

- KCG86 Wel Wel, see Welwel
- JDK51 Welabu 09°34'/42°38' 1946 m, north-west of Jijiga 09/42 [Gz]
- JDK.. Welabu sub-district (centre in 1964 = Aneno) 09/42 [Ad Pa]  
cf Mida Welabo
- HE... Welaha 12/39? [x]  
Emperor Susneyos in one of his later expeditions against Lasta /in 1632?/ proceeded from Dänqäz to Welaha. There his army was attacked by a peasant leader Bihono. The forces of Ras Se'elä Krestos and a nobleman Gäbrä Krestos were put to flight, and escaped only by abandoning their tents, carpets and other articles.  
[7th Int. Conf. of Ethiopian Studies 1984 p 217]
- JDJ91 Welale (mountain) 09°52'/41°43' 819 m 09/41 [Gz]
- Welamo, Walamo*, a subdivision of the main ethnic group Ometo (West Sidama); Welamo (Wellamo) as a name is in later time considered to be better replaced by the name Wolayta (Wolayyta), see Welayta.
- HCK52 Welamo (Walamo, Uollamo, Uolamo, Ualeita) 06/37 [+ Ad WO Gz]  
(mountain) 06°50'/37°37' 2012 m  
Coordinates would give map code HCK51  
**Welamo** (area)  
Most of Welamo was conquered by King Yisshaq (1414-1429).  
The area resisted several attacks of the Shewan forces of Emperor Menilek but was finally conquered in 1894. Four or five armies entered from several directions. The largest came from the north and was commanded by the Emperor himself.
- HCK52 Welamo awraja (Wolamo, Wollamo, Walamo), see also Welayita awraja  
The awraja governor before 1974, Dejazmach Wolde Semaiat, received money from the World Bank in connection with the Welamo Agricultural Development Unit, WADU, in order to improve the local infrastructure, including the road network.  
[Grenstedt 2000 p 227]  
The name was changed to Welayita awraja after the revolution in 1974,  
see under this name for more recent years.
- map 1:10,000 by Mapping & Geog. Inst. 1964.
- welana: *Walane, Wolane*, a dialect of Gurage related to Silti
- HCS13c Welana 07/37 [LM]
- HDK96 Welarge (Dillon) 09°53'/38°04' 1554 m 09/38 [AA Gz 18 WO]  
west of Tulu Milki
- HDE16 Welargi (Fagogi) 08°19'/39°58' 2931, 3285 m 08/39 [Gz WO]  
(mountain), north-east of lake Ziway,  
with church Silase to the west
- HEC45 Welavi (Uelavi) 11/37 [+ WO]
- Welayita, Wolaita*, also known as Welamo,  
a north Omotic ethnic group numbering about 1,269,216  
according to the 1994 census.  
Among the many ethnically based political parties around 1994-1995  
there was the Wolaita People's Democratic Front, WPDF, same as  
or different from the Wollaita Peoples Democratic Organization?
- HCK51 **Welayita awraja** (Welamo .., Wolamo .., Uollamo ..) 06/37 [Gz n]  
(Wolaita .., Wolayta .., Wolayyta ..) 06°50'/37°40'  
(centre at least 1964-1980 = Soddo)  
The awraja name Welamo was changed into Welayita at some point after 1974.
- 1950s Girmame Neway was appointed as governor of Welamo sub-province in the late 1950s.  
He was well received there because he had a famous forefather, Dejazmach Girmame,  
who had negotiated with the chiefs prior to Menileks re-occupation of the area.  
Girmame led the people to build roads and bridges and schools. After he had been

governor for just over six months he is said to have produced some E\$ 30,000 for a school. He surprised everyone by announcing that the money came from bribes which he had accepted and put aside for the school project.

Governor Girmame organised the people into their own watch committees when they complained of the dishonesty and brutality of 'Amhara' police. He distributed undeveloped land to the landless. The landowners complained of this and of Girmame's settling squatters from their land, leaving them with no labour supply. D. Levine in *Africa Today*, May 1961, states that a wealthy landowner named Desta Fisseha managed to arrange Girmame's transfer through the customary channels of Palace intrigue. Girmame was recalled and posted to Jijiga. Together with his brother he became the leader of the failed coup in December 1960.

[R Greenfield, Ethiopia, London 1965 p 371]

1970s In 1978 this awraja had the highest estimated population density in Ethiopia: 230 persons per square km.

1990s In late 1999 there was serious disturbance in Soddo, the centre of the wereda. Welayita wereda is inhabited by several small ethnic groups with closely related languages. The authorities had proposed to develop one single script for these languages. Experts had developed an integrated language called *Wegagoda* (Welayita-Gamo-Gofa-Dara) and schoolbooks had been printed. When schools reopened that year, teachers were surprised to be told to teach in this new language.

Students, with support from their parents, started a demonstration demanding teaching in their own languages. When the students broke into the school store, took out the books and burnt them, the authorities intervened; police beat up students and arrested several of them.

At a new demonstration several students were killed, and many arrested. The police also proceeded to arrest citizens who were considered leaders of the resistance.

"The town of Soddo resembled an occupied zone, with military everywhere and an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty."

The central government intervened and withdrew the Wegagoda experiment. Soon after, Welayita was granted the status of a *zone*.

2000s In the election of 2000, the opposition did not put up candidates, and the EPRDF ran the election unopposed. Students remained on strike for some time, demanding a monument for their fallen heroes, to establish the historical record.

[S Pausewang, Nordem Report, 2001]

In 2003 Welayita Zone was the worst affected in the SNNPR concerning malnutrition, with some districts having assessed levels of Global Acute Malnutrition of 15-20%, this according to Save the Children UK.

[Addis Tribune 2003/10/31]

HCK..	Welayta Soddo (with post office) = HCK52 Soddo (Wolamo Soddo)?	06/37	[Po]
HCS76	Welbareg, see Wulbareg		
HDJ15	Welbata 09°10'/37°06' 1922 m, south of Hareto	09/37	[Gz]
HDL84	Welbati 09°48'/38°52' 2646 m, east of Fiche see under Debre Libanos	09/38	[AA Gz]
HDJ93	Welbe 09°54'/36°53' 2007 m, west of Alibo	09/36	[Gz]
HDM20	Welbeya 09°16'/39°24' 2228 m south-east of and near Sheno	09/39	[Gz]
	<i>weld</i> (A) the Son, as part of the Trinity		
HDL74	Weld Ami 09°44'/38°47' 2582 m see under Debre Libanos	09/38	[AA Gz]
HEL56	Weld Nigus (Uold Negus) 12°13'/39°00' 2325 m north of Lalibela, cf Welde Nigus <i>welda</i> (A) corolla, crown of flowers	12/39	[Gz Gu]

HDK31	Welda	09/37	[AA]
HE...	Welda, in Yeju awraja	11/39	[n]
	Enrolment in the Sweden-supported Wello Environment Education Project at Welda secondary school was 1229 in 1985/86 and 1449 in 1986/87.		
HCI97	Weldane 07°14'/37°16' 1845 m, north-west of Waka	07/37	[Gz]
HEU14	Weldayo 12°50'/39°45' 1657 m, east of Korbeta	12/39	[Gz]
	<i>welde</i> (wäldä) (A) son of /only used in compound male names, e.g. Welde Giyorgis/		
HBM56	Welde (Uolde) 04°06'/39°55' 907 m near the border of Kenya	04/39	[+ WO Gz]
HDL90	Welde 09°57'/38°28' 2163 m, east of Tulu Milki	09/38	[Gz]
HDT00	Welde 2163 m	09/38	[AA]
HDM03	<b>Welde Ab</b> (Cioba, Choba, Chowa) 09°04'/39°37' 1174 m The hunting party of Powell-Cotton passed there at the end of December 1899. "Choba is perched on the top of a cliff, sloping away down to the Kassam /about 5 km away/. Here is a little collection of the usual types of circular Abyssinian huts. -- Here was a Customs-house and a telephone station, also a watch-tower, built like an overgrown nest, where a sentry was continually posted to watch the highway below, which was barred at night by a strong, high gate." The telephone clerk, a Shewan, lent the visitors his best hut. Its floor was spread with carpets, and round the walls were hung rifles, a shield, an elephant's tail, and other hunting trophies. [Powell-Cotton 1902 p 65-66]	09/39	[Gz x]
HDM84	Welde Ab 09°46'/39°42' 3292 m south-west of Debre Sina near Termaber	09/39	[Gz]
HDM.?	Welde Ager (with church Mika'el) in Bulga/Kasim wereda	09/39?	[x]
JCB15c	Welde Aliyu (Uoldealiu), at Ganale Doria	05/41	[+ Wa]
HFE89	Welde Isti 14°21'/39°21' 2361 m, near code HFF80 (with church Kidane Mihret), north-west of Adigrat	14/39	[Gz]
HED61	Welde Menta (Uoghir Uoldementa, Uogir W.) 11°28'/37°37' 1607 m, downstream from Tis Isat bridge	11/37	[Gz]
HEL56	Welde Nigus 12°14'/39°00' 2278 m, north of Lalibela cf Weld Nigus	12/39	[Gz]
HFD12	Weldebba, see Woldebba		
HEU20	Welderek 12°53'/39°22' 2614 m north-west of Maychew	12/39	[Gz]
HEM02	<b>Weldiya</b> (Weldia, Weldya, Waldya, Ualdia, Uoldia) (Weldeya, Waldeya, Woldia, Woldiya, Fre: Ouoldia) (Woldai, Wubete), Gz 11°50'/39° 41' = HEM03 2112 m; MS: 11°48'/39°35' = HEM02, 1850/2038 m, 75 km (in a straight line) north of Dessie, distance 521 km from Addis Abeba. With church Gebriel, and post office. Centre at least 1964-1980 of Yeju awraja. Within a radius of 10 km there are at km 3SE Gerbidda (Gherbidda) (village) 1953 m 7SE Gurbiya (Gurbiagia) (village) 2907 m 7S Kundi (Cundi) (village near a stream) 8SW Gere'ado (Gherado) (village) 1826/2122 m	11/39 11/39	[Gz x WO Gu] [Br Ha]
geol	Travertine for building purposes has been worked on a minor scale from Weldiya.		

[Mohr, Geology 1961]

- 1890s According to Wylde the Weldiya market, held on Tuesdays, was regarded as large in the 1890s. It was estimated (Alamanni) that around 1890 there were sold annually 40,000 oxen, 10,000 cows, 20,000 goats, and 10,000 sheep.  
In early 1890 the governor of Weldiya, capital of Yeju, was Wele who was a brother of Empress Taytu. Wele was absent with Menilek on a campaign, and his wife and children then seemed threatened by a rebel Zegeye. Taytu was in Dessie at the time and took action so that Zegeye had to keep peace. She also sent a force with 300 guns to Weldiya.  
[C Prouty, Empress Taytu ..., 1986 p 69]
- 1910s In May 1911 Ras Wale /Wele/ was seized and charged with leading a rebellion in 1910 in Yeju. His son Amadi viewed the arrest and the resulting capital sentence as the work of Ras Mikael, and took up arms to restore the family honour. By 14 July Ras Mikael's pacification force had occupied a considerable part of Yeju. Amadi withdrew toward Weldiya. At the end of July, in a four-hour engagement, Amadi was defeated north of Weldiya. By mid-August he had been brought to Addis Abeba for trial and imprisonment.  
[Marcus, Menelik II, (1975)1995 p 254-255]
- 1930s In the early 1930s, Weldiya was the administrative centre of Yeju province and was regarded as a small town. Its market was known for its mules.  
[Zervos 1936]  
On 15 January 1936 Dr. Dassios' Red Cross camp at Weldiya was bombed by the Italians, and on 18 January Dr. Schuppler.  
[Sbacchi 1997 p 82]  
Dr. Dassios had arranged a protected storage place for his equipment, so it was not destroyed by the bombing. He started to bring the patients to shelters early in the morning and to take down the tents for the time 5 a.m. until 4 p.m. when air raids might occur. The tents were set up again and surgical operations continued all through the nights. It even happened that outdoor operations took place. Victims of mustard gas started to be brought in towards the end of January. The ambulance within a couple of months treated 150 gas victims before moving towards Korem. On the way to there a small lake could be seen to have its surface covered with a yellow substance. The Italian pilots even threw hand grenades, and Dr Dassios once saw two pilots competing about hitting a certain small hut. The built-up centre of Weldiya was bombed five times during this period.  
[E Leijonhufvud, Kejsaren ..., Sthlm 1948 p 65-67 from Junod's book 'The third front']  
After the bombing at Korem, Dr Junod of the International Committee of the Red Cross, together with Count von Rosen, a wounded Dutchman and an English doctor suffering from dysentery approached Weldiya. The Emperor had given them his own motorcar to travel in.  
We came up to the last hill which lay between us and Weldiya, but first there was a large river to cross before we could enter. The car got stuck in the water.  
In the meantime they had conversation and van Schelven told how he had been wounded. He was going up towards Korem with a caravan of about a hundred mules, carrying white cases all marked with the red cross. Suddenly they were attacked and the Dutchman received a blow which made him unconscious. When he came to himself it was night and nobody to be seen. Only on the third day he decided to reach a place where he heard a cock crowing. It was a 'shifta village' and a 'witch doctor' forced him to drink and eat a half-rotten egg. Knowing that the Emperor was offering rewards, the villagers took van Schelven towards Korem.  
Towards the end of the day a lorry passed. It could pull the Emperor's car out of the water but its engine refused to start. Junod's party left the car behind, piled into the lorry and arrived at Weldiya an hour later. Junod found that the Greek surgeon Dr Dassios was camped in the neighbourhood. "I visited him and explained the situation on the northern front, advising him to return to the capital at the first sign of danger." Junod and Dassios did not meet again until on year later in Paris. He told then that he had actually gone northwards and had had serious adventures.  
After a day in Weldiya Junod was taken back to Addis Abeba by the only three-engined

plane of the Ethiopian Army.

[M Junod, *Warriors without weapons*, London 1951 p 65-69]

The voluntary Red Cross officer Major Gerald Burgoyne had seen the bombing of Dessie and three weeks later he was bombed again and wrote:

"Your tent is gone, said the vet. It had too. A real good shot. The Eytie seeing the red roof put six bombs carefully around it ... fortunately beyond covering everything with earth and breaking my medical chest it did not do me any harm. The Eytie dropped three or four big bombs on the town but mostly let them have incendiary bombs - little things which did small harm beyond burning down the houses and chucking splinters about. But it was too evident that he deliberately bombed my tent. He never dropped one of any sort near my men's tents forty yards away. Can't understand the idea."

[Mockler 1984 p 87]

Major Gerald Burgoyne left Weldiya on 25 January 1936. *The Times* of London wrote:

"He marched to a fresh camp with the Red Cross Flag flying, after which nothing was heard of him." 25 years later his widow could collect details of how his death through war action had occurred.

[3rd Int. Conf. of Ethiopian Studies 1969 p 315]

On their progress southwards, the Italians on 10 April 1936 camped near the river Alla in the neighbourhood of Weldiya.

The large motorized column which was organized later arrived in Weldiya in the evening of 21 April.

[P Gentizon, *La conquista ...*, Milano 1937 p 138, 161]

Italian *Residenza*, telephone, infirmary, tobacco shop with restaurant.

Post office of the Italians was opened 9 January 1937. Its cancellations read UALDIA' AMARA or UALDIA'(AMARA) but on 1 Oct. (1 Dec.?) 1940 the locality was transferred to the *Governo dello Scioa*.

[Philatelic source]

Contractor M.C.M. Pollera built the hospital in Weldiya in 1937.

At some distance, a Blackshirt division '23 Marzo' built a little church and a fountain as monuments to their fallen soldiers.

[Guida 1938]

1940s After the liberation, the Ethiopian post office at Weldiya was to be opened in 1944.

There was a mission station /started when?/ (-1967-) of the American Lutheran Mission.

In 1948, peasants in Yeju rose after appeals against alienation of their land were ignored. Led by a Kenyazmach Malaku Tayye and one Unda Muhammad, they attacked the prison in the district capital Weldiya and liberated the prisoners. The rebellion was finally suppressed, and the leaders were publicly flogged on a market day.

[Bahru Zewde 1991 p 218]

1950s Weldiya was still centre of awraja (-1956-).

Sub-province Governor of Yeju awraja in 1959 was Dejazmach Geleta Korcho.

1960s "It is often said that there is a road from Waldia to Lalibela, but actually the only road to Lalibela is from Kobbo --

Waldia is, however, the best place to start if one wants to hike into Lalibela, and guides and mules may be found in the town. The journey on foot or mule from Waldia to Lalibela takes three days.

Beyond Waldia, the /main/ road winds through a steep valley."

[Welcome to Ethiopia, A.A. circa 1965 p 65-66]

There was a small Italian hotel.

In 1966 it was decided that the Ministry of Interior would design a masterplan for Weldiya, without engaging external consultants.

Population 8,505 as counted in 1967.

There were 7 telephone numbers in 1956 and 25 in the 1967 telephone directory.

Apart from official offices there was the Mekane Yesus Hospital and the American

- Lutheran Mission. Names of foreigners were Anello Grigorio and Dr. Simmson. Telephones on personal names were 10 for Christian-type Ethiopian names, among them Dejazmach Gubena Amedie and Dejazmach Zewdie Biru. Moslem-type names were 6, among them Grazmach Mohammed Humed. Itegue Taytu Bitul Secondary School had 15 students in grade 12 who sat for school leaving certificate in 1968, but only one of them passed.
- 1970s Famine period: a nurse Tony from Netherlands worked in the Weldiya feeding camp around 1973-74. There were about 100 orphans, and over 500 women. Mission doctor Tor Harald Kristiansen from Norway worked there. The hospital had 30 proper beds, but by using corridors the double were admitted.  
[G Filseth, Jorden brenner, Oslo 1974 p 109-111]  
Head of the Lutheran mission station in Weldiya around 1974 was Bob Braun. Spelling used by the post office was WELDIA (-1975-).  
The town got its first water supply line around 1976 through International Lutheran Aid, with 24 outlet points for about 2,500 people using the supply.  
[Tenaestelin (Sthlm) 1976 no 1 p 20]  
There were petrol filling stations of Shell and Total (-1978-).  
Doctor Erik Erichsen (b 1947) of the Swedish EFS Mission together with nurse Senait (b 1951) and later the doctor's wife started work at the hospital in 1978. Several of the local staff had been in prison for political reasons. The famine in the area also had as consequence that the hospital was overloaded. The hospital was taken over by the Derg government in 1979.  
[Mission source]
- The famous commercial giant Sheik Mohammed Hussein Ali Al-Amoudi, son of a Saudi Arabian father and an Ethiopian mother, grew up in Weldiya (but he was born in Dessie). In later years he favoured Weldiya to some extent, cf below at 2000.
- 1980s Population about 15,700 in 1984.  
Enrolment in the Sweden-supported Wello Environment Education Project at Weldiya junior secondary school was 1,778 in 1986/87.  
In May-June 1988 the Derg government forces quickly moved from Weldiya to Korem. "According to TPLF sources in London, the front captured Weldiya in mid-October /1989/ after government forces withdrew 60-70 kilometres south."  
[News]  
There were air attacks on Weldiya on 16 and 17 November 1989, but no fatalities were reported. In an attack on 7 November 1990 one person was killed, one wounded, and relief offices burnt. On December 27 nine person were killed close to a relief store.  
[Africa Watch 1991]
- 1990s "It is strange to be back here after weeks spent in the heightened atmosphere and constant insecurity of Bahr Dar and Gondar. It seems so peaceful. I pay a visit to the site of a recent Mig bombing raid, a food relief depot on the edge of the town where many of the poor were killed as they patiently queued for their ration. -- nearly every day MiGs rumble in the sky like distant thunder. On the day of the celebrations to mark the completion of the new land reform, the start of the ceremony is repeatedly delayed until late in the afternoon and even then the peasants massing in the arena to watch the plays and listen to the speeches keep glancing nervously at the sky -- The EPDM, the Amhara branch of the Front, has been working in the area since 1981 and, even though the Dergue was not expelled until a year ago, the rural peasants have long supported them."  
"Woldia seems a thriving town, if numbers on the streets at any one time are anything to go by. Its wide main street, lined with small hotels, restaurants and bars, is always crowded with pedestrians, peasants laden with bundles, donkeys laden with firewood, merchants' trucks and carts drawn by skeletal horses with flanks rubbed by harnesses into open, fly-blown wounds."  
Judge Admassu, a member of the present *shengo* when interviewed, said that under the Derg "the representatives were only nominally elected. The WPE decided who would be nominated. The people didn't oppose him because of the consequences. In some cases, we

were told to elect even a person we had never seen before."

The British researcher/author Jenny Hammond on 21 March 1991 interviewed judge Admassu Tilahun and vice-chairperson Desta Abraha of the Women's Association of Weldiya.

[Hammond 1999 p 374-375, 449]

In Weldiya there is an association of Xamir people with language Xamtanga, which is related to Awngi/Agew and Qemant. There were estimated to be 80,000 or fewer Xamtanga speakers in the North Amhara Region in 1995.

[Summer Institute of Linguistics]

Population of Weldiya about 24,500 in 1994.

The road towards Debre Tabor branches off at Weldiya. It was built by Chinese in the 1970s and is commonly called the "Chinese Road" /or "China Road"/. It is called Highway on the road sign and starts going high up soon after leaving Weldiya.

The centre of Weldiya is at the road fork. There is the minaret of a mosque and a small market area with a row of shops and also restaurants, some of them Moslem. The bus station is at the "Chinese Road" about one kilometre from the road fork.

Near the centre are reasonable hotels: Kiddus Mikael, Abiate Sema, Alika Woldo Yohannis.

[Äthiopien 1999 p 316-317]

"When you arrive /by bus/ in Woldia, you might want to use a *gari* to get you and your luggage up the 1.5 km climb into town. Accommodation in Woldia is all on the basic side -- Up in town, the best bet in the dollar-a-night range is the /Kiddus Mikael/ on the main roundabout. -- The best hotel in town, or so I'm told, is a new and nameless cream-painted place about 50 m past the Abiata Sema Hotel, and on the opposite side of the road. -- The Lal Restaurant comes as the sort of surprise that makes it all worthwhile --"

[Bradt 1995(1998) p 330]

The current claim to fame of Weldiya is that it is where the tycoon Al-Amoudi was brought up and went to school. The son of an Ethiopian mother and a Yemeni father, some people say they still remember him selling lamp fuel as a child in the town. He went on to greater things - earning hundreds of millions in Saudi Arabia and Sweden and then coming back to Ethiopia and building the Sheraton, many factories, and other investments. In Weldiya he is noted for his generosity to old friends, and his philanthropy in rebuildings an old school and other projects.

"The main drag of Weldiya is a teaming mass of truck drivers, peddlers, bar girls, and strollers. There is surprisingly little hassle in my experience, unlike lots of other towns."

[John Graham in AddisTribune 2000/02/18]

2000s There are daily busses to Dessie (4 hours) and Lalibela (7 hours). By taxi it is 4 hours to Lalibela.

Main hotels are the Genet and the Lal. Next door to the Photo Addis film store is the Manen restaurant.

[Lonely planet 2000 p 201]

The Lal hotel had 54 rooms in 2003.

Population about 30,200 in 2001, a doubling in 15 years.

picts Svenskmannagärning, Sthlm 1936 p 58 air view of British ambulance camp on the morning before the bombing;

Ethiopia Observer vol XI /1967/ no 4 p 276 site of British Red Cross camp in 1935;

G Filseth, Jorden brenner, Oslo 1974 at p 97 orphans in famine camp;

B Parker, Ethiopia .., Oxford (Oxfam) 1995 p 57

front of Bob Marley Music Shop

J Hammond, Fire from the ashes (Red Sea Press) 1999 p 222-223[pl 14-15] celebration of land reform.

**Weldiya : Anoma Maryam**

David Buxton visited this church north-west of Weldiya in October 1944:

"The cave was completely hidden in a ravine choked with a jungle-growth of trees and herbage. Behind a screen-like wall, which partly closed the mouth of the cave, we found the primitive little church itself. It was built in mud over a framework of sticks, between the floor and the roof of the cave. It was white-washed, but otherwise plain - an unpretentious and attractive example of its class."

[D Buxton, travels in Ethiopia, London (1949)1957 p 105]

### **Weldiya : Gerado**

Enrolment in the Sweden-supported Wello Environment Education Project at Gerado junior secondary school was 649 in 1985/86 and 751 in 1986/87.

### **Weldiya : Kundi (Qundi)**

The capital of Shewa was at Qundi when Wessen Seged was assassinated and the 18-year old Sahle Selasse became Ras of Shewa.

### **Weldiya : Melkekole**

The primary school in 1968 had 524 boys and 318 girls, with 12 male and 3 female teachers.

JDA73	Weldoyi (G. Uoldoi) 08°49'/40°08' 1281, 1593 m (mountain), south-west of Awash station	08/40	[Gz WO]
HDK98	Wele 09°57'/38°18' 2547 m see under Tulu Milki, cf Wili	09/38	[AA Gz]
HEU74	Welea (Wele'a) (mountain) 13°21'/39°44' 2018 m south-east of Kwiha	13/39	[Gz]
HDJ47	Weleba 09°28'/37°19' 2370 m, south-east of Shambu	09/37	[Gz]
JCG66	Welechiso (Welech'iso) (peak) 06°56'/40°22' 2604 m south-west of Ginir	06/40	[Gz]
HDU95	Weledi 10°50'/39°48' 1444 m (with church Maryam)	10/39	[Gz]
HDB50	Welega (Uallaga, Uollega) 08°36'/35°44' 1828 m (Walaga)	08/35	[Gz]
HCK93	Welege, island on lake Abaya, see Alge		
HDL15	Welege 09°09'/38°56' 2492 m, see under Sendafa	09/38	[AA Gz]
HFE16	Welegesha (Welegesha) (with rock-hewn church), see under Temben churches Welegesha Iyesus (Wolegheso Yesus) the same?	13/39	[x]
pict	D Buxton, the Abyssinians, London 1970 p 116 monolithic altar in abandoned church		
HEL86	Weleh 12°32'/39°03' 2047 m, south of Sekota	12/39	[Gz]
HEL86	Weleh 12°34'/39°00' 2695 m, south of Sekota	12/39	[Gz]
HEL..	<b>Weleh</b> sub-district (Wäläh) (centre in 1964 = Adiansen Weleh) There was a bloody battle east of Weleh on 22 September 1937. The Italian side overpowered the Patriot side. <i>Wagshum</i> Dejazmach Hailu Kebede was wounded and soon died of his wound. His forces retreated in disarray, and the Raya-Azebo inflicted heavy damage on the people of Wag. Rome is said to have reported that among those killed at Weleh were 38 Italian officers, 4 NCOs, 4 army soldiers and 13 Blackshirts. The atrocities committed in Wag by Italians afterwards were an interpretation of orders to "show no mercy" from Marshal Graziani. [13th Int. Conf. of Ethiopian Studies, vol I 1997 p 104]	12/39	[Ad]
HE...	Weleka (Wäläqa, Walaqa) (historical place/river) In 1600-1601 Susneyos made his way to the Wäläqa river, where several Gafat groups came forward to confront him. His men crossed the river and faced one more Gafat group. In 1603, the Tulama from Weleka and the Afre from Bizamo mounted a simultaneous heavy raid on Gojjam. The chronicle states that Emperor Susneyos had given land in Wäläqa to the Wäransha,	../..	[+ Pa n]



but in 1611 he clashed with them. He defeated them and the Ittu Oromo at Shäbäl in Gojjam.

[Pankhurst 1997]

In 1612, Emperor Susenyos devastated a small Oromo group called Warantisha, but two years later he supported them in the struggle against the Oromo. He made a bold attempt to drive the Warantisha's enemies out of Walaqa; the attempt failed and he therefore moved the entire Warantisha with their cattle across the Abay in 1614.

[Mohammed 1994]

HEJ99c **Weleka** (Wolleka, Wolleqa, Walleka, Weuleka) 12/37 [Gz q n WO]  
(Welek'a, Weleqa, Wallaca, Uolaich) 12°38'/37°29' 2283 m  
Near Gondar, formerly inhabited by Falasha.

Village having both black and red soil. On black soil the yearly rotation may, for example, be tef-tef-nug-tef-chick peas with no fallow year. On red soil the rotation may e.g. be tef-finger millet- fallow or barley-green peas-barley-green peas-fallow. When domestic animals graze on fallowed fields, their droppings improve fertility. There was some ensete in Weleka, but it was not common in the area.

One type of tef was called *azen bekantu*, 'sadness for nothing', and there was a story about a man who thought that tef did not grow on his soil and when returning later was surprised that it had grown well.

A low, hollow mound made of stones and used as a chicken coop was possibly a specialty of Weleka village.

[F J Simoons, Northwest Ethiopia ..., Madison/USA 1960]

1920s Yona Bogala was born in 1908 in Weleka village. His father was a weaver. The family, including eleven children, lived in a traditional hut, and scratched out their existence growing *teff*. In 1921 Jacques Faitlovitch spent several months in Weleka, and Yona studied Hebrew with him every day after sunset. When Faitlovitch proposed to take Yona, along with some other students, to Palestine and Europe to be educated, Yona's parents agreed reluctantly. Yona and three other youths were selected. Yona studied for over two years at a Jerusalem *yeshiva* and then went to Frankfurt, where he studied German and learnt Yiddish. In his mid-teens he studied French and Hedrew at a Jewish school in Switzerland.

After returning to Ethiopia, Yona became a teacher at the school set up by Faitlovitch in Addis Abeba in 1924. During the Fascist occupation, he was administrator of this college until the Italians shut it down. Yona then was teaching some sixty Jewish students in his home, but after two years he had to flee to the south. After the liberation in 1941, Yona became head of the Department of Schools in the Ministry of Education. In the 1950s Yona Bogala became the chief spokesman for his people, and at that time he also stayed in Asmara.

Yona Bogala's 'second base of operations' became Ambover in the Gondar region.

On 9 February 1973 Israel's chief Sephardic rabbi ruled that the Falashas were Jews according to Halacha, the Jewish law. In November 1979 Yona Bogala and three other Falasha leaders went to Montreal to address 2,000 representatives of Jewish federations. Yona Bogala was respected because of his education and position, and he wielded power because of his position as paymaster, the funnel for Jewish funds to his people. Like many other Falashas he resettled to Israel and from 1979 he lived near Tel Aviv.

[L Rapoport, Redemption song, 1986 p 41-62, 218-219]

Hiskiahu Finkas, a Falasha boy about 11-12 years old and the son of a shepherd in Wolleqa village was together with three other Falasha boys brought to Europe by Jacques Faitlovitch. He arrived in Florence in Italy in 1921. He seemed promising in his studies but contracted tuberculosis and died in Alexandria on 7 February 1931. He thus never had the opportunity to return home.

[The Beta Israel ..., UK 1999 p 15-16]

1970s Paul Henze visited there around 1970.

"We spent a busy hour in Wolleqa, a Falasha village just off the main road a few kilometres north of Gondar. The village has a synagogue and a school which has received

some Israeli assistance. The enthusiastic schoolmaster, Ato Abebe Berhane, had studied in Israel and spoke Hebrew, which was being taught at the school. He proudly told us that his Hebrew name was Ya'ir ben Uri. He gave us each a yarmulka to put on our heads when we entered the synagogue. It was a round, thatched-roof building like any simple Ethiopian country church, but it had a wooden Star of David rather than a cross at its peak. Inside there was -- a table with a Torah, Menorah, and a few pamphlets etc. Services were held regularly, Ato Abebe said --"

"The main attraction of Wolleqa was its pottery market near the highway. Making pottery has long been a Falasha specialty. The tourist market has influenced the objects made -- The problem with all this Falasha pottery -- was that it was extremely fragile. -- The smooth black surface was deceptive - there was no strength beneath it. -- In 1971 the /US/ Peace Corps started a project to teach Falashas how to mix clay and fire pottery well enough to make it reasonably durable."

[P B Henze, Ethiopian journeys, (USA 1977)A.A. 2001 p 181]

1980s

Graham Hancock made a visit to Weleka around 1980 when he was researching in the lake Tana area about the Ark of the Covenant. "Before leaving Gondar we were warned by a senior official that we should on no account try to interview or photo-graph any Ethiopian Jews. - This year the position of the government is that the Falashas don't exist."

Hancock's guide Balcha was nervous. "Late last year I brought a Canadian film crew to that very village ... they were interested in the Jews and they had all the official permissions and everything. Anyway, they poked around and asked a lot of leading questions about religious freedom, political persecution and so on - all of which I had to translate. Afterwards I was arrested by the security police and locked up for a few weeks accused of facilitating anti-state propaganda."

When passing after an excursion to the Simen mountains, Balcha refused to leave the car and serve as an interpreter. A young man who spoke some English was found.

"There was not much to see. Sprawled up a slope at the side of the road, the village -- was dirty and seething with flies. Many of the people who pressed around us seemed to think that we ourselves must be Jewish and that we had come to take them away to Israel. Other ran towards us with armloads of -- representations of the Star of David and of the supposed bed-time scene between Solomon and Sheba. -- I asked our guide how long it had been since there had been any foreigners here to buy their goods. 'Not since year before,' he replied."

"-- the place of worship, which the Falashas called a *mesgid*, turned out to be filled with chintzy gifts from Israel: boxes of *matsos* were stacked in one corner and nobody could read the Torah - which had been printed in Tel Aviv - because it was written in Hebrew."

[G Hancock, The sign and the seal, New York 1992 p 31-36]

A Reuter correspondent visited Weleka in 1982 and was told that the material situation of the Falasha there had rather improved since 1974.

"When I came to the village of Wolleka, some miles to the north of Gondar, I found an unusual gloom, and Jerusalem too was its cause. I drove there with the guide from NTO, the National Tour Operation. The village was established as a showpiece before the revolution. Even now, unless recent fighting prevented it, the occasional tourists were taken to Wolleka as part of the Gondar tour. Day permits were issued to NTO on request. For many, particularly from America, the village was the sole reason for visiting Ethiopia."

Women sat behind rows of pottery. There were animals: flat-nosed frogs, crocodiles and goats, and lions with their heads crested with the Star of David. There were bearded priests clutching the twin scrolls of the Torah, and a curious pod which when opened revealed a couple in a stilted embrace, enacting the mythical union of Solomon and Sheba.

There was also something missing. I thought perhaps it may have to do with the false economy, the trickle of tourists, and the money that filtered through from international Jewry. Then I realized the population was skewed. It was like a village emptied by war. I

had seen only women, the very old, and young children.

In the synagogue, schoolroom chairs were arranged in rows in one half of the room. The walls had been daubed in white a long time ago, and the brown chaff had worn through. Pasted on the wall behind some shelves was a colour poster: Beth Hatefutsoh, the museum of the Diaspora, Tel Aviv. An elderly *kes*, more a priest than a rabbi, showed me the Torah, and a Hebrew Pentateuchal text.

[Marsden-Smedley 1990 p 126-127]

2000 Around 6 km north of Gondar is the little village of Wolleka, once the home of a thriving population of Falasha.

"The old synagogue and Falasha homes can be visited, but a special tip to the village cannot be called very worthwhile."

"From 1985 to 1991, many Falashas were airlifted to Israel, and today none but a handful remain -- Sadly, the pottery for which they were famous has degenerated into clumsy, half-hearted affairs, produced to feed the demand from tourists."

[Lonely planet 2000 p 178, 177]

picts F J Simoons, Northwest Ethiopia, USA 1960 fig 13 a weaver & his wife,  
fig 36 man carrying the beam of his plough;  
G Hancock et al., Under Ethiopian skies, London 1983(1987)  
p 77 Falasha clay figurines.

*welel* (wäläl) (A) floor

GDF74 **Welel** (Walal, Walel, Wallel, Uallel, Ualel, Uale) 08/34 [Gz x WO]

(Wayu) (mountain) 08°53'/34°50' 2707, 3312 m, cf Tulu Welel

According to d'Abbadie the Borana migrated from the highlands of Bali to Welel before the 1400s.

When the Matcha/Mecha spread widely, they reached the western part of present Wellega, which "they sanctified by making Walal their sacred mountain".

The beautiful mountain of the region, which resembles mount Walal in Walabu, the region of Borana dispersal in the early 1500s, aroused nostalgia for the Borana's original homeland.

[Mohammed 1994 p 62]

*welela* (wäläla) (A) liquid honey

HDM11 Welele (district in Bulga) 09°13'/39°25' 2742 m 09/39 [Gz n]

(with church Mika'el Debir to the north), south-east of Sheno

HEE08 Welelet 10°56'/39°09' 3393 m 10/39 [Gz]

HDF51 **Welenchiti** (Uelenciti, Wolinchiti, Aualancheti) 08/39 [MS WO]

(Wolinchite, Wulinchiti, Uolenciti, Wolenchiti) 08/39 [Ad Po Gu]

(Wulenchiti, Walankiti, Ualanchiti, Ualankit) 08/39 [Ca x Gu Gz]

(Wolencheti, Fre: Oualenketi), distance 122 km from Addis Abeba

Gz: 08°40'/39°26' 1431 m; MS: 08°40'/39°30' 1436 m

With railway station & sub-post office under Nazret.

Centre in 1964 of Boset wereda.

The signboard at the railway station uses the spelling OUALENKETI

(or Ouelanketi as written by P.G. Jansen in a book?).

geol In the region of Welenchiti thick argillaceous diatomite deposits with pyroclastic intercalations form a terrace 80 m above the present Awash river.

[Mohr, Geology 1961 p 202]

1930s In agreeable hilly landscape with healthy and mild climate. May be regarded as a border for wild olive, *weyra*, and there is a kind of euphorbia not higher than a man's height.

Italian infirmary and *spacci* shops with restaurant/s/.

At about 1½ hour ride there is a natural cave with a hot place supposed to be good for healing arthritis, rheumatism and obesity.

[Guida 1938]

With sub-post office using spelling WULENCHITI on its postmark.

Post office of the Italians was opened 9 May 1937 (or 1 July?).

Its cancellations read UALANCHITI(AMARA) which was changed to UALANCHITI(HARAR) after the locality had been transferred to the *Governo dell'Harar* on 1 August 1938.

[Philatelic source]

1960s 23 km from Nazret "there is usually a bar across the road in the middle of the valley. This is the inspection point for the game reserve which lies beyond. There is no trouble entering the game reserve, but the guards may insist on searching the car upon return."

[Welcome to Ethiopia, A.A, circa 1965 p 76]

In 1966 it was decided that the Ministry of Interior would design a master plan for Welenchiti, without engaging external consultants.

Population 3,747 as counted in 1967.

The primary school in 1968 had 232 boys and 76 girls, with 6 teachers.

Cash for a new school was collected from the inhabitants in 1964.

An elementary school building constructed of concrete elements and with Swedish assistance through ESBU was completed around 1970.

[SIDA 1971]

In the 1967 directory there was only one telephone number listed, for Idris Ibrahim.

1980s Population about 7,400 in 1984.

1990s Population about 11,700 in 1994.

In June 1995 the conflict between Orthodox and Protestant churches was evident.

The Orthodox Church had prohibited Protestants to use its cemetery to bury their dead. A petrol station owned by Protestants at Welenchiti was destroyed.

2000s Population about 14,400 in 2001, a doubling in 15 years.

welene: *welena*, *welensa* (Arsi O) *Erythrina* spp, tree with red flowers

*Welene* (wäläne), traditionally a Gurage area

H... Welene sub-district (Welenie .., Wolenie ..) 08/38 [+ Ad]  
(centre in 1964 = Jemah), in Chebo & Gurage awraja,  
cf Eza & Welene

The primary school in 1968 had 78 boys and 12 girls  
in grades 1-4, with 2 teachers.

HEK55 Welene wereda (Wäläne ..) 08/38 [+ x]  
(centre in -1957-1964- = Aklil)

*Weleni*, an ethnic sub-group speaking East Gurage

HD... Weleni (centre in 1964 of Sibu Tuka sub-district) 09/36 [Ad]

HDD98 **Welenkomi** (Woloncomi, Wolenkomi, Wolenkomie) 09/38 [AA Gz Te Ad]

09°00'/38°15' 2341 m, west of Addis Alem, 76 km from Addis Abeba

With sub-post office under A. Abeba and church Kidane Mihret.

Centre in 1964 of Ejersa Lefa sub-district.

Within a radius of 10 km there are at km

2E Kela (K'ela) 2129 m

3E Tulu Ferda /Mecha/ 2124 m

5E Ihud Gebeya 2208 m

6E Bekenisa

7E Huluko (Huluk'o)

7E Miti (Mit'i) 2098 m

5W Afe Nigus 2138 m

9NW Lafa 2744 m

9NW Mulo

2N Tero 2163 m

4N Gare

	6N Kora (area)		
	6N Jemjem 2243 m		
1960s	The sub-post office uses spelling WOLENKOMI on its postmark. Population 2,338 as counted in 1967. The primary school in 1968 had 219 boys and 89 girls, with 4 teachers. An elementary school building constructed of concrete elements and with Swedish assistance through ESBU was completed around 1970. [SIDA 1971]		
text	/which Welenkomi?:/ Mesfin Wolde-Mariam et al., Welenkomi: A socioeconomic and nutritional survey of a rural community in the Central Highlands of Ethiopia, <i>The World Land Use Survey</i> , Occasional Papers no.11, Tonbridge 1971.		
HDL30	Welenkomi (Wolenkomi) 09°24'/38°30' 2111 m (Wolonkomi) (with church Kidane Mihret)	09/38	[AA Gz]
HDD66	Welenso (Weleso, Gafarsa) 08°44'/38°04' 2503 m	08/38	[Gz]
HDL67	Welenso (Ualanso), see under Webera	09/39	[+ WO]
HDL72	Welenso 09°41'/38°36' 2805 m, south-west of Fiche <i>welensu, wolensu, welensa, wolensa</i> (O) kinds of tree with ornamental red flowers, <i>Erythrina abyssinica</i> , <i>E. brucei</i> , with lightweight wood, easily planted for hedges; <i>walansu</i> (O) having treatment, care, carefulness	09/38	[Gz]
HDF91	Welensu 08°58'/39°26' 1548 m	08/39	[Gz]
HDH97	Welensu 09°52'/36°20' 1925 m	09/36	[Gz]
HDK37	Welensu 09°20'/38°10' 2544 m	09/38	[AA Gz]
HDK37	Welensu 09°24'/38°13' 2482 m	09/38	[AA Gz]
JCJ13	Welensu (Uelensu) (area)	06/41	[+ WO]
JDK40	Welensu (Ualensu) (area)	09/42	[+ WO]
HDJ85	Welensu Chule (W. Ch'ule) 09°47'/37°06' 2474 m south of Alibo	09/37	[Gz]
HET24	Welesi, see Welezi		
HDD66	Weleso, see Welenso		
	<i>wetele</i> (A) daughter of, in female names		
HDE93	Welete Suk (Wäläte Suq) (village)	08/38	[x]
HET24	Welezi (Welesi) 12°55'/38°49' 1808 m	12/38	[Gz]
HE...	Welfa (locality near Ashenge)	12/39	[n]
HEE56	Welgi 11°23'/39°03' 2211 m, south of Bete Hor		
JDK55	Welgo 09°29'/43°00' 1763 m	09/43	[Gz]
JDK55	Welgo (Uelgo) 09°30'/42°58' 1786 m <i>weli</i> (Som) holy man, person who exercises paternal authority	09/42	[Gz WO]
HDD93	Weli 09°01'/37°50' 2059 m, see under Ambo cf Wali ..	09/37	[AA Gz]
HEF71	Weli Mikael (church) 11°33'/39°30' Weli Mikael, north-east of Mekdela	11/39	[Gz]
H....	Welie Hamus sub-district (Wolie ..) (centre in 1964 = Achingi)	10/37?	[+ Ad]
HE...	Welie Sekela sub-district (centre in 1964 = Kolel Gebread)	11/37	[Ad]
HCJ29	Welimera 06°34'/37°26' 1866 m, cf Welmera	06/37	[Gz]
JEH82	Welis (mountain chain) 12°30'/40°51' 960 m	12/40	[Gz]
	<i>Weliso, Wolisso, Wolisa</i> , a sub-tribe of the Mecha/Liban Oromo		
HDD45	<b>Weliso</b> (Giyon, Ghion, Guyon, Waliso, Walliso) (Ualiso, Uoliso, Wolisa, Woliso, Wolisso, Wilisso)	08/37 08/37	[MS Ro Gz] [Ad WO Gu]

(Welso, Walso) Gz: 08°32'/37°59' 2063 m; MS: 08°36'/38°06' 2014/2103 m

Centre in 1980 of Chebo & Gurage awraja.

Distance 116 km from Addis Abeba.

Within a radius of 10 km there are at km

5E Waranne (Uaranne) (village)

9SE Birbirsa (village) 2014 m

10W Aro (mountain)

10NW Chitu, see this name

5.. Obi (mission station), see this name

Greenfield believed that *weliso* is a Gurage word. The Amhara-dominated government changed the name to **Ghion** at some point before 1951 and this continued to be used during about four decades, although Weliso dominated in daily conversation.

- 1930s The road Addis Abeba-Weliso was one of the few built new by the Ethiopian government before the Italian time, and at least by 1938 the distance 110 km from Addis Abeba to Weliso was asphalted and 90 km Weliso-Abelti gravelled. Located at the centre of Weliso Oromo, with market on Mondays. When the Crown Prince family of Sweden made their visit to Ethiopia in the beginning of 1935, an excursion from the capital to the Gibi river started on 11 January. Overnight accommodation for them had been arranged in Weliso. Tents were divided into several rooms, with carpets on the floors and English iron bedsteads. Palms had been planted in rows from the lunch place to the tents. Prince Bertil, accompanied by General Virgin, Princess Ingrid and others, went hunting. Bertil and Virgin each shot a waterbuck near the river. The hot spring was visited the next morning, but the police had chased the local bathers away so no picturesque photos could be taken.  
[E Virgin, *Abessinska minnen*, Sthlm 1936 p 178-180]  
*Commissariato dei Guraghè*, telegraph, infirmary, *spaccio*.  
The Italians planned to open a post office, to be named Uollisò, but this was not carried out. The locality was transferred from *Galla e Sidama* to *Governo dello Scioa*.  
The Italian *banda* force under Captain Rolle around October 1938 was sent down to the 'western sector' which had suddenly become troublesome. Two rival rebel leaders were operating around Weliso. They were Gurassu Duke and Olona Dinkel. Gurassu Duke (a former member of the Crown Prince's bodyguard) was in the end the better-known - and the longer-lived - but in his day Olona Dinkel, a Wellega Oromo, was as legendary. A price put on Gurassu Duke's head was doubled by Marshal Graziani because Gurassu had hanged a negotiator, engineer Castagna, and a price of 50,000 lire was put on Olona Dinkel's head.  
[Mockler 1984 p 191]  
After the liberation, the Ethiopian post office was to be opened in 1944. The post used spelling GUEYON in 1951 and GHION around 1964.  
[Philatelic source]
- 1940s In the beginning of 1948 a young Swede was manager of the Weliso hotel.
- 1950s In 1955 there was a 40 kW hydro-electric power station.  
The S.I.M. had a school and clinic there (when? actually referring to Obi?).  
"One of hardly more than three villages with typical Gurage houses along the highway to Jimma."  
[report after 1957]  
By 1958 Ghion was one of 27 places in Ethiopia ranked as First Class Township. Sub-province Governor of Chebo awraja in 1959 was Dejzasmach Habte Selassie Belayneh.
- 1960s The weekly market in Weliso was on Saturdays.  
A new swimming-pool at the hotel was opened in mid-1960.  
New secondary school classes were inaugurated in October 1962, with Peace Corps volunteers as teachers.

Surveys of the Central Statistical Office in the mid-1960s found that of the town population in Weliso ten years of age and older, there were 2,720 men of which 42.3% literate and 3,180 women of which 8.8% literate.

Official statistics for 1965 say that there were 1,070 owned, 1,070 rented, and 50 unspecified dwellings. Of these none had piped water, 1,430 used water from wells and 760 from streams.

The Low-cost Demonstration Centre built by ESIBT ("Building College") was inaugurated in July 1964.

Around 1965 the installed electrical capacity was 32 kVA and annual production 64,500 kWh.

A track for motor traffic extends 20 km from the centre of Weliso to a find-spot of limestone. A lime-kiln was built there and still produced lime in the mid-1960s. A couple of kilometres away there is a second find-spot. The reserves of both could reach a maximum of about 100,000 metric tons. However, geological conditions are not favourable for the occurrence of a large quantity of limestone.

[Mineral 1966]

"Ghion is a small resort town and has a hotel with a hot mineral-water swimming pool and baths. The hotel is east of the centre of town. Turn left at the hotel sign and follow the road for about two kms. to the hotel."

[Welcome to Ethiopia, A.A. circa 1965 p 43]

Population 3,105 as counted in 1967.

In the telephone directory of 1967 there are 9 numbers for official offices and one for the hotel. Of numbers on personal names there are about 10 Christian-type Ethiopian among whom Memhir Wolde Tensay, and a couple of Moslem-type names. (See below about Wolde Tensay.)

According to the CSO in 1968 for Ghion, population was 8,627, and 25% of the active population were engaged in sales and 13% in farming. Mother tongue was stated to be almost one third each of Gurage, Oromo and Amharic. Religious affiliation was 83% Christian and 17% Muslim.

Sudan Interior Mission primary school in 1968 had 231 boys and 22 girls in grades 1-4, with 5 male teachers (Ethiopian).

Ras Gobena Secondary School had 25 students in grade 12 who in 1968 sat for school leaving certificate, and 4 of them passed.

A branch of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia was established within the period 1965-1968.

The hotel with its tukuls and swimming pool had the name Ras Hotel also in 1969.

Memhir Abba Wolde Tensai Gizaw, settled in Weliso, unmarried and 50 years of age in 1969, was "the host of thousands of patients mainly possessed by Satan and other evil spirits." He had an assembly hall and a baptism room in the centre of Weliso, and also a farm on a *gasha* of land given to him by the Emperor. Abba Wolde Tensai was a properly ordained priest of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. (See below for 1985.)

[Eth. Herald 1969-06-07 with article and photo]

1970s

Volunteer Sven/Sten?-Olof Andersson (b 1934) was teacher at the secondary school and left for Sweden on 26 February 1970. Same for Karl-Åke Odenhäll (b 1944).

Among the more regular staff there was an Indian teacher Mr Raja Thomas who later moved to Indibir. As a pet he kept in his home in Weliso a small dik-dik antelope Bambi which later was taken over by the Canadian mission family at Obi. There was a petrol filling station of Agip (-1978-).

A boy Negussie Kumbi had suffered from tuberculosis already as a baby in the late 1950s and had become a hunchback. He was treated at the TB clinic in Addis Abeba and became free at least from the infection. After the Canadian couple Coleman arrived to the Obi mission near Weliso in 1962, Negussie grew up with that family.

Negussie became much attached to the Evangelical faith. He smiled often and seldom looked sad, and he trusted God without any reserve, but even so his life became tragic. As a young man he was educated at the Teacher Training Institute in Asmara and had been

evacuated from there when the town was besieged, so Negussie had to walk for several weeks through rebel-controlled country.

As his first job he was posted in 1978 as director of a tiny school in the far-away village of Amaya. He became known there as an eager Bible reader. A few months into the school year he was arrested. "You are suspected of carrying out counter-revolutionary activities."

Negussie was taken to Weliso for questioning, with a dozen airmail letters from his missionary friends in Canada being used as evidence for accusations. Negussie was subjected to very brutal treatment at the Weliso police station by a sergeant and a young cadre representing the Derg government. The torture is described in detail in Coleman's book cited here. Captain Tilahun possibly disapproved of the beating, but he was afraid of the cadre. The food to be brought to a prisoner according to Ethiopian custom was brought to Negussie from his church friends at Obi.

No brutal treatment could force Negussie to disclaim his faith. He asked for transfer to Addis Abeba and was further ill-treated by police there before he was locked up in the Addis Abeba prison - *Alem Bakanye*, 'end of the world for me'. After years of isolation, a secret religious group of prisoners, Invisible Fellowship Group, grew to some seventy members. The colonel who was director of the prison got the idea to engage these 'Penties, religious freaks' to help him organize the other prisoners in various activities so that the prison would give a good impression on inspection.

In 1985, Negussie was set free without explanation, six-and-a-half-years after his arrest. With his background, he was awarded a scholarship to go to a seminary in Kenya. There he could also marry the Ethiopian woman who had been his chosen one since a dozen of years.

Mengistu's government fell in 1991. When Negussie would have had his exam in 1993 he unfortunately contracted typhoid fever in the final weeks before his graduation. He returned to Ethiopia only to die soon after - the final end of his tragic life.

[D Coleman, *The scent of eucalyptus*, Canada 2003 p 177-205]

1980s Around 1982 the hotel with the swimming pool was called Resort Hotel and had 37 beds. Its manager then was Debalke Alene who was at the same time also manager of Walga Hotel with 36 beds.

Population of the town about 16,800 in 1984.

Abba Wolde Tensai Gizaw had much activity as a healer, as told above. In 1985 he was about 72 years old (photo on page 138 in Sandström's book). His church was simple and undecorated. In his courtyard surrounded by buildings, so many healed people had left their crutches and walking sticks and amulets that it became a kind of museum. He had a pump and gave persons a shower as his method of baptism. Abba Wolde by this time received some support from a German foundation, but he also gave away much as gifts. He seems to have had a positive attitude to missions and the Evangelicals, although he himself belonged to the Orthodox church.

[A Sandström, *Mesqelblommans land* (EFS) 1986 p 137-139]

1990s Population about 25,500 in 1994.

Weliso Hotel is one of the most attractive in the government-owned Ethiopia Hotel chain, with dense thickets in the grounds supporting vervet monkeys and a diversity of birds. If you are not staying at the Weliso Hotel, it is difficult to think of a compelling reason to overnight in this town.

There is another Ethiopia Hotel, the Wolga Hotel, on the main road opposite the bank. There is also the usual conglomeration of dollar-a-night jobs, of which the Gexee Mele Hotel opposite the Shell Garage is the best.

[Bradt 1995(1998) p 255]

The main hotel consists of one main building in which the bath tubs are the size of small swimming pools and a number of individual cabins built in the local *tukul* style.

The religious leader Abba Wolde Tensa'e has for many years gained a great reputation for his cures - as well as expelling of devils - which he usually carries out in public on Sundays and encourages sightseers.



[Camerapix 1995 p 203, 205]

Naturally hot mineral water is used at Weliso Hotel which lies 1.4 km from the town centre. The outdoor pool is filled from Friday morning to Monday afternoon, and the indoor pool is open daily except Monday. There is also the cheaper Refera Hotel in Weliso.

[Lonely planet 2000 p 278]

2000s The Multipurpose Community Telecentre was opened in February 2000 and was the first of its kind in Ethiopia. It was established with assistance from the British Council. The next one was opened in Debre Birhan almost two years later. [News]

In year 2000 a hospital project launched in 1997 by an Italian organization was to be completed. It would be a 150-bed hospital with surgical, X-ray and laboratory equipment, at a cost of 72 million birr.

[AddisTribune 2000/03/03]

Population about 31,300 in 2001, like for several other Ethiopian towns a doubling in 15 years' time.

In 2003 Hotel Rafera had 30 rooms, Walga Ethiopia 29 rooms, and Wolisso Ethiopia 18 rooms.

map Urban Giyon 1:4,000 by Mapping & Geog. Inst., May 1962.

text R. Giel et al., Faith-healing and spirit possession in Ghion, Ethiopia, *in* Social Science and Medicine (New York), vol 2, 1968.

picts Kronprinsparets orientresa, Sthlm 1935 p 230-234 ten photos from excursion during visit of the Swedish Crown Prince in January 1935; E Virgin, Abessinska minnen, Sthlm 1936 p 185 bathing in hot spring.

HDD46 Weliso 08°32'/38°06' 2715 m

08/38 [Gz]

HDD.. Weliso sub-district? (-1997-)

08/37 [n]

HDD54 Weliso wereda (Wolliso ..)  
(centre in 1964 = Chitu)

08/37 [+ Ad]

HDS41 Welka (Welk'a, Welqa) 10°20'/37°40' 2402 m  
west of Debre Markos

10/37 [Gz]

HFC17 Welkayit (Wälqayit), see Wolkayit  
*welki* (O) deep mud /where one cannot walk/

HDL42 Welki (Welk'i, Welqi) 09°29'/38°39' 2360 m  
north-west of Sululta

09/38 [AA Gz]

welkite: *wolkitte* (O) even, plain; *wolkitteh* (O) kind of shrub or tree, *Dombeya goetzenii*; (western O) kind of usually small tree, *Ilex mitis*

HDD13 **Welkite** (Welkitie, Walkitti, Uolchitte, Uolkutte)  
(Welk'it'e, Welqite, Wolkite, Wolkitte)

08/37

[MS Ad Br WO]

(Walkite, Wälk'itte, Walqitti), Gz: 08°17'/37°47' 1892 m  
MS: 08°15'/37°49' 1910/1935 m; at 158 km from Addis Abeba  
Centre in 1964 of Goro wereda and  
of Amuru Werebira sub-district.

08/37

[Gz q Po Wa]

Capital (-1995-) of the Gurage Zone.

Within a radius of 10 km there are at km  
10SW Gato (village)

?NW Ummuga (village nearby) 1814 m

1930s *Residenza dei Guraghè Occidentali*, telegraph, infirmary, *spaccio*.  
[Guida 1938]

Post office of the Italians was opened 7 December 1937. Its cancellations read UOLCHITTE'\*GALLA e SIDAMA but the name was modified to UOLCHITTE\*(SCIOA) after 1 September 1938 when the locality was

transferred to the *Governo dello Scioa*.

After the liberation, the Ethiopian post office was to be opened in 1944.

[Philatelic source]

"One of hardly more than three villages with typical Gurage houses along the highway to Jimma."

[report after 1957]

1960s At Ras ZeSelassie School one (! out of 2,332 successful in all of Ethiopia) passed 8th-grade examination in 1960.

A trail westwards from Welkite to Suntu was passable by trucks in the dry season (-1962-).

In 1966 it was decided that the Ministry of Interior would design a master plan for Welkite, without engaging external consultants.

Population 3,226 as counted in 1967.

In the 1967 telephone directory there are numbers for two men with Christian-type names and 4 men with Moslem-type names.

Ras ZeSelassie primary school in 1968 had 630 boys and 220 girls, with 6 teachers.

Ras ZeSelassie Junior Secondary School had 77 male and 9 female students in grades 7-8, with two teachers (Ethiopian).

1970s From Welkite an extreme example of an attempt at eviction of tenants is reported (Ståhl is citing a confidential source). In this area a retired colonel in the Ethiopian army owned 4,000 hectares. He had some 500 tenants cultivating different parts of this land. In 1969 the colonel started mechanized farming. At one point, he made up his mind to expand the process of mechanization rapidly and announced that he was going to terminate the tenancy relationships with all 500 tenants. The tenants, however, reacted violently. They are said to have tried to stone their landlord when he was leaving a bar in Welkite. Since that incident the colonel changed tactics. He mechanized smaller areas at a time, thereby evicting smaller numbers of tenants. In 1972 he had 160 hectares under tractor cultivation and 140 tenant families were said to have been evicted. These people did not, however, leave the area, and they still had the ensete cultivations around their house giving them a minimum of food.

[M Ståhl, *Contradictions ..*, (Scand. Inst. of African Studies) Uppsala 1973 p 46]

Welkite became a centre of large scale mechanized farming. The process started in 1969 as a result of fertilizer demonstration by an FAO programme. In 1973 some 60 mechanized farms with an average size of 80 hectares had been established. The commercial farmers cultivated land which earlier was idle or grazing land, so only the colonel told of above evicted any tenants.

Teff, wheat and haricot beans were grown by the farmers, who were financially strong people from Addis Abeba or local government officials. They bought parts of the large areas of government land around Welkite.

The minimum package programme of CADU, launched in 1971, was extended also to Welkite. It was aimed at improving conditions for poor peasants.

[M Ståhl, *Ethiopia: political contradictions ..*, Uppsala/Sweden 1974 p 152]

There were petrol filling stations of Agip and Mobil (-1978-).

1980s Population about 7,900 in 1984.

1990s Population about 15,300 in 1994, a doubling in ten years.

Around 1995 Welkite was capital of the Gurage Zone of the SNNPRS federal entity (Southern Nations).

A new road linking Welkite and Butajira, that is west and east Gurage country, was started from the Welkite side in April 1995. It would mean a 200 km shorter connection for motor traffic.

In villages around Welkite there are believed to be about 1,000 speakers of Gumuz, which otherwise is a Nilo-Saharan people living near Metemma on both sides of the border in Ethiopia and Sudan.

[Summer Institute of Linguistics 1996]

"I spent the night at this busy little roadside town by accident -- The bus arrived at 5.00pm and, due to a shortage of passengers, the driver abruptly decided to call it a day. -- if you are stranded it's a friendly little place with plenty of dollar-a-night hotels and bars along the main strip. -- The best of the cheap places is the Andonet Hotel. -- There are no external locks on its rooms -- Several notches higher, and not a great deal more expensive, is the Teffera Hotel --"

[Bradt 1995(1998) p 255]

2000s There is the Tefera Hotel. There are daily buses to Addis Abeba, Jimma and Hosaina.

[Lonely planet 2000 p 278]

Population about 18,800 in 2001.

HDL68 Welkite Mikael (Welk'ite Mika'el) 09°36'/39°11' 09/39 [Gz]  
(church), west of Debre Birhan

?? Wello Kore (visiting postman under W.Soddo) ../.. [Po]

HDL01 **Welmera** (Welmera Adis) 09°05'/38°31' 2388 m 09/38 [AA Gz]

west of Addis Abeba, see also under Genet

Welmera, with Finnish mission at 3 km to the south-east.

Finnish Mission primary school (in Menagesha awraja) in 1968 had 158 boys and 33 girls in grades 1-5, with 5 teachers (all male Ethiopian).

HDL01 Welmera sub-district (-1964-1997-) 09/38 [Ad n]  
(centre in 1964 = Merfeta)

GCT44 Welo (Uelo), cf Walo, Wilo, Wollo 07/33 [+ WO]

HFC17 Welqait, see Wolkayit

HDD45 Welso, see Weliso

*welwel, walwal* (Som) 1. cool breeze that blows in the evening;

2. anxiety, agitation, worry; (A) (wälwäl) empty space

KCG86 **Welwel** (Ual Ual, Wel Wel, Walwal, Fre: Oual-Oual) 07/45 [Gz WO Gu Ad]

(Wol Wol) Gz: 07°03'/45°24' = KCG86, 570 m; MS: 07°00'/45°20' = KCG76

(many wells stated to be 359 in number), a much discussed conflict site in 1934-35.

1930s The far-reaching Welwel incident arose in connexion with the operations of an Anglo-Abyssinian Boundary Commission which had been demarcating the frontier between Ethiopia and British Somaliland, and had been instructed to survey the wells and watering grounds shared by certain Somali and Ogaden tribes.

The Italo-Ethiopian boundary in this region, though loosely (and conflictingly) defined in two treaties dating back to Menilek's time, had never been demarcated on the spot.

According to the interpretation most favourable to the Italians, it ran at a distance of 180 miles from the coast. The important wells of Welwel and Warder, over 230 miles inland, were in 1930 occupied by the Italian Somaliland authorities, who built fortified posts near the water. This occupation never occasioned a protest from Addis Abeba, and the Italian authorities were convinced that the area was recognized as being under their authority.

They were wrong in this assumption, for the Joint Anglo-Abyssinian Commission visited the wells on 23 November 1934, as being an Ethiopian territory.

A protective escort of about 600 regular and irregular Ethiopian troops accompanied the Commission. Difficulties at once arose over the question of access to the water.

[Jones & Monroe]

The joint Anglo-Ethiopian Boundary Commission examining the limits of the grazing areas of the nomadic Somali peoples not only came across an Italian garrison of colonial troops at Welwel, but saw also that the recently appointed Italian *commandatore* had cause a fort to be built from the crumbling old stone defence-works of Muhammad Abdille (called the 'Mad Mullah').

[R Greenfield 1965 p 190]

Fitawrari Shifferaw pitched his camp to the north. Colonel Clifford and the Ethiopian Commissioners pitched their tents a few hundred yards away, side by side; and Colonel

Clifford raised the Union Jack.

A Somali under-officer among Shifferaw's men crossed the lines and deserted. The Fitawrari sent a threatening letter across the lines; Lieutenant Mousti, the *bande* leader, replied saying that the deserter would be sent back. But his own men refused. Mousti sent for instructions from the base at Warder; and that night the Italian Frontier Officer, Captain Cimmaruta, arrived to take over the situation personally, supported by three or four hundred more irregulars.

Next morning an interview took place. Clifford asked Cimmaruta to pull back his men till the Commissioners' job was done. Cimmaruta refused, and the interview ended stormily. Cimmaruta went back to Warder with almost all his men, leaving only 100 *bande* to watch the Ethiopians.

[Mockler 1984 p 37-38]

The British officers on the Commission reported the Italian commander to be 'unconciliatory and disoblising'. When Italian military aeroplanes gave a 'provocative demonstration' over the camp, they decided to play for safety and withdrew.

The Joint Commission therefore left the wells, but in order to avoid any appearance of a retreat, which may have roused the Ogaden, and have amounted to an acknowledgement of Italian possession, left a force on the spot.

[Jones & Monroe]

On 25 November, the British and Ethiopian commissions retired to Ado. It seemed as if an unpleasant incident had been avoided. But the two lines stayed in position facing each other. In the following days 16 Mijurtin *bande* deserted the Italians to join Omar Samanthar, who was nearby. The situation suddenly flared up on 5 December, and the actual occasion was a trivial thing: the tossing of a bone from the campfire by an Ethiopian at a Somali.

[Mockler 1984 p 38-39]

A pitched battle took place on 5 December 1934. No neutral eyewitness was present, and it is impossible to lay the whole responsibility at either door.

Each party indicted the other. Italy at once demanded apologies, a salute to the Italian flag at Welwel, and £20,000 compensation, but the Ethiopians refused until the blame had been fairly assigned. Since Italy refused arbitration, the Ethiopian Government referred the matter to the League of Nations.

For some months the dispute did not assume threatening dimensions. It was not discussed by the League Council meeting of January 1935, nor at the meeting of the British, French, and Italian prime ministers at Stresa in April. The Italian Government took it to mean that the European powers would turn a blind eye to their doings in Africa. This impression was heightened by an agreement which they signed with the French on 7 January 1935. In February the Italians began to send troops and Blackshirts to East Africa, but both parties seemed ready to negotiate. In May 1935 the League Council succeeded in setting on foot the arbitral procedure. An arbitration commission of four - two Italians, a French lawyer and an American lawyer employed by Ethiopia - was to discuss the matter.

[Jones & Monroe]

On 1 March a local ceasefire was successfully agreed: proof, if proof were needed, of the unimportance of the Welwel affair. Both sides seem tacitly to have abandoned Welwel itself. The Italians had pulled back to Warder, the Ethiopians to Gerlogubi.

[Mockler 1984 p 51]

The Conciliation Commission failed to agree. The deadlock was complete and the League Council met again at the end of July 1935. It succeeded in setting the Commission back to work with a fifth arbitrator.

Meantime a solution was sought in a separate Three-Power meeting of the British, French, and Italians on 16 August 1935. From this meeting in Paris, the British and French delegations forwarded to Rome proposals to which the consent of Abyssinia could be secured.

By this time the desire for possession was burning too high in Italy. The answer was a blank refusal. The Italian delegate at the League Council meeting of 4 September 1935

made what was, in all but name, a declaration of war.

On 3 October Italian forces crossed the Mareb river from Eritrea into Ethiopia.

[Jones & Monroe, A history of Ethiopia, 1955 p 176-180

(1st ed. Oxford Univ. Press 1935 has the title A history of Abyssinia)]

In May 1934 nine Somali being Italian citizens went hunting near Welwel to obtain leopard skins. They were arrested by the Ethiopians and kept prisoners in Degeh Bur and Jijiga. They were released in April 1935, after energetic action for six months by the Italian consul in Harar, but one of the nine died in prison.

[Italian accusations in 1935]

"The Italian pretext for invasion came with the Wal Wal incident -- On 23 November 1934 an Anglo-Ethiopian boundary commission, which had been surveying the frontier between British Somaliland and Ethiopia, arrived at Wal Wal, 100 kilometres within Ethiopia. There they were confronted by an Italian force, which had earlier arrived from /Italian Somaliland/. The British members of the commission protested at the Italian presence, but then withdrew to avoid an 'international incident'. The Ethiopians on the other hand faced the Italians for about a fortnight, until a shot of undeterminate, but probably Italian, origin precipitated a clash.

The Italians responded by despatching an ultimatum to Ethiopia. -- These terms, which would have constituted recognition of Italian sovereignty over Wal Wal, were considered unacceptable by the Ethiopian Government."

[Pankhurst, The Ethiopians, 1998 p 223]

(Was the following exchange in French a translation of original texts in Italian?

Lorenzo Tazaz knew the Italian language quite well.)

The Italian captain Cimmaruta in a letter of 26 November 1934 wrote to Fitawrari Sheferra, Ethiopian head of the mission for frontier delimitation, in the following way:

"... Je vous avertis que je suis venu hier à Oual-Oual, pour dire cela et que je vous l'ai envoyé dire par votre chef Chifta ..."

An answer to this was written on the same day:

"... Nous aimons à croire que vous ignorez la signification du mot 'Chifta', parole qui n'est pas employée dans une conversation internationale ..."

signed by Lorenzo Tazaz and the British major E.H.M. Clifford.

[H de Monfreid, Le drame éthiopien, p 120]

To serve as escort to the border commission, Fitawrari Shiferra and Alemayehu with several hundred soldiers arrived at Welwel in late November. There they were together with the commission and Ato Ali with some 250 Somali soldiers trained in the European way by Umar Sementer. They camped on the outskirts of an area several kilometres wide inside which the wells were located.

At the opposite edge of the area *banda* were camped and had dug trenches. The British had tried to negotiate with Captain Cimaruta in Warder. Italian airplanes circled over the Ethiopian camp, but when they also passed over the British these became very angered and, with Fitawrari Tesemma and Ato Lorenzo Tazaz, withdrew to Ado about 40 km to the north-west.

Captain Cimaruta sent a letter in Italian language to the Ethiopian side with an ultimatum: "Evacuate within four hours or be prepared to fight." The Ethiopians did not understand the message in time and remained.

Shooting started at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon. It escalated, with perhaps a thousand men on the Ethiopian side. The Italian *banda* began to flee when one or two airplanes from Warder started dropping bombs and two tanks appeared. Most of the Ethiopians had never seen tanks before. They caused panic and the Ethiopians fled.

Fitawrari Shiferra was among the first to flee, by means of a truck. Fitawrari Alymayehu was killed. Next morning a couple of bombs were dropped which fell into a swamp and did not explode. They were recovered by Ato Ali's men and later sent to Addis Abeba as evidence against the Italians.

When a temporary camp was established about 100 km to the north-west after the retreat, a count was made. 130 men were missing, 19 moderately wounded were sent northwards,

and 6 severely wounded were cared for at the place.

[G Agge, I svart tjänst ..., Shlm 1935 p 208-211]

Alemayehu died bravely early in the battle and since his deputy had rushed away to Jijiga, a Muslim Ethiopian, Ali Nur, subsequently made *balambaras*, took command. Eventually the Ethiopians suffered the heavier casualties and were obliged to withdraw. They took splinters of the bombs to Jijiga, and with an eye on the morale of his men, Grazmach Afewerq made a knife from one of them with which to cut his meat.

[R Greenfield, Ethiopia, London 1965 p 191]

"After two weeks of disputes, battle broke out on the afternoon of December 5 between the Ethiopians, whose numbers had risen from 600 to 1500, and 600 blacktroops under Italian command. Three Italian planes and two tanks tipped the balance of victory in favour of the Italians. The Ethiopians retreated, leaving 130 dead, while the Italians suffered a loss of thirty men."

The Italian chargé d'affaires at Addis Abeba was instructed to declare that the incident could not be settled by arbitration and to demand indemnity and moral reparations. The Ethiopian Government on 14 December referred the matter to the Council of the League of Nations. A committee of four arbitrators was set up and met on 6 June 1935. The Council itself met on 31 July, but the Welwel incident more or less disappeared into the aspects of the full-scale Italo-Ethiopian war.

G Salvemini, Prelude to World War II, London 1953 p 173, 252-253]

Mr Clift, head of Sinclair Oil Co. at their headquarters in Dire Dawa, told a German traveller around 1955 that "the well of Welwel is like hundred others in the Ogaden", but Sinclair were making test drillings for oil there.

1960s  
Fitawrari Wolde Amanuel primary school in 1968 had  
58 boys and 35 girls, with 3 teachers.

texts  
P.B. Potter, Lessons from the Wal-Wal arbitration between Ethiopia  
and Italy, *in* New Commonwealth Quarterly, vol 1, 1935;  
P.B. Potter, The Wal Wal arbitration, *in* American Journal  
of International Law, vol 30, 1936;  
R. Cimmaruta, Ual Ual, Milano 1936;  
P.B.Potter, The Wal Wal arbitration, Washington DC  
(Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), 1938;  
J. Drysdale, The Somali dispute, London 1964, chapter 4  
"The Wal Wal incident" p 48-55.

KCG76	Welwel & Warder awraja (centre in 1964 = Warder)	06/45	[Ad]
HDL79	Welyu 09°44'/39°18' 2735 m, south-east of Deneba	09/39	[Gz]
JDP58c	Wema (Uema) 10°30'/41°25' 789 m, cf Wama	10/41	[Wa Gz]
HDD16	Wemam (Weman) 08°18'/38°04' 2214 m	08/38	[Gz]
HDU62	Wembeda (Wembada) 10°30'/39°32' 2827 m south of Were Ilu	10/39	[Gz]
HEF95	Wembede 11°42'/39°48' 1506 m south-east of Weldiya	11/39	[Gz]

H.... *wember* (wämbär) (A,T) chair, seat; chief judge; "St. Mary's Throne"  
Wember Maryam (small village) 08/38 [Ca 20]  
Tiny settlement at the foot of Zikwala mountain and passed  
when taking the main road up.

HDP70 *wembera*: *Wambera*, ethnic group numbering 6,636 (in the 1980s?)  
**Wembera** (Wombera, Wumbera, Uombera) 10/35 [Gz x Pa Gu]  
(Wämbärya, Wanbera) (high plateau), Gz: 10°35'/35°48' 2097 m  
MS: 10°39'/35°38' = HDN79, c2150 m  
Area where the Dabus joins the Abay.

- 1880s Wumbera was subdued and colonized by nigus Tekle Haymanot of Gojjam in June 1882. Islam had not yet gained any noticeable influence on the eastern side of the Dabus. [Arén 1978]
- 1900s Colonel Lewis, a Sudan Political Officer, went from the Sudan up to Wanbera in 1903 to buy Abyssinian mules.
- 1920s Consul Cheesman had to interrupt his survey of the Abay region at Wanbera in April 1927 but he returned to there again in early 1929.  
 "Wanbera -- is in fact a kind of outlying land island of the high plateau. -- when we moved on towards Wanbera we should, as they told us almost in a whisper, have to cross the depression of the Dura River, which is Negro country, and they considered an escort necessary for the next stage or two. -- After two thunderstorms and a pouring wet evening all the muleteers came in a body to say that they would not go farther than the highland of Wanbera. They were convinced that as soon as they got into the low country the fever would kill them, now that the rains had started early."  
 April 1927: "The direct route /to Wanbera/ from Koko went across the Dora depression, but the descent was precipitous and was not recommended for loaded mules, so we worked our way northward to cross the depression at its upper end. -- Wanbera is a comparatively level plateau about 10 miles across and 6 miles from north to south /16 x 10 km/, with an altitude of 7000 feet above sea-level. -- The Kasa, where we camped, was a very small stream but supplied all the water we required."  
 "We went on about six miles next day to Wanbera village, one of the most pleasant camps we had been in throughout our journey. The high altitude makes the climate cool and delightful."  
 "Wanbera is a large village of a few hundred houses and is important chiefly for its market and as a centre for caravan traffic. One set of merchants plies between there and Roseires in the Sudan, and another goes to the Abyssinian main plateau; both carry the famous coffee grown at Kitar in Wanbera district. We had reached an altitude where the Amhara can live, but the population is strongly Galla."  
 "A week or two before, several caravans had gone to Roseires with coffee, but no more would venture until after the rains. Merchants going only to Gubba, the negro province within Abyssinia, would load with onions from Wanbera and bring back cotton, but that was all."  
 "On February 15th, 1929, we arrived once more in Wanbera. -- The first camp would be at Kitar -- From Wanbera there was a more frequented track going to Wallaga and crossing the Abbai at Ancho."  
 "We were informed that when four generations ago the Gallas from Wallega crossed the Abbai and invaded Wanbera, they stormed the Kitar hill with spearmen but were defeated by the Shinasha. They came a second time, led by their King Jelo Wabi, who drew up his troops in two columns. While one made a frontal attack against the ramparts, the other, led by the King, came round to the east and up the hill, getting in at the back of the Shinasha and routing them. Thus the Galla took possession of Kitar and the Wanbera highlands, driving the Shinasha to the lower lands."  
 [R E Cheesman, *Lake Tana & the Blue Nile*, London 1936 p 341-350]
- 1930s About 700 inhabitants in the Italian time, with *Residenza*, telegraph, infirmary. An important centre for caravans and market, with different groups of Oromo and numerous Sidama in the surroundings. [Guida 1938]
- 1960s The primary school, in Metekel awraja, in 1968 had 152 boys and 15 girls in grades 1-3, with 3 teachers.
- HDP70 **Wembera** (Wenbera, Uombera, Uambera, Umbera) 10/35 [Gz Ad WO Wa]  
 (Wanbera), see also under Debre Zeyit  
 Population 800 as counted in 1956.
- text Kinfé Gebeyehu, A survey report of Wombera,  
*in Gondar Health Series 1963*, one page.
- HDP70 Wembera sub-district? (-1997-) 10/35 [n]

- HDP70 Wembera wereda (Wumberta ..) (-1964-1994-) 10/35 [MS Ad n]  
(centre in 1964 = Debre Zeyit)  
Located (-2003-) in the Metekel zone of Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State.
- HDL23 Wembere 09°16'/38°44' 2506 m, north of Sululta 09/38 [AA Gz]
- HEM71 Wemberet 12°28'/39°30' 3086 m, west of Alamata 12/39 [Gz]
- HET79 Wemberet 13°19'/39°18' 2340 m, north of Samre 13/39 [Gz]
- HDR64 **Wemberma** (Wämbärma, Wämbäremma) 10/36 [Pa n]  
(Wambarma, Wemberima, Wenberima, Womberima) 10°31'/36°57' 1950 m  
Historically recorded as a main route into Gojjam.  
In the 1590s a number of Cushitic-speaking pagan communities of Bizamo and the adjacent districts fled across the Abay into Wämbärma and other areas. The Afre Oromo followed them around 1600. The Agäw inhabitants of this district, who had been victims of slave raids earlier, offered very little resistance.
- 1600s Around 1600 young Susneyos set forth for Wämbärma, encountered a Gafat group called Yasubli, and captured many of its cattle.  
[Pankhurst 1997]  
A number of times between 1607 and 1616 Emperor Susenyos devastated the Agaw district of Wambarma with unsatiated thirst for slaves. He left behind him in Wambarma carnage unprecedented in the history of the Agaw people. The wars which the Matcha /Mecha Oromo/ conducted along the Abay for almost three decades before Susenyos came to power were much less destructive. The cattle and slaves which Susenyos captured were employed in buying the loyalty of his formidable army. The conquest of the pastoral Oromo was the object of his hopes and preparation; but he ruined the Agaw without achieving anything.  
[Mohammed 1994]  
Oromo were expected to advance into Wämbärma in 1695.
- HDR63 Wemberma sub-district (centre in 1964 = Yenegash) 10/37 [Ad]  
There is a significant Oromo community with much of its linguistic and ethnic identity still intact.  
Dan Sandford in December 1940 planned for Womberima south of Burye to be the base of the Emperor when he returned. George Grey was sent to supervise cleaning of an airstrip. However, Belaya was selected as base instead.  
[Shirreff 1995 p 63]
- H... Wemberma & Gwagussa wereda 10/36 [+ Ad]  
(Womberima & Guagussa ..) (centre in 1964 = Shende Gebreal)
- HDP70 Wembero, see Debre Zeyit
- HEJ74 Wemberofta Kirkos (Wemberoft'a K'irk'os) (church) 12/38 [Gz]  
12°29'/38°57', north-west of lake Tana
- HEJ14 **Wemberya** (Wmbärya, Wambarya) 11/36 [Gz Pa n]  
11°53'/36°59' 1819 m, at a western shore of lake Tana  
/The following historical events refer to an area further to the south?/  
Wämbärya, which G:W:B: Huntingford refers to as a "somewhat vague district of Agäwmedr", has sizeable occurrences of gold and would have been the gold-producing area nearest to Aksum in ancient times. Sasu mentioned as a gold-producing area by Kosmas Indikopleustes could have been Wämbärya.
- 1500s Around 1527, Imam Ahmäd's men advanced as far as Wämbärya and captured loot there. Around 1591, Särsä Dengel's army reached Wämbärya after a seven day march, without the Gafat knowing it beforehand. The Emperor's men immediately attacked them, and burnt down many of their houses. Särsä Dengel announced that he would spend the rainy season in his camp in an open space in the area. A month or so later, however, he was advised not to remain there. He never returned.  
[Pankhurst 1997]  
In the 1590s a number of Cushitic-speaking pagan communities of Bizamo and the



adjacent districts fled across the Abay into Wambarya and other areas. The Afre Oromo followed them.

In 1591, Emperor Särsä Dengel undertook an expedition to Wämbärya, where his soldiers captured much loot.

1600s In 1607, Emperor Susneyos undertook an expedition, led by Nägash Keflo, west into Wämbärya and further into 'Shanqella' lands.

[Pankhurst 1997]

In 1610, the Afre from Bizamo crossed over into Wambarya. However, when they heard of Susenyos's arrival in Gojjam, they retreated to Bizamo before they completed their looting.

Between 1607 and 1616 Susenyos devastated the Agaw district of Wambarya with insatiable thirst for slaves. He left behind a carnage unprecedented in the history of the Agaw people. In 1618 Susenyos settled all the *yahabata* cavalry in Wambarya and other districts along the Abay. The reason for doing so was that he wanted them to act as a shield against the Matcha /Mecha Oromo/ incursion from Bizamo.

[Mohammed 1994]

In 1688, Emperor Iyasu I advanced to what the chronicle refers to as the 'rebel country' of Wämbärya, which had defied three previous rulers, Susneyos, Fasilädäs, and Yohannes. Killing two of the enemy, one with a rifle and the other with a spear, Iyasu I reportedly wrought further destruction, killing many and taking immense loot.

[Pankhurst 1997]

HDD92 Wemetu 09°02'/37°43' 1980 m, west of Ambo 09/37 [AA Gz]