

The 1984 EPRP's Surgical Military Operation of Dangila Town

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Abstract

This paper tries to chronicled, narrate and depict Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party (EPRP's) surgical military operation in Dangila, a town then was the capital of Agāw-Mider Awraja, Gojjam province. This operation was very important to EPRP, for it was a decisive comeback after breakup in 1980. This time around, the Därke was very sure about the total exhaustion of EPRP. However, this successful military operation of EPRP has shocked the Därke governorates deeply. So using the historical research method, basically consulting primary sources, this paper tried to produce the military operation of EPRP in Danglia and the surrounding area. The principal sources of the study were both secondary and primary sources. Much emphasis was given to acquire primary sources of information through, the Därke security reports, various other documents, ex-EPRP fighters and eye witnesses. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions of ex-EPRP fighters was also employed and analyzed to substantiate this study. Using the aforementioned sources of information, deep discussions and analysis was conducted to draw this conclusion.

Keywords: EPRP, Därke, Quara, Dangila, Ethiopia

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I. Introduction

The Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party known by its acronym as EPRP, and in Amharic also as *Ihapa* (ኢህአፓ), was an essential ingredient of the history the Ethiopian Revolution. It was a civilian political left and one of the most significant offshoots the Ethiopian Students Movement (c.1960-1974). The party was actively and boldly engaged in all sorts of revolutionary activities. In a very short period of time, EPRP has evolved from student activism to urban guerilla and eventually to peasant based protracted armed struggle against the Māngestu Haile-Mariam regime. During the tumultuous years of the Ethiopian revolution, EPRP has paid the dearest price among civilian political groupings. This was due to the nature of its political contriving and direct confrontation with the Därke on urban insurrection. EPRP which had been pervasively challenged the military rule of the Därke during the bloody years of the Ethiopian revolution was horribly lost much of its urban structure by the counter measurement of the Därke—the Red Terror. The reign of terror was categorically from 1976-1978 (Fantahun Ayele, 2014; 208, Bahru Zewde, 2008; 436). What has been declared as 'the Red Terror' by Māngestu was a large scale indiscriminate programmatic attack for the liquidation of the EPRP in urban centers. With unprecedented cruelty in Ethiopian history, Māngestu was succeeded in executing his plan. It was a traumatic political experience that badly affected the subsequent political developments of Ethiopia.

After the Red Terror, a number of young Ethiopians were fleeing to the rural areas to join their comrades in the mountains of Northern Ethiopia. A mountains place on Eastern Tigray popularly known as Assimba was the base of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Army (EPRA). It was the military wing of EPRP who had maintained a precarious existence for some time (John Markakis, 1981; 18). EPRA was established a little before the Ethiopian revolution, for the purpose of protracted peasant based armed struggle against the Imperial regime. But with the outbreak of the Ethiopian revolution, there comes a shift on strategic engagement of the EPRP. Thus, before the Red Terror EPRA was in the mountains with insignificant role. The Red Terror increased the role of EPRA exponentially, both in its size as well as in its activities. This growth of EPRA, however, was not survived so long for it was again counter-checked by the TPLF. During this time the TPLF was almost emerged as formidable force and vanguards of Tigrayan Nationalism in Tigray region. Unable to challenge the TPLF, EPRA/EPRP forced to relocate its center from Eastern Tigray to the North Western parts of the then Gondar province.

After lost its initial base forever, by the end of 1979, EPRP/EPRA began to operate in the areas around Wāleqayit, Ṭägädé, Ṭälāmet, Armaçihō, Bālāsa, and Çilega. However, the strong presence of Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU) in this area too, makes the territory again was not a safe haven for EPRP. In Wāleqayite and Ṭägädé, the EPRP was seen by the local people as similar to the Därke (Maserasha Alebachew, 2016; 60). This sentiment of the locality was due to the deeper existence of EDU in that specific region. For EDU, both EPRP and the Därke are materialist atheists and Marxist political radicals who stood against the

Ethiopian establishments. EDU had already been in these regions for a while with greater acceptance of the local people (Asmamwu Hailu, 2006 EC; 26).

Similarly, the TPLF, due to its geographic vicinity to its base in Western Tigray—Dädäbit, was also moved its operational space in the adjacent lowlands of Wälqayite known as Mäzäga. Thus, EPRP had faced another round tough and arduous competition with EDU and the TPLF to occupy space and to operate in the North Western regions of Ethiopia. Very soon, the TPLF successfully annihilated and, forced EPRA to left out of Wälqayite and further compressed to southward. EPRP now totally squeezed to the south and limited on the North Western side of Bägémder. In the meantime the number of active fighting force who by now departed from EPRA was increased from time to time. To tackle this chronic problem the Fourth Plenum or what was popularly called *Šinfa* Seminar was organized from January to April 1980 (*ibid*; 134-135).

The incident following the Seminar was the total disintegration of the EPRA/EPRP. One Significant portion, especially known as the Bäläsa Group moved to Tigray and established the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EPDM) later changed to ANDM. The other, and probably the majority, moved to the Sudan and eventually resettled in the USA and Europe. Some others return back to home, asking excuse from the Därke and, joined their family. Very few remains in Tach-Armachiho and continued their struggle. This group of EPRP enthusiasts, who are committed to sustain the aspiration of their fallen Comrades were Šägayé Gäbrä-Mädehen known by his name de' guerre as (Däbetäraw), Bäkär Bariawu, Jabäre, Gäbrä-Egeziyabhér Haile-Mikael known by his name de guerre as (Gayém) and Abäbä Bariawu. This time around, EPRP was making its base in the lowlands of Quara (Informants: Yibäleṭal Seyoum and Gošu Bälay).

II. EPRP in Dangila during the Red Terror.

The area around Agäw-Meder, where Dangila was its capital, was one of the hot-spots of the Red Terror. This happens due to the fact that, the EPRP chooses Agäw-Meder and Mätäkäl as “Second Asimba” (*Pamphlet*; Yä Mätäkäl Awraja Lemat Bazar Yä Propaganda Committee, 1980; 5). EPRP established its cell in Addis Kedame area of Agäw-Mider, in the early stages of the Ethiopian revolution. And, they called it as ‘Second Assimba’. “They have been here a bit earlier; perhaps next to Asimba in equal terms and parallel pace to Addis Ababa, they would have been here in Addis Qedame” (Informant: Asayä Antänäh). This area in Agäw-Meder attracted EPRP probably due to various tactical and strategic reasons. Firstly, in terms of its geographic position located adjoining very close to the low lands of Mätäkäl and Quara. It was easy to move to the low lands and resettled in the Sudan if they failed. At the very same place, they can move further to the central highlands if they succeeded. In these strategic terms, the whole Agäw-Meder *Awraja*, including Dangila was verily viable. Secondly, what makes Addis- Qedame feasible was that, it was then a town without any single seat of government administration units, except *qäbälés*. This is why; it seems they choose it as their Second Asimba (Informant: Asayä Antänäh).

It is worthwhile here that; sources indicated EPRP had chosen Mätäkäl and Agäw-Meder, the two Western *Awrajas* of the Gojjam province as “the second Asimba.” It means EPRP choose bases’ in Tigray and Gojjam at the very same time. This may probably give us a glimpse about the basics of the political analysis of the Party (EPRP). In this case, politically the two provinces

[Gojjam and Tigray] had been ruled by their own regional lords with a considerable autonomous status for long period of time. The two provinces had entertained peasant uprisings against the Imperial regime, and thereby it seems EPRP has believed that the subjective and objective condition for revolutionary war is ripped in the peasants of the two provinces. In terms of building infrastructure and providing social services, the two provinces were neglected by the Imperial regime and lagged behind others (Mesfin Wolde-Mariam, 2015; 144). Even though Gojjam was one of surplus productive province of the country, the level of poverty and destitution was in the same level of deprivation with that of Tigray. In Tigray, it was the Iyobs in the Eastern part of the province, and in Gojjam it was the Agäw's and ethnic minorities in Mätäkäl, Western part of the province proposed for the protracted peasant based struggle.

Subsequently, in a different time frame, one of the senior historians tried to give his own comparative analysis on this case, in the way that, while EPRP was able to win many villages in Agamé within short time until the balance of power shifted towards TPLF in Tigray. In contrast, the EPRP had had little success in inspiring the peasants of Gojjam, and not for lack of grievances to exploit. Rather, the peasants in Gojjam do not regard EPRP fighters as *Yä'Wonzačín Lejoč* (children of our rivers), since most of them are not originally from that region. They are skeptical and profoundly suspicious of the motives of these agitators. The party was unable to penetrate the tightly controlled peasants associations that link villages with districts and with administrative regions of Gojjam (Gebbru Tareke, 1991; 215 & 218).

The concentration of active EPRP cells in the region was said to have been centered in a site called Zäläsa, a place located in the border between Addis Qedam and Dangila, some 6-8 kilometers in north easterly direction from Dangila. This group was led by a third year Addis Ababa University student known as Mäkuriaw Motbayénor, in which that area was his native origin. Around him, there were other strong members including a

half Greek known as Gétačew Mänolé, a High School biology teacher Segatyé Gässäsä, Samuel Šifāraw, and an ethnic Oromo known as Dässalāne, whose fathers name is unknown for now. It seems here, Dässalāne was a professional revolutionary and a fugitive. His entire fee was covered by high school teachers in Dangila and he permanently settled in Zälāsa (Informant: Tāmāsgān Emeré).

It seems therefore, due to this very reason that the intensity of the red terror in Dangila was very severe as compared with other areas of Gojjam. Perhaps the worst red terror repression measurement, next to Gondär would have been taking place in Dangila. Mass grave was excavated in a prison camp immediately after the downfall of the *Därke*. Besides, the *Därke*'s massive attack on suspected EPRP was immense. Whether they are a member or not, without a clear identification countless number of peasants were killed in a place called Worqe-Méda, which located in a border between Dangila and Jawi, 30-35 km in westerly direction from Dangila. Perhaps, two hundred up to three hundred peasants killed and buried in unidentified massive grave (Informants: Tāmāsgān Emeré and Abuhäyē Muhābaw). The magnitude of this intensity, no doubt had a parallel effect on the later developments of EPRP to the region.

III.EPRP: From the Quara Congress to Dangila Operation

After secured Quara and the surrounding area as its important permanent base, the EPRP held its major Congress in Quara in the mid of June 1984. This was the first major Congress after breakup. In this Congress, EPRP re-elected its new leaders that will lead the newly re-structured EPRP. The party also decided the equality and right to self-determination of Ethiopian nationalities, but this shall only be respected under the realm of Ethiopian unity. EPRP denounced it otherwise, as paving the way for secessionist sentiment. The other most important point in the Quara Congress was land; in which land was decided to be for the tiller and farmers can privately owned it (Takelo Teshome, 2011; 260).

The Congress of Quara in many ways dictates the basic paradigm shift of EPRP. The party is now basically departed from its initial ideological conviction—Marxism and Leninism. For a Marxist—Leninist organization, land as the basic means of production should not be possessed privately in any way. But EPRP proved, it no longer be staunch Marxist political party. Even more, the party decided to embrace the potential importance of Liberalism and Multi-Party system. The Congress of Quara denotes, the party was restructured and reorganized itself in a new pattern. EPRP, after this, was no longer conferring as a genuine proletarian “Black Bolshevik” party. It can be said, in such a manner, it disclosed the total departure from its initial formation.

The EPRP in Quara was completely different from that of the EPRP from Assimba. The other most important thing was that, the moving sprite of the EPRP in Quara was Gäbrä-Egeziabehere Haile-Mikaél or known by his name de guerre as *Gayém*. Until his death in 1993 inside Addis Ababa, *Gayém* would be perhaps the brain of EPRP after the Quara Congress. He was loved and respected by the people and the EPRP army. He served as CC member, security chief and *Keflä-Hezeb* (Organizer and Coordinator) of the EPRP (Informants: Gošu Bäläy, Yibäleṭal Seyoum, Gašu Kāfalä, Gétenät Šifāraw, Abuhäyē Muhābawu).¹

According to the *Därke* security reports, the EPRP of Quara was further solidified by the army commissars and leaders come from England. They are students from England universities, abandoned their educational carrier to sustain the struggle and fulfill the aspiration of “the martyr” comrades (GA: Folder/Bä’Keflähagäru Selä’Tädärägu Asäsawoče Leyou Leyou Mastawosh: File/Yä’Çilega Awraja Šāṭeta) /ḥ2/ጥ1/1975). Here, it looks like that, it was these new comers who re-located the Quara area as the EPRP’s overall command base. And it was also the coming of these university students that arouses the sprite of the struggle again. Perhaps the better success story of EPRA/EPRP would be here after; the rest was a tale of retreat otherwise. As a comeback to the center, and to send signals for the *Derge*, EPRP has made a successful military operation in Dangila town. Then was capital city of Agew-Mider Awraja of Gojjam province.

IV.The Dangila Operation of 1984

Geographically, Dangila locates in the North Western parts of Ethiopia, and the same direction for Gojjam province too. It was strategically most important site; a gateway to the highland region of Gojjam and also important for traversed to the low lands of Mätäkäl and Quara which extends up to the Sudan. Thereof, Danglia was an important market place since the late medieval period. In a period before EPRDF, it was also served as the capital city of the Agäw-Mider Awraja (sub-province), the most significant sub-province of Gojjam.

After the Quara Congress, when EPRP starts its military operation in the region, it more focused to move onto the East towards the adjacent Acäfär and Gazegé area, specifically to the mountainous places of Zebest and Bälän. These places are the most strategic sites located between the most northern part of Gojjam and most southern part of Gondär province. Bälän is the gate way to Aläfa and Qunzela (DMUAC: Folder/613/: File/Selä Šāṭeta Aṭābabāqk Leyou Leyou Mārājawoče). EPRP appeared in a full scale invasion of Bälän and the

¹ These all ex-EPRP fighters remembered him with awe and very enthusiastic about him; they described him as silent and charismatic, respected and feared by everybody.

surrounding areas were after the end of the winter season of 1984. By the beginning of June 1984, they come across from the Gazegé, they almost arrived at Zebest. It is a place adjacent to Mätäkäl, Bälän and Aläfä. (Informants: Abäwulehe Kendé and Abenät Zäläqä).

On the beginning of the Ethiopian summer season, while one portion of EPRP was heading to the border between Gojjam and Gondär, the other portion of the EPRP fighters in Quara was preparing to undertake the biggest operation after the party's breakup since 1980. Before its practical operation, EPRP makes a careful preparation. A thorough plan was drawn. The location of important places, like the municipality, the police station, the bank, the prison camp and other institutions are located on the drawn map (Informant: Yibäleṭal Seyoum). The major sources of these necessary information's were the people who are mostly from Dangila and the surrounding environ. Especially those who are from Dangila and moved across the Quara land for contraband trade to the Sudan. These traders were important source of information, thus they were carefully examined by EPRP. One of such traders was Alemawu Seyoum. He Said;

We were travelling to the Sudan for trade. Moved most of the time by foot and packing our commodities on the back of a donkey. Our trade was a kind of contraband, and it was very much profitable. One day while we are on our way to the Sudan, by the beginning of the summer season of 1984 [May 1976 E.C], EPRP fighters stopped us in Quara and imprisoned us in a specific place called Dälägu. It was a town very important station for the contraband traders. Their leader was known as Dagmawi. He was a kind of handsome light skinned, tall and afro haired with charismatic appearances. He asked many questions about Dangila, especially about the administrators. Some of the questions were why you are here? Where are you from, and where are you heading for? What things have you possessed in your hand? Who is the governor of the *Awraja* and of the *Worada*? Who is the head of *Isäpa* (Ethiopian Workers Party)? And many more questions were forwarded to us. We gave the necessary answer for every single question. Dagmawi wrote every single answer of us in a note book. Eventually, when he was very sure that we are peaceful traders to be destined in the Sudan, *Dagmawi* allowed us to be freed from captivity and gave to us a pass paper with an emblem of EPRP. We encountered Dagmawi three times, first at Dälägu, then at Bakusa, and finally at Tiha. After a month they encountered us in Quara they ransacked Dangila.

EPRP undertook this decisive operation in collaboration with the local peoples of Quara, who better knows the highlands of the Dangila area. The three most important allies in this regard were Zämänä Gälagay, Adämu Mäläsä and Ademeté Bizunäh. The first two were natives of Quara who had been lived in Tumhä for long period of time, while the later was the native of Tumhä who joined EPRP in the Sudan by 1982. These three individuals get in to conflict with the Därke government in their own personal affairs (Informants: Yibäleṭal Seyoum and Eyenengeda Mäsälä).

Zämänä Gälagay gets in to conflict with the Därke in relation with *Qänazemače* Seménäh Dästa. *Qänazemače* Seménäh has been known for his furious resistance of the *Därke* government in Agäw-Meder and Acäfär during the initial stages of the Ethiopian revolution. After *Qänazemače* Seménäh Dästa escaped the Däreg's besiege in Fageta. He immediately moved to Tumhä, a place located very near to a mountainous escarpment that separated the vast lowlands of the North West to the Ethiopian highlands. *Qänazemače* Seménäh then eventually moved from Tumhä to Quara. Zämänä Gälagay, who was then, both land lord and also a native of Quara was accused by the Därke. The Därke accusation was that, he has been hosted Seménäh Dästa and helped him to escape to Quara, and thereby finally to reach to the Sudan.

Knowing the subsequent harassment of the Därke, Zämänä escaped and relocated himself in Quara. But all his entire property was ransacked by the Därke. After seven years, Zämänä Gälagay returned to Dangila to avenge what the Därke had done unto him, this time by manipulating the EPRP's military operation on Dangila (Informants: Eyenengeda Mäsälä, Abägaz Seyoum, Yibäleṭal Seyoum and Tämäsgän Emeré). His bold statement after all the messes makes clear his deepest sentiment, in which he used to have said that; "now I got the exact payment for the price of all my cattle's and my näh téffe!" (Informants: Abägaz Seyoum and Eyenengida Mäsälä).

On the other hand Admeté Bezunäh's personal resentment against the Därke was due to the assassination of his older brother Alänä Bezunäh by the Red Terror. "We all become anxious and infuriated for what has been happened to our darling brother! He was the only educated in our family and we all loved him very much!" said his cousin, Yibäleṭal Seyoum. According to him, the entire family was then disintegrated. Ademeté Bezunäh moved to the Sudan and joined EPRP perhaps he would be among the first generation to join EPRP after the Quara Congress. While himself, Yibälta moved to Bulän, Debäté in to Mätäkäl. Admeté was later the most important figure for EPRP in recruiting fighters, especially from Dangila and the adjacent Acäfär area. The Däreg security reports also confirmed his very important role in side EPRP. Perhaps fearing the retaliation of the Därke on to the family, Admeté was even said to have bringing his old aged father Bezunäh Abära to Quara to live with EPRP held territory. The Därke security reports confirmed this scenario as follows:

Admeté Bezunäh, a person with high profile rank inside EPRP is now engaged in high level of lawlessness. His older brother, who has been a teacher, was killed while his antirevolutionary activities was known and get disclosed by the government. Admeté brought back his father Bezunäh Abära to Gondär province. In a specific place called Gälägu, he is now rearing cattle's looted by EPRP, and this is announced by, the Mätäkäl *Awraja* governorate general. (NALA: Folder/17.1.11.02, Folder/17.1.11.02.02/).

The other collaborators of EPRP in bringing to Dangila were the Family of Mäläsä Läkäw. He was a prominent feudal lord in Geraregë, a place located some 5 km north of Dangila. When the *Därke* declared his important issue of "Land to the Tiller" by 1975, Mäläsä was not ready to submit neither his land nor his lordship veneration for the *Därke's* statement issued for the entire Ethiopian public. Rather, Mäläsä decided to fight the government troops by own effort alone until the very end of his life. For one day it was said, he has been strongly fought the *Därke* troops and became a surprise for the *Därke*, in which they were unable to hand him down. Eventually the *Därke* troops shoot him to death after one day of fire exchange. His sons retreated to Quara having the dead body of their father and permanently settled in Quara. The *Därke* killed the very old aged sister of him for revenge. Just like Zämänä Gälagay; his entire property was confiscated and destroyed by the *Därke* troops. One of his sons' Adämu Mäläsä joined EPRP and said to bring EPRP from Quara to Dängila for retaliation. (Informants: Abägaz Seyoum, Eyenengeda Mäsälä and Tämäsgän Emeré).

In the mid night of July 1, 1976 E.C (1984), EPRP fighters estimated 128 arrived in Dangila and opened up fire at 3.30 am local time (NALA: Folder/17.1.11.04, File/17.1.11.04.01). Immediately within their arrival, the forces of EPRP dispatched in groups to different government institutions of the town. Some moved towards the prison camp in order to freed prisoners, others to government associations to get basic commodities. And some others invaded the administration buildings of the *Awraja* and *Wäräda*, and some others were also moved to *qäbälé* shops. Above all, their major target was looting the commercial bank in Dangila, but knowingly or unknowingly the fortunate bank manager hasn't been inside the town, rather he was in Bahir Dar. So they opened fire in order to unlock the doors of the building and the strong room of the commercial bank. In the fire exchange two guards of the commercial bank, known as Azalä Täshalä and Aduña Ayälä were immediately killed by EPRP. (Informants: Abägaz Seyoum, Alemawu Seyoum, Eyenengeda Mäsälä and Tämäsgän Emeré.)

The *Därke* reports showed, that following the subsequent obliteration of EPRP on its Dangila operation: Dangila, *qäbälé* 04 cooperatives shop had lost estimated 1879 birr in cash and other material property. The *Awraja* police treasury house had lost 9 different kinds of rifles and bullets, which would be estimated nearly around 11,000 Ethiopian birr. Rifles and bullets that had been property of the Agäw-Meder *awraja* administration office looted inside the police treasury house estimated around 8,366 Ethiopian birr, and also 5 other *Dimotefär* machineguns in which its price was not listed. On *qäbälé* 05, eight *Dimotefär* gun bullets estimated 148 birr. Other unlisted kinds and amounts of police materials including the communication radio were looted. They also ransacked the telephone service of Dangila town; both the building and the network lines were destroyed. They destroyed Toyota car that belongs to Water office of the town. They destroyed various kinds of mass organization offices and government institutions. They tried to free prisoners from prison camp, but their attempt was failed. There are individuals who are kidnaped by EPRP, but soon they realized. They killed one policemen and another was taken by EPRP (NALA: Folder/17.1.11.04, File/17.1.11.04.01/). Total material loss was not fully estimated in Ethiopian birr amount. The human loss was that, four persons were killed and while three others were wounded.

After they ravaged Dangila the forces of EPRP left the town, dispersed in to three directions. The first group carrying the looted property headed towards Quara. The second group moved to the north towards Gazegë. The third group was to Dängäl-Bäre near to the Lake Tana area. After the Dangila operation, EPRP again established its new command base at Jawi, a hot low land some 80km from Dangila. They even conglomerated their looted property in the compounds of a government school in Jawi (*ibid*). The group that heading towards Quara was again also divided in to two groups, one of the splinter directly goes to its command base. The other and the second group established another new command base called Basägë, a place located very near to the borders of Mätäkäl and Quara (Informant: Däräsä Ayänäw).

Thus, now firstly we can say, EPRP comes to understand the power vacuum of the *Därke* government's structures of the entire Western low lands of Quara and Mätäkäl. This is why it looks; EPRP dragged its new command base from Quara to the hot lowlands of Jawi located relatively very near to the highlands of Agäw-Meder and Acäfär. Secondly, the group dispersion to the three different directions of the North and North West makes clear that, important existence of EPRP was now established in the highland regions of the Lake Tana basin. This appears relatively better success story for EPRP, whose military enliven was more a somersault of retreat.

The following incident was that, the *Därke* officials of different power level arrived at Dangila. One of which was Zäläqä Bägänä, the secretariat general of *Isäpa* (Workers Party of Ethiopia) of Gojjam province and many other dignitaries, arrived by helicopter. Zäläqä Bägänä specially was said to have moved to Tumhä and

criticized the peasants in relation with Zāmānā Gālagay. For he believes they are cooperated with him. The Dārge's retaliation measurement was followed soon. The first among the victims of this retaliation were those who were suspected as contraband traders constantly travelled to Quara and the Sudan. They are accused as the most important trot out of the EPRP to Dangila. All of the active traders, most of whom were innocent, even know nothing about what is going on, were imprisoned tortured. They eventually killed by the Dārge. Among these victims including, Alā Ahmed, Šāmsul Jibril, Muhammad Murad, Muhammad Bälāy, Yusuf Muhammad, and Abé Šāgayā were remembered very well in Dangila. (Informants: Abāgaz Seyoum, Alemawu Seyoum, Eyenengeda Mäsälā and Tāmāsgān Emeré).

The second victims of the Dārge's retaliation measurement were the chairman's of Wobo *qābälé* known as Mulat, and the Kaba *qābälé* chairman known as Tadāgā Ayinešāt. These two *qābälés* located in the border between Mätākāl and Agāw-Meder *Awraja* and also located in a very near distance to Dangila. This strategic location makes them too much susceptible for the attacks of the either side. They were killed for they are accused of negligence to stop the advancement of EPRP fighters. As well, they are also charged for not informing the coming of EPRP towards Dangila. Mulat especially was member of the Imperial Body Guard during the Haile Selassie régime. Therefore, the Dārge could probably have enough reason to suspect him in many ways. A man responsible for the killing of Mulat and Tadāgā was called Tāfāra Dori. He was an ethnic Kulsi Agāw and secret agent of the Dārge in Woreq-Médā (Informants: Abāgaz Seyoum).

The other incident following the EPRP's Dangila operation was that, reports provided to Tāsefayā Wāldā-Selassie, head of the security chief of the military government, revealed that political cells of EPRP were tried to be re-build in Dangila. This was disclosed by the government security reports. Thus, whether this report was targeting for retaliation those of who suspected as trotted out. Or else there actually was an attempt for the revival of EPRP political cells in Dangila needs rigorous sources for verification. However, those of who enlisted and captured as they have been engaged in such activity were from different sections of the society. Peasants, day laborers, students, teachers, and veteran soldiers who got 85 birr pension per month were suspected as involved in the activity. Among these, especially twelve of them were accused for providing necessary information for EPRP to invaded Dangila. They identified as architects who played the most vital role for all the mess that had happened in Dangila (DMUAC: Folder---File/ḡ-12/Yä Propaganda ena Qeseqesa Asetābabari).

On the other hand, among the peasants captured for supporting EPRP most of them were said to be due to "their lower level of consciousness appeased easily by rifles and cloths" (*ibid*). This political cells of EPRP restructured in Dangila was believed to be for the third time. The first was back in the mid of 1970s just like any other parts of Ethiopia until it was squeezed by the red terror in 1978. The second attempt was immediately after the red terror by the end of 1979 and the beginning of 1980. It was called the "new EPRP" (*ibid*). If, the reports imparted to the Dārge Security chief were for real; it was therefore for the third time.

The most important achievement of EPRP after its Dangila operation was that, it really showed its influential existence for the Dārge. Its presence now, is not a rumble in the wilderness somewhere around the far distant in the western lowlands of the country. But it actually is real and even able to infiltrate successfully in to the central highlands. After the Dangila operation, the number of youths who joined EPRP guerrilla force was also increased swiftly. Throughout Ačāfār and Agāw-Meder, EPRP praised also in the war songs of *fukāra* and *qārāreto* in public gatherings, including in a wedding ceremonies. In the meantime its geographic realm was expanded ever than before in Gojjam. Bustling a little while between the pocket areas along the Ethiopia and Sudan border, EPRP invaded Mambuk town by February 1985. Mambuk was then capital of Dangur *Wārāda*, which is located very near to the southern side of the Bälāya mountain cove. It was also very important commercial site and located almost at the middle site of Mätākāl *Awraja*. This situation has basically compelled the Dārge government to a large scale re-settlement plan of Mätākāl as counter-insurgency to tackle the pervasive penetration of the EPRP on the region.

Conclusion

Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Party (EPRP) was among the earliest, probably the first, political parties in Ethiopian history. Due to the revolutionary politics, that it comes to involve, EPRP has almost comes in to direct conflict with almost all other political groups. The military government of *Dārge* was able to liquidate the entire urban structure of EPRP through Red Terror. The TPLF was also another lifelong enemy, which ended the exuberance of EPRP in Tigray, and continued to harass until the last days of 1991. EDU was also another political group which comes into direct clash with EPRP across the North Western parts of Ethiopia. With all these, receded its bases and retreat, EPRP eventually break into various pieces. One small group remains in the Quara lowlands was able to enliven for a while. This group has relatively had a success story. This group has made one of a successful military operation on Dangila town in 1984. This group of EPRP was completely decimated by the TPLF led EPRDF forces in the beginning of the 1990s.

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