suspicions toward Islam but also showed that the government backed their battle against Islamic extremism.[258] So, it is possible to argue that the position of the EOC has changed toward the government, in their common attacks on Islam. The EOC feels like its accusations are backed by the government and doesn't feel alone in their fight against Muslim extremism.[259]

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church still has a very strong position in society. They have dozens of large churches in Addis Ababa, and so are visually strongly present. The main tourist attractions in the city are these large churches. Indeed, the majority of the Ethiopian population is Christian. Official numbers state that 43.5% of the Ethiopian population is Christian-Orthodox. Although there is much controversy around these numbers, they are the official numbers stated by the government. It is safe to say that, although the Ethiopian Orthodox Church has lost its position as state religion, it is still very influential both in society and politics. An illustration of this is the continuing discourse of Christian Ethiopia. Whenever the country is threatened by outside forces, Muslim or other, the government recycles this discourse.[260] Another fine example is situated during the millennium year, where

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[255] Interview Zayd 10/03/2014.

[256] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 13.

[257] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 23.

[258] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 23.

[259] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 23.

[260] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 13.

the government used the Orthodox Christian history as a way of legitimizing the territory of Ethiopia and their power position in this country.

2.4 International influences

2.4.1 United States of America

The interest of the United States of America in Ethiopia is the first important international influence to be discussed on the issues concerning Ethiopian Muslims. The discourse of 'war on terror' became stronger after 9/11. The USA declared certain forms of Islam as extremist and a danger to modern society. This policy has granted them considerable control over and access to the Islamic world as it created a common enemy, not only for their own people but for the modern world as a whole.[261] Their discourse was fuelled by neo-conservatives who believe that Western society is on the edge of destruction because of the corruption of the hearts and minds of people. For neo-conservatives, this means growing individualism and a declining feeling of national pride.

During the cold war, the common enemy had been the Soviet Union but, after the fall of the Berlin wall a new scapegoat was needed. In between, this had been the war on drugs but, eventually, the scapegoat became Islam and, more specifically, Islamic radicalism and extremism usually associated with terrorism. This discourse was written in stone after 9/11.[262] Al-Qaida became the focus of a true witch hunt: it was presented as a major danger, larger than anybody could prove. With separate cells all over the world and many young believers brainwashed, the organization provided an abstract but ever-present threat. In fact, Al-Qaida was a small organization with a very limited amount of followers, mainly frowned upon by the largest part of Muslims in the world.[263] Even the 9/11 attack was orchestrated by a different group, who merely had ties with Al-Qaida. But the harm was already done: all over

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[261] Documentary about the developments in the USA and within al-Qaida put in comparison, this documentary was made by the BBC.
http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/the-power-of-nightmares/ consulted 25/01/2014.
[262] Documentary about the developments in the USA and within al-Qaida put in comparison, this documentary was made by the BBC.
http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/the-power-of-nightmares/ consulted 25/01/2014.
[263] Documentary about the developments in the USA and within al-Qaida put in comparison, this documentary was made by the BBC.
http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/the-power-of-nightmares/ consulted 25/01/2014.14.

the world Islam has gotten a negative connotation regularly stressed by leaders worldwide. The impact of this discourse has been so deep that even Muslims themselves became suspicious of each other and of other Muslim movements in various parts of the world.

Especially the United States of America use this discourse on a regular basis to justify their actions in the Islamic world. Examples are numerous. But what is the connection between the USA and Ethiopia? Islamic activity in Somalia (the growing power of al-Shabab and the existence of smaller Islamic groups such as Hizb al-Islam), Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti and Ethiopia cause the USA to worry about the Horn of Africa.[264] The fact that this has been a very unstable region with political conflict in Eritrea, the separation of Sudan and the unresolved issues in Somalia strengthens their uneasiness. Ostebo writes: *"The intervention (Somalia 2006) drew general support from the West, which emphasized Ethiopia's important strategic position on the Horn of Africa in keeping regional stability and combating "international terrorism."*[265] In the entire region of the Horn of Africa, Islamic actors are present but it cannot be said that all of them are political. As mentioned before, the Salafi and Tabligh movement in Ethiopia have no interest in politics. Nonetheless, this region has had the undivided attention of the USA. In the early 90s, for example, the US government produced a document stating that about forty-five percent of the Ethiopian population was Muslim.[266] This was cause for concern for the US and for the EPRDF.

In the turbulent Horn of Africa, Ethiopia is a fairly stable country and thus a perfect ally for the US. The US grants financial aid and political support to the EPRDF to help them control the region. The 2006 intervention in Somalia is a good example, although it should be mentioned that the UIC (United Islamic Courts) declared a *Jihad* or holy war against Ethiopia and thus provided a good reason to intervene, namely self-defense. Ethiopia and, more specifically, the current government welcomed the support of the USA because it gave them a political framework to work with. The late prime minister, Meles Zenawi, had expressed his appreciation with the renewed American attention to the region, which created the political

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[264] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 7.
[265] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 12.
[266] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia",* 22.

backing and framework Ethiopia needed to crackdown on unwanted movements, both domestically and regionally.[267]

2.4.2   The Horn of Africa

This section discusses all countries in the Horn of Africa as far as their relevance for my research is concerned. I will provide the reader with a short view on their history and the position of Islam in every country. My reasons for going into this discussion are two-fold. First, that all these countries caused, to a different extent, instability in the region. This instability is the main reason why the USA has become involved in the region and why Ethiopia has become less secure. Both of these are relevant for the position of Muslims in Ethiopia. Secondly, several issues in these countries have a direct influence on Ethiopian politics. Dereje Feyissa Dori writes: *"Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia to oust the Union of Islamic courts (UIC) in 2006 and the political alliance between Somalia's Islamists and Eritrea since then have also heightened the government's preoccupation with security."*[268]

2.4.2.1   Eritrea

Eritrea is the first country to be discussed. This country is located between Ethiopia and the Red Sea. The Eritrean Forces (EPLF) fought side by side with the TPLF against the socialist *Derg* regime.[269] After this, the EPLF received the right of separation from the transitional charter.[270] However, this issue lies beyond the scope of my dissertation. The reason why Eritrea is of relevance is because of the war in 1998. Eritrea entered the Ethiopian territory claiming that part of this territory belonged to Eritrea, based on historical reasons. Relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea had been deteriorating for eight years leading up to the war. The conflicted territories were Badme, Shiraro and parts of Shire.[271] Initial attacks were countered by the Ethiopian government and the Eritrean enemy forces were defeated. Asaias, leader of the Asmara government, claimed that these territories belonged to Eritrea and bragged that he

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[267] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 12.

[268] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"Muslims struggling of recognition in Contemporary Ethiopia",* 2013, 27.

[269] Marcus, Herald. "*A History of Ethiopia"*, 213.

[270] Van der Beken, Christophe. *"Unity in Diversity-Federalism as a Mechanism to Accommodate Ethnic Diversity: the Case of Ethiopia",* 162.

[271] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Historian says river Mereb marks Ethio-Eritrean border",* 05 June 1998.

would never retreat from Badme. This indicates how determined Eritrea was to claim these territories.[272]

The war had an interesting effect on the Ethiopian government. As it changed from a left wing to a more right wing government, it started to reinstate old national symbols to rally the national feeling of the population. The relevance of this to my research will be thoroughly discussed in chapter four. Although eventually, peace returned between the two countries, their political relationship never returned to a positive one.[273] Recently, Eritrea began to incite the Ethiopian government again. Therefore Eritrea has contributed to the turbulent situation in the Horn of Africa and has caused instability for Ethiopia on a few occasions. In Eritrea, multiple Islamic movements are active, of which the most important one is the Eritrean Islamic Jihad Movement. This movement has *Jihad* in its name and has been accused of global jihadism. Ostebo writes that there is no evidence of global jihadism. The movement has focused on domestic affairs only, but they are however contesting the Asmara regime.[274]

2.4.2.2   *Somalia*

Somalia is regularly referred to as a prime example of a failed state. However, failed states require a state to begin with. This has not been the case since the regime of Said Barre fell in 1991. After attaining independence in 1969, Somalia had an impressive army force and the regime held the population under control by way of patronage but mainly by repression.[275] Foreign aid to Somalia was very limited compared to other African countries, but however limited, it was essential because of Somalia's small economy. The regime had used this foreign support to repress the population but when funding withered after the Cold War, the regime weakened and conflict reached the capital.[276] Eventually, the president fled the country and armies loyal to the regime were defeated. After this, the country was left helpless in the hands of different factions and warlords who started to fight each other.[277] Today, there are two fairly stable entities in Somalia called Puntland and Somaliland. They live in small

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[272] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Badme-Isaias Obsession",* 15 July 1998

[273] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Eritrea prevents Ethiopians from returning home",* 28 July 1999.

[274] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 8.

[275] Van der Veen, Roel. *"Afrika: van de koude oorlog naar de 21ste eeuw",* Kit Publisher, Nederland, 2002, 170.

[276] Van der Veen, Roel. *"Afrika: van de koude oorlog naar de 21ste eeuw",* 170.

[277] Van der Veen, Roel. *"Afrika: van de koude oorlog naar de 21ste eeuw",* 171.

bureaucratic structures in relative peace and order.[278] In other parts of the country chaos and violence are part of everyday life.

Islamism in Somalia is especially relevant for the story in Ethiopia. In Somalia, different groups are active, usually intersecting with a lot of violence. The main actors in the early 90s were Al-Itihad al-Islamiyya and the United Islamic Courts, which emerged from the S*hari'a* courts movement in the Ethiopia Somali region.[279] The UIC managed to establish control over Mogadishu in 2006. During this period the movement also openly stated that they were launching a Jihad against Ethiopia.[280] In response, Ethiopia intervened in 2006 to defend its national interests and made an early end of the UIC by organizing a short but intense campaign against the movement. The UIC was weak and overconfident and were removed from power after a short struggle.[281] After the intervention of Ethiopia in 2006, two new Islamic movements were created. The most well-known is al-Shabab, which grew out of the UIC. Al-Shabab has been growing in strength over the past few years and is clinging more and more to global Jihadism. Currently, al-Shabab controls large parts of southern Somalia.[282] The second group is Hizb al-Islam. This is a coalition of smaller Islamic groups, established in 2009. The relation between these two groups has been rather difficult, as is illustrated by repeated violent clashes.[283] The political and religious history of Somalia is incredibly complicated and diverse. I have tried to mention all the relevant aspects of this history, but for my research subject it is not necessary to handle the whole or detailed history of this country.

2.4.2.3   *Sudan and Djibouti*

Sudan and Djibouti will not be handled extensively in this thesis because of lesser relevance to my main subject. Relations between Ethiopia and Djibouti are relatively peaceful. Currently, a railway is under construction in the two countries so that Ethiopian export can reach the dock of Djibouti in a cheaper and faster way. This does not mean that relations

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[278] Van der Veen, Roel. *"Afrika: van de koude oorlog naar de 21ste eeuw",* 173.

[279] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 25.

[280] The Ethiopian Herald, *"UIC says finalizing plans to wage declared war against Ethiopia",* 20 December 2006.

[281] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 25.

[282] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 7.

[283] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 7.

aren't strenuous from time to time. In Sudan, the struggle of independence has seemed secular because of the secular elites that took part in it.[284] In reality, the struggle was highly influenced from the start by two very important Islamic conservative and political forces, namely the Khatmyyia Sufi Brotherhood and the Ansar community. The secular elites were aware they needed the support of these groups in order to get the support of the population. Therefore, these political forces were the starting point from which the new born parties were created after independence.[285]

Islam in Sudan grew in a very conservative political climate and has always been an important actor in Sudan. In 1989, the National Islamic Front was created, implementing their political program which declared *Shari'a* as the law of the country. Because of their aggressive foreign policy, Sudan started supporting active Islamic groups like Hamas.[286] A relevant illustration of this is the fact that the assassins who survived the attack on the Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak were granted asylum in Sudan.[287] This frustrated neighboring countries Ethiopia and Egypt a great deal. The assassination attempt on president Mubarak will be discussed in greater detail in chapter four. So Sudan is relevant in the sense that a political form of Islam rose in this country. They were also very active in politicizing Islam in sub-Sahara Africa. Ethiopian Muslims were an obvious target group. They were a major factor in shaping Islam in Ethiopia until Saudi Arabia took its place.[288]

2.4.3   Saudi Arabia

The relevance of Saudi Arabia should be interpreted in the context of ideological and financial support. Salafism originated in Saudi Arabia and subsequently found its way to Ethiopia. It grew extensively after 1991 because the EPRDF granted the freedom to perform the *Hajj* undisturbed, lead ng to student exchange and trade. Although all these already existed before 1991, the new freedom facilitated these exchanges. As stated above, Salafism came to Ethiopia exactly because of these forms of exchange. The current relevance of Saudi

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[284] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 27.

[285] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 27.

[286] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 27.

[287] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Terrorists involved in Mubarak assassination attempt arrested",* 2 August 1995.

[288] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia",* 26.

Arabia for the position of Muslims in the public space is that many Christians and the government claim that the Saudis are funding a lot of Islamic organizations and institutions in Addis Ababa.[289] It is a popular belief that, for example, many mosques and madrasas are funded by Saudi Arabia. (The same goes for the United Arabic Emirates, which have been known to fund Ethiopian Muslims and their organizations, for the building of mosques and schools.) This is considered a threat because of the possibility of radical influences. In his article 'Islam and State Relations', Ostebo writes that the good African Muslim is a traditional Muslim or otherwise known as Sufi.[290] A Salafist, in turn, is considered a 'bad' or radical Muslim. In chapter five, we will see that most of the time these accusations are based on incorrect information which does not originate from the field. The relevance of Saudi Arabia will be discussed in function of the interrelatedness of space.

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[289] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia"*, 26.
[290] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam"*, 6.

Chapter three: Conflict post-1991

Massey's statement that *"conflict is not something that befalls an originally, or potentially, harmonious urban space."*[291] will become very apparent in this chapter. In the previous chapter, I discussed Islam in Ethiopia before 1991 and showed how the history of Muslims in Ethiopia was a very troubled one with various forms of discrimination. In this chapter, more recent issues will be considered. The post-1991 era brought considerable changes for Muslim communities, in which the religion was given a legal framework. Within this framework they managed to create significant changes for themselves in society and politics. This, however, does not mean that the past twenty-three years went without conflict and recurrent hardship. First, we will take a look at internal differences in the Muslim communities. Secondly, I will provide the reader with an historical discussion of the conflict between Muslim communities and the current government. Conflict should not be interpreted as armed struggle but rather as a series of incidents between these two actors. The last part of this chapter will concern itself with the relationship between Muslims and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

Before I advance into the matter, I would like to emphasize that, being a *Ferenji* or foreigner, it is incredibly difficult to fully comprehend the complexity of issues concerning Ethiopian Muslims. The current unfolding of these issues makes it all the more difficult. Therefore, I wish to stress that I, by no means, claim that the following analysis is exhaustive. Based on my fieldwork and on the writings of prominent researchers I will try to present the situation with as much nuance and objectivity as possible.

3.1   *Conflict within the Muslim communities*

As was mentioned in chapter two, there are four major Islamic movements in Ethiopia. These movements each have a different ideology concerning the correct practice of Islam. Each refers to different sources and opinions to legitimize its position. For me, as a researcher, it is interesting to compare these differences. However, it would not be interesting to follow any appraisal made by these movements themselves. Not only would it be incorrect to take any

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[291] Massey, Doreen. "*For space*", 153.

stance, moreover, it is the appraisal which makes relations between these movements strenuous to begin with.

3.1.1 Ideological differences

Ideological differences concern piousness, the correct expression of faith and the performance of the *Da'wa*. These differences are usually resolved through debate and compromise but become especially relevant when the government involves itself in these debates, like in the following example. In Ethiopia, a large debate is going on within the Muslim communities about clothing, more specifically about the wearing of the headscarf for women. Salafism requires its female followers to wear the *Niqab.* But the government has been trying to prohibit female headwear in universities and schools. Various educational institutions all over the country have submitted to government rules, usually provoking student demonstrations organized by Muslim students. One of the most recent incidents happened during my fieldwork. In the Jima university, female headwear was prohibited and this created a strong reaction among the students.[292] Most Ethiopian Muslims, who do not follow Salafi ideology, consider wearing the *Niqab* undue -*Hijab* is most accepted- but they all agree that any limitation on wearing the *Niqab* is a breach of the rights granted to them by the constitution of this government. The Ethiopian government however, has been careful not to single out the Muslim communities by stating that this new law was applicable to all religions. They dressed it as a ban on all religious symbols within educational institutions.[293] This is in compliance with article ninety of the constitution, which states that education will be provided by the state; free from religious influence.[294] On the other hand, in article eleven, the same constitution also asserts that the state will not interfere in religion.[295] Regardless of how the government has dressed this law, Muslims feel that it is solely focused on them since it has significantly more religious implications for female Muslims then it has for Christians. For one, if adopted by all educational institutions, it would force Muslim women to choose between education and religion. This is not a choice they care to make, as became apparent

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[292] Interview Bakr 25/01/2014

[293] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 242.

[294] Ethiopian government, *"Proclamation No. 1: the constitution of the federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia",* 1995, 126.

[295] Ethiopian government, *"Proclamation No. 1: the constitution of the federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia",* 1995, 126.

during various interviews between 18 January and 10 March 2014.[296] Further, praying in congregation on school property will also be prohibited if this law is applied. Ostebo and Haustein state: *"the ruling party undertook several measures further restricting the public space of Muslims in Ethiopia. In May and November 2007, the Ministry of Education issued drafts for a law addressing the question of religious expression (art.27 and the mandate to keep education free from religious influence (art90) came to bear in the proposition to restrict the use of* Hijab *and* Niqab *in public schools."*[297] This example about the wearing of the *Hijab* provides a very good illustration of the complexity of some issues regarding Muslims.

3.1.2 Political differences

Not only in ideology do the different Muslim movements differ, but also in the level on which they are politically active. Traditional movements, like Salafism and Jamat al-Tabligh, mainly focus on internal issues within their communities. Their attempt is to try and reform the Ethiopian Muslim into an active Muslim who follows the *Shari'a* in the correct way.[298] This in itself creates debates about which is the correct way to practice Islam. While Salafism and Jamat al-Tabligh refrain from being politically active, the intellectual movement tries to encourage Muslims to take part in politics. If Muslims are more active in politics they can create a favorable position for themselves and their community in society. One of the central aspects of internal debates of recent years is whether to demonstrate or not. Muslims have taken to the streets of Addis Ababa for the past three to four years to demonstrate against the growing intrusion of the government in their religion. However, these peaceful demonstrations were repeatedly met by armed government force.[299] This led to an internal debate led by a very prominent Muslim intellectual (who is one of my respondents that chose to remain anonymous), who mainly preaches resolve and composure. He suggests that there is no point in going to the streets weekly when every demonstration is met with force. Ethiopia is currently ruled by an authoritarian government and it cannot allow to lose control over a religious institution. He states that, if the government wants to be in control of an institution, it will be. Muslims are therefore asking too much. As long as this government is in power, he

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[296] Focus group of five Female Muslims 24/02/2014.

[297] Haustein, Jörg and Ostebo, Terje. *"ERPDF's revolutionary democracy and religious plurality: Islam and Christianity in Post- Derg Ethiopia".* Florida: Center for African Studies and Department of Religion, University of Florida, 2011, 10.

[298] Ostebo, Terje. *"The question of Becoming: Islamic Reform Movements in Contemporary Ethiopia",* 439.

[299] Interview Hussein 17/02/2014.

believes Muslims are sacrificing more than they are gaining by doing so. They should rather wait and hope that a new party or government will rise up and change the situation.[300] His point of view is supported by many Muslims and should be understood in the light of the issues that took place in 2011 (more on this below). Other aspects which have been fuelling internal debates between different movements are mainly focused on different religious convictions. The expansion of Salafism has created a more fragmented Muslim community and heightened interreligious tensions[301] However, between the different convictions, disagreement rarely escalated into a violent struggle: the conflict has been largely of a rhetorical nature.

Over the past few years, a number of constructive efforts have been made to reconcile some of the differences. In 2007, for instance, a conference was organized by the Addis Ababa Ulama Unity Forum (AUUF) in which delegations of scholars of every movement were present. They met weekly for almost two years.[302] Although many internal differences remained unresolved, they did reach an agreement on a very important subject: mutual respect and the prevention of conflict between Muslims.[303] This forum was untimely and officially shut down by the *Majlis,* although the real culprit was the regime.[304] Another instance that, according to Ostebo,[305] greatly contributed to more unity among Muslim movements, was the al-Ahbash incident in 2011. It is widely known that the government was involved in the introduction of al-Ahbash on a larger scale.[306] Because of the involvement of the government, Muslims have been uniting against what is increasingly seen as a common enemy.

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[300] Interview Ahmed 03/02/2014.

[301] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 11.

[302] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 11.

[303] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 11.

[304] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. "*Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 242.

[305] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 23.

[306] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 20.

3.1.3   Generational differences

Internal issues have also been fueled by a new generation of Muslims in Ethiopia. Within several movements, this new generation has put forward fresh ideas about their religion. A lot of young Muslims want to be good and correct Muslims who obey Islamic prescriptions, whether they are Salafi, Sufi or Tabligh. They are usually enlightened through personal reading, which is made possible by growing availability of education and by ideas of international authorities. In several movements, youngsters believe the previous generation to be incorrect and not strict enough in their religious expression. A good example of this are the ideas of the different factions within the Salafi movement, Ahl-al-Sunna and Khawarij. Both factions accuse the older generation of Salafis of not being pious enough, although these deviations within Salafism are more extreme forms of what is discussed here. In Addis Ababa, youths are generally well educated and have wide access to literature from various parts of the world. They are thus confronted with growing cultural fragmentation.[307] Islamic revivalism is one of the consequences of this confrontation and as such very important to take into account when discussing current issues concerning Ethiopian Muslim communities. Muslim youths put emphasis on being a 'good' Muslim, whatever this may entail for them.[308]

Additionally, the younger generation has to deal with significant economical and political changes. As seen in chapter one, trade had been the most important source of income for Ethiopian Muslims but that changed during the rule of the socialist regime. Landowners lost their properties and thus moved to trade to make their fortunes. Because of this, more competition arose and Muslims were forced to look for other forms of income. In Ethiopia eighty percent of the wage-earning jobs are government jobs.[309] For these jobs, a higher level of education is necessary so parents massively started enrolling their children in schools. The government, however, is not capable of providing enough jobs for every educated man or woman.[310] This discrepancy between expectations and future opportunities has contributed to a growing anxiety among young Ethiopians.[311] Discontent among young Muslims about the inability to work, added to their increasing level of intellectual prowess , has resulted in a

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[307] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 47.

[308] Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. *"The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims",* Belgium, LEBMA vzw, 2013, 7.

[309] Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. *"The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims",* 6.

[310] Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. *"The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims",* 7.

[311] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 47.

religiously and politically more active Muslim population. They therefore associate themselves with multiple moral categories.[312] Many of the Muslims of Addis Ababa today consider all these internal differences as one of the causes for their position in the public space and in society, which has been evolving in a negative way.[313] The division, which is created by this growing religious plurality, makes them vulnerable to government intrusions such as with the al-Ahbash incident. In order to avoid new incidents, informants rarely show their ideological background unless it is specifically asked for. They characterize themselves as Ethiopian Muslims regardless of their ideological background.

3.2   Conflict between Muslims and the current government

When the EPRDF defeated the *Derg* regime, they implemented various new forms of religious freedom for all religious groups. The new constitution in which these freedoms were proclaimed provided a liberal frame for Ethiopians to live in. In practice, this meant for Muslims that the restrictions on the *Hajj* were abolished and literature was free to be imported and exported.[314] Both proved to be very important for the evolution of the different Islamic ideologies. Or, to quote Desplat and Ostebo: *"This development also facilitated the emergence of new reform movements that effectively gained public presence over the past two decades".*[315] Another restriction, one on the building of mosques, was abolished as well.[316] This abolishment had an exceedingly tangible and visible effect on Addis Ababa. Sumeya, a local Muslim who wrote a book on mosques in Addis Ababa, states that 105 of 158 mosques in Addis Ababa were built after 1991.[317] A major facilitator for the building of mosques was

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[312] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 10.

[313] Interview Hussein 17/02/2014.

[314] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 9.

[315] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 3.

[316] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 9.

[317] Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF",* Addis Ababa, 2004, 45.

Ali Abdu, mayor of Addis Ababa between 1991 and 1995.[318] Thirty mosques were built in Addis Ababa during his mayorship.[319]

The new liberties brought forth by the constitution resulted in the forming of new Islamic organizations and NGOs which allowed Muslims to organize themselves and have extensive financial and ideological connections with the wider Islamic world. They were actively institutionalizing Islam in Ethiopia during the first five years after 1991.[320] A lot of projects were accomplished during this period which boosted their position in society and the public space. Although the focus of the new government was on ethnicity, they cooperated extensively with Muslims during these first years because they wanted the support of the latter to minimize the power of the Amharic Christian elite which had been dominant for the larger part of Ethiopia's history.[321] Unfortunately, much of the progress made during these five years was lost after 1995.[322] This is due to a number of causes and some had a larger impact than others. In my opinion, a combination of them all led the government to be concerned about the new politicized Islam which was being exalted.[323]

3.2.1   Decisive events

The first important event took place in November 1994 when Muslims went to the streets to demonstrate. They demanded the *Shari'a* (Islamic law) to be included into the constitution.[324] This demonstration proved to be the first incident that changed the government's view on Ethiopian Muslims.[325] The government, as well as members of the public, considered this demand as a strain on the concept of religious equality. Moreover, it clearly demonstrated the thin line between political and religious ideas in Islam.[326]

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[318] Interview Solomon 28/01/14
[319] Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF"*, 40.
[320] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam"*, 10.
[321] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam"*, 9.
[322] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 40.
[323] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 40.
[324] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 40.
[325] Interview Solomon 28/01/14.
[326] Abbink, Jon. *"Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia"*, 261.

The events that took place in 1995 are of even more significance. In February of that year, there was a power struggle within the *Majlis*. Members of this institution demanded the resignation of their vice-president and his supporters since they believed him to be in the pocket of the government. The struggle escalated when the government used the unrest within the *Majlis* to perform a crackdown in which hundreds of Muslims were arrested, nine people were killed and 129 were injured.[327] Police also surrounded the offices of the Ethiopian Muslim Youth Association. Everyone who was present was arrested and the organization was shut down.[328] Thirty-five of those arrested were accused of instigating unrest and destroying property more than a year later.[329] They were jailed for two and a half years.

The incident with the *Majlis* led the government to shut down most of Muslim organizations and NGOs within Ethiopia, an important exception is the Ethiopian Islamic Supreme Council (*Majlis*). The *Majlis* was, however, under effective control of the government from that moment onwards. The February 1995 event meant a vast disadvantage for Muslims to organize themselves, because the government had abolished almost every means for them to do so. Although the *Majlis* still claims to represent Muslims, later events in which the *Majlis* was involved created a lot of suspicion amongst Ethiopian Muslims toward this institution. This will become apparent further below.

It is important to take a small detour and take a closer look at the Ethiopian Islamic Supreme council. The reason for this are the events that took place in 1995. The closing of Islamic organizations and future events, which will be dealt with later, have led to the question of the legitimacy of the *Majlis* stated by Muslims in Ethiopia and in the Diasporas.[330] On the blog for Ethiopian Muslims was written: "*We face a big bureaucratic challenge whenever we demand to build our mosques. Our children couldn't express their faith freely in government owned colleges and universities. Muslim charity organizations are falsely accused of expanding 'Wahhabism' and closed down. The leadership of the* Majlis *didn't say anything when these illegal measures were hurting the Muslim society, pointing to the Higher Council*

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[327] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Mosque violence alleged instigators appear before court",* 15 January 1995.

[328] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 40.

[329] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Individuals accused of allegedly instigating unrest at Grand Mosque appear before court",* 20 January 1995.

[330] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"Muslims struggling of recognition in Contemporary Ethiopia",* 35.

of Islamic Affairs in Ethiopia".[331] Together the *Majlis* and the EPRDF have accomplished to cleanse the council from "Wahhabis" and to buttress the "Wahhabi" influence in Ethiopia.[332] The only institution which is supposed to protect the rights of Muslims has been proven to be working against Muslims. Dereje Feyissa Dori writes: "*The so-called Islamic affairs council from federal level down to* woredas *are serving as peripherals of the security with the mission to suppress all forms of right claims by Muslims and pre-empt any such future aspirations".[333]*

The third incident that had a significant impact on the government's position towards Islam took place during the same year of 1995: the assassination attempt on Hosni Mubarak, the Egyptian president, during his visit to Ethiopia in June. The attempt was orchestrated by the Egyptian Jama'a al-Islamiyya, an organization with alleged support of Sudan (the country that later gave the attackers political asylum).[334] The Ethiopian government was very disturbed by the incident and by the quickly deteriorating relation with Egypt concerning the attempt. This becomes remarkably apparent in state controlled media like The Ethiopian Herald, which posted articles relevant to the event until the beginning of the following year.[335]

The fourth incident to be discussed in this context took place from May 1995 until April 1996. During this period, various bomb attacks were launched by the AIAI on Ethiopian territory after which the Ethiopian government retaliated.[336] In addition, the AIAI supported the ONLF and cooperated with radical Muslims in Oromia.[337] Against all this and all previous events mentioned, the Ethiopian government started taking repressive actions toward Muslims.

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[331]Blog for Ethiopian Muslims on which they can venerate their ideas and frustrations. http://blog.ethiopianmuslims.net/?p=2169 consulted 12/04/2014.

[332] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. "*Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 243.

[333] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"Muslims struggling of recognition in Contemporary Ethiopia",* 25.

[334] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Group claims responsibility for terrorist attack",* 5 July 1995.

[335] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Mosque violence alleged instigators appear before court",* 15 January 1995.

[336] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 40.

[337] Erlich, Haggai. *"Saudi Arabia & Ethiopia: Islam, Christianity & Politics Entwined",* 2007, 206.

3.2.2 Policy of containment

Ostebo states that Muslims were deprived of much of the public space they had acquired during the previous years.[338] They lost important means to organize their religion when their ability to build mosques and other Islamic institutions deteriorated. Muslims simply did not have the political and social clout to properly organize these endeavors. On the other hand, Muslims started to organize themselves on a higher level of informality in which the mosque received a very important position, being a closed space in which the government was not allowed.[339] This situation clearly resulted in the informal and de-institutionalized character of contemporary Ethiopian Islam. The measures undertaken by the government thus backfired because they had less control over Muslim activity. The government then decided to compel Muslims to submit reports on how the mosque was being managed, whether it had ties with outside donors and an insight into all sources of income.[340]

Looking at the consequences of all these incidents in the long run, it is safe to say that they have had a significant impact on the public space and that they mark the start of a changed political position of the current government towards Islam. Instead of a political alliance between Muslims and the government, as was in limited amounts the case before 1995, the government will grow increasingly suspicious of Ethiopian Muslims. Ostebo states: *"Suffice to say that the latter part of the 1990s was characterized by a policy of containment in which the regime sought to control movements within the Muslim community"*.[341] After 1995/6, conflict between Ethiopian Muslims and the government was relatively subdued until 2011. Ostebo states: *"Things took a dramatic turn during the summer of 2011, when the secular regime even more actively became engaged in intra-religious Muslim affairs."*[342]

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[338] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 40.

[339] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 40.

[340] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 40.

[341] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 242.

[342] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 244.

3.2.2.1 The al-Ahbash incident

The EPRDF evolved from being a secular government to actively engaging in the Muslim affairs, when it aided the introduction of al-Ahbash in Ethiopia. A conference was organized by the *Majlis* for which Islamic scholars and leaders were summoned to attend. It was not long after the start of the conference that most of them walked out in disgust because of the ideas put forward.[343] This marks the start of the al-Ahbash incident. Ostebo writes that there are no official statements by the government of its involvement in the al-Ahbash incident. Yet, he effectively proves their involvement by citing various relevant articles and public announcements.[344] He especially emphasizes the involvement of the Ministry of Federal Affairs. The minister of Federal affairs, Shiferaw Tekle-Mariam, was present at various workshops in the aftermath of the conference during the summer of 2011 and played an active role in praising the al-Ahbash movement. He stated that the speech of Qadi at the workshop pointed to where Ethiopia should be heading.[345] Officially, the al-Ahbash conference and workshops had been organized by the *Majlis*, but as discussed above, they were under control of the government. Ostebo adds that the council could not have afforded to organize such a large conference, therefore he insinuates the involvement of the government.[346] Muslim scholars believe that the government is trying to control their community by controlling its leaders.[347] They say the same has been done within the EOC, where the patriarch was replaced by a more regime friendly patriarch and is still in this position today.[348] However, they claim that Islam in Ethiopia is highly unstructured and there is no real central leader. The attempts by the government to control the *Majlis* and through this organ Ethiopian Muslims is thus not a very effective method.[349]

After these events took place in the summer, a government-controlled campaign by the *Majlis* was launched in the fall of 2011 and finished in the spring of 2012. Within this period, various training sessions -which were ideological courses on al-Ahbash- were organized, which took

[343] Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. *"The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims",* 17.

[344] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 20.

[345] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 20.

[346] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam", 20.*

[347] Interview Ahmed 12/02/2014.

[348] Abbink, Jon. "*Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia",* 260.

[349] Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. *"The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims",* 13.

place in various parts of the country, for example in universities.[350] The attendance of these training camps was enormous: around 18.000 individuals participated. There is however a reported incident where two hundred people were arrested after dropping out, which suggests that these sessions were not always voluntarily attended.[351] A lot of Muslims interpreted these incidents as an indoctrination by the government, that had incorrect or at least very limited knowledge of the different Islamic ideologies.[352] Other sessions were held in military camps, for example the ideological training of *Imams* took place in Sandafa Military Training Camp.[353] The ones who refused to participate lost their leadership in the regional or zonal *Majlis* or in the mosque, usually after serving their community for many years.[354] Presence of the government was again very apparent in these training sessions where Salafism was portrayed as anti-government, extremist and anti-development.[355]

It was abundantly clear to Ethiopian Muslims that the government was pro al-Ahbash because of its anti-Salafi teachings.[356] In addition, they spoke of the *Majlis* as the only legitimate representation of Muslims.[357] And they claimed that anyone who did not recognize the *Majlis* as a representation of Ethiopian Muslims was considered extremist.[358] The government took a more proactive role during this incident by asserting a clear definition of which form of Islam was the correct one, namely the ideology of the al-Ahbash movement, and they gave their full support to this movement.[359] In Ethiopia, it is common that people remained loyal to the scholarly discourse of African Islam, in which traditional Sufi Islam is considered the correct kind of Islam. They regarded Arabic ideologies as a danger to their 'home-grown' Islam.[360] Therefore, Muslims regarded the actions of the government as a violation of the

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[350] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam*", 20.

[351] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam*", 21.

[352] Interview Ahmed 03/02/2014

[353] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam*", 20.

[354] Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. "*The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims*", 37.

[355] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam*", 20.

[356] Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. "*The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims*", 19.

[357] interview Ahmed 03/02/2014

[358] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. "*Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism*", 246.

[359] Interview Ahmed 03/02/2014

[360] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam*", 6.

Ethiopian constitution in which they were granted freedom of religion, opinion and ideas. This discourse, openly engaged in by the government, fits perfectly in the international discourse of the good and the bad Muslim. The 'good' Muslim being a moderate one and the 'bad' Muslim a radical and extremist, usually associated with Salafism and Islamism.

The relevance of the al-Ahbash incident lies in its impact on the position of Muslims in the public space of Ethiopia today. The following years entailed various actions by the government and the Muslim communities that are significant for the current situation.[361] This incident is also the outcome of the growing suspicion of the government toward Islam which was visible for the first time in 1995.

3.2.2.2 The Anwolia incident

Next to the al-Ahbash incident and the compulsory training sessions organized by the *Majlis*, there was what is called the Anwolia incident. Anwolia college is a school closely linked with Anwolia mosque. It has a building on the property of the mosque as well as various institutions in the city, like its primary and secondary school.[362] This Islamic institution started as an Arabic school in 1966 but soon evolved into a college in the 90s.[363] It has been sponsored by the Saudi based Muslim World League (MWL) within which the International Islamic Relief Organization, a branch of the MWL, received effective control of the school in 1993.[364]

In 2011, Anwolia college came into conflict with the Ministry of Education regarding the Arabic curriculum and regarding whether or not the organization should be registered as a religious organization.[365] A new law had been instated a few years before which ordered all NGOs in Ethiopia to re-register, whether they were domestic or foreign.[366] The IIRO had failed to re-register, had lost its license and thus became by law an illegitimate organization, leaving Anwolia college without an owner and sponsor. By law it was decreed that when an educational institution lost its foreign contributor, the school would be transferred to the

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[361] Interview Zayd 08/02/2014.
[362] Abdellah, Abdulfetah. *"Hayat Directory",* Addis Ababa January 2007, 399.
[363] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 22.
[364] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 22.
[365] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 22.
[366] Interview Ahmed 03/02/2014.

ministry of the Education. However, it was decided to put Anwolia under the jurisdiction of the *Majlis*, because of the school's emphasis on religion. This would have been a fair decision if the EIASC had not been under government control and thus widely detested by Muslims in Addis Ababa. At first, staff and head were cautiously optimistic but when the Imam of the Anwolia mosque was removed from his position as he refused to attend the al-Ahbash training, the optimism soon disappeared. Contributing to this was the infiltration of Anwolia college by the now al-Ahbash controlled *Majlis*, and as such it greatly compromised the hub of Salafism in Addis Ababa. Since Salafism was seen as an extremist movement and the absolute enemy of al-Ahbash, fifty members of staff including all Arabic teachers were dismissed as was the Arabic curriculum.[367] All links with Salafism within the school were removed.[368]

Students were left with the inability to graduate and in June 2011 they occupied the school for three days out of protest. Muslims from outside the college left the mosques after Friday prayer and showed up in support.[369] The months following the protest gained significant momentum, Muslims became aware and decided to push for more than just the integrity of the school. They appointed seventeen representatives who submitted three demands to the EPRDF. The first being that the government should halt the forced indoctrination of al-Ahbash. The second was to let Muslims elect a new board for the school and a third demand was for new elections to be held for the positions within the *Majlis*. These elections were supposed to be held every five years but hadn't been conducted for the past ten years. Many Muslim scholars characterize these demands not as put forth by a religious community but rather by a secular and democratic social movement.[370] Of course, these demands were inspired by growing frustrations about government intrusion within the Muslim population. The main reason why these scholars put emphasis on secularity and democracy is to counter the Western and Ethiopian discourse of a politicized Islam which wants to create an Islamic state.

Soon the student demonstration developed into a widespread demonstration against al-Ahbash and the government.[371] The response of the EPRDF: new elections were granted for the

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[367] Interview Ahmed 03/02/2014.
[368] Interview Ahmed 03/02/2014.
[369] Interview Ahmed 03/02/2014.
[370] Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. *"The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims",* 15.
[371] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 22.

Majlis. The first demand, about the forced indoctrination of al-Ahbash, was ignored because the government denied its involvement in the al-Ahbash training sessions. The second demand, to elect a new school board, was refused on the grounds that they could just as easily have given it to the Ministry of Education. Then Anwolia college would have become a governmental institution, implying they would have done the college and the Muslim community a favor. However, the most important demand, new elections for the *Majlis*, was met by the government at that time. The representatives elected announced their candidacy and started campaigning in mosques and public spaces. They campaigned for their candidacy and against al-Ahbash. The apotheosis of this campaign was supposed to be a gathering in Anwolia college.[372] However, the meeting of the African Union would take place on the same day in Addis Ababa, since it is the place where their headquarters are located. The government warned the seventeen representatives that this was unacceptable and that their activities were thus prohibited on that day. The representatives disagreed. Anwolia college is located at the outskirts of Addis Ababa. They asserted that the gathering would not get in the way of the AU meeting. And so, they decided to go through with the campaign as planned. During their gathering, the army and police busted the compound, arrested various people and also beat up some attendees. From that moment onwards, Muslims were furious and started demonstrating in the streets of Addis Ababa, more specifically around Anwar mosque.[373] The government then decided to arrest all the representatives in an attempt to curb the movement. They were sent to prison on charges of incenting terrorism.

After the arrest of the representatives, the movement was carried on via a Facebook page. In this way, leadership remained anonymous. In addition, Muslims had been going to the streets almost every Friday after the *Juma'a* prayer, to protest against the recent intrusions of the government and the al-Ahbash movement. On the eight day of Ramadan 2011, a massive demonstration was held in Addis Ababa. The government responded by blocking all exits and by beating people brutally. Other cities experienced similar crackdowns followed by many arrests. These crackdowns did not end the movement but weakened it severely.[374] Street rallies stopped almost completely, and it is safe to say that the Muslim community lost their faith in the EPRDF. They might have received various liberties after the new constitution was declared, but now they had to consider the fact that, looking back on the past two decades, none of these liberties were put into practice. They were still second-rate citizens faced with

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[372] Interview Ahmed 03/02/2014.
[373] Interview Ahmed 03/02/2014.
[374] Interview Ahmed 03/02/2014.

numerous disadvantages. Although the constitution gave a liberal framework the Muslims still had to deal with various disadvantages since 1991.

During the period of my fieldwork (18 January till 10 March 2014) no demonstrations took place. Although I heard several rumors about planned protests around Anwar mosque after *Juma'a*, I did not witness any disturbance at the mosque on any Friday. Very noticeable, however, was the number of policemen present during *Juma'a*. Although it might be argued that one or two policemen are always present for controlling traffic during prayer however, I noticed close to twenty police officers present. This shows that the government is still expecting demonstrations to happen after prayer. Several of my informants told me that demonstrations only ended two weeks before my arrival. The anonymous leaders had been convincing their followers that demonstrations then would do more harm than good. One of my informants, told me: "*We did not stop protesting because we are afraid, but rather because our leader/s told us not to do so.*"[375] In between their actions, these leaders wanted to give the government some time to reconsider their strategy. Moreover, they believe that as long as an authoritarian government has the power there is actually no point in protesting.[376] The current situation could be labeled a transitional period in which relative peace has returned to the streets of Addis Ababa. This, however, does not mean that other incidents are not taking place in other parts of the country.

The government and the EOC have been using the discourse of Islamic extremism more and more to justify their suspicion and crackdowns on the growing Islamic presence in Ethiopia.[377] Their discourse has been supported by the international community, most noticeably by the USA. But what is it based on? A very important source is said to be the writings on Islam in Ethiopia by Erligh Haggai. However, other experts on Islam in Ethiopia, like Terje Ostebo and Dereje Feyissa Dori have concluded otherwise. Ostebo states that there are no signs of actual extremism or radicalization in the field.[378] Over the past years, he himself has made countless trips to Ethiopia to do fieldwork in different regions of the country. Dereje Feyissa, who has written a very interesting article on extremism in all Ethiopian religions, concludes that extremism is present in Islam, but also in all religions in

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[375] Focus group of five Female Muslims 24/02/2014.
[376] Interview Ahmed 03/02/2014.
[377] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 14.
[378] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 14.

Ethiopia.[379] During my own fieldwork I did not came into contact with Islamic extremism. Many of my informants did believe that the possibility of extremism within the Muslims community is there but I rarely met someone who believed it was an actual danger for the country. In Addis Ababa, I did not observe extremism, Muslims performed their everyday life focusing on survival rather than on being politically active.

3.3   Conflict with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church

As Ahmed Hussein and Jon Abbink have shown, interreligious tolerance is not as self-evident as people might believe. This was the case in the past as it is in the present. Even though regular interaction among people is mostly peaceful, negative discourse exists between and within different religions. There is also plenty of conflict regarding the public space between Muslims and the EOC. Another point of friction is a result of the dynamics within the religious landscape in which one religious group is expanding at the expense of the other. All of these will be considered more closely in this section. Ostebo discussed interreligious tolerance in a new light, which challenges the claims of the current regime. He states that interreligious tolerance should be interpreted, as only made possible because of the asymmetric relationship between Christians and Muslims.[380]

The most obvious competition between the different religions in Ethiopia is about the number of followers. There are three major religious convictions in Ethiopia accompanied by various religions: the EOC, Pentecostalism, and Islam. Because of its strong relation with the Ethiopian political power, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church has managed to hold the majority of followers in Ethiopia. Although they had lost their privileged position as state religion after the revolution in 1974, the EOC is still very prominent and firmly rooted in Ethiopian society. After the socialist regime was defeated and religious freedom was instated, other religions saw the opportunity to institutionalize. This had a large impact on their ability to recruit new followers. Islam and Protestantism are the most important religions in this aspect. The amount of new converts in their religion has grown considerably since 1991. In 1994, Protestants made up 10.1 percent of the population, Muslims 32.8 percent and the EOC of 50.6 percent.

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[379] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia"*, 10.

[380] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism"*, 250.

The most recent census (2007) showed that the number of Muslims rose by 1.1 percent and Pentecostals rose by 8.5 percent. The number of Orthodox Christians, on the other hand, declined by 7.1 percent.[381] Their main rival in this regard shows to be Pentecostalism and not Islam. And yet, the Ethiopian Orthodox church feels mainly threatened by Islam in the public space.

3.3.1 Contest in visibility

Both religions compete to be very present in the lives of Ethiopians and one of the most obvious ways to do so is by making their religion more visible. The EOC has numerous churches in cities and spread out over the country, even in some mainly Muslim cities like Harar. In Addis Ababa, churches are extremely visible, especially in the city center. Many important churches are located relatively close to one another other and show the rich Christian heritage of Ethiopia. Two prominent churches in this respect are Trinity Church and Saint Georges Church. These churches are not only important for worshipping but also as a visiting place for tourists. They are usually beautifully located and well-preserved. The presence of Islam in the public space has been growing steadily. New Islamic institutions and mosques are very visible in the city because of their beautiful architecture and high minarets, in the case of large mosques. The EOC feels threatened by this growing visible presence of Islam and challenges it in various ways. The building of mosques in the capital and elsewhere has been the cause for various issues between local Islamic and Christian communities.

The most recent issue concerned a large mosque that is being built at the moment, namely Mohajirun Mosque. It is located around Siddest kilo. Originally, it was located behind Saint Maryam Church in a small private home. This was unacceptable for Christians living in this part of the city and Christians attending this church.[382] The conflict erupted in 2006 when Christians demanded the mosque to be removed. Soldiers had to intervene in order to pacify the situation. Unfortunately, one person died during this incident. In the end, it was concluded that the mosque had to be removed and built close to Siddest kilo.[383] This location was, however, far from ideal. The plot of land was located next to a river and thus the land hilled down.[384] Building a mosque on uneven terrain has been a challenge but today it is close to

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[381] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia"*, 6.
[382] Interview Iziz 14/02/2014.
[383] Interview Solomon 02/02/2014.
[384] Interview Iziz 14/02/2014.

completion. Interestingly, the mosque's location is now in the middle of the sacred space of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, between Saint Georges and Saint Maryam. [385]

Since the EOC has been steadily losing public and sacred space in Addis Ababa to other religions, their reaction has consisted mainly of engaging in a discourse which portrays Muslims as a threat to Ethiopia, accusing them of extremism and being politically active. Abbink states: *"Polemics in Ethiopia express hegemonic strategies and claims to power, and are rapidly evolving as an ideological phenomenon expanding in public space."[386]* Discourse has evolved in this direction because of the large amount of freedom established after 1991. This created among other things the possibility to reconnect globally, which in turn established a more fundamentalist form of religion. Thus the power struggle over the public space took a more symbolic turn.[387] The evolution in discourse has had a negative impact on religious tolerance and cooperation. Polemics are not only relevant for the growing conflict over the public space, another goal is delegitimizing other faiths, which can, in turn, be seen as a means of attracting new converts.[388] Another freedom granted after 1991, the freedom of press, saw the birth of various Islamic periodicals. Their main focus is on defying Christian discourse and discourse engaged in by the government, and on religious piousness. This means that it focuses on the *Da'wa* and religious consciousness.

3.3.2 *Polemic discourse*

The EOC recently adopted a more missionary discourse to promote their religious doctrine. Abbick writes that this missionary discourse is fairly new and not a part of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's past. Most media have disappeared over the past decade, Islamic as well as Christian publications. The cause of the disappearance of the EOC periodicals was governmental pressure to stop the production or financial reasons.[389] Discourse between Muslims and the EOC has been evolving into a rather hostile one. Although it might have started out by promoting their own religion and refuting the other, a rather extreme discourse has been engaged in, in the past years. Public discourse by the Ethiopian government and the

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[385] Interview Solomon 02/02/2014.

[386] Abbink, Jon. *"Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia"*, 253.

[387] Abbink, Jon. *"Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia"*, 254.

[388] Abbink, Jon. *"Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia"*, 257.

[389] Abbink, Jon. *"Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia"*, 264.

EOC names Ethiopia a Christian Island in a sea of pagans and Muslims.[390] This discourse has provoked a lot of criticism from prominent researchers as well as from Ethiopian Muslims. The phrase Christian Island in a sea of pagans and Muslims might not have been an Ethiopian creation. In the late nineteenth century, it was mainly used by European missionaries and merchants living in Ethiopia in order to receive financial and military support from European leaders. The discourse fed into the already existing sentiment towards Islam in Ethiopia.[391] It is based on the long historical relation between the EOC and the state, from the 9th century A.D. to 1974.

Muslims have had a diverse and rich history in Ethiopia ranging from various sultanates to various forms of struggle against discriminatory policies by the ruling elite. It is thus hardly possible to talk about Ethiopia as a solely Christian country. However, public discourse is full of examples of the contrary. The late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, for instance, was very cautious to mention religion in relation to Ethiopia but whenever the integrity of the country was in danger from an outside force he characterized Ethiopia as a Christian country.[392] Another instance: after 9/11, the discourse of extremism and terrorism not only grew within governmental media but also within the EOC, which was a result of the growing presence of Muslims in public offices and in the public space. According to them this was a sign of Islam as a political power based on extremist ideals.[393] The EOC went as far as to claim that Islamic schools were brainwash-factories that turned innocent children into *Jihadi* warriors. They also claimed that youngsters were travelling to the Middle East for military training.[394] Yet another instance: during the al-Ahbash training sessions prominent leaders from the church were invited to attend, which shows that they were backed by the government. Another instance: the EOC claims to be the soul of the Ethiopian nation, based on their rich history with Ethiopian rulers until 1974.[395] In this discourse, Muslims are regarded as foreigners. Utterances such as 'Muslims in Ethiopia' instead of Ethiopian Muslims and 'The birds' home

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[390] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam*", 8.
[391] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam*", 8.
[392] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam*", 13.
[393] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam*", 13.
[394] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam*", 13.
[395] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The politics of Representing Ethiopia's Religious Past"*, Presented at the 4th European Conference on African Studies, Uppsala, 2011, 16.

is the *Warka* and Muslim country is Mecca'(*Ye'Amora Hager Klarka Yeslam Hager Mekkah*) are illustrative of this [396]. Such utterances are very much frowned upon by the Ethiopian Muslim community, especially because Islam was spread by indigenous people with a small trickling of Arabs in the coast as exception.[397] Both are prime examples of how the EOC and others regard Islam in Ethiopia as a foreign religion not part of Ethiopian society. This obviously makes Muslims feel very unwelcome in their country. Moreover, they feel offended by these polemics and refer to their own history as a means of establishing their identity as an Ethiopian citizen and being recognized as a part of Ethiopian society. Their story reads that Islam in Ethiopia is as old as Islam itself. With this, they refer to the relation Ethiopia has with the first *Hijra,* when the first Muslims arrived in Aksum.

One of the most controversial facts Muslims refer to is the conversion of one of the early kings of the Axumite kingdom, who was called Najashi and was one of the first Muslim rulers outside Arabia.[398] It is said that he was curious about the new religion and eventually converted in secret. The EOC denies that this ever happened and states that there are no sources except for Arabic ones to corroborate this. This has also been concluded by other researchers on the subject.[399] Nevertheless it remains a heated discussion between the EOC and Muslim communities in Ethiopia. Not only do these narratives have the purpose to reposition Muslims in Ethiopia, they also try to regenerate their feeling of national pride. This is crucial. During my research, informants repeatedly told me that they did not feel Ethiopian or did not feel like equal citizens in Ethiopia. They told me that various forms of discrimination in daily life makes them feel unwelcome in their own country.[400] This discourse is thus used as a status claim, whether it is true or not.[401]

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[396] Interview Ahmed 03/02/2014. Warka is a tree which grows in Ethiopia.
[397] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The politics of Representing Ethiopia's Religious Past",* 16.
[398] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The politics of Representing Ethiopia's Religious Past",* 12.
[399] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The politics of Representing Ethiopia's Religious Past",* 12.
[400] Focus group of five Female Muslims 24/02/2014.
[401] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The politics of Representing Ethiopia's Religious Past",* 28.

3.4 Consequences of conflict on a social level

The consequences on a social level of what we have so far discussed, are enormous. Although it is slightly out of the scope of this thesis, its relevance for the future cannot be understated. With regard to Ethiopian Muslims, it seems fear has been an emotion which has prevailed in recent years, although many do not wish to admit it. Recent crackdowns and intrusions on their religion and community have led many to be very cautious to speak their minds or to oppose the government. The fact that all my informants wished to stay anonymous is exemplary. The anti-terror law strongly contributes to this fear because nowadays anyone could be arrested for alleged terrorism. For example: a thirty-one year old woman called Abeba was arrested in her workplace. She was accused of inciting and mobilizing Ethiopian Muslims against the government. The authorities had a tape of Abeba's phone conversation with her sister in Yemen. Abeba stated that it was a call about everyday life, but the authorities insisted that she was talking in code. Human Rights Watch has now taken up her case and is defending her against the accusations made.[402]

Ethiopian Muslims have been suffering increased pressure from the government, the EOC and the global community. The latter has adopted the manipulated perception of the government controlled *Majlis*.[403] Their discourse, which suggests there could be terrorists in Ethiopia might, if continued, result in a self-fulfilling prophecy. Ethiopian Muslims, festering their growing hate toward the government, might join domestic based Islamic groups which aspire to perform radical attacks against the Ethiopian government. Other researchers have expressed similar concerns. Ostebo writes: *"My contention at this stage, is that there is a risk that the policy may backfire on the regime itself, and that it is likely to create increased tensions between the Muslims and the state and possibly worsen relations between Christians and Muslims in Ethiopia. Although the Muslims have been determined to avoid direct confrontation with the authorities, there is, at the same time, a clear risk of further radicalization of parts of the Muslim community."*[404] It is thus a possibility that the governments' repression to avoid terrorism in Ethiopia might actually result in exactly that, especially the government's repressive actions against demonstrations which are in fact

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[402] Website of the Human Rights Watch. Article about Abeba.
http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/03/25/witness_price-mass-surveillance consulted 06/06/2014.
[403] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam"*, 16.
[404] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam"*, 23.

mainly peaceful.[405] An informant stated: *"The more you force an individual the more they become fundamental."*[406] In the field, there is little sign of Ethiopia being tortured by extremism and terrorism, which clearly contradicts the discourse engaged in by the government and internationally.

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[405] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 22.
[406] Interview Mahmoud 12/02/2014.

Chapter four: Relevant Global events and their influences

In this chapter, we will take a closer look at the impact of global events on the position of Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa and in Ethiopian society. It will become clear that the position of Muslims in the public space is formed by local as well as global aspects. Doreen Massey has written about the important interrelatedness of the global and local in the formation of public space and I believe her statements to be directly applicable to the subject of this thesis. Therefore, this chapter will deal with two major external influences on Ethiopia; i.e. the global interacting with the local. First, the USA and its War on Terror, which has had a huge impact on the Ethiopian government and on Muslim communities in Addis Ababa. Secondly, the Middle East: Ethiopia's close geographical location to the Middle East allows for finances and doctrines originating from this region to reach Ethiopia in a fairly easy way. Whereas the USA supports the Ethiopian government, the countries in the Middle East support parts of the Muslim population.

Furthermore, we will take a closer look at two events that both took place in the Horn of Africa: the Ethio-Eritrean war (1998) and the intervention of Ethiopia in Somalia in 2006. Both had a considerable impact on the government, which in turn severely affected the position of Muslims in Ethiopia.

4.1   War on Terror

The USA sees Ethiopia as an ally against political Islamic movements in the Horn of Africa. This translates to financial and political support by the USA. About 700 million dollars are spent on the Ethiopian government every year and not only for the War on Terror, also for economic and social development -an amount which quadrupled over the past decade-.[407] As a consequence, the discourse of the War on Terror has been adopted by the Ethiopian government and the EOC, resulting in a discourse in which interreligious tensions currently dominating Ethiopia are increasingly put in relation with the global confrontation between

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[407] Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. *"The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims",* 169.

Christians and Muslims.[408] Moreover, the Ethiopian government has been (mis)using this discourse in order to justify their repressive actions against opposition parties and religious actors. They have been aiming to gain strategic significance in the Global War on Terror waged by the US and their global order, by responding to new security threats the USA has distinguished.[409] The Ethiopian army, one of the most effective in Africa, can be deployed for the interest of the West. Additionally, Ethiopia also has various prisons in which hundreds of detainees suspected of having ties with terrorist groups have been interrogated by the US.

Dereje Feyissa states that the renewed discourse of religious tolerance in Ethiopia, revived by the EPRDF, should also be seen in this discourse on the War on Terror.[410] Desplat, on the other hand, states that the relations between Ethiopia and the coalition against terror revived the idea of a Christian Ethiopia.[411] In return, the EPRDF receives large amounts of financial support and political legitimization from the West.[412] Soon after 9/11, Ethiopia assumed the role of regional superpower that constitutes a stronghold against the perceived Islamic threat.[413] The late Prime Minister stated that *"he viewed the Bush initiated "war on terror" as something god-sent".*[414]

4.1.1   War on Terror in Ethiopian media

The EPRDF has been in power for almost twenty-four years, keeping the opposition weak and continuously attempting to take more control over all aspects of the country, for instance the telephone network, the internet and the media. During my fieldwork, I took a critical look at the government controlled media, and more specifically, the newspapers of The Ethiopian Herald. During the past twenty-three years, Islamic extremism has been the subject of many articles. Not only because of the events that took place in the Horn of Africa but also as a

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[408] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia",* 27.
[409] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia",* 23.
[410] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia",* 23.
[411] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 180.
[412] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia",* 24.
[413] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 249.
[414] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 12.

subject in itself. Some articles talk about the discourse engaged in by American officials, others talk about terrorism. This does not only illustrate that the government is actively contributing to the discourse of War on Terror, it also implies their growing suspicion of Islam in the Horn of Africa. An example: on 10 July 1995, The Ethiopian Herald cited a speech given by a US state official: *"Festering political and ethnic conflicts are often the cause of international terrorism whose rate of incidence has declined while casualties from the attack are on the rise."*[415] The written publication of this speech helped to justify the Ethiopian government's actions towards any form of opposition based on the fact that political stability is necessary to avoid terrorism.

Another example: on 9 January 2005, an article appeared in The Ethiopian Herald which contained an extensive interview with the late Prime Minister. The headline read: *"Terrorism: a menace to world peace."*[416] Although he was very nuanced and cautious in his answers, Meles Zenawi did emphasize the strong relationship with the Global Coalition Against Terrorism and the horrors terrorism brings about.[417] Various similar articles can be found in this newspaper, which illustrates the emphasis that the Ethiopian government puts on the threat of Islam in the Horn of Africa and the responsibility of Ethiopia to combat this. However, it does not mean that this newspaper only publishes articles about Islam in a negative light.[418] Not only state controlled newspapers but other media as well have been focusing on terrorism. The best and most controversial example of this is a documentary called *"Jihadawi Harekat",* which was made after the Anwolia incident and aired on 5 February 2013. As mentioned before, the Anwolia incident had escalated, leaving many Muslims in jail, wounded or killed. The documentary was intended to discredit the peaceful mentality of the Muslims involved but also to justify the government's crackdown on the Muslim civil rights movement. First, it shows confessions by some of the seventeen representatives appointed in Anwolia college which are currently still in jail on terrorist charges. They look exhausted and hopeless when they appear on screen.[419] Their confessions insinuate connections with the Muslim Brotherhood and the conclusion that Salafism and the Muslim Brotherhood have the ultimate goal to create an Islamic world based on the

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[415] The Ethiopia Herald, *"Acts of International terrorism",* 10 July 1995.
[416] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Terrorism: a menace to world peace",* 9 January 2005.
[417] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Terrorism: a menace to world peace",* 9 January 2005.
[418] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Eid-Al-Adha colourfully celebrated",* 20 December 2007.
[419] This documentary was made by the government with the goal of delegitimizing the Ethiopian Muslim Demonstrations.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g4SxGOS5y88 consulted 27/04/2014.

Shari'a.[420] An unedited interrogation clip wrongly broadcasted showed the interrogator coerce one of the representatives into admitting these things.[421] Another incident where unedited scripts were released showed that parts of these interviews were taken out of context in order for them to sound like what the government wanted people to hear.[422] Furthermore, the documentary, which lasts more than one and a half hours, gives a horrifying image of the growing threat of Islam in the wider African context with the main spotlight on Ethiopia. The documentary draws a parallel between the current Ethiopian Muslim civil rights movement - which originated in Anwolia college- and Islamic jihadist groups all over Africa. For instance, it shows images of Boko Haram in Nigeria and al-Shabab in Somalia.[423]

Conclusively, the documentary exaggerates the situation in Ethiopia, portraying Muslims as a huge threat to Ethiopian interreligious tolerance. The film is especially worrying for Ethiopian Muslims because their peaceful movement is portrayed as extremist and radical. Although the goal of *Harekat* was to generate moral panic -which serves as the fabric of social control-, to portray the EPRDF as protector and to create division within the Muslim community, it actually resulted in a lot of criticism from all parts of Ethiopia. Thirty-three political parties have denounced the documentary as yet another exaggeration by the EPRDF and many have spoken out against this film.[424] Among these are other religions and, most notably, Christians. They, too, found this documentary another transgression of the government.[425] In reality, the incidents on which this film is based as well as the film in itself have led to a growing opposition against the government.

The consistent negative discourse of the War on Terror and on Salafism in Ethiopia has had grave consequences for the Muslim community in Ethiopia. There is growing suspicion within Ethiopian society as well as in the world; Ethiopian Muslims are increasingly scrutinized. Ostebo states that the information about Islam in Ethiopia is provided by the government controlled *Majlis*, who are less concerned with the rights of Ethiopian Muslims

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[420] Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. *"The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims",* 93.

[421] Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. *"The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims",* 93.

[422] Interview Ahmed 12/02/2014.

[423] This documentary was made by the government with the goal of delegitimizing the Ethiopian Muslim Demonstrations.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g4SxGOS5y88 consulted 27/04/2014.

[424] Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. *"The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims",* 95.

[425] Interview Ahmed 12/02/2014.

than by their control over them.[426] Massey writes: *"the inevitable local production of the global means that there is potentially some purchase through local politics on wider global mechanisms. Different places occupy distinct positions within the wider power-geometries of the global."*[427]   The Ethiopian government undertook the necessary measures to obtain an important position in these global power geometries.

4.1.2   The Ethiopian anti-terror law

In 2009 Ethiopia proclaimed its own anti-terror law. A terrorist group is defined as *"a group, association or organization which is composed of not less than two members with the objective of committing acts of terrorism or plans, prepares, executes or causes the execution of acts of terrorism or assists or incites others in any way to commit acts of terrorism".*[428] The law distinguishes various reasons for an individual or group to be trailed under the notion of terrorism. This can range from morally supporting a terrorist to actually committing or thinking of committing a terrorist act. The punishment foreseen in the anti-terror law is imprisonment for a minimum of ten years to life, which are serious punishments for any individual, terrorist or not.[429] In addition, this very broad definition of who is supposed to be trailed as terrorist makes this law broadly applicable. The anti-terror law not only makes intervention from the government more likely but also contributes to a negative image of Islam in Ethiopian society which result in more difficulties for Ethiopian Muslims in daily life.[430] Ostebo writes: *"Ethiopia adopted its own anti-terror law, which gave a broad definition of terrorism and provided the regime with extensive power to counteract any "terror" movements at its own discretion".*[431] For instance, two Swedish journalists reporting on the Ogaden National Liberation Front, which fights for the liberation of their region, were arrested under this law.[432] And an informant told me of his two-week imprisonment under suspicion of terrorism when he was making a documentary on the history of mosques in

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[426] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 16.

[427] Massey, Doreen. "*For space",* 102.

[428] Ethiopian Government, "*Proclamation No. 652: Anti- Terrorism Proclamation",* in: Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2009, 4829.

[429] Ethiopian Government, "*Proclamation No. 652: Anti- Terrorism Proclamation",* in: Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2009, 4831.

[430] Interview Fatima 13/02/14.

[431] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 12.

[432] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 12.

Addis Ababa.[433] An even more disturbing example of the extensive power of the anti-terrorist law, was the detention of the seventeen representatives in the Anwolia incident. They, too, were accused of terrorism. The anti-terror law states that the leaders of a terrorist group or organization receive the harshest punishment of all: a minimum of twenty years of 'rigorous' imprisonment to a life sentence. The labeling of the Muslim civil rights movement as a terrorist movement in *Jihadawi Harekat* and the trail of its leaders as supposed terrorists are exemplary for how this law functions in practice. Moreover, it is common knowledge that the law also justifies obtaining forced evidence. An illustration of this is the unintended release of an unedited interrogation of one of the representatives. It shows how he was forced to admit that they had been trying to establish an Islamic state in Ethiopia.[434] If there is truth to this, it cannot be used in court because this is a violation of the Ethiopian constitution. Article nineteen states that information required under torture or coercion is not admissible in court.[435] The matter of forced evidence and the fact that citizens of Addis Ababa are convinced that this is regular practice, creates considerable incentive to encourage further research on the matter.

4.2   Ethio-Eritrean war 1998-2000

The war between Eritrea and Ethiopia started when Eritrean forces occupied some regions on Ethiopian territory. The Eritrean government was convinced that these regions belonged to their territory and swore never to retreat. Isaias, the leader of Eritrea, stated that *"withdrawing from Badme meant that the sun would never rise again."*[436] Ethiopia retaliated fairly quickly and was successful in repelling Eritrean forces. The Ethiopian Herald wrote: *"Then, the unthinkable happened! Badme and its environs were retaken only in four days of fighting. Isaias' might was reduced to ashes!"*[437] This article also stated: *"We knew all along that we were able to deal with those who chose to invade us."*[438] After this war, the relations with Eritrea never fully returned to normal. Although they returned to relative peace a proxy war was still fought by the Eritrean government against Ethiopia. This becomes apparent when it

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[433] Interview Rashid 13/02/2014.
[434] Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. *"The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims",* 93.
[435] Ethiopian government, *"Proclamation No. 1: the constitution of the federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia",* 1995, 140.
[436] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Badme-Isaias Obsession",* 15 July 1998.
[437] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Badme-Isaias Obsession",* 15 July 1998.
[438] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Badme-Isaias Obsession",* 15 July 1998.

was discovered they financially supported extremist groups al-Shabab and Ogaden National Liberation Front.[439]

Although it seems that there never was a real threat, Ethiopia took the invasion very seriously and encouraged the Ethiopian people to unite behind their government. The EPRDF refrained from its previous discourse in which it encouraged ethnic and religious diversity and tolerance, instead it called for unity and made use of the rich past of Ethiopia, mainly focusing on Christian elements and reinstating old symbols which were mainly taken from Ethiopian past dominated by the EOC. This invoked a new sense of nationalism. This does not, however, mean that the ethnic federalism adopted by this regime was ended. They still proudly held on to this system of political order. Although regions had received autonomy they were still all part of the Ethiopian territory and thus under control of the EPRDF.[440] Dereje Feyissa states that *"the EPRDF was never at heart a federal regime at all."*[441]

This change in discourse by the EPRDF also marks a change in ideology of the government. While at first the EPRDF was known to be a rather leftist political party, it changed to a more rightist political party.[442] Their new ideological position is expressed in the continuous focus on unity.[443] This is relevant for Muslims in the sense that the government started to intervene more regularly in society. The war with Eritrea helped change the position of the government in general and more specifically towards Islam. The war with Eritrea should thus be seen as an indirect cause for the growing bad relations between the government and the Muslim communities in Ethiopia. Of course the change in ideology and policy of the EPRDF did not only have an impact on Ethiopian Muslims but on the entire Ethiopian populace. All were subjected to a new kind of rule that reflects itself in the crackdown by the EPRDF on the opposition parties which secured an incredible victory after the 2005 elections.[444]

Conclusively, the Ethio-Eritrean war was the first event which caused the EPRDF to move from the distribution of power to a more centralized state and party. The second event

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[439] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia",* 28.

[440] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia",* 17.

[441] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia",* 17.

[442] Interview Solomon 02/02/2014.

[443] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 252.

[444] Interview Van der Beken 18/02/2014

involved the national elections in 2005. The third was the millennium celebration, where the government celebrated the 2000-year existence of its cultural heritage, putting emphasis only on its Christian background.[445] Muslims have no affinity with this notion at all and much prefer the discourse of secularism of the state: they are frustrated with the contradictory discourses the government has been proclaiming.[446]

4.3   Intervention in Somalia 2006-2009

In Somalia, which has been a hotbed of conflict since its independence in 1960, and even more so after the fall of the dictatorial regime of Siad Barre in 1991, Islamism has been able to move and organize freely. This does not only worry neighboring countries but also the international community. The War on Terror, instigated by the USA, has been fuelled by, among other things, their concerns about the situation in the Horn of Africa and, specifically, in Somalia. They believe Somalia serves as a safe haven for terrorists and Islamists such as UIC, Al-Itihad al-Islamiyya, Hakarat al-Islah and al-Shabab.

4.3.1   UIC

The UIC has known a large expansion in the 90s. It was a loosely organized group with dispersed ideological influences ranging from Sufism to Salafism.[447] Initially, only a few could be considered radical. These were able to gain more influence because of the establishment of the Joint Islamic Courts Council in 2000. Several new courts were established by Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, who assumed power of the UIC between 2000 and 2004. The ideology related to Al-Itihad al-Islamiyya, out of which the UIC grew, was disseminated. This led to growing tensions within the movement which surfaced between 2004 and 2006. The UIC was divided in an accommodating wing led by Sheikh Sharif Sheik Ahmed and a militant wing led by Hassan Dahir Aweys.[448] The UIC saw Ethiopia as an archenemy, aggressive towards Islam and Muslims in the Horn of Africa. Their goal was to

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[445] Desplat, Patrick and Ostebo, Terje. *"Muslim Ethiopia: Christian legacy, Identity politics and Islamic reformism",* 251.
[446] Interview Ahmed 15/02/2014.
[447] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 33.
[448] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 33.

create a greater Somalia with a strong religious background. In 2006, the UIC took control over Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia.

The Ethiopian Herald stated that *"Ever since they gained control of Mogadishu, the extremist forces have been accusing Ethiopia of fictitious cases. The purpose of using Ethiopia as a scapegoat is a strategy designed to solicit local support for their bankrupt ambitions."*[449] The UIC refers to the officers sent by Ethiopia to train the troops of the TFG (Transitional Federal Government), which is the internationally recognized government in Somalia.[450] Whether the accusations of UIC are correct or not falls beyond the scope of this thesis but would be an interesting research subject. Ostebo attributes the revival of Somali nationalism to the intervention of Ethiopia in 2006, leading eventually to the attraction of a large number of young Somalis, who left again when Ethiopia retreated in 2009.[451] So, although the UIC used the word *Jihad,* its main focus was not on a global *Jihad* but rather on a united Somalia. The UIC did declare *Jihad* against Ethiopia after it took control over Mogadishu in 2006. This was considered by Ethiopia and the international community as another step towards Somalia as a safe haven for terrorists. Ethiopia thus reacted by intervening on Somalian territory, allegedly to defend its own territory.[452] The Ethiopian government regarded the UIC to be a considerable threat to its own security.[453]

Even during the intervention, the UIC was very divided. Sheikh Sharif was not opposed to the TFG and would eventually become the leader of this organ.[454] This is very contradictory to what Meles stated in The Ethiopian Herald: *"Prime Minister told AP that he has little hope that a peace agreement could be reached between Somalia's internationally recognized government and Islamic militants who have taken over much of the country."*[455] The Ethiopian late Prime Minister stated that the militant Islamists in Somalia where a danger to

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[449] The Ethiopian Herald, *"The Somalia Jihadists: While the world looks on they prepare to plan and execute terrorist actions",* 5 November 2006.
[450] The Ethiopian Herald, *"UIC says finalizing plans to wage declared war against Ethiopia",* 20 December 2006.
[451] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 34.
[452] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 12.
[453] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Somali militants threat to world: Meles",* 3 November 1999.
[454] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 34.
[455] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Somali militants threat to world: Meles",* 3 November 1999.

Somali's themselves, for Ethiopia and for the international community.[456] The first seems to be incorrect because, as discussed before, many young Somali's had joined these groups which insinuates that in their eyes it was not the UIC which was the threat to their safety but rather the Ethiopian intervention. In this statement of Meles Zenawi it also becomes clear what the true goal of the Ethiopian government was when it intervened in Somalia. The intervention gave Ethiopia more international importance which translated itself in growing political and financial support.[457] Ostebo writes that *"the intervention drew general support from the West, which emphasized Ethiopia's important strategic position on the Horn of Africa in keeping regional stability and combating "international terrorism."*[458] The EPRDF eagerly played along because it was aware that contributing to the War on Terror would produce much needed development aid from the West.[459] The Russian writer Sergei Strokan wrote in the Russian Daily Online*: "Perhaps the world should thank Ethiopia for undertaking their dirty work, relieving great countries from unpleasant necessity to gather, to summon UN security council,[…].*"[460]

On 12 December 2006 the UIC announced that they were preparing an attack on Ethiopia with the intention of ousting the Ethiopian military trainers from Somalia. On 20 December, when they declared that they were in the final stages of their war preparation, Ethiopian troops, backed by the international community, started openly combating the UIC militants.[461] They had been asked to do so by the TFG, which was ill-equipped.[462] Shortly after the intervention, the UIC was defeated. They had been over-confident and the joint attack launched by the TFG and Ethiopia had quickly led to the dismantling of the UIC.[463] An article in The Ethiopian Herald, written on 26 December stated that *"The fundamentalist group in Somalia has been retreating in disarray unable to resist the counter offensive launched by the*

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[456] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Somali militants threat to world: Meles",* 3 November 1999.
[457] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 12.
[458] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 12.
[459] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 12.
[460] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Ethiopia said showing new way of solving problems with terrorism",* 28 December 2006.
[461] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Fundamentalist force in Somalia declares intensified attacks on Ethiopia",* 13 December 2006.
[462] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Forced to go to war",* 26 December 2006.
[463] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 12.

Ethiopian National Defense Force and the Transitional Government of Somalia".[464] In January 2007, the late Ethiopian Prime Minister stated that their defensive goals in Somalia were reached. They had crushed the opposition and Somalia was more at peace than ever before. The Ethiopian government further promised to aid Somalia to retain stability -with their own future security in mind.[465] The late Prime Minister stated that there was a lot to be done to ensure peace in the country and that their main focus aside from this was to redraw forces from Somalia.[466] Nonetheless, Ethiopian forces stayed in Somalia for another two years which eventually led to criticism.[467] In some ways, this discourse may remind the reader of the discourse engaged in by the US government after the second war in Iraq.

As mentioned before, the intervention in Somalia firmly integrated the country into the global War on Terror and it thus received various forms of support from the West, most noticeably from the USA.[468] Moreover, it also renewed what is called the "Ahmed Gragn movement", which refers to the returning fear of the Ethiopian government of an external threat in the form of an Islamic force as well as fear of this force allying with its own local Muslim population.[469] It is not a coincidence that the anti-terror law was passed in the same year as the ending of the intervention in Somalia. The anti-terror law facilitates the government to counteract 'terror' movements and groups at its own discretion.[470] This, in turn, has had a significant impact on the incidents that took place in 2011 (which have been dealt with in chapter three) and later, on the position of Islam in the public space in Addis Ababa. It has thus contributed to the growing suspicion within the current government towards its own Muslim communities and, more specifically, towards Salafism.

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[464] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Fundamentalists in Somalia retreating in disarray",* 26 December 2006.
[465] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Operation in Somalia achieves set targets: Premier",* 3 January 2007.
[466] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Operation in Somalia achieves set targets: Premier",* 3 January 2007.
[467] The Ethiopian Herald, *"Prime minister Meles holds talks with Somalia".* 18 January 2008.
[468] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 12.
[469] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 12.
[470] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 12.

4.3.2 Al-Shabab

Al-Shabab emerged from the Habar Gir/air sub-clan. Although it tried to widen the base of its followers, the clan has dominated the movement. Al-Shabab was influenced by various combatants from Afghanistan which were allegedly responsible for terrorist attacks in Somalia. This gave *al-Shabab* a Salafi-jihadist ideology and background, resulting in a strong jihadi narrative in which the struggle with the TFG was put into the larger narrative of war against the US and other Western forces.[471] This did not get significant support from the local population and the movement took a more pragmatic stance. In recent years, a stronger division within the movement has emerged. The more moderate faction focuses on political engagement and dialogue whereas the militant faction is determined to wage *Jihad* against the West and its supporters.[472] The latter has public ties with al-Qaida. In 2008, al-Qaida declared that al-Shabab was an active part of its global *Jihad* against Western powers. The question, however, remains to which extent these ties are of any significance in the field. Ostebo, for instance, states that Ethiopia has exaggerated the influence of al-Qaida in its country.[473] The relevance of al-Shabab is that this movement has, yet again, turned the eyes of the West towards the Horn of Africa. Suspicion of al-Shabab's ill intentions does not only worry the world but Ethiopia as well, since this group is active in a neighboring country. This strengthens the fear of an external Islamic threat which might try to exert influence on Ethiopian Muslims.

4.4   Support from the Middle East

As discussed in chapter one, the connection between Ethiopia and the *Mashreq* or Middle-East is an old and fairly continuous one. It started with the first Muslims arriving in Aksum and went on with the expansion of Islam through Ethiopian territory by a trickling of Arab merchants. Later, Ethiopian Muslims dominated trade because they were not allowed to own

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[471] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 34.

[472] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 35.

[473] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 60.

land or do another job.[474] These merchants held close ties with the *Mashreq*. After 1991, the new regime granted more possibilities to keep in contact with the *Mashreq:* the *hajj* was much easier to perform, literature was more easily accessible and the freedom of ideas and religion allowed for new ideologies from the region to find their ground in Ethiopia. Ethiopian Muslims were thus confronted with various new Islamic ideas and convictions after 1991. To name a few: the Muslim Brotherhood from Egypt has had an impact on the intellectual movement in Addis Ababa, Salafism originated in Saudi Arabia and is still the national Islamic ideology in Ethiopia and al-Ahbash, which originated in Lebanon, has had forced encounters with Ethiopian Muslims.

New possibilities of acquiring information from sources in the Middle-East and a higher level of education have had a significant impact on religious expression in Ethiopia. The fact that the *Hijab* and *Niqab* are worn by most female Muslims in Ethiopia, while this was not the case in earlier times, might illustrate this. Other examples are a renewed focus on praying five times a day, charity and the large presence of Koran schools. Various conversations with Muslims as well as other Ethiopians made clear that this change in religious fervor has been a shock for non-Muslims. Some of them even called it a radical change and did not understand why this was necessary all of a sudden.[475] The growing fervor of some Ethiopian Muslims has thus created suspicion of radicalization among other Ethiopians and also within the government.

The *Mashreq* is not only relevant because of its ideologies, which were adopted in Ethiopia over time, but also because of their financial support or alleged financial support to Ethiopian Muslims. This support is donated to build and maintain various religious institutions like schools and mosques. It originates mainly from countries like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. A prime example of financial support is Anwolia college. As mentioned before, this school was financed by a Saudi based organization and thus perceived as the hub of Salafism in Addis Ababa. No wonder that events around this school escalated in 2011, given the growing suspicion of the government towards Salafism because of its increased presence in Ethiopia. Especially funding from Saudi Arabia is distrusted, since Salafism is regarded as a foreign Islam which is not native to Africa. During the various training sessions

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[474] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Coexistence and/or confrontation?: Towards a reappraisal of Christian-Muslim encounter in Contemporary Ethiopia",* in: Journal of Religion in Africa, Vol. 36, Leiden, 2006, pp. 4-22.

[475] Focus group different ethnicities and religions 04/03/2014.

of al-Ahbash, participating government officials put emphasis on the claim of al-Ahbash that Salafis are extremists and terrorists. In addition, they labelled Salafism as anti-constitutional and anti-developmental.[476] The government thus regards Salafism as an external threat to their security and to the Ethiopian constitution, which explains many of the political actions taken against Muslims and Salafists since 2011. Financial support of Ethiopian Muslims by the *Mashreq*, which results among other things in the building of Islamic institutions, and growing religious fervor instigated by the *Mashreq* aids the visibility of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa and of Ethiopia in general. This in turn has led to growing suspicion by the government and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. They have taken various actions to curb Saudi influences in Ethiopia and to limit the popularity of Salafism among Ethiopian Muslims, which has had a significant impact on the position of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa.

At this point, it is interesting to look at a specific author who has had a considerable influence on the perception of Middle Eastern funding of Muslim institutions, as well as on the position the Ethiopian government has taken concerning these institutions.[477] Erlich Haggai is a historian from Israeli descent who has specialized in Islam in Ethiopia and has written a considerable amount of articles on the subject. He also wrote a book, called 'Saudi Arabia & Ethiopia', in which he focuses on the political as well as on the religious relations between these two countries. He mainly puts emphasis on the Salafi/wahhabi doctrine, which was transferred from Saudi Arabia to Ethiopia.[478] Various statements in this book instantly raise alarm. For example: *"The spread in Ethiopia of Wahhabism, the Islamic radical doctrine of the Saudi state [...]What is behind the Saudi "exported" Al-Qaida radicalism in the 1990's and its impact on the horn of Africa?."*[479] Aside from the large influence Haggai ascribes to Saudi Arabia in Ethiopia, he also spends considerable time linking Salafism with various terrorist groups in the Horn of Africa and across the world, such as Al-Qaida and AIAI. Although there is an obvious link between these organizations and Salafi ideas, linking this with Salafism in Ethiopia creates a wrong picture. There is no denying that there are extremists and terrorists who adhere Salafi ideology but that does not mean all Salafis are terrorists. It is a generalization that cannot be sustained. More importantly, it has had

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[476] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 21.
[477] Interview Solomon 28/01/2014
[478] Haggai, Erlich. *"Saudi Arabia & Ethiopia: Islam, Christianity & Politics Entwined",*5.
[479] Haggai, Erlich. *"Saudi Arabia & Ethiopia: Islam, Christianity & Politics Entwined",*5.

considerable consequences in Ethiopia, with the al-Ahbash incident and Anwolia college as prime examples. Ostebo has reacted to this idea in several of his articles. In his opinion, Salafism in Ethiopia should be regarded as a reform movement with no political ambitions. Its main goal is spreading their mission. In addition, Ostebo asserts that accusation of Islamism and politicization are not observable in the field.[480]

During my own fieldwork, I gathered significant contradictions to Haggai's thesis. For instance, in his introduction Haggai writes: *"Saudi money is behind much of the current Islamic revival in Ethiopia, the construction of hundreds of new mosques and Quranic schools, the establishment of welfare associations and translated literature, the expansion of the Hajj, the organization of conferences of preachers, the monthly subsidies for the newly converted, the spread of the contention that Muslims are already an overwhelming majority in the country and more".*[481] Much of this is exaggerated. Although much of the newly acquired literature originates from Saudi Arabia, it was the new policy of the government and not so much Saudi money which allowed access to literature as well as the growing mobility of Ethiopian Muslims, which resulted in higher *Hajj* quotas. As mentioned before, it is not only under Saudi influence that Ethiopian Muslims consider themselves to be the majority in Ethiopia. Numbers released by the CIA also contribute to this notion.[482] In addition, when we take a closer look at schools and mosques in Addis Ababa, it becomes apparent that far from all mosques are funded with Saudi money. Haggai seems to consider all Ethiopian Muslims to be Salafists or at least all movements in Ethiopia to be supported by Saudi Arabia. This is incorrect. Ethiopian Islam is much more diverse and there are some movements, like al-Tablighi, which consider themselves rivals of Salafism. In addition, as mentioned in chapter two, Tablighi refuse outside aid and insist on independency of the movement.

Many Ethiopian Muslim intellectuals find Haggai biased in his research of Islam in Ethiopia. Although I do not wish to go so far as to call Haggai biased, it becomes difficult when he writes things as *"the main confrontation today is not Christian- Islamic, but Islamic-Islamic. It is believed that the worldwide, internal debates and conflicts over the interpretation of Islam, not its conflict with the Western, Christian civilizations, are the main cause of today's*

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[480] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives"*, 8.
[481] Haggai, Erlich. *"Saudi Arabia & Ethiopia: Islam, Christianity & Politics Entwined"*, 4.
[482] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia"*, 22.

international instability. Our study supports this argument."[483] It is obvious that internal differences within Islam have created a large amount of friction within the Islamic world. But what Haggai leaves out here is the fact that Western discourse and interventions have considerably contributed to this friction and to conflict in general in the Islamic world. Moreover, it seems out of place to lump all issues in Ethiopia together. As mentioned before, respect was the main outcome of the conference organized by the AUUF in Ethiopia, and more unity was the result of the incidents in 2011.[484] Furthermore, most of the conflicts taking place in Ethiopia involving Muslim communities are between Islam and Christianity and between the government and Muslim communities.

With the exception of statements like the above, I am not convinced that Haggai is biased. In my opinion, his research is mainly based on literature which hardly shows the ground situation in Ethiopia. This opinion is based on my studying of the bibliography in his book as well as of the various citations of literature throughout. His source material comes from individuals, and their opinions can hardly be exported to all. Furthermore, he mainly refers to discourse engaged in by Saudi Arabia which deals with Islam in Ethiopia. This literature can be biased and might reflect ulterior motives. Using this literature, he insinuates that politicization of Islam and radicalism were exported from Saudi Arabia to Ethiopia. He claims that *"As in the past, the renewed Middle Eastern connection also worked toward the politicization of Islam in Ethiopia [...] Quite a number, however who are widely referred to in today's Ethiopia as "Wahhabis" have begun to strive for the political victory of Islam."*[485] However, he seems to contradict his story, when, a few pages further, he adds that the focus of Ethiopian Muslims is on redefining religious equality. *"By and large, in spite of such (Saudi) influences, it seems that most Muslims in Ethiopia's capital have remained loyal their apolitical traditions. They do their best to channel the new momentum toward redefining Ethiopia as a sphere of religious equality."*[486]

The relevance of Erlich Haggai to my story finds itself in the influence his work has had on the policies of the EPRDF towards Islam. Haggai has given various lectures to various government officials and in addition his book in itself seems to have been of relevance as

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[483] Haggai, Erlich. *"Saudi Arabia & Ethiopia: Islam, Christianity & Politics Entwined",* 8.
[484] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 11.
[485] Haggai, Erlich. *"Saudi Arabia & Ethiopia: Islam, Christianity & Politics Entwined",*176.
[486] Haggai, Erlich. *"Saudi Arabia & Ethiopia: Islam, Christianity & Politics Entwined",* 179.

well.[487] The emphasis he puts on the negative aspects of Salafism in the world and the way he projects it onto Ethiopian Salafis might be linked to the government's negative attitude towards Salafism. A last statement from Haggai to conclude with: *"The legacy of Ahmed Gragn and the call for Islam's victory over Ethiopia have not died in Harar. Though Al-Itihad al-Islami, IOLF and the agents of Al-Qaida seem to have lost some ground in recent years, international Islamic terrorists still consider the Horn of Africa an operation base and a safe heaven."[488]*

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[487] Interview Solomon 02/02/2014.

[488] Haggai, Erlich. *"Saudi Arabia & Ethiopia: Islam, Christianity & Politics Entwined",* 229.

Chapter five: Islam in the Public Space of Addis Ababa

In this chapter we will take a closer look at the research performed during my fieldwork. The previous chapters considered most of the different aspects which concern and influence the position of Muslims in the public space of the Ethiopian capital. As well as relevant background information and some considerations on the social aspects of these matters. In this chapter the goal is to discuss the position of Islam in the public space over the past twenty-three years and the influence of local and global events on their current position in the capital city. The chapter will answer the following main research questions: "What is the current position of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa and how did this evolve over the past twenty-three years to arrive at the contemporary situation?" The second one: "To what extent did events and issues of the past twenty-three years contribute to the contemporary presence of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa?" I will distill an answer on these questions by taking a closer look at three aspects of the position of Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa. The first being the relevance of public space within the dynamics of the past twenty-three years. The second being the presence of Muslims in the public space. Information provided in this part of chapter five is mainly based on personal observations and fieldwork. The third aspect is concerned with an historical exposition of the impact of global and local events on the position of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa.

An important part of my research of public space is based on the theories of Doreen Massey. Although I do not agree with some of her statements, the backbone of her theory is remarkably well applicable to my thesis subject. The interrelatedness of space, as Massey describes it in 'For Space' (2005), brings the local in close contact with the global and vice versa: *"If we really think space relationally, then it is the sum of all our connections, and in that sense utterly grounded, and those connections may go around the world."*[489] As discussed in chapter four, the local position of Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa is very much influenced by global ideologies, discourses and events. The global is, in turn, influenced by the discourse engaged in by the Ethiopian government on their own Muslim population, on Islam in the Horn of Africa and on its own position in the global War on Terror.

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[489] Massey, Doreen. *"For space",* 185.

This chapter, however, concerns itself more with the actual space within the city. In this sense the local is very much influenced by the global. The position of Muslims in the public space entails their ability to build religious institutions, to wear their religious clothing of choice and to perform their religious rituals. It entails literature, spread from all parts of the world, making Ethiopian Muslims more eager to perform their religion in a correct way and helping the spread of different Islamic ideologies. Global ideological and financial support in its turn has had a considerable impact on the visibility of Islam. From another perspective, the American financial and political support to the Ethiopian government gives the latter the ability to intensively intervene in all parts of society and public space.

In addition, Ethiopians, Muslim or otherwise, are themselves important actors in creating space. Massey states: "*Space is always under construction. Precisely because space in this reading is a product of relations between, relations which are necessary embedded in material practice[…] it is always in the process of being made.*"[490] Every relation thus takes part in forming space as well as every practice performed in this space, whether it's of a religious nature or otherwise. Human beings are always inevitably making spaces and places.[491] Space will thus be regarded in this thesis as more then distance or openness and rather as a configuration of multiplicity. All aspects concerning Ethiopian Muslims in the public space and in Ethiopian society, as well as their current hardships, are all part of this configuration of multiplicity. They all contribute to the current situation regarding the public space of Addis Ababa and the position of Muslims in this space.

Place is also of significance for this thesis. Since the aim is to get information about the position of Muslims in the city of Addis Ababa, mosques and Islamic schools are of the utmost importance, not merely indicators of the growing visibility of Islam but also as significant 'places'. In this sense, place is considered as part of the larger structure which we refer to as space. Place in this thesis is defined as a subjective embodiment of meaning and a location of cultural relevance and memory.[492] Schools, but mainly mosques, will be regarded as centers for the surrounding Muslim community, in most of the cases it is the community which initiated the construction of the mosque which can therefore be regarded as a place where Muslims come not only for religious purposes like praying and studying the *Qur'an* but

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[490] Massey, Doreen. "*For space*", 9.
[491] Massey, Doreen. "*For space*". 175.
[492] Desplat, Patrick Et. al. "*Prayer in the city: The Making of Muslim Sacred Places and Urban Life*", Bielefeld, Transaction Publishers, 2012 18.

also for social and economic reasons. For example, most of the large mosques in Addis Ababa are surrounded by several shops usually run by Muslims. Place making should thus not only be interpreted in the religious sense but is formed by various activities and relations. In this thesis, the emphasis is however mainly on religious practices. The growing religious fervor which has resulted from the growing availability of religious information has also meant that the sacred in Islam has changed in Ethiopia. This does not only mean that Islamic shrines have lost part of their popularity to mosques as places of prayer. It also means that the sacred becomes more apparent in the expression of aspirations in everyday life. This life is characterized by complexity, ambiguity, reflectivity, openness and frustration, Desplat states that this very much coincides with the imagination of urban life.[493]

5.1. Relevance of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa today

Both the conflict with the Ethiopian Orthodox Christians and the EPRDF seem to revolve around public space. The EOC considers various parts of the capital city as parts of their sacred space. A larger amount of freedom granted in the early years of the EPRDF's rule allowed Muslims to construct a considerable amount of mosques in the capital city as well as in other parts of the country. This has created and still creates a lot of friction between the two religious communities. When we take a closer look at some individual mosque histories further in this text, this will be clearly illustrated. The mushrooming of mosques all over Addis Ababa has not only made Islam more visible, it has also disrupted some sacred spaces which used to be controlled by the EOC. This has resulted in a very aggressive discourse between these both parties and in several clashes between religious communities. Ostebo: *"Most of the actual confrontations between the two religious communities have been related to the competition over public space; the construction of mosques & churches and the celebrations of religious holidays."*[494]

Public space is not only a point of friction between religious groups, but also between Muslim communities and the Ethiopian government. Haggai states: *"However, in general, it seems that for the first time in history (before 1991), Muslims can compete for a place under the*

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[493] Desplat, Patrick Et. al. *"Prayer in the city: The Making of Muslim Sacred Places and Urban Life",* 28.
[494] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 10.

Ethiopian sun.[495] The Muslim community became a relevant actor in the city. Haggai's statement, however - though theoretically valid – demands a more nuanced investigation of the situation on the ground. As research indicated, it would be an overstatement to claim the Muslim community as an uncontroversial actor in public space.

Again, growing visibility of Islam which is not only created by mosques but also formed in religious expression feeds into the increasing suspicion of the government towards Islam. For example the Friday prayer otherwise known as *Juma'a* is for a large part performed on the streets. This also includes the religious practice of washing the body before prayer. The practice is therefore very visible in public space. One of the most relevant aspects of religious expression influencing the conflict between the Muslim community and the government however, are the traditions of the Salafi community. The female Salafi's wear the *Niqab* because it is believed that the entire female body is a jewel and should thus be covered. Also the male Salafi's have a strict dress code in which they imitate the first community of followers of the prophet. For instance, they show their ankles and grow a long beard which makes them very visible in the public sphere. In addition the movement has grown extensively after 1991 making their visibility even more prominent. As indicated above, Salafism is very much distrusted by the government and the global discourse often links it to extremism and terrorism. Actions to limit the possibilities of Salafi's in the public and in society have not only affected the Salafi community but have had an effect on all Ethiopian Muslims. However, it is not only Salafism which has become more visible. As stated above there is a growing amount of religious fervor and other movements have also increased their religious expression through the performance of rituals and dress codes. Once more the *Hijab* may be taken as an example. Government limitation on headwear in universities indicates that the visible presence of Islam is regarded as an issue by government officials.

Next to dress codes and rituals, the construction of mosques and schools is of great importance for Muslims since, at the moment, there are not enough mosques in Addis Ababa for all Muslims residing in the city. Although the religious qualities are most important to Muslims when it comes to the construction of these institutions, my findings indicate that mosques also provides Ethiopian Muslims with a form of recognition as an active community of Ethiopia. Currently, the need for more Islamic institutions in the capital and all over Ethiopia is one of the main incentives for friction in the Ethiopian society. Muslims need

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[495] Haggai, Erlich. *"Saudi Arabia & Ethiopia: Islam, Christianity & Politics Entwined",* 178.

these institutions in order to organize themselves and more importantly to organize their religion, which is constitutionally guaranteed. However, over the past years this guarantee has slowly been crumbling, because of the growing interventions from the government. In addition, it is very hard to build these institutions when local Christian communities regularly reject their right to build in what they consider their neighborhood. Ostebo writes: *"The Muslims are, on their part, caught in between rising expectations and negotiations over public space."*[496] Lastly, the public is of considerable importance in the light of recent events. So, let us have a look at demonstrations organized by the Muslim population since 2011 in Addis Ababa, as yet another aspect of their presence in the public space. As mentioned in chapter three, there were weekly demonstrations in Addis Ababa to protest against the growing role the EPRDF wanted to play in religion. Demonstrations are always a means of putting pressure on governments exactly because they take place in the public space. Showing their presence and discontent does not only contribute to the demonstrators' visibility in the public space but also makes sure their demands are heard by a wide variety of people.

The public space of Addis Ababa is thus relevant whenever the larger subject of Islam in Ethiopia is discussed. The public space of Addis Ababa is thus for various reasons a relevant subject, which should be taken into account whenever the larger subject of Islam in Ethiopia is discussed. This is also the opinion of Terje Ostebo. In most articles he clearly states that the public space is central to conflicts involving the Ethiopian Muslim population. In one of his articles he asserts: *"The regime's reactions deprived the Muslims of much of the public space they (Ethiopian Muslims) had acquired since 1991."*[497] Not only Ostebo puts emphasis on the public space in his research, various other prominent researchers do the same. Jon Abbink, for instance, writes: *"more competition over public space, often in the most literal sense: when and where to build mosques, churches, or chapels; self-presentation in the media; public celebrations; and religious "noise" production by means of loudspeakers."*[498] Dereje Feyissa and Erlich Haggai, too, are very much concerned with the public space. Dereje does not just put emphasis on competition over the construction of mosques, he also regards rivalry

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[496] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 53.
[497] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 40.
[498] Abbink, Jon. *"Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia",* 255.

polemics and public discourse to actively shape the public space.[499] All these celebrated researchers mention the public space in their articles and books. However, in most of these articles their research with regards to the public space in usually limited to one or two paragraphs. I thus decided to take a much closer look at this aspect in the light of current issues involving Ethiopian Muslims.

5.2 Visibility of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa today

5.2.1 Visibility through dress code

We all know the traditional look and clothing of Muslims. Their dress codes are universal and every country which has Muslims residing in them -which is close to every country in the world- is acquainted with these. In almost all countries where Islam is not the dominant religion, their traditional clothing generates criticism, undergoes bigotry and, in some countries, limits on this form of religious expression exist by the political apparatus. For instance, in Belgium, there has been a very heated discussion of whether or not to forbid women wearing the *Hijab* when working in public offices or attending schools. In Ethiopia, this is no different. As mentioned before, the EPRDF has been working on a law which prohibits the headscarf for women on the campus of any university. Although it has not fully been put in practice, during my fieldwork it became apparent that even the Addis Ababa University was going to implement this law next year. Moreover, together with limits on religious clothing, prayer will also be prohibited on campus.[500] This will most likely generate a strong reaction from Muslim students, like it has been the case in other universities where the law has already been put into practice. So, religious expression in a non-Muslim country or at least in a country which regards itself as non-Muslim can become very difficult. In addition, this thesis took the capital city of Ethiopia as a case study. This city is ethnically and religiously very diverse. In addition it is the center of political power. This situation can cause difficulties to perform Muslim practices. As a reaction, some Muslims become more active in

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[499] Feyissa Dori, Dereje. *"The potential for and signs of religious radicalization in Ethiopia",* 15.
[500] Interview Ahmed 12/02/2014.

the practice of their faith, as will be shown below. Desplat writes: *"Muslim practices of place making are often intensified to maneuver through the complexities of urban life."*[501]

First, this section will explore the relevance of traditional Islamic clothing in the public space of Addis Ababa. As mentioned in chapter one, Muslims used to live in harsh conditions before 1991. They were not allowed to own land or to perform any social or economical job which was dominated by Christians. Atrocities took place under the command of their Christian rulers. During the social regime, religion in general was very much limited in any form of expression. It is thus safe to say that Ethiopian Muslims before and after 1991 looked differently and practiced in a very different way. The new constitution drafted in 1995 officially opened Ethiopia to the world and, more specifically, opened the way for Ethiopian Muslims to the larger Islamic world.[502] The ability for Ethiopian Muslims to travel to these regions as well as the ability for external Islamic authorities to travel to Ethiopia, and the availability of Islamic literature, has translated into a transmission of foreign practices and traditions to Ethiopia. This is very much reflected in the public space, not only in the performance of rituals but also in the dress codes of Ethiopian Muslims. While the *Hijab* might not have been a common sight in Ethiopia before 1991, post-1991 this has become common practice. All Islamic women wear some form of headscarf, it even has become obligatory. Especially young females put emphasis on this tradition and do it because they strive to be a correct Muslim.[503] In Salafi circles, wearing the *Niqab* has attained a similar significance. The *Niqab* most likely was not very common in Ethiopia before the resurgence of Salafism after 1991. The issue of the headscarf generates a lot of confusion among other religious individuals. In various conversations with Christians and Protestants the subject of the female headscarf came to the fore. They called it a new trend which they did not understand: *"why is the female headscarf all of a sudden so important and necessary",* they asked.[504] Not only female headwear has become more common. Also the Muslim *Taqiyah* which is worn by male Muslims has become a widely performed practice. Both forms of headwear have become popular by Ethiopian Muslims, which makes them easily recognizable and visible in the public space of Addis Ababa and, of course, in the rest of Ethiopia. Let us now take a closer look at the Islamic dress, which in Arabic is called *Thawb*. Although many

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[501] Desplat, Patrick Et. al. *"Prayer in the city: The Making of Muslim Sacred Places and Urban Life",* 12.

[502] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 22.

[503] Focus group of five Female Muslims 24/02/2014.

[504] Informal conversation Miran 16/02/2014.

do not wear the *Thawb* in everyday life it is widely visible, especially around market places, most noticeably in Merkato. Most Ethiopian Muslims in Addis Ababa wear the *Thawb* to *Juma'a* (Friday prayer). Another characteristic feature of the dresscode of the Ethiopian Muslim is the *Kûfiyyah.* Most countries in the *Mashreq* have their own national scarf. In Ethiopia this *Kûfiyyah* is worn extensively. More specifically the *Kûfiyyah* of Saudi Arabia is most common. This again confirms the formation of space as relations which range across the world.

As mentioned before, female and male Salafis have a different clothing style compared to other Muslim movements and moderate Muslims. Male Salafis grow their beards long in accordance with how the prophet and his close followers did. Because Salafism is associated with radicalism and terrorism, the beard has also become associated with this. This is, however, completely irrational. Not every Muslim with a beard is a potential extremist and/or terrorist. Moreover, some if not most Salafis in Ethiopia are focused on their individual lives and the correct performance of their religion as they interpret it. Another characteristic external feature of male Salafists is showing the ankles. This can obviously be attributed to the influence of Saudi Arabia in Ethiopia, which increased after 1991. This practice is widely visible in Addis Ababa.

In conclusion it can be stated that first and foremost the new religious fervor, which is created by greater freedom and better relations with the rest of the Islamic world, expresses itself in the Islamic dress code which is followed without exception post-1991. This translates itself in greater visibility of Muslims in the public space. This is mostly positive because of their limited ability to do so before 1991, it is their constitutional right to do so and because being more visible is important in order for them to claim their position in society. On the other hand, it has some downsides, especially for women. As mentioned before, the prohibition of *hijab* in universities will require female Muslims to choose between religion and education. Further being easily recognizable also heightens the possibility of being discriminated.

5.2.2 *Visibility through performance of rituals*

In the same way that there has been an increase in self-expression through dress code, there has been an upswing in the performance of Islamic rituals and practices post-1991. The same pretext can be identified, namely growing relations with the larger Islamic world. This intensification of connections with other Islamic countries has not just created more religious fervor among Ethiopian Muslims but has also given them more confidence, which translates

itself into more religious expression in stricter compliance to Islamic practices. Although praying five times a day (*Salat*) is not performed by every Muslim, the effort other Muslims put into their prayer rituals is striking. Many Ethiopian Muslims put all other preoccupations aside to follow this requirement in the life of a good Muslim. The prayer is preferably performed in a mosque or in a building intended for this purpose, but when such place is not available they will pray anywhere. This should be understood in the sense that any open space in the city will be used. Sometimes multiple Muslims agree on specific public places to go and pray together. This sort of praying in the streets has undergone increasing scrutiny from the government and local Christians. For example a number of taxi drivers were found to pray under the bridge where their taxis are stationed when they are not on duty. This however has become increasingly difficult because they are chased away or prohibited to pray by the local police.[505] In other places Muslims are subjugated to harassment by individuals or groups who follow a different religion.[506] Close to where the Nur Hussein mosque is located, for instance, young Muslims prayed on the grass and during this prayer were often insulted and accused of being terrorists.[507]

Another form of public prayer takes place during *Juma'a.* Because not all mosques have the capacity to seat the hundreds of Muslims who want to visit the mosque closest to them on Friday after one p.m., Muslims pray outside.[508] As is tradition, before praying they wash their head, feet and hands/forearms. This is done on the street. Dozens of bottles of water are provided to clean the necessary body parts. Muslims gather around these spots to wash themselves, sometimes with more than ten in one group. Having brought their own blanket or a newspaper, they put them next to each other, in this way occupying the entire street from sidewalk to sidewalk. Around some mosques, even roundabouts are occupied or streets as far as the eye can see. The traffic is stopped by policemen during the entire prayer. There is also a prohibition of noise during prayer. Only the loudspeakers of the mosque echo through the streets around the mosque, followed by group recitation. This practice does not only make *Juma'a* something very special to attend for me as an outsider, it also illustrated for me as a researcher how the public space of Addis Ababa was completely occupied by Muslims: visually (the total occupation of the streets) as well as auditory (the sound of the loudspeakers and the recitation).

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[505] Interview Zayd 10/03/2014.
[506] Informal conversation Rashid 08/03/2014.
[507] Informal conversation Rashid 08/03/2014.
[508] Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF",* 13.

Let us make a small detour on the subject of self-expression of Muslims, by taking a look at the auditory aspect, namely the very diverse soundscape of Addis Ababa. Wherever you are, you can hear loudspeakers broadcasting religious messages and calls for prayer, filling the streets with sound. In Addis Ababa there are mosques, Ethiopian Orthodox churches, Catholic churches and Protestant churches. Almost all of these have loudspeakers and all of these use them regularly. This means that there is a lot of competition of sound in Addis Ababa, since each of these wishes to get its religious messages out into the public. Orthodox Churches most regularly claim the soundscape of Addis Ababa: not only do they have a lot more religious institutions than other religions, they also use their loudspeakers most. At least once a day, most Orthodox churches preach religious messages to their believers. Mosques, on the other hand, do not. They are only heard during Friday prayer and on Islamic holidays. Moreover, their messages are much shorter in length. Conclusively, when we regard the soundscape in the context of Islam in the public space, we can argue that it contributes much to their presence on moments when the loudspeaker is used, even though the EOC's claim of the soundscape is more dominant.

5.2.3 Visibility through demonstrations

Let us now take a look at demonstrations as a means of usurping the public space for Muslims in Addis Ababa. Although there weren't any demonstrations during my fieldwork in Addis Ababa, there were multiple ones over the past three years. Let us zoom in on the demonstrations against al-Ahbash, which have only ended fairly recently. They mainly took place after *Juma'a* around the Anwar Mosque, the most central mosque in Addis Ababa. When we look at these demonstrations from a different perspective than the one we have developed in chapter three, a different story unfolds. Demonstrations obviously take place in the public space: the streets are filled with protesters making noise by singing or shouting. Their presence is thus hard to ignore for the government as well as for other people. Demonstrations are, in other words, a way to claim the public space. In Addis Ababa, the presence of Islam and Ethiopian Muslims would be so much more clear during these. The goal of these demonstrations in not only to put pressure on the government, it is a way to ventilate their anger and frustration by telling people what is bothering them. Ostebo emphasizes the peaceful course these demonstrations take, they are nothing like an uprising or a revolution.[509] Ethiopian Muslims do not wish to create an Islamic state, in fact they are

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[509] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam*". 22.

active supporters of the separation of religion and state as well as supporters of religious freedom.[510] Although these demonstrations have currently ended, it should be seen as a temporary break, unless the Ethiopian government would meet some or all of their demands. The fact that the last demonstrations took place fairly recently means that these events still have an impact today. Everybody I talked to during my fieldwork was aware of the issues concerning Ethiopian Muslims. The relevance to the public space is thus still applicable, even if there were no demonstrations during my stay in Ethiopia.

The religious revival of Islam since 1991 has clearly manifested itself in the public space and has become apparent in the topics discussed above. Islamic religious revival in a country which has previously been under communist rule is not a sole characteristic of Ethiopia but can be observed in many nations, for example Tajikistan and other countries which used to be part of the USSR.[511] This trend is not only observed within Islam: other religious groups which lived under the same circumstances know similar trends. In Ethiopia this cannot solely be attributed to the generation of *Derg,* but also to the new open policy of the government. The relation between the global and the local again becomes apparent. The increased relations of Ethiopian Muslims (local) with the larger Islamic *Umma* (the global) has greatly contributed to the presence of Islam in the public space of Ethiopia.

5.2.4   *Visibility through mosques and schools*

As the reader may have noticed the mosque is central to almost all practices and events. One may even claim that it is the center of religious practice and in this sense highly important for research. In any debate on Islam in Ethiopia, Islamic institutions such as schools and mosques are never far from the picture. It is thus essential to take a closer look at the history of mosques and schools in Addis Ababa and their impact on the position of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space. They are thus not only relevant for the formation of the public space, they are also most relevant for making place which has become apparent in the practices discussed above.

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[510] Interview Ahmed 12/02/2014.

[511] For more about this interesting trend one may consult various works of Bruno DeCordier who has done extensive research on Central Asia. De Cordier, Bruno. *"The (in)visible hand of Muhajirat: a field observation on labor migration, social change and religion in the Vakhsh Valley, Tadjikistan",* in: Handbook of research on development and religion, United Kingdom, 2013, 524.

This section will first take a look at the mosques located in Addis Ababa. As already suggested in the previous paragraphs mosques are very important to assess the position of Islam in public space. Not only do many important practices take place in and around the mosque, important relations – be they global or local - are also crucial in the construction of mosques as well as in their maintenance. In addition, many interreligious tensions revolve around building mosques and the history of many a mosque is teeming with conflicts involving the government. The mosque itself is thus a center where different actors, global as well as local, support, clash and influence each other, in addition to (and maybe because of) the visibility of these centers. Their high minarets and round domes make Islam more visible than ever in the public space of Addis Ababa: these mosque and thus Ethiopian Muslims can no longer be ignored. In the words of Ahmed Hussein: *"Minarets and glittering domes of newly constructed mosques have further enhanced the visibility and prominence of Islam in the public sphere, and added to the beauty and diversity of the urban landscape of Addis Ababa and other towns throughout the country."*[512]

Today there are more than 158 mosques in the city.[513] The exact number is unknown because of the informal character some of the mosques have, which is significant in itself. Another reason for this is a lack of effort or the inability of the government to document and register all the mosques in Addis Ababa, this in contrary to churches in the city which are even geographically located by the national mapping agency. The highly informal aspect of a large amount of mosques in Addis Ababa is caused by the inability to build mosques on a normal basis and a lack in licensing from the government. During an interview with a government official in the mapping division for Addis Ababa, the government official said that the master plan for the city did not include room for religious buildings and institutions, but when 'one' individual asked permission to build a mosque or church this would instantly be agreed upon by the municipality.[514] However, when I asked some critical questions, the translator present started to nervously tell a story of tolerance. Later, I learned that this was because the official threatened to take him away if he relayed negative information.[515] This may be another indication that, although religious freedom might be constitutionally guaranteed, the matter is

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[512] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Coexistence and/or confrontation?: Towards a reappraisal of Christian-Muslim encounter in Contemporary Ethiopia",* 10.
[513] Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF",* 44.
[514] Interview Government official 04/03/2014.
[515] Interview Government official 04/03/2014.

much more complicated on the ground.[516] On the government reforms, leading to more religious freedom, Hussein stated that they were implemented *"with varying degrees of success and commitment".*[517] Although it might, for example, be the case that churches are instantly approved by the municipality, the research indicates that this is definitely not the case with mosques.[518] If we take a look at the history of some mosques, this will become apparent. It is however not interesting to discuss all mosques as this thesis does not aim to provide all this information. Moreover, this would be unfeasible because there are so many mosques in Addis Ababa. In the following paragraph, the thesis will discuss some of the most relevant cases, illustrating that constitutional rights are not always successfully implemented on the ground.

As mentioned before, a group of young Muslims often praying on the street, were later responsible for the construction of Nur Hussein mosque. One day during their prayer, a government official advised them to move their religious practice to a more remote location regarded as a garbage area. The local Muslims took this advice and started building a mosque on that piece of land. The official approached them again but this time he was furious, he told them that their business was illegal and in no way approved by the government. A little later he destroyed the small mosque and sold the property to a private investor. The local Muslims were very disappointed but decided to look for a different piece of land. They found an investor who was willing to pay for everything and the Muslim community bought a piece of land next to the house of the government official.[519] This obviously further infuriated the government official and he encouraged the Christian community to boycott the construction. However, when the case was presented to the higher authorities, the Muslims received approval to build the mosque.[520] This case shows that the government sometimes actively supports Muslims, though these cases are not the majority.

Another case is the one of Bilal mosque, which is located in the western part of Addis Ababa. The mosque was finished only recently, in 2012, though first efforts to build this mosque were made in 1996. A house was donated to be used for prayer but this house soon became too small, which led the community to apply for a construction license and to build a small

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[516] Interview Zayd 08/02/2014.
[517] Hussein, Ahmed. *"Coexistence and/or confrontation?: Towards a reappraisal of Christian-Muslim encounter in Contemporary Ethiopia",* 13.
[518] Interview Zayd 08/02/2014.
[519] Interview Rashid 08/03/2014.
[520] Interview Rashid 08/03/2014.

mosque on the property while the answer of the governments was still pending. For a number of years, they did not receive a positive reply. When the eventual reply came, it stated that the piece of land the Muslim community asked for was sold to a private investor and that the mosque had to be demolished within five days. Otherwise the government would demolish the mosque itself.[521] However, after stating that this was a violation of their constitutional rights and after the persistence of local communities, the government gave its consent in 2004. The mosque was then finished in 2012.[522] Another useful example is the history of Al-Fatih mosque. After applying for a construction permit, the local community had to wait for seventeen years before the government replied. During this time, a small mosque was already constructed by the community. After seventeen years the government replied that the administrative file was lost and that the property was given to another individual. The mosque was partially demolished and the community was charged 200.000 *Birr* (local currency, €7.518).[523]

The history of Sumeia mosque starts during the *Derg* regime in 1975 but is relevant to this research only from 1992. Efforts were taken to start on the construction of the mosque during the rule of the *Derg* regime but they were met with horrifying repression.[524] The new regime agreed to the construction of the Sumeia mosque in 1992. This brought great joy to the community that had suffered so much hardship in its effort to construct this mosque.[525] However, after several years of waiting no formal consent was given. In 1995 the government asked the Muslim community on which plot they wanted to construct their mosque. When the Muslims replied which slot they desired, the government hereafter stated that this piece of land was claimed for the construction of a private school. A little after, the school was build. This infuriated the local community and in 2000 they again applied to build a mosque. As a temporary alternative they rented a house to pray in. However, when the owner found out the house was functioning as a mosque, he demanded that the Muslims leave the premises. The local Muslim community refused and occupied the house for almost two years until the government intervened. During this intervention five people died and 120 were injured. After this incident, the government changed its position and allotted an area in the city for the

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[521] Interview Rashid 08/03/2014.
[522] Interview Rashid 08/03/2014.
[523] Abdulwehab, Kemal. *"The history of Addis Ababa Mosques"*, in: Annales d'Ethiopie, Vol. 26, 2011, France, 315.
[524] The main person in charge of the project was imprisoned after launching a petition for the construction. His son later disappeared as well. Interview Rashid13/02/2014.
[525] Interview Rashid13/02/2014.

construction of Sumeia mosque.[526] However, this slot was again a plot which had previously been used as garbage area. This is a phenomenon which seems to return in many of the histories of the mosques. Abdulwehab states: *"Another issue is the bad location of a large number of mosques in Addis Ababa. According to the author [Abdulhatif Fetah], 90% of them are constructed on or near a gorge and/or on a place which ones was a garbage area [sic]."*[527] Although such stories shine a bad light on the Ethiopian government, it is important to note that the goal of this thesis is not in any way to attack the government. Rather, this thesis merely aims to point out that, although theoretically, many improvements were made regarding the construction of mosques in Ethiopia, government policies do require some scrutiny. There are several examples in which the government has actively aided the Muslim community in their struggle to construct mosques, as will become apparent in other examples.

The debate on the issue of mosques and their construction in Addis Ababa is very controversial, as indicated by author Sumeya.[528] Sumeya is a Muslim living in Addis Ababa who has done extensive research on mosques in the city, and has covered the history of 158 mosques. During his research he gathered various statistics on these mosques which proved very useful to my research. When we look at these statistics the lack of implementation of the constitution again becomes apparent. Of the 158 mosques that were built in Addis Ababa, 107 were built post-1991, which means that two thirds were constructed during the rule of the EPRDF, which in itself is very remarkable.[529] This can obviously be attributed to the new constitution and its effects. It should however be stated that most of these mosques were constructed due to efforts from the Muslim communities who were determined to build their own mosque. Although the EPRDF has created a large legal framework in which Muslims can organize themselves, further support of the government with regard to the construction of a mosque is fairly limited. Of the 107 mosques which were built after 1991, only forty mosques received a plot of land as a gift from the government.[530] Moreover, the amount of licensed mosques is very small. Of the 158 mosques which Sumeya has researched, only fifty-six mosques received a license from the government to operate as mosque before 2012.[531] This makes all the other mosques very informal, which does not only work as a disadvantage for Muslims but also for the government itself. Therefore, the other mosques operate in an

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[526] Interview Rashid13/02/2014.
[527] Abdulwehab, Kemal. *"The history of Addis Ababa Mosques",* 315.
[528] The necessity of the author to use a pseudonym illustrates this controversy.
[529] Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF",* 44.
[530] Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF",* 46.
[531] Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF",* 44.

informal setting are often in the process of acquiring a license. There is thus an effort to solve these problems.

When we put mosques at the center of the relation between the EPRDF and the Muslim communities, the issues concerning the construction and maintenance of the mosques reflect the broader issues. An enormous improvement can be observed for the Muslim communities, which can be related to the new constitution and to a new kind of politics. Several efforts were made to improve the conditions for Muslims and the construction of mosques. For example Abdulwehab states: *"Thirdly and more significantly, plots were granted by the government on a basis of one mosque to every* "warada" *in Addis Ababa without payment."*[532] Regardless of the impressive improvements, there are still plenty of issues which remain unresolved and in fact some circumstances have deteriorated in the recent years. Abdulwehab states: *"Even if conflicts did not always occur, most mosques were built after legal battles with government bodies responsible for granting the plots of land, issuing the necessary title deeds and permits for construction."*[533]

5.3 *The mosque as metaphor for the position of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa today*

Most researchers interpret the conflict over public space in the context of interreligious tensions, of course not without reason. When we speak of interreligious conflict it should be held in mind that, in the context of my thesis, this conflict is mainly between the EOC, which is losing a lot of sacred as well as public space, and Islam which has claimed vast amounts of new space. This has, as seen above, only been possible since 1991 and possibly also during the *Derg* regime -which removed the EOC as state religion- though in a lesser extent. Although the Ethiopian government currently projects an image of religious tolerance, this is not a fully realistic picture of the situation on the ground. I have discussed various aspects of religious tensions in previous chapters. This chapter discusses these tensions in the light of constructing mosques. Although the subject has been touched upon briefly in chapter three it seems evident to discuss this aspect more intensively.

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[532] Abdulwehab, Kemal. *"The history of Addis Ababa Mosques",* 314.
[533] Abdulwehab, Kemal. *"The history of Addis Ababa Mosques",* 315.

5.3.1 *Interreligious conflict versus interreligious tolerance*

During my search for mosque histories, I came across mixed stories about their construction. At first it seemed impossible to draw a definite conclusion about whether conflict around construction may be generalized. Now however, it has become obvious that such generalization cannot be made although interreligious tensions are more common than rare in these cases. Most Muslims know the expressions "for the construction of every mosque blood had to flow" or "for every mosque somebody had to die".[534] Such sayings suggest the difficulties between religious communities which surround the construction of mosques and illustrate how Muslims perceive these incidents. If we take a closer look at some mosques' histories it will become exceedingly clear where such sentiments come from. They however, do mainly focus on negative aspects.

In chapter three, we saw the history of Mohajirun mosque, which was already a good example of the origin of Muslims' perception of these incidents. Yerer mosque, which was built in the east of Addis Ababa, was a center of religious tensions during its construction. The mosque was constructed during the day and at night it was destroyed by the local Christian community, this to the extent that multiple Muslims in the area volunteered to spent the night in the mosque to guard and protect it. My informant was one of those who volunteered.[535] Another example is the construction of Jewhar Shonke mosque, which started in 1992. A few very religious Muslims decided that they wanted to construct a mosque in their neighborhood. The mosque is located in the north-east of Addis Ababa, in a sub-city called Yeka. Before the construction of this mosque, they prayed in a small private house which was owned by a Christian woman. She gave her house to the local Ethiopian Muslims for them to pray in. Soon it became too small and in 1995 they decided to build a big mosque in the woods close to where their residences were.[536] They cut down all the trees in the area and constructed a fence around the property on which they hoped to build a mosque. This fence was destroyed by the Christian community, so at night Muslims rebuilt the fence. This conflict went back and forth for a while until the two communities clashed. When the fence, was once more destroyed and rebuilt, the Muslim community hired a guard to protect it.[537] This guard was severely injured during his duty and at that point the government intervened. The municipality declared that the Muslim community had to relocate and find a new place to construct a

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[534] Interview Solomon 02/02/2014.
[535] Interview Ahmed 12/02/2014.
[536] Interview Rashid 19/02/2014.
[537] Interview Rashid 19/02/2014.

mosque. At this point, an Ethiopian Muslim intellectual stepped in. Habeb Haji Mohammed Sari is known for his translation of the *Qur'an* in Amharic. He wrote a letter to the government, which turned their minds and convinced them to vote in favor of the local Muslim community. Two new guards were instated to protect the property and the plans for construction were drafted in 1998. The government sent engineers and mapmakers to measure the property, which infuriated the Christian community. They harassed and eventually chased away the government employees which in its turn led the government to call in help from the police.[538] The Christian community was so infuriated that they even clashed with these police officers. Eventually, they stayed to protect the mosque for two months until its foundations were finished. The mosque itself was finished in the year 2000. The reason why Christians acted so violently in this case is that they claimed the mosque was built on a holy location.[539]

Another good example is the history of Jafar mosque, which starts in 1991. Some Muslims settled on the outskirts of Addis Ababa, in a place which at that time was not considered part of the city. These Muslims gathered on a regular basis and during one of these gatherings they decided to construct a mosque.[540] A year later, new residents arrived to this area and were instantly opposed to the idea of building a mosque in the area. The local Muslim community reacted by building a fence around the compound which was reserved for the construction of Jafar mosque.[541] As was the case with the Jewhar Shonke mosque, this fence was almost instantly destroyed by the new Christian residents in the area. They argued that the land for the construction of this mosque was not provided by the government and that the claim of this land by the Ethiopian Muslims was thus not justified nor legally instated. This quarrel eventually led to severe clashes. When in 1994 the question again arose whether to build a mosque in the area, violence erupted once again. The government decided to intervene and wished to sell the property to a private investor. The local Muslim community, however, did not give up and persistently put pressure on the government to allow them to construct their mosque. Two years later, in 1996, the government granted them a license to build Jafar mosque on the slot that had been reserved for it. From this moment on, real violence did not

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[538] Interview Rashid 19/02/2014.
[539] Interview Rashid 19/02/2014.
[540] Interview Rashid 19/02/2014.
[541] Interview Rashid 19/02/2014.

erupt again, but various forms of boycott were still performed by the local Christian community. This became apparent in the twelve years it took to build this mosque.[542]

Although Nur Hussein mosque has previously been discussed in relation to the problems with the Ethiopian government, it is also relevant in the context of interreligious tensions we are dealing with in this section. After all, when a slot of land was bought for the construction of Nur Hussein mosque the local Christian community actively boycotted the construction of this mosque. Once again, a clear example of the tensions to which Ethiopian Muslims are subjected when they wish to construct a mosque in their neighborhood.[543] As stated above such tensions do not occur in the history of every mosque. There are also several examples of religious tolerance and even cooperation to build a mosque. It seems however that this is only a fact in a few cases. A prime example of such interreligious cooperation is the construction of Abdallah ibn Abas mosque. The initiative to construct this mosque actually came from the local Christian community and not from Muslims living in the area. It is said that many Christians who live around this part of Addis Ababa wanted to give the local Muslim residents a mosque of their own. The Christians discussed this with the Muslims and soon three possible slots of land were considered, of which they eventually chose one. Christians aided with the financial aspect for the construction of the mosque and a local priest even donated his house for Muslims to pray in until their new mosque was finished.[544] The mosque was built in wood, but soon became too small and was later rebuilt in stone. The building grew in size and was finely ornamented. It was completely finished in the year 2000.

From this example, it should be clear that any debate about interreligious tolerance as well as interreligious conflict in the public space of Addis Ababa with regards to the construction of mosques should be nuanced. Although there are obviously still a lot of interreligious tensions concerning the construction of mosques it is very common for individuals of different religious groups to have good relations with each other. Muslims and Christians or members of any other religion can have deep friendships in which religious background is of no importance. So whether one speaks of interreligious tension or interreligious tolerance, the one should never be considered without the other.

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[542] Interview Rashid 08/02/2014.
[543] Interview Rashid 08/02/2014.
[544] Interview Rashid 08/02/2014.

5.3.2 Deficiency of mosques

Up until now we have discussed mosques in their traditional sense, as structures with a large minaret and a dome. A mosque is instantly associated with this image and rightfully so: mosques all over the world have these very specific characteristics. In the capital city of Ethiopia various beautiful mosques have been constructed and can most definitely be considered important locations for Muslims in the public space. They are places where religious as well as social practices are performed and many of these practices are central in the lives of Muslims living in the city. They are thus rightfully considered to be central in the story of the position of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa. However, it is important to note that not all mosques in Addis Ababa fit this picture. Quite the contrary, several mosque histories already touched upon the fact that private houses have often been used as mosques. Some of them were only used temporarily until a new larger mosque could be constructed. Other private houses have been continually used as mosques. They look like regular houses in Addis Ababa, often the informal kind of house. Usually made of steel plates, these houses have a simple construction and, most of the time, they have no more than two rooms. It is impossible to know that these houses serve as mosques unless you are specifically looking for them. They usually do not have a minaret or a dome, although some of them do have an improvised minaret with speakers on them (for photos of these mosques, I refer the reader to the appendix of this thesis). These houses are obviously not ideal to perform in them all the functions which are usually performed in mosques. So, why are they used as such? The answer is fairly simple: these houses are still used today because of the difficulties with the construction of traditional mosques. As mentioned before, the construction of a mosque receives plenty of headwind from the EPRDF as well as from the Christian communities in Addis Ababa, resulting in a deficiency of mosques in the city.

Official statistics provided by the Ethiopian government state that in Addis Ababa the population reaches 2.739.551 individuals.[545] Of these, 17.2 percent are Muslim according to government statistics.[546] These are official numbers, although they are widely contested by Ethiopian Muslims who claim that they consist of more than fifty percent of the population in

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[545] History of the city of Addis Ababa as found on the website of the City Government of Addis Ababa
http://www.addisababacity.gov.et/index.php/en/about-addis/history consulted 05/04/2014.
[546] History of the city of Addis Ababa as found on the website of the City Government of Addis Ababa
http://www.addisababacity.gov.et/index.php/en/about-addis/history consulted 05/04/2014.

Ethiopia. This claim would entail that there are significantly more Muslims in Addis Ababa. It is impossible to say who is right and who is wrong. This thesis therefore uses the results from the national consensus in 2007. Even if these figures are considered insufficient by the Muslim communities in Ethiopia, they still provide some essential insights on mosques in Addis Ababa. If 17.2 percent of the total population in Addis Ababa is Muslim, that would mean that there are 471.203 Muslims residing within the boundaries of the city. Most of them pray five times a day and regularly visit their mosque. In addition, on Friday during *Juma'a* they all gather to pray around a mosque which is capable of performing this ritual. Since nobody has a clear idea of how many mosques there are in Addis Ababa it is impossible to compare the numbers of worshippers to the amount of mosques without severe reservations. As mentioned before, Sumeya performed research on 158 mosques in Addis Ababa. However, my research convinced me that there are more mosques in Addis Ababa as I myself have visited and heard about mosques which Sumeya does not cover. His research was performed before 2009, which means it cannot have covered the mosques built during the last five years. In my opinion, it would be reasonable to claim that there are more or less 170 mosques in Addis Ababa, which means that 471.203 Muslims would have to share these mosques to perform their daily prayer. On average, this would entail that every mosque should have the capacity to host about 2.772 Muslims, in case all of these individuals like to attend their own house of worship. Even larger mosques would have difficulties housing such a number of worshippers. And let us not forget that a substantial amount of these mosques are smaller ones located in private houses which cannot hold more than 30 people.

Even when the number of 170 mosques is grossly underestimated, It can be concluded that there is a shortage in mosques in the capital city. This explains why Muslims are using their own houses as mosques. They do not only aid their community, which earns them prestige and respect, the practice is also an obvious sign that there is a lack of possibilities to build traditional and bigger mosques in the capital city. This while government officials stated that if a person wants to build a mosque on a certain piece of land, the government would agree to and allow this.[547] A shortage in mosques also becomes apparent when Friday prayer is performed. As stated above, Muslims perform the prayer and the rituals before and after *Juma'a* on the streets around the mosque they attend. Sumeya states that fifty mosques are capable of holding *Juma'a* on their premises.[548] That would mean that every one of these fifty

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[547] Interview Government official 04/03/2014.
[548] Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF",* 11.

mosques would have 9.424 Muslims attending their Friday prayer. It is thus hardly surprising that the streets around these mosques are flooded with followers. All these numbers and stories concerning mosques in Addis Ababa again indicate that, although many improvements have taken place compared to the past, there are still plenty of issues regarding the position of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa. Ethiopian Muslims want more support from the government and more mosques in exchange for their contributions in society.[549] An informant said: *"We have received many mosques but with countless difficulties and they are still insufficient."*[550]

5.3.3 Local versus global funding

If we consider mosques places of importance in the public space and we define space as a correlation between global and local, funding should most definitely be taken into account. Many in Ethiopia believe Muslim institutions in Addis Ababa to be funded by money from the Middle East. This becomes evident in various forms of public discourse and is influenced by various researchers, who have often provided a wrong image of the situation on the ground. Erlich Haggai is considered to have had an important impact on this debate. As already cited above, he stated that *"Saudi money is behind much of the current Islamic revival in Ethiopia, the construction of hundreds of new mosques and Quranic schools, the establishment of welfare associations and translated literature, the expansion of the Hajj, the organization of conferences of preachers, the monthly subsidies for the newly converted, the spread of the contention that Muslims are already an overwhelming majority in the country and more."*[551] Other researchers have reacted to this, some local examples being Abdulhatif Fetah and Kemal Abdulwehab. The latter stated that *"The last and important issue on mosque building is financial. Contrary to the frequent allegations by different non-Muslim writers that most mosques of Addis Ababa were built with Saudi's petro-dollar, more than 95% of them were constructed with funds raised and gathered from the local community."*[552] Saudi funding might have been of relevance to the Salafi movement, it hardly seems the case with other movements present in Ethiopia today. Funding for mosques is organized through local organizations called *âh'lel Kheyr.*[553] These organizations can be divided in three financial categories: the first one being foreign investments. In this category local Muslims look for

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[549] Interview Bakr 05/02/2014.
[550] Interview Mahmoud 21/02/2014.
[551] Haggai, Erlich. *"Saudi Arabia & Ethiopia: Islam, Christianity & Politics Entwined"*, 4.
[552] Abdulwehab, Kemal. *"The history of Addis Ababa Mosques"*, 315.
[553] Interview Iziz 14/02/2014.

foreign funding to construct their mosque. As Abdulwehab already stated, this is only the case for 5% of the mosques constructed. During my own research, I came upon very few examples of this category. Some are Jewhar Shonke and Anwolia mosque which were financed with money donated by the Saudi Arabian government, Beni mosque and Bilal mosque which were both funded by money from the United Arab Emirates. The second category of *âh'lel Kheyr* is financial support by one individual.[554] Several Ethiopian Muslims have acquired great wealth. Most of them have the ambition to donate their money to support their community. There are plenty of examples of mosques which are funded by one individual, such as Nur Hussein mosque, Abdallah ibn Abas mosque, Hamza mosque and so forth. The third category of *âh'lel Kheyr* is financial support by the local community.[555] This means that several individuals put a sum of money together to build a new mosque or to complete one. Examples are al-Anwar mosque, Tabarekh mosque, Jafar mosque, Sumeia mosque and so forth. My research has shown that accusations of widespread foreign funding and other forms of international support are gross misconceptions. But in the cases where it is applicable this funding coincides with Massey's theories about the relation between the global and the local.

The misconception of Arabic funding in itself influences the position of Muslims in public space and the conceptions of others about this position. It is important to note that not merely the funding in itself, but – more prominently – the discourse about this funding operates on both a local and a global level. It seems that non-Muslim writers in and outside Ethiopia do not attribute enough agency to the Ethiopian Muslims. Whenever certain individuals and groups talk about Islam in Ethiopia, the relation and influence of the Middle East is never far away. Ethiopian Muslims themselves should be considered as active players in their own destinies and not merely subjects of larger currents. One of the informants stated: *"Everything Muslims have they worked and suffered for."*[556]

5.3.4   Centers of education

Another tribute to the importance of mosques in the public space of Addis Ababa is their ambition to be more than just a center of worship but also of education. Education is organized in most of the mosques, even in those located in private houses. The form of education is mainly focused on *Qur'an* citations and Arabic and Islamic courses. These schools, located on the premises of the mosque, should not be regarded as regular schools, as

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[554] Interview Iziz 14/02/2014.
[555] Interview Iziz 14/02/2014.
[556] Interview Bakr 28/02/2014.

they are fairly small and focus on religious studies.[557] They are, however, not the only forms of education Muslim communities organize in Addis Ababa. There are about twelve schools founded and run by Muslims of which the most known is Anwolia college, where recent demonstrations originated. Schools are also very interesting when they are considered in the light of public space. Not only do they illustrate the presence of Islam, they are also important institutions to which Muslims send their children for their education. These schools do not necessarily provide *Qur'an* teachings, they provide the same courses as other schools owned by the state. One exception being that Arabic is taught in some of these schools.

Schools or centers of education are important in the light of increasing visibility of Islam in the public space. Educated individuals are able to read and think about religious questions, ideas and practices. It thus heightens their ability to broaden and deepen their religious convictions, which then has its repercussions on the public space, because in the case of Muslims more emphasis will be on dress code and Islamic practices and traditions. Schools are less visible as mosques, yet they do increase the visibility of Islam. Not only because these institutions are visible, also because education brings these students in contact with Islamic literature and allows them to read and understand this literature which eventually results in more religious fervor, piousness and its physical and spatial expressions.

5.3.5   Spatial distribution

In this section, we will examine the spatial distribution of first schools and later on, mosques. When we look at the spatial distribution of schools (for a lay-out I refer the reader to Figure 40 in the appendix of this thesis), we note that thirteen schools are located nearby each other in the western part of Addis Ababa. In this way, they coincide with the more important sub-cities for the Addis Ababa Muslim population. Most of the schools are located in and around Addis Ketema, a sub-city which is not only important in terms of residence, it also holds the most important mosque, namely Anwar mosque, next to seventeen other mosques.[558] In addition, the largest market in Addis Ababa called Merkato -mainly the workplace of Ethiopian Muslims- is also located in this sub-city. This market is dominated by Muslim merchants, handymen and shop owners. During my research in Addis Ababa, it was my perception that Islam was most present in this sub-city. Eight of the thirteen schools are

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[557] Interview Iziz 14/02/2014.
[558] Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF",* 43.

located here.[559] The issues around these schools are also relevant for discussion. The best example of this is Anwolia college. Managed and funded by a Saudi organization, it represents a good illustration of the relation between the global and the local, as Massey describes it. Moreover, the incidents that occurred in relation to the school are also a great example of how this relation changes the public space and the position of Islam in this space. Unfortunately, since I was unable to gather the same amount of information on schools as I gathered on mosques in Addis Ababa (with the exception of Anwolia college, which at the moment is central to understand the current situation) an extensive analysis, similar to that of the mosques, is not possible for Muslim schools in Addis Ababa.

The spatial distribution of mosques shows a similar pattern. As already stated Addis Ketema is considered an important sub-city for Ethiopian Muslims. Other areas of similar importance are Kolfe Keranyo, Gulele and Lafto. In all of these areas, a lot of Muslims reside and the bigger parts of their days are lived in these sub-cities.[560] There are ten sub-cities in Addis Ababa. Most intellectuals and researchers consider Kolfe Keranyo, Gulele and Lafto as important for the Muslim population in Addis Ababa. This coincides with the location of all relevant schools in Addis Ababa as well as with the location of most of the mosques. Abdulwehab states: *"The distribution is uneven. Kolfe Keranyo sub-city has dozens of mosques. Very few are found in Arada and Bole sub-cities. This seems to be related to patterns of settlement of Muslim populations in the capital city."*[561] Also related to this case Sumeya provides interesting statistics which are useful to get a better grasp of the subject. Of the 158 mosques he researched, seventy are located in Kolfe Keranyo, which instantly shows the relations discussed here.[562] As already indicated, there are eighteen mosques located in Addis Ketema. Gulele sub-city holds ten mosques and Lafto holds seventeen. In total, these sub-cities contain 72.8 percent of all mosques in Addis Ababa which were researched by Sumeya.[563] This means that four of the ten sub-cities have 72.8 percent of the mosques located in them. This does not only show the uneven distribution of mosques in the city, it also shows the close relation between sub-cities which are dominated by Muslim residents and the amount of mosques located within them. Other sub-cities which have a larger amount of mosques are Yeka(8), Bole(9) and akake Kaleti(9). In the future, these sub-cities will

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[559] Abdellah, Abdulfetah. *"Hayat Directory",* Addis Ababa January 2007, 399.
[560] Interview Abdu 24/01/2014.
[561] Abdulwehab, Kemal. *"The history of Addis Ababa Mosques",* 312.
[562] Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF",* 43.
[563] Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF",* 43.

probably be considered as important areas for Ethiopian Muslims in the light of availability of mosques and visibility in Addis Ababa.

To indicate a further contrast between these sub-cities it is interesting to provide some statistics on other sub-cities. For example, in Arada there are four mosques and in Kerkos there are five.[564] Figure 41 shows this spatial distribution in the form of a map on which I indicated the statistics of Sumeya, in order to give the reader a better idea of the situation. In Ethiopia there is no decent map available that shows all the mosques in Addis Ababa. This can of course be explained by the lack of knowledge about the amount of mosques in the capital. Even the larger mosques are badly charted. My map of the city shows far from all mosques in Addis Ababa, although the national mapping agency guaranteed that all of them were located on it. My fieldwork included an attempt to locate all the larger mosques in Addis Ababa. The criteria I used were: at least one minaret, preferably a dome and at least 80m². I chose to only focus on mosques complying to these criteria because these are mostly responsible for enhancing the visibility of Islam in the capital city. Fifty-four larger mosques are located in Addis Ababa, which have been mapped in Figure 39. Regardless, more then fifty large mosques are located in Addis Ababa, which intensively increases the visibility of Islam in the city's public space. When taken into account that most of these mosques were built post-1991, this provides a clear picture of the impressive increase in visibility and presence of Ethiopian Muslims in the capital city over the past twenty-three years.

The spatial distribution very much coincides with the statistics gathered by Sumeya. Most of mosques are located in Gulele, Kolfe Keranyo and Addis Ketema. It is difficult to claim completion of the mapping project when the duration of my fieldwork was relatively short and information about mosques is so difficult to come by. Further mapping, and possible correlations between the geographical stratification of the mosques and schools and their possible controversial nature within their surrounding communities, may prove fruitful areas for further research.

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[564] Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF"*, 43.

5.4   Perception

Since it is one thing to research and write about all events and their consequences on the position of Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa, it is another to measure up my findings to those of Ethiopian Muslims. Before I advance on this topic, I want to stress that because my fieldwork was of course limited, I must assume that the views and opinions I gathered from my respondents are not representative for all Ethiopian Muslims in Addis Ababa. Yet they are relevant, since they represent the views and opinions of the people who often feel demoralized to speak their minds.

For Ethiopian Muslims in Addis Ababa their community is one of the most important aspects of the public space, feeling at ease there is important. As already mentioned when we look at the spread of Muslim communities in Addis Ababa, some sub-cities are known to be very important for Muslims, not only residentially but also economically. Most who migrate to the capital city also chose their location to live based on ethnicity and some based on religious preferences.[565] This does not mean, however, that these sub-cities are homogenous, Christians and Muslims could be neighbors. Although religious communities living side by side have clashed over issues such as the construction of mosques, in general there is a lot of interreligious tolerance between individuals. They are friends, lovers and so on. In most cases, Muslims seem to feel good and safe in their communities.

During street interviews all participants, none excepted, expressed discontent with their government.[566] I believe this to be a relatively recent phenomenon, which is shared with most of the Ethiopian population. Some of the reasons mentioned are continuous economical problems, for example: governmental companies like the telecommunication company which keeps malfunctioning, the growing control the EPRDF exerts on a political as well as on a social level. Several participants said they didn't always feel comfortable in Addis Ababa and said that Muslims were discriminated.[567] Some have stated that they have been harassed on occasion, however this was rather exceptional. Others stated that Muslims are limited in their religious expression, in these cases most blamed the government for it.[568]

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[565] Interview Mahmoud 12/02/2014.
[566] Street interviews 08/03/2014.
[567] Street interviews 20/02/2014.
[568] Street interviews 20/02/2014.

Unfortunately, because of the small number of respondents it is impossible to generalize these findings. But because they are so remarkable, they have only increased my curiosity and interest about the situation on the field. Furthermore, since the current situation of Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa today is subject to possible incidents on all levels of society - political, social, economical and religious- all that this dissertation analyzed could alter in the blink of an eye. Future research could therefore only lead to even more interesting insights.

5.5 Impact of all relevant events on the position of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa today

The events and discourses described in chapter three and four have been discussed because of their relevance to the public space of Addis Ababa. This part of my thesis will focus on their impact. In this section I will try and bring all the previous together in an effort to properly answer the research questions which formed the point of departure at the introduction of this chapter. Therefore, I will provide the reader with a historical exposition of the impact of global and local events on the position of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa.

5.5.1 Urban space as the product of conflict

Massey states: *"Conflict is not something that befalls an originally, or potentially, harmonious urban space. Urban space is the product of conflict."*[569] Next to interreligious tensions, which have been discussed in previous sections, the conflict which also shapes the public space of Addis Ababa is the conflict between the Muslim community and the Ethiopian government. Relevant to this conflict are not just large events like the al-Ahbash and the Anwolia incident but also smaller intrusions of the government in the affairs of Ethiopian Muslims. These smaller intrusions can, in some cases, be directly related to these larger events, but this is not always the case. Much to the contrary.

The first limitations on the freedom of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space post-1991 were introduced in between 1994 and 1996. After several incidents happened in the urban space of Addis Ababa -incidents in which the Ethiopian Muslim population was involved and some in which they were not involved at all- measures were taken by the Ethiopian government. These incidents seemed to have awakened new suspicions of the government towards Islam and they

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[569] Massey, Doreen. *"For space"*. 153.

acted accordingly. One of these incidents was the internal power conflict in the *Majlis*, which escalated around Anwar mosque and resulted in several arrests and the closing of the Ethiopian Muslim Youth Association.[570] Further events (which have been discussed in chapter three) led to the forceful closing of several Islamic organizations and NGO's in addition to government control over the most important institution for Ethiopian Muslims, namely The Ethiopian Islamic Supreme Council, which was from that moment on under strict control of the government.[571] This has limited the Muslim population in organizing their affairs within the new institutionalized framework provided by the current Ethiopian government since it obviously entails restrictions in the public space. The growing informality to which Muslims turned and the inability to use institutions, limited their ability to build mosques, schools and other Islamic institutions. In addition, it became harder for them to communicate with the Ethiopian government. Ostebo: *"The council's close links with the regime and its vast apparatus has effectively enabled the government to monitor and control developments within the Muslim community, and the council has on its side proved to be a loyal instrument in curbing unwanted movements."*[572] Furthermore, the government reacted by taking several Islamic periodicals out of circulation, although this was more of an indirect result. These periodicals disappeared one after the other.[573] Abbink states: *"In 1998 the number of periodicals had already gone down to eight and in 2008 only al-Islam, Salafiyya Quddis and Sawatul Islam remained."*[574] These 'smaller' intrusions in the position of Muslims in the public space have a close relation to the bigger events that took place between 1994 and 1996. In contrast to the earlier constitutional protection of Muslims, the difficulties they encountered within public space, even became adopted in law: the introduction of the Ethiopian anti-terror law during the intervention in Somalia is one of the most important legal documents with regard to the escalating conflict between Ethiopian Muslims and the EPRDF.[575] It enabled the Ethiopian government to crack down on any unwanted movement

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[570] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 40.

[571] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam".* 16.

[572] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 40.

[573] Abbink, Jon. *"Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia",* 263.

[574] Abbink, Jon. *"Religion in Public Spaces": Emerging Muslim-Christian polemics in Ethiopia",* 263.

[575] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam".* 12.

whether it was religious or political. For Muslims, this has meant that individuals can be arrested without confirmed suspicions and that demonstrators can be arrested for 'inciting terror and instability', as was the case during the demonstrations after the Anwolia incident. As a result, Muslims fear repression and thus refrain from publically expressing their opinion. A case in point is the fact that all the informants who contributed to this thesis have asked to remain anonymous because of their anxiety for any possible consequences.

There is thus a wide gap between the first intrusions after 1995 and later incidents. This shows that not every event discussed in this thesis has had a direct influence on the public space of Addis Ababa. As extensively dealt with in chapter three, in 2011 two important incidents took place: the introduction of al-Ahbash and the conflict in Anwolia college. These incidents are milestones in the development of the conflict between the government and Ethiopian Muslims. The relationship between these two parties deteriorated severely after 2011. Muslims have growing doubts about the current government although they had been relatively satisfied with the EPRDF. Since 2011 they have been questioning not only the current position of the government but also their attitude towards Muslims since they resumed power.[576] These events also indicated a new policy of the government towards Islam and more specifically towards Salafism. As mentioned before, Salafism has made itself unpopular in Ethiopia through various radical groups like Ahl-al Sunna and Takfir wal Hijra. In addition, the global discourse which associates Salafism with extremism and various terrorist organizations like Al-Qaida contributed to this.[577] The new policy not only manifests itself on a social level but also in the public space. After 2011, and during the demonstrations which lasted until recently (2013), there were various intrusions on the position of Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa by the Ethiopian government. In other words, rule of law is not equal to rule by law.[578]

Another example of rule by law is the censorship executed on Islamic periodicals, the publication of which helps shape the position of Islam in the public space through spreading Islamic ideas across the Ethiopian population. They make Islam visible by their appearance in shops, houses, restaurants etcetera. Moreover, the ideas developed in these periodicals translate themselves in new behavior among Muslim population. As mentioned before, in

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[576] Interview Ahmed 12/02/2014.

[577] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islamism in the Horn of Africa: Assessing Ideology, Actors and objectives",* 71.

[578] Interview Ahmed 15/02/2014.

2008 only four Islamic periodicals remained in Ethiopia. Others had been shut down for various reasons, such as the alleged instigating of extremism and terrorism. The last periodicals disappeared after 2011. One of them was shut down very aggressively. The police entered the compound where the editorial office was located and did not only close the office but also arrested all employees that were present.[579] The fact that no Islamic periodicals are being published anymore is definitely a violation of the constitution, which states that Ethiopians have the freedom to have their own ideas and convictions.[580] Moreover, it trespasses the law published in 2008, which guarantees the freedom of expression and mass media: *"Freedom of mass media is constitutionally guaranteed. Censorship in any form is prohibited."*[581] Although shutting down periodicals based on allegations would be considered as censorship the fourth point in this proclamation states: *"Reaffirming the constitutional principle that restrictions on freedom of expression and of the mass media shall only be based on laws which secure and preserve the wellbeing of the youth, honor and reputation of persons, national security, public order and other overriding rights."*[582] Unfortunately, many of the exceptions made to this law can be interpreted in a broad sense, so these exceptions can be implied whenever.

Islamic Ethiopian intellectuals emphasize the relation of the disappearance of their last periodicals and the events that took place in 2011.[583] As already discussed in chapter three, the internal debate of the Muslim communities about which kind of headwear is appropriate for Muslim women had worsened since the government started to draft a proclamation which stated that religious symbols would be prohibited in public schools and universities. Although this law had been drafted before 2011, it seemed to have moved to the background. Many were thus convinced the law would not be implemented. However, after 2011, this law was implemented in various universities -even Addis Ababa University has now decided to implement the law next year.[584] The implementation of this law has already lead to demonstrations all over Ethiopia and will continue to lead to much more disappointment and

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[579] Interview Ahmed 12/02/2014.

[580] Ethiopian government, *"Proclamation No. 1: the constitution of the federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia",* 1995, p.126.

[581] Ethiopian government, *"Proclamation No. 590: A proclamation to provide for freedom of the mass media access to information",* in: Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2008, 4.

[582] Ethiopian government, *"Proclamation No. 590: A proclamation to provide for freedom of the mass media access to information",* in: Federal Negarit Gazeta, 2008, 1.

[583] Interview Ahmed 12/02/2014.

[584] Interview Solomon 28/01/2014

dissatisfaction among young Ethiopian Muslims. It is obvious that prohibiting female headscarves in public institutions is again a limitation on Muslims' right to express their religion in the public space. Another limitation which has been dealt with previously, is the one on praying in the street. Recently, the police has prohibited Muslims to pray in small congregations on the street. This makes it difficult for people who work on the roads of Addis Ababa to be faithful Muslims. Moreover, it represents another aspect of the liberty of being visibly present in the public space. Another recent phenomenon is the gradual takeover of the mosques of Addis Ababa by the *Majlis*. These takeovers are legally forced on the imams who have been working in these mosques and serving their communities, some for many years.[585] By giving the government-controlled *Majlis* such authority -in the sense of management- over these mosques entails that Muslims lose control over what is for them the most important place in public space. Finally, in recent years there has been a growing limitation on praying in congregation and following *Qur'an* studies in private houses. The government has put increased pressure on mosques located on private property, by closing many.[586] As already stated, these small mosques were in many cases created because of difficulties in constructing traditional mosques in the city. Closing them because of a lack of proper documentation or other reasons not only angers Muslims who gather at these mosques but also worsens the deficit.

The next example of the attitude of the government towards Islam is to be found in the discourse of government-owned media. The constant reference to extremism, terrorism and radicalism in relation to Muslim movements, points to an increased external as well as internal burden for Ethiopian Muslims. Movies like 'Hakarat', which link Muslim movements to the Arab Spring, Boko Haram and Al-Qaida reflect poorly on Ethiopian Muslims. This movie was aired on the only Ethiopian television channel ETV, which is government-owned and mainly broadcasts stories about Ethiopia. In newspapers, there are also various articles linking Islam or Islamic groups to extremism, this while positive stories about Muslims are a rare thing to come by.[587] It seems that every movement or group which opposes the government can be labeled as extremist or terrorist. Ostebo writes: *"I suggest that dichotomization of Muslims as either moderate or extremist in African context needs to be seen as a product of independent discourses, as negotiations in which local policy-makers*

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[585] Interview Zayd 09/02/2014.
[586] Interview Zayd 09/02/2014.

apply their own preferences and motives."[588] Ethiopians who read and see these discourses of Islamic extremism and who chose to believe them, often assume a negative attitude towards Islam. Although this became apparent from my research, this negative impact cannot be generalized.

The opposition which is created by this discourse not only shows remarkable resemblance with the situation under previous rulers of Ethiopia but also has its influence in the public space of Addis Ababa. Various forms of discrimination are felt by Ethiopian Muslims and some are even harassed.[589] These are still rather the exception than the rule but if suspicion and negative discourse remain a daily fact, interreligious tensions might become even more of a problem than it sometimes is today. Ostebo asserts that *"there was never a situation of equality and religious parity. The two groups' position and statuses have been clearly defined."*[590] Muslims do not always feel free in their movement in the public space of the capital city because of these recurring incidents.[591]

5.5.2 *Direct and indirect impact of events*

It seems as if only a few events have had a direct impact on the position of Islam in the public space. Mainly the events which have taken place in 1995 and the ones in 2011. Most scholars are already aware of the relations between the events in 1995 and the consequences in the public space. However, the relation between the events of 2011 and a growing amount of intrusions by the government in the position of Islam in the public space hardly seems a coincidence. These increased intrusions have made Ethiopian Muslims suspicious of the intentions of the government and the regime has angered them. In this way, the government has become a common enemy for all Islamic movements, which now know more unity between them. This does not mean that all internal disagreements have been solved, but differences are partly forgotten because of a bigger threat, and all speak of tolerance.[592] This also becomes clear in their efforts to have conversations and conferences to address and discuss these differences. Ostebo states: *"While the last years' developments presumably would have exacerbated interreligious tensions within the Muslim community, it is interesting*

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[588] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam"*, 3.
[589] Street interviews 20/02/2014.
[590] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam"*, 9.
[591] Focus group of five Female Muslims 24/02/2014.
[592] Street interviews 20/02/2014.

to see that it in fact has fostered a strong sense of unity, as well as resilience against the regime's policy."[593] They also do not mention their religious preferences unless specifically asked and when they talk about these preferences they always add that the Ethiopian Muslims are one.[594] Less internal differences and more external threats leading to more unity, is very visible in the public space. A prime example of this effect are the demonstrations which have been held over the past years. Muslims moved together, regardless of their personal convictions, to protect their constitutional rights and to demand more respect from the government for their religion. The intrusions of the EPRDF have also led to more religious expression, making Muslims all the more determined to express their religion as freely as possible. The translation of this in the public space of Addis Ababa: Muslims who used to pray less than five times a day will now pray as is prescribed in the *Qur'an,* women who did not always wear their veil, now do so.[595] In other words, Muslims' public presence has increased.

So where does this leave us with regard to the current presence of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa? The current position of Islam in Ethiopia is definitely a difficult one today, not compared to pre-1991, but compared to the promise the EPRDF represented for the Ethiopian Muslim. Relations between Muslims and the government have slowly been deteriorating, got even worse after 2011 and have never been at such a low point -since 1991- as they are today. This is obviously reflected in the public space and the position of Islam therein. Ethiopian Muslims are not only left obstructed in their daily lives, moreover, their position in the public space is severely limited, both on the *long duree* as on a short term. An example of *long duree* is the construction and management of mosques, and a short-term example is the lack of ability to pray in any place in the city. In addition, there are the various incidents with Christians over the construction of mosques, various forms of harassment and discrimination. In a group discussion with Muslim women it became clear that feeling well in their community is very important. When they venture out of their communities for education and/or a job they say they are subjected to various kinds of intimidation and some are discriminated when they are looking for a job.[596] The fact that plenty of mosques are not licensed and many are held within private houses also indicates that having Islamic

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[593] Ostebo, Terje. "*Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam",* 23.
[594] Street interviews 08/03/2014.
[595] Interview Ahmed 12/02/2014.
[596] Focus group of five Female Muslims 24/02/2014.

institutions is not without problems and thus that the position of Islam is not that great in absolute terms. On the other hand, having an external enemy in the government has led to more religious piousness and unity.[597] Other attributing factors to a better position in the public space are the ability to build mosques, the freedom of literature and of travel to the Middle East, religious equality (in theory), education and so forth. Muslims have seized these opportunities with both hands and have considerably improved their position in the public space of Addis Ababa as well as in society itself. In my opinion, the position of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa has improved impressively over the past years, regardless of the continuous encroachments on its integrity. The position of Islam, in the past twenty-three years, in the public space of Addis Ababa has never been stronger even if today Ethiopian Muslims have lost some autonomy in this space. However, if the current trend of government crackdowns and intrusions continues, it might take a turn for the worst. Things were never easy for Ethiopian Muslims, not even post-1991, because of the divide between the constitution on paper and in practice. Even with constitutional protection, growing pressure from the government and religious groups like the EOC put the position of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa in jeopardy. There is a growing presence of Islam in the public sphere, but global trends and local contestations pose serious threats.

When in 1991, a new government took power in Ethiopia, the political landscape was reshaped into an ethnic democracy at least on paper. Religion was separated from state affairs and Ethiopians enjoyed religious freedom and equality, although many improvements have yet to be made, especially with regard to the Muslims communities. The first five years of the EPRDF's rule Islam enjoyed a huge amount of freedom compared to the past. Why then did the position of the government change? All the events and incidents discussed in previous chapters – interreligious conflicts, political conflicts, conflicts with the EOC, global conflicts- which happened over the past twenty-three years have all directly or indirectly influenced the government's shift from a rather leftist to a right policy. I believe these events to be the cause, although the government started out with good notions of freedom and equality this changed slowly because of actions taken by Muslims and other groups like the incidents in 1995, the intervention in Somalia and groups like Takfir wal Hijra. In addition, over the past 23 years the Ethiopian government and population had to deal with various threats against its territory and integrity. International threats like the Eritrean war and other discussed above. These

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[597] Interview Mahmoud 22/02/2014.

events thus had an ideological influence on the government.[598] In addition to the question why the policy of the government changed, we have to ask ourselves: how did the government go from promoting religious freedom to denying it in a course of only twenty-three years? It seems unfathomable. And why do Ethiopian Muslims have to deal with much more problems than other religions? Many Ethiopians in the Diaspora have done research on the intrusions of the government in all religions.[599] For my informants this question is baffling as well.[600] In an attempt to explain this, I refer the reader to post-2001 Ethiopia, when the country became an important actor and bastion against terrorism, as did many other southern nation-states - another prime example is Pakistan.[601] These countries have got lured into the War on Terror by receiving financial support from the USA, a political framework to work within and legitimization.[602] This political framework aids the government in legitimizing the control exercised by them especially towards Muslim communities in Ethiopia. Finally, the global discourse on the threat of Islam, adopted by the Ethiopian government, has hit home, thereby justifying any repressive action deemed necessary. In conclusion, global as well as local events have had considerable influence, direct and indirect, on government policy in Ethiopia and therefore on the position of Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa.

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[598] Interview Mohammed 03/02/2014 - Informant which regularly works for the government and is actively involved.

[599] Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. *"The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims",* Belgium, LEBMA vzw, 2013, p.185.

[600] Informal conversations over the entire period of my stay

[601] De Cordier, Bruno: Class March 2014.

[602] Ostebo, Terje. *"Islam and state relations in Ethiopia: From containment to the production of a governmental Islam".* 12.

Conclusion

The current situation in Ethiopia regarding the Muslim community has been bleak at best, although the regime change in 1991 showed much promise for Muslims. The EPRDF has now been in power for twenty-three consecutive years, and it's growing tendency to become an authoritarian regime is not only reflected in the repression of Muslims but in society as a whole. This society seems, for Ethiopian Muslims, increasingly difficult to live in and sentiments towards the EPRDF are hardly positive. In Addis Ababa, there are three Islamic movements which together consist of 471.202 individuals; in Ethiopia as a whole 33.9% adhere to Islam according to the national consensus of 2007. Yet, Islam, being thus the second largest religious group in Ethiopia, has been suffering a great deal over the past twenty-three years. Interreligious violence, increased intrusions and crackdowns from the EPRDF and global conflicts have all attributed to this. Because of internal divisions within part of the Muslim communities little could be done to form a united front. Today this has changed. Ethiopian Muslims have partly set aside their differences and are united in resilience against government policies. These government policies are strongly influenced by the global discourse of War on Terror. The government and the Ethiopian Muslims have thus increasingly been opposed to each other which has resulted in demonstrations and crackdowns. Incidents have been plentiful and have increased since 2011. This obviously reflects on the public space, the actual key topic of this thesis. Many researchers have implicated the importance of public space in the conflicts involving Ethiopian Muslims. Most of them however have mainly considered this to be of importance in the light of interreligious conflict and not so much in relation to the government. This thesis has analyzed the public space of Addis Ababa as a case study in which this space is discussed as broadly as feasible. I have taken a look at the religious conflict but rather as a secondary quest into how far it has influenced the position of Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa. The main focus of this thesis was the influence of the conflict between the government and the Ethiopian Muslim community, which I tried to give an extensive background to help the reader understand different trends and policies as well as the extreme complexity of the situation. After all, the public space is not only a central issue in interreligious conflict but also very relevant in the clash between state and Ethiopian Muslims. As tensions grew between the government and Ethiopian Muslims and new policies were taken to intrude into this religion, the aim has

become to control it and eventually to limit its presence in the public space. Muslims on the other hand, trying to avoid direct confrontation, have however not been silent and speak their minds through demonstrations. More religious piousness has marked the struggle of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa, partly to regain its decreased position in this space but mainly to resist the violation of their constitutional rights. If the current trend is continued by both parties, and most importantly by the government, it might actually lead to terrorism, which is exactly what the government is so fearful of today. Ostebo has drawn similar conclusions.

Public space in this thesis has been discussed as formed by relations, practices and the interrelatedness of the global and the local, a theory which has been promoted by Doreen Massey. Her theory proves to be one of the best ways to analyze the position of Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa. As pointed out throughout this thesis, the global is incredibly important in forming the local: the support from Saudi-Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries to Ethiopian Muslims has aided them in the construction of mosques, schools and organizations where they can assemble, although this should not be generalized. On the other hand, the War on Terror and its biggest promoter (USA) narratively, politically and financially aid the Ethiopian government, which uses this support to limit the visibility of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa. Although this was limited in their first years in power, they have taken a more pro-active roll over the past years.

The interrelatedness of space also helps us answer my research questions. The first one was: "What is the current position of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa and how did this evolve over the past twenty-three years to arrive at the contemporary situation?" The current position of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space is a difficult question to answer, the trajectory of their position in the public space of Addis Ababa has been influenced by positive as well as negative facts. The various liberties which the current government has granted to all Ethiopian citizens have been grasped by Ethiopian Muslims to immensely increase their position in the public space as well as their social mobility. After the fall of the communist regime, the Islamic movement received an enormous increase in followers, which increased their visibility in itself. On the other hand, the growing authoritarianism of the EPRDF, their position as important player in the War on Terror and constant threats to their national integrity have resulted in limitations in the public space as well as on a social level. In addition, there are still plenty of interreligious tensions in Ethiopia regardless of the

religious equality constitutionalized in 1995 or the discourse of interreligious tolerance.[603] The answer is thus that the current position of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space of Addis Ababa in the past twenty-three years has been better than ever before. This can be attributed to the policy of the current government, but mostly to the agency of the Ethiopian Muslims themselves. However, if we do not compare the current situation to the past and simply look at what is in front of us today, we must conclude that their position is still limited compared to Muslims in other parts of the world, and to the position of the EOC in the same public space.

The current position of Islam in the public space can also be attributed to the interrelatedness of space. After all, problems started to emerge after the reintroduction of al-Ahbash. Other events which have been important for the position of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space regularly bring the global and the local together, such as in the case of the Anwolia conflict, the assassination attempt on Mubarak, growth of Salafism and so forth. If we take a closer look at the trajectory of the position of Muslim communities in the public space of Addis Ababa it becomes apparent that after an all time low, in 1991 the presence of Islam and the position of Ethiopian Muslims in Addis Ababa intensely increased, especially before 1995, and also after in a less steep upward trajectory. It is rather the incidents which took place in 2011 and post-2011 which brought changes to the position of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space, resulting in possible declines. This trajectory can be closely linked to the change of sentiment of the government towards Islam.

The second research question was: to what extent did events and issues of the past twenty-three years contribute to the current position of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa? Well, not all events had a direct impact on the position of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa. Mainly the incidents in 1995 and 2011 had a more direct impact resulting in crackdowns, demonstrations and limitations on religious expression. Some events had rather an indirect impact, in the sense that they had a direct impact on the position of the government towards Islam which in turn translated itself in policies which limited social mobility and the position of Ethiopian Muslims in the public space, in Addis Ababa and elsewhere in the country. The answer to the second question is thus yes, post-1991 events, global and local, have had a distinct impact on the current position of Islam in the public space of Addis Ababa.

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Appendix

Figure 1: Ethiopian Muslims washing their body before praying on Friday. Large amounts of water are provided and they wash in groups on the streets of Addis Ababa. This is visible around all mosques in the city which have the ability to perform *Juma'a.*

Source: Picture taken by Jep Stockmans 07/02/2014

Figure 2: Prayer in the streets of Addis Ababa, more specifically around Anwar mosque. Because of a lack of mosques in the capital city of Ethiopia, Muslims are forced to pray on the street. This does heightens their visibility in the city.

Source: Picture taken by Jep Stockmans 07/02/2014

Figure 3: Bilal mosque.

Source: Picture taken by Jep Stockmans 23/02/2014

Figure 4: Argentina mosque.

Source: Picture taken by Jep Stockmans 23/02/2014

Figure 5: Tewfec mosque.

Source: Picture taken by Jep Stockmans 23/02/2014

Figure 6: Sheikh Jewhar Shonke mosque.

Source: Picture taken by Jep Stockmans 23/02/2014

Figure 7: Shegole mosque.

Source: Picture taken by Jep Stockmans 23/02/2014

Figure 8: Anwar mosque.

Source: Picture taken by Jep Stockmans 07/02/2014

Figure 9: Najashi academy, one of the Islamic school in Addis Ababa.

Source: Picture taken by Jep Stockmans 23/02/2014

Figure 10: Abadir mosque.

Source: Picture taken by Jep Stockmans 04/03/2014

Figure 11: Anwolia mosque and college.

Source: Picture taken by Jep Stockmans 23/02/2014

Figure 12: *Juma'a* around Beni mosque.

Source: Picture taken by Jep Stockmans 14/02/2014.

Figure 13: Ethiopian Muslim praying in front of the Police during the demonstrations taking place in Addis Ababa after the Anwolia incident 2011.

Source: Mohammed, Jawar, Et.Al. *"The civil rights movement of Ethiopian Muslims".* Belgium, LEBMA vzw, 2013, 64.
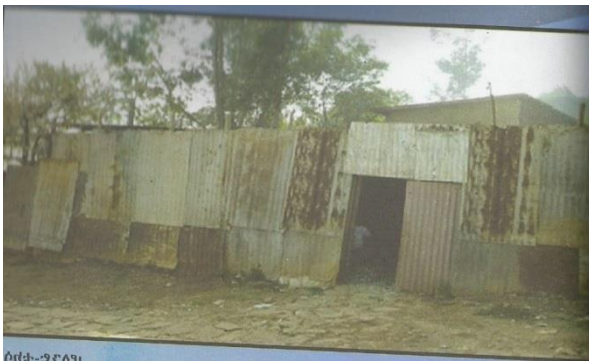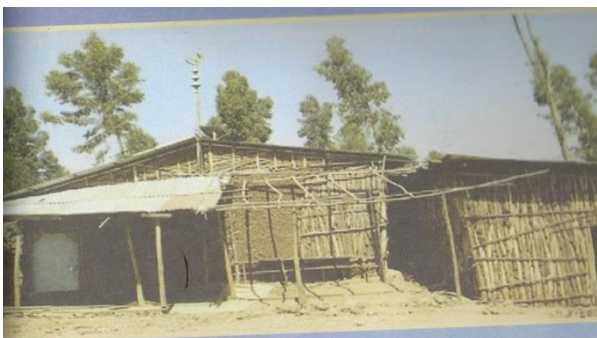

Figure14: Example of a mosque in Addis Ababa made from steel plates.

Source: Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF".* Addis Ababa, 2004, 125.
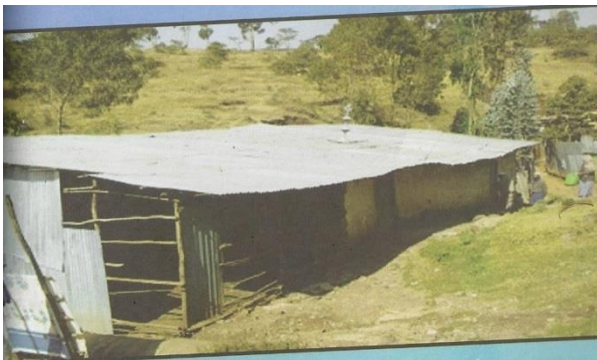
Figure 15: Another mosque located in Addis Ababa which is constructed like informal houses. The instable construction and limited space are noticeable.

Source: Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF".* Addis Ababa, 2004, 125.

Figure 16: Mosque in Addis Ababa made from mud and branches.

Source: Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF".* Addis Ababa, 2004, 127.

Figure 17: Mosque in Addis Ababa made from steel plates and branches.

Source: Sumeya, Abu. *"History of Addis Ababa mosques from Minilik III- EPRDF".* Addis Ababa, 2004, 127.
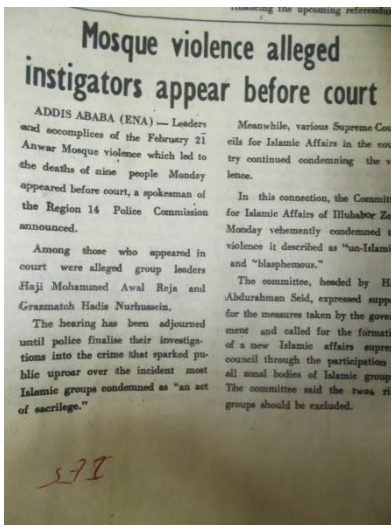

Figure 18: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Mosque violence alleged instigators appear before court",* 15 January 1995.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 19: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Individuals accused of allegedly instigating unrest at Grand Mosque appear before court",* 20 January 1995.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 20: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Group claims responsibility for terrorist attack",* 5 July 1995.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 21: The Ethiopia Herald, *"Acts of International terrorism said on the decline",* 10 July 1995.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 22: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Terrorism: a menace to world peace",* 9 January 2005
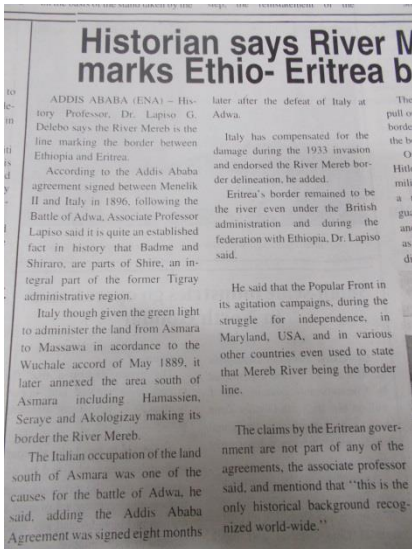
Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 23: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Historian says river mereb marks Ethio-Eritrean border"*, 05 June 1998.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 24: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Badme-Isaias Obsession"*, 15 July 1998.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 25: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Eritrea prevents Ethiopians from returning home"*, 28 July 1999.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 26: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Somali militants thread to world: Meles",* 3 November 1999.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 27: The Ethiopian Herald, *"The Somalia Jihadists: While the world looks on they prepare to plan and execute terrorist actions",* 5 November 2006.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 28: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Fundamentalist force in Somalia declares intensified attacks on Ethiopia",* 13 December 2006.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 29: The Ethiopian Herald, *"UIC says finalizing plans to wage declared war against Ethiopia",* 20 December 2006.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 30: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Ethiopia said showing new way of solving problems with terrorism",* 28 December 2006.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 31: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Fundamentalists in Somalia retreating in disarray",* 26 December 2006.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 32: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Forced to go to war",* 26 December 2006.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 33: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Eid-Al-Adha colourfully celebrated",* 20 December 2007.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 34: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Operation in Somalia achieves set targets: Premier",* 3 January 2007.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 35: The Ethiopian Herald, *"The need to create terrorist intolerant society",* 22 December 2007.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 36: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Tolerance Ethiopia, Christianity and Islam from a historical perspective"*, 17 December 2006.
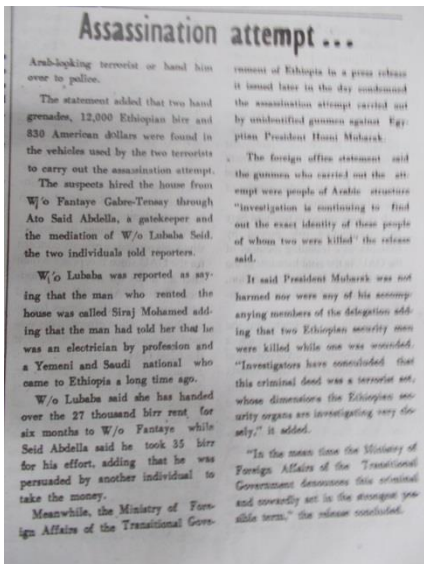
Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 37: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Terrorists involved in Mubarak assassination attempt arrested",* 2 August 1995.

Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

Figure 38: The Ethiopian Herald, *"Prime minister Meles holds talks with Somalia".* 18 January 2008.
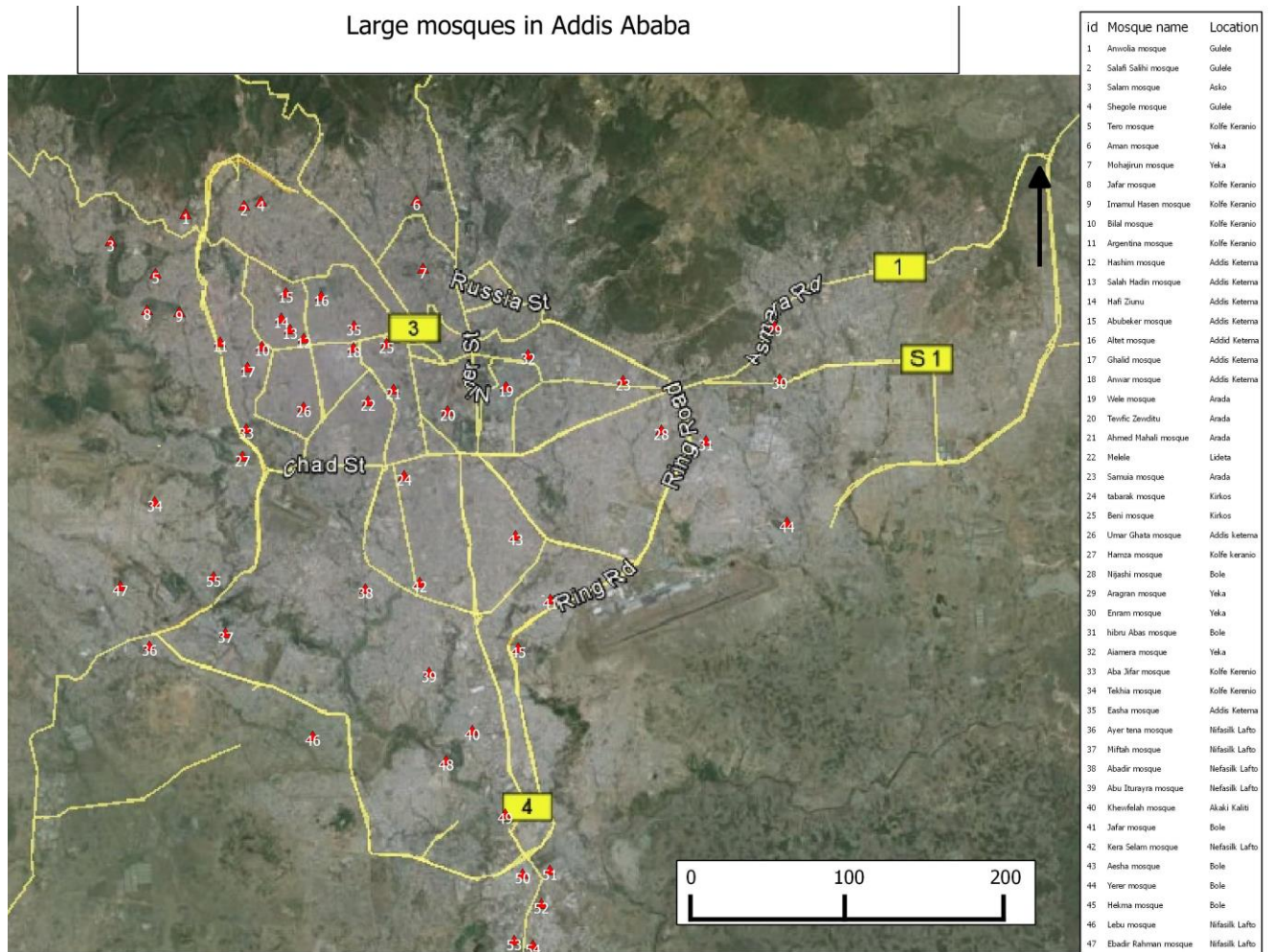
Source: The Ethiopian Herald.

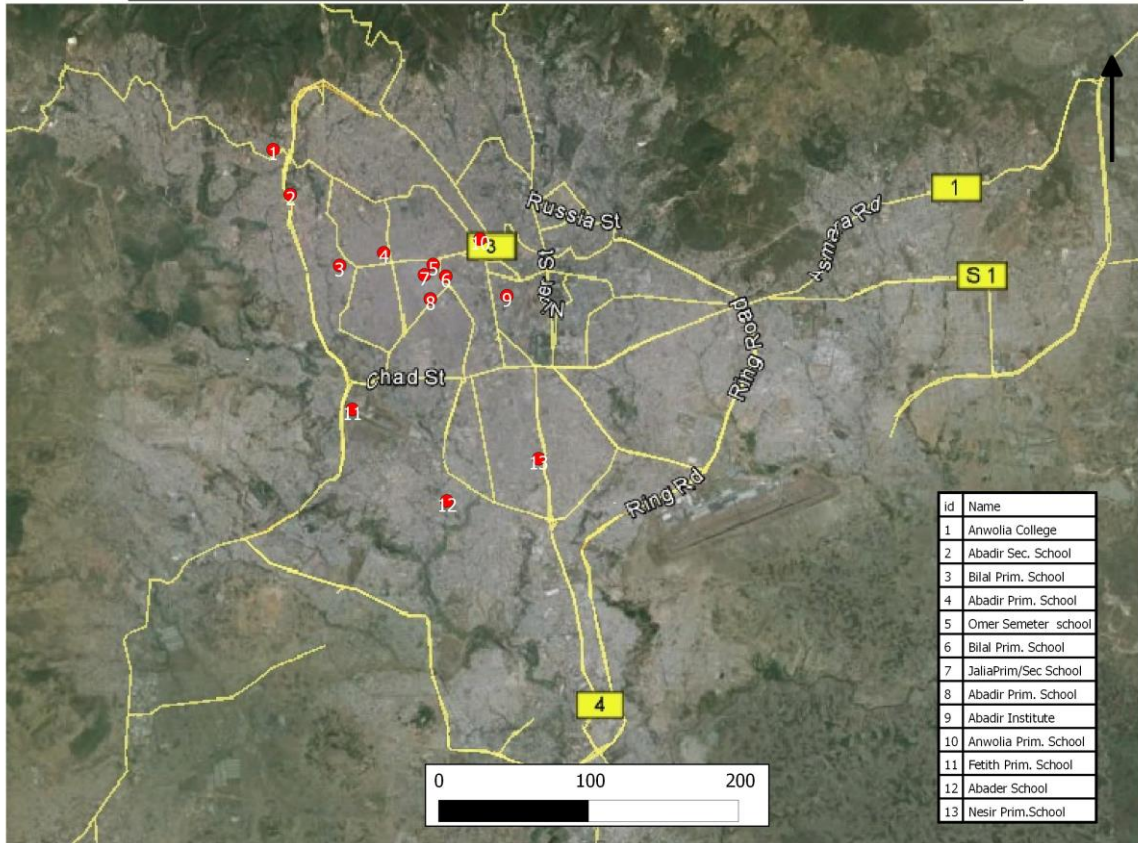Figure 39: Large mosques in Addis Ababa.   Source: Jep Stockmans made in 2014.

Figure 40: Muslim schools in Addis Ababa: Location, Name and distributions.

Source: Jep Stockmans made in 2014.

Subcities and their amount of mosques.

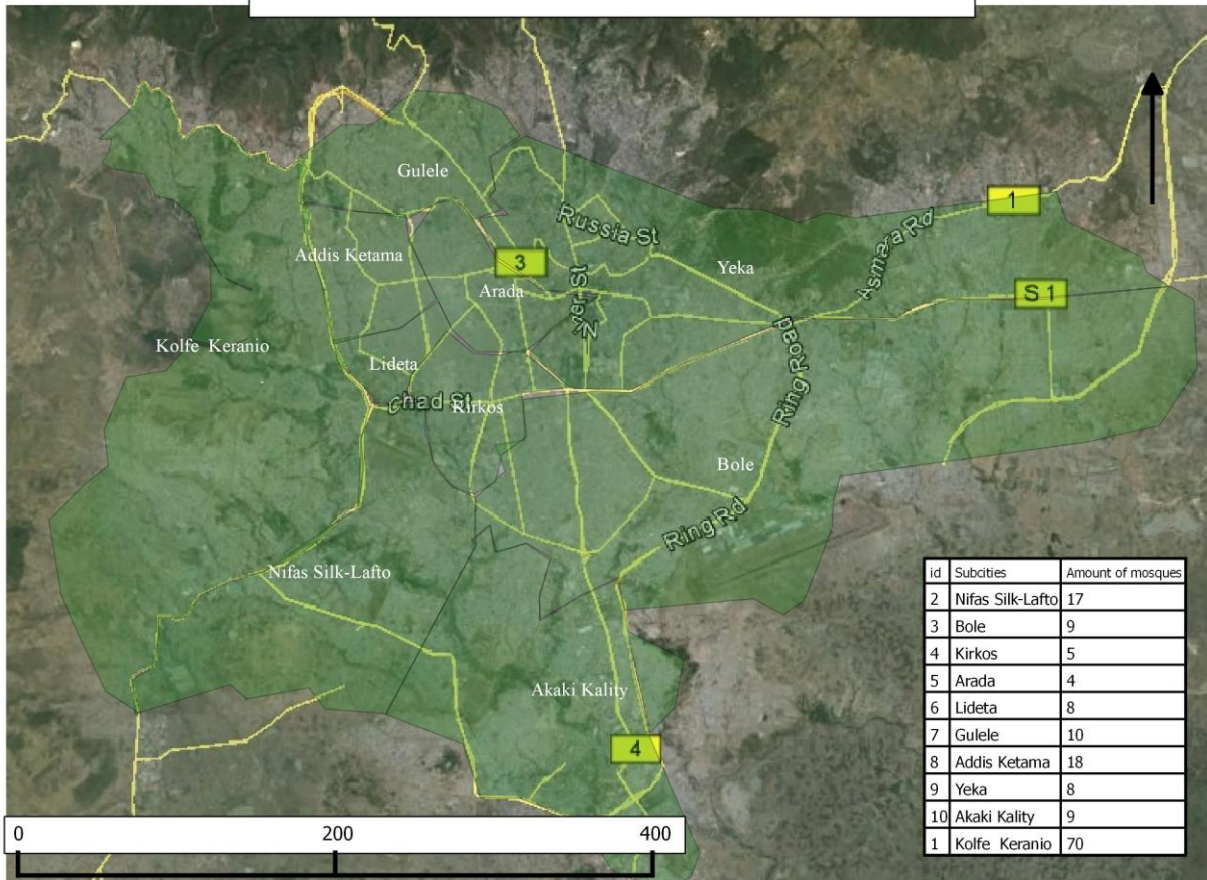| id	Subcities	Amount of mosques
2	Nifas Silk-Lafto	17
3	Bole	9
4	Kirkos	5
5	Arada	4
6	Lideta	8
7	Gulele	10
8	Addis Ketama	18
9	Yeka	8
10	Akaki Kality	9
1	Kolfe Keranio	70

Figure 41: Subcities and their amount of mosques.   Source: Jep Stockmans made in 2014.