

“Ethiopian Incunabula”
In Continuation to the findings of S. Wright and S. Strelycn
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INTRODUCTION

Incunabula –“cradle books” is a term use for books published before 1500, i.e. from 1446 to 1500 and denotes very early printed books.

Printing press, which was first invented by Johannes Gutenberg around 1446, is a technology of book production that facilitates communications.¹ Besides facilitation of communications, printing press is a carrier of culture and historians observed that without it, neither political, constitutional, ecclesiastical, nor economic, nor sociological, philosophical and literary movements the impact of communication can be fully understood.

Despite of its value, the diffusion of the printing technology is not found evenly all through out the world. For instance, after the first Gutenberg printed Bible appeared in 1456, by the end of the century – 44 years later – printing operations existed in 12 European countries and the continent was flooded with 20 million volumes of 7,000 titles in 35, 000 different editions. However, even if since 1548 the Abyssinian monks in Rome were able to have a printing press in Geez characters and had printed some parts of the Scripture² it took the printing press to reach our region more than 400 years, i.e., in 1863.

Furthermore even to realize the value of the press it is found it took several decades, some cases centuries. For example, in Europe bibliographers at that time who were engaged in compiling manuscripts realized far late the challenging speed in which books were produced by these presses and started to work in retrospective to catch them and document them. They categorized the books produced before the end of 15th century by the name “incunabula”. Then in our case, even if the first printing press was established at Massawa, in 1863, it took the bibliographers to pay attention to it more than 100 years. Stephen Wright was a pioneer librarian in Ethiopia who put his hands in cataloguing the National Library of Ethiopia and the then Haile Sellassie I University library of Addis Ababa in mid 1960s.³ Probably, in the work Wright came across assortment of books printed in Ethiopia with difficult typographical notes to describe. Logically, he turned into bibliographies and printing press history of Ethiopia for background information. Unfortunately, this was not to be easy; for, there were no appropriate bibliographies for books published with the Ethiopian Empire as well as there was no written history of printing presses established in Ethiopia, at least before the Italian occupation in 1936.⁴ Therefore, faced with a situation of the incunabula period (of books printed before 1500) in Europe, Wright took the initiative of compiling list of books published within Ethiopia before 1936 under the entries by each printing press inside the country. Thus, Wright designated his work Ethiopian Incunabula.

1967 Stephen Wright published a book entitled “Ethiopian Incunabula,” compiled from the book collections in the National Library of Ethiopia and the Addis Ababa University library, then Haile Sellassie I University library.⁵ Although Wright did not state openly why he intended to compile the book he published, from the conclusion of his preface it

was clear he wanted to compile a bibliography of books printed within Ethiopia before 1950 in three installments.⁶

Wright had included in the compilation of his list books printed in printing presses in Eritrea, but, arbitrarily some books printed in Eritrea with the following reasons:

“By ‘Ethiopia’ is understood the whole present extent of the Empire—that is, including the ex-Italian colony of Eritrea. However, in view of the large number of entirely Italian works printed in Eritrea up to (and after) 1936, some books issued (through whatever printer) by the Italian administration have been excluded. This separation is admittedly arbitrary, and open to objection from pedantic bibliographers, but it seemed necessary if this hand list were not to be “swamped” by publications in Italian of essentially “colonial” interest. On the other hand, books issued, in whatever language, by missionary societies (Catholic and Protestant alike) have as a rule been included, especially since many of these were designed primarily for circulation within Ethiopian proper.”⁷

This action is distorting the history of Eritrea as well as extending politics into a pure objective scholarly work and as Wright expected it was not tenable by serious scholars.

Nevertheless, in the first installment that runs before 1936, Stephen Wright succeeded to have the entry of 224 titles of books precisely. Stefan Strelycn wrongly indicated it was 223 titles in his second supplement in page 65.

The work of Wright was continued by Stefan STRELYCN who rejected the arbitrary separation of the books printed in Eritrea by the colonial administration before 1936 by Wright.⁸

First, Strelycn did a research on the Ethiopian Incunabula in the main public libraries of Rome in 1970 and 1971 and was able to find some 231 new titles that were not found by Wright. He published this findings in a Rome based Review known as *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*.⁹

Second, Strelycn did similar research in 1976 the Faïtlovitch library of Tel-Aviv University in Israel and in the library of the Istituto Orientale of Naples, Italy and was able to find some 165 new titles which were neither noted by Wright nor by Strelycn in his first supplement. Strelycn published these findings as a second supplement in the above mentioned Review.¹⁰

In 1980, while I was in Rome for studies Stefan Strelycn met me and after discussing the possibility of unidentified Ethiopian Incunabula specimen in religious libraries, like the one of the Ethiopian College in the Vatican where I were living at that time, he asked me if I could do some research and send him my findings for publication. I agreed with him and immediately undertook the research in the religious institution libraries of the Pontifical Ethiopian College in the Vatican, the Pontifical Urbanian University in Rome, the International College of S. Lorenzo da Brindisi of the Capuchin, the Franciscan House of the Roman Province, and the former house of Cardinal Massaiah in Frascati. I sent my findings to Strelycn in Manchester, England, who on receiving it, he later came to me in early 1981 to Rome and told me that he was satisfied with it and was to publish it in the near future. However, being in unstable health state in case he dies I should make follow up and see for its publication. Unfortunately, Strelycn died on May 19, 1981 without publishing it. This left a burden on me and when tried to get the manuscript I sent to him I was not able to get it back. Therefore, as I did not had copy I was forced to repeat the work in Rome. I even extended it to Milan where I was able to search the

libraries of the Capuchin Friars' Provincial House of S. Cuore, the Ambrosian, and the S. Cuore Catholic library of Milan where substantial number of Ethiopian books are stored. Besides these, on my return to Eritrea I got a short break of work and was able to study the religious institution libraries in Keren, Asmara, and Harar in Ethiopia. Most the libraries I visit were not properly catalogued and due to the instability of the country were seen to be transferred from a place to place. For example, in Asmara the Pavonian library was moved from the Cathedral premises to its present site in Bar Jimma area, and the Cistercian library monastery when it was confiscated by the Ethiopian regime in 1980, first it was moved into Diocesan Major Seminary at Tappa area, and later to its present new site at Paradisso area.

In the libraries I visited I observed that there was substantial number of specimen of the Ethiopian Incunabula which were already noted by Wright and Strelycn and printed in their respected publication. However, as were compile new list with items that were not found by my predecessors I collected only the data that was not noted in the previous publications.

When I collected some 114 new titles neither noted by Wright or Strelycn before I composed an article submitted it to be published in a local scholarly Journal, namely, "*Quadern di Studi Etiopici*" published in CENTRO STUDI ETIOPICI –Asmara in 1987. However, because of censure my article was suspended and remained ever since in suspension.

Then, after ten years in 1997 I approached the editor of the *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, a Review where Strelycn published his articles on this topic in 1974 and 1979 respectively. However, I was discouraged by the attitude of the editor and the next decade I did not have even the time to think about it.¹¹ Recently, some people who knew about this article reminded me that I should do something to publish it and so, after 20 years just I push it for publication.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE PRESENTATION

Stephan Wright gave identification letter or tag for each printing press and arranged by order of towns they were located, for instance from A to H was for assigned to presses found in Addis Ababa, K to Q for presses in Eritrea, and S and T for those in Harar province.¹²

This kind of identification arrangement was also followed by Stefan Strelycn, but with certain modification of identification for presses that were not noted before by Wright.¹³ For example, he assigned letter V for presses in Asmara and U for presses in Massawa. Then, as he got more unidentified presses, he multiplied the V and U by introducing a subscript number; such as V₁, V₂, V₃, and U₁, U₂, U₃, U₄. I have adopted this arrangement for the identification of printing presses and consequently turned the tag for press at Keren into L₁ and L₂.

As for the presentation Wright and Strelycn differ from each other for the overriding purpose of they had was substantially different. Stephan Wright was mainly concerned with physical descriptions of the books he can find in libraries and providing information for librarians in their work of cataloguing. For him the history of presses that was planted in Ethiopia before 1935 was necessarily an implicated topic.

However, Stefan Strelycn extended the study of Wright by including in possible bibliographies that could shade light to the presses and their products established in Ethiopia before 1936.¹⁴ With this he tried to bridge the gap between the existing bibliographies compiled outside of Ethiopia and the publication produced inside Ethiopia that might not get entry in the bibliographies. So, Strelycn often had a chapter referring the existence of previously identified books in a given library as well as a reference to existing bibliographic source for them.

On this respect, Strelycn had almost completed in leveling the above mentioned gap. Thus, with the overwhelming existing information of the samples already discovered, I feel there is no much need to hold this approach and I dropped it. I mean the purpose of the study is to find out the titles of books produced by each press and focus is not on the volume of each title.

Therefore, I limit my presentation in two chapters, instead three or four as my predecessors did. In chapter one, I will present the bibliographical data with the description of title with its typographical note, with page numbers, and physical measurement height by breadth in centimeters. The title of the specimen is usually taken from the title page and if not it will be indicated in brackets [on cover]. Further if there is found any observable particularities in the book I will report it in a square bracket []. Besides this I put *Sic* in square brackets to indicate a word I found written with unusual spellings. Then, I will give initials of the library where it is found in.

In Chapter two, I will give some relevant data about the collection the “Legislazione, Notizie e Studi Sull’Eritrea” and some comments on the history of the press in the light new information I have found. Next, in a table I will give the list of the presses known to have existed in Eritrea and Ethiopia before 1936 and the number of each press products identified by S. Wright, S. Strelycn and me.

Abbreviation of libraries the “Incunabula” item is found in

| | |
|-------|--|
| APL | Asmara, Pavoniani Library, Eritrea |
| AUL | Asmara, University Library, Eritrea |
| AVA | Asmara, Apostolic Vicariate Archives, Eritrea |
| AVAH | Apostolic Vicariate Archiate, Harar |
| LCILB | Library of “Collegio Internazionale S.Lorenzo da Brindisi”, Roma |
| CMLA | Cistercian Monastery Library in Asmara, Eritrea |
| CLLPM | the Capuchin Library of Lombard Province in Milan, Italy |
| LPCEV | the Library of the Pontifical Ethiopian College in Vatican |
| LSK | the Library of the Seminary at Keren, Eritrea |
| PCEV | Biblioteca del Collegio Etiopico, Vaticano |
| RSE | Rassegna di Studi Etiopici |
| WD | Without date |
| WI | Without imprint |

Identification Letters/tags of Presses

- A **የኢትዮጵያ (በአዲስ አበባ) መጋተሚያ** Imprimerie Éthiopienne d'Addis-Ababa (*ou* d'Addis Abeba).
- B Imprimerie Alexis Desvages (**የሙሴ ዴስቫጅ ማኅተም ቤት**).
- C Imprimerie du Régent Ras (Negus) Täfäri (puis de l'Empereur Haylä-Səllase I)
- D **መርሐ ጥበብ (የኢትዮጵያ መንግሥት ማተሚያ** Imprimerie du Gouvernement Éthiopien)
- E **ጎሀ ጽባሕ** (Aurore)
- F **ለቤተ ሳይዳ ሆስፒታል የተሰጠ ማተሚያ ቤት**
- [G **ልዑል ራስ መኰንን ማተሚያ ቤት**]
- H **አርቲስቲክ ማተሚያ ቤት** (Artistic Press)
- I Imprimerie du Courrier d'Éthiopie
- K Swedish Mission (first press, at Menkullu)
- L Different presses at Keren
 - L₁ Roman Catholic Mission (first press, at Keren)
 - L₂ Salvago Raggi
- M Swedish Mission (Asmara)
- N Roman Catholic Mission (Asmara)
- O O₁ - Fioretti e Baltrami, Asmara
 - O₂ - M. Fioretti, Asmara
- P P₁ - E. Cicero, Asmara
 - P₂ - A.A. F. Cicero, Asmara
- [Q Silla, Asmara]
- R De Angeli, Asmara
- S Roman Catholic Mission (Saint Lazare, Diredawa)
- T Private Press of A. Jonsson, Harar
- U Different Presses in Massawa
 - U₁ Tipografia dell'Africa Italiana
 - U₂ Tipografia Nazionale
 - U₃ Tipografia Militare
 - U₄ Catholic Mission Press –Massawa
- V Different Presses in Asmara
 - V₁ Tipografia Coloniale
 - V₂ Direzione Affari Civili
 - V₃ Stabilimento Tipografico Coloniale
 - V₄. Tipografia Militare
- X Unidentified presses

Chapter One

In this chapter the entry of the title of books that I found which were not identified by Stephen Wright and Stefan Strelycn is done by the order of letter tags of the printing presses arranged my predecessors. This because I will include only the printing presses of whose product or books I found that was not discovered either by Stephen Wright or by Stefan Strelycn before and I am concerned only with presenting a new specimen that was not found before. Therefore, I advice that readers should not get confused if I move from a press with tag “A” to that of tag “E” and from this to that of tag “L” etc.

A. የኢትዮጵያ መኃተሚያ (Imprimerie Éthiopienne)

1. የዳግማዊ ምኒልክ ሆፒታል (sic)። ባለጤና ሆኖ ለመኖር የሚበጅ አንድ አንድ ምክር። ዘድክቶር ሩሶ የኢትዮጵያ መንግሥት ሓኪም። የሆፒታል (sic) አለቃ። [አዲስ አበባ፣ የኢትዮጵያ አዲስ አበባ መኃተሚያ ፲፱፻፮] 7 pp. 18 x 13.5 cm

Library: LSK

[The cover paper is missing and it has no title page. The imprint is taken from page 7].

E. ጎሀ ጽባሕ።

1. የቅዱሳን የሐርያት (sic) ስራ መጽሐፍ። ባማርኛ ቋንቋ። አዲስ አበባ በእንግሊዝና። በእንግድ አገር መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ። የሚያሳትምና የሚሸጥ ማኅበር፣ በጎሀ ጽባሕ ማተሚያ ቤት ፲፱፻፳፮፣ ዓመተ ምሕረት, 138 pp., 15 x 10.5 cm

Library: CMLA

2. የጌታችን፣ የየሱስ፣ ክርስቶስ፣ ቅዱስ፣ ወንጌል። ቅዱስ ሉቃስ እንደ ጻፈው። በአማርኛ ቋንቋና፣ በጋለኛ ቋንቋ። አዲስ አበባ፣ በጎሀ ጽባሕ፣ በእንግሊዝና፣ በእንግዳ፣ አገር፣ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ የሚያሳትምና፣ የሚሸጥ፣ ማኅበር። ፲፱፻፳፮፣ ዓመተ ምሕረት። [on back of the title page]. Saint Luke’s Gospel in Amharic and Galla; London and Addis Ababa, British and Foreign Bible Society, 1933, 129 double pages, 15 X 10 cm

Library: CMLA

L. Different presses in Keren

L₁. Roman Catholic Mission, Keren

1. [ዳዊት ከመኃልየ ነቢያት ጋር] WI, 216 pp., 16 x 11 cm.
[This is the same with the one mentioned from bibliography by Strelycn in Supplement I, page 512, n. 2]

Library: LSK

2. አባ ተክለማርያም፣ ፊደል ቋንቋ ኢትዮጵያ። ከረን ናይ ካቶሊካውያን ማኅተም ፲፰፻፺፯ Cheren, Tipografia Cattolica 1904 16 pp. 17.5 x 11 cm.

Library: LSK

3. መዝገበ ምሥጢራት WI, 26.5 x 20 cm
[This a sacraments’ reception register divided into three section whereby the baptism has a three entries per page, marriage two entries per page, and death has another three entries per page. It is found every parish that was established before 70 years and the earliest record I could find was in 1892].

Library: Archives St. Michael’s Paris, Keren

4. **ሥርዓተ፡ ቅዳሴ፡ ዘቤተ ክርስቲያን፡ ካቶሊካዊት፡ እንተ፡ በኤትዮጵያ። ተኃትመ፡ በሀገረ፡ ከረን፡ ባማኅተመ፡ ካቶሊካውያን፡ ፲ወ፱፻ወ፯፡ አመት እምልደተ፡ እግዚእኑ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ።** 166 pp. 28 x 21 cm
Library: Lazarists' Archives—Hebo, Eritrea; and Adigrat Diocese Archive—Adigrat, Ethiopia

L₂. Tipografia della Scuola Governativa di Arti e Mestieri “Salvago Raggi”, Cheren

1. Dott. Ivo Droandi, Capitano Vetrinario dei Commissariati Regionli del Barca e Gasc e Setit. Convogli e Caravne di cammelli (Riassuntodi Regolamenti). Cheren. Tipografia della Scuola Governativadi Arti e Mestieri “Salvago Raggi”, 1919, [1],3 blank 54 pp. 23.5 x 14.5 cm.
Library : APL

M. Swedish Mission, Asmara

1. **መጽሐፍ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ዝመሰረቱ፡ ትምህርቲ፡ ክርስትና፡ ብቋንቋ፡ ትግርኛ። ብዐመት፡ ፲፱፻፲፡ ድሕሪ፡ ልደት፡ ክርስቶስ፡ ብማሕተም፡ ሚስዮኔ፡ ሰዌዲሴ፡ ኣብ ኣስመራ፡ ተሓትመ።** [10], 259 pp. 14.5 x 10.5 cm.
Library: CLLPM
2. **ወንጌል፡ ዘዮሐንስ። ተኃትመ፡ በሀገረ፡ ኣስመራ፡ በ፲ወ፱፻ወ፲ወ፬ ዓመት፡ እምልደቱ፡ ለእግዚእኑ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ።** [On cover]. Vangelo secondo Giovanni. **ወንጌል፡ ዘዮሐንስ።** in lingua Geez. Asmara. Tipografia Evangelica. 1921, 108 pp. 13 x 8.5 cm
 [The last pages are lost and on page 94 begins **መልእክተ፡ ዮሐንስ፡ ሓዋርያ፡ ወልደ ዘብዴዎስ፡ ቀዳማዊ።**]
Library: CLLPM
3. Sillabario della Lingua Tigrigna. **መጽሐፍ ፊደል፡ ዘረባ፡ ትግርኛ።** 2nd. Asmara. Tipografia della Missione Svedese. 1922, 122pp. 14.5 x 10.5 cm
 [At the end of the book there is an addition incorporated material of **መዝሙር ቀለውዕ ክርስቲያን።** with pagination 5-12].
Library: CMLA
4. [on cover] **በስመ፡ ኣብ፡ ወወልድ፡ ወመንፈስ፡ ቅዱስ፡ ፩፡ ኣምላክ፡ ኣሜን። ኣውዳ፡ ኣዋርሕ፡ ፲፱፻፳፭፡ ዓ. ም። (ጳጉመን፡ ኣምስተኛ)።** Calendario dal 11 settembre 1932 al 10 settembre 1932 (sic) **ኣብ፡ ቤት፡ ማሕተም፡ ወንጌላዊት፡ ማሕበር፡ ዚሸየጥ፡ ዘሎ፡ መጻሕፍቲ።** Elenco dei libri in vendita alla Tipografia Missione Evangelica (Asmara, Eritrea). WD. 32 pp. 15 x 10 cm.
Library: CMLA
5. **ወልደኣብ፡ ወልደማርያም። መጽሐፍ፡ ፊደል፡ (sic) ብቋንቋ፡ ትግርኛ።** [on cover] **ተሓትመ፡ ብማሕተም፡ ወንጌላዊት፡ ማሕበር፡ ኣስመራ። ፲፱፻፳፭፡ ዓ. ም።**
 Asmara, Missione Evangelica, 1935, 46 pp. 19.5 x 12 cm.
Library: APA

N. Roman Catholic Mission – Asmara¹⁵

1. **መልእክተ፡ ኤንጅክሊካ፡ በእንተ፡ ትምህርተ፡ ክርስቲያን።**¹⁶ Asmara, Tipografia Francescana, 1911, 24 pp. 23 x 15 cm.

- Library:** CMLA
2. Virginio, Prinzivalli, Nella Terra degli Schiavi. Romanzo con prefazione di P.G.D., 3^a ed.riveduta e corretta. Asmara. Tipografia Francescana, Missione Cattolica. 1912, XVI, 345 pp. 20 x 15 cm.
Library: LPECV; LCILB 52 –E- 2
 3. N. 61. Colonia Eritrea:- Istruzione pubblica. Asmara, Tipografia Francescana, (Missione Cattolica), 1914, 52 pp., 24 x 16 cm.
Library: AUL
 4. ሥርዓተ ቅዳሴ ዘቤተክርስቲያን ካቶሊካዊት እንተ በኢትዮጵያ። ተኃትመ በማኅተመ ካቶሊካውያን በ፲፱፻፯ ዓመት እምልደተ እግዚእን። 162 pp. 30 x 20 cm.
[This was identified by S. Strelycn in his first Supplement in page 515 n. 7, but not found].
Library: LPCEV, LCILB
 5. Giovanni da Palermo, Dizionario della Lingua Somalo, Asmara, Tipografia Francescana, 1915, VI 354pp. 24 x 16 cm.
Library: LCILB
 6. Colonia Eritrea: Tassa sugli Affari, Istruzioni, Asmara, Tipografia Francescana (M. Catt.), 1917, 23 pp. + 4 unnumbered model sheets, 23 x 13,5 cm.
Library: APL
 7. Colonia Eritrea: Tassa sugli Affari, Tariffa, Asmara, Tipografia Francescana (Missione Cattolica), 1917, 8 pp., 31.5 x 21 cm.
Library: APL
 8. Ferrovie Eritree, Capitolato d’Onoriper la fornitura del materiale metallico occorrente per la prosecuzione dell’armamento della ferrovia “Asmara—Cheren—Agordat”, Tipografia Francescana (Miss. Catt.), 1918, 13 pp. 30 x 21 cm.
[At the end it is signed “il direttore delle ferrovie Tonetti”].
Library: APL
 9. Magazzino Generale: Protuario dei prezzi per l’esercizio 1918 – 1919. Asmara, Tipografia francescana. (Missione Catt.), 1918, 57(2) pp. 24.5 x 16 cm.
Library: APL
 10. Memorie Care. XXV^o anniversario di fondazione della Missione Cattolica Italiana in Eritrea (1894- 1919), asmara, Tipografia Francescana (Missione Catt.), 1919, 34 pp., 25.5 x 1.5 cm.
Library: CMLA
 11. ሓዲሳት። መልእክተ። ጳውሎስ። ወካልኣን። ሐዋርያት። ወራእዩ። ለዮሐንስ። ዘተሰናኣዉ። ምስሉ። መጻሕፍተ ቀደምት። ብራና። ወምስሉ። መጻሕፍተ። ሶርያ። ወፅርእ። ተኃትመ። በኃሊዮተ። ሚስዮን። ካቶሊክ። በማሕተመ። ካቶሊካውያን። ፲፱፻፲፪። VIII, 198 (1) pp. 23.5 x15.5 cm.
[On pages III –VI there is a letter addressed to Mons. C. Carrara: መቅደም። መልእክተ። ናብ። ካሚሎ። ካራራ። ብ። ፍ። ዳ ባሳኖ። Cap.ን። ኤ. ግራሶን። CM። ካብ ዓዲ ቀይሕ።]
Library: CLLPM; LPECV; APL
 12. N. 79. Colonia Eritrea: Ordinamento. Fondario; - Regolamento per l’applicazione dell’ordinamento Fondario: Catasto. Asmara, Tipografia Francescana (Missione Catt.), 1920, 218 pp., 23.5 x 16 cm
Library: CMLA; AUL

13. P. Angelico da None, Breve Compendio di Teologia Morale con Copiosa inserzione del nuovo Diritto Canonico per uso interno della Missione Cattolica. Asmara, Tipografia Franciscana (Missione Catt.), 1921, 464 pp., 23.5 x 16.5 cm.
Library: LCILB; LSK
14. Notizie sulla nuova rotabile Nafasit—Decamare—Asmara, Asmara, Tipografia Franciscana, 1921, 7pp. + 3 folded maps, 20 x 12 cm.
Library: LPECV
15. Bernard Marranghello (Ing^{ri}), Contributo di proposte tecnico-finanziarie alla sistemazione e riedificazione di Massaua in conseguenza dei arrecati dal terremoto del 14 Agosto 1921. Asmara, Tipografia Franciscana, 1921, 41 pp., 28 x 19.5 cm.
Library: APL
16. ንኡስ መጽሓፈ ጸሎት። በኃልዮ ሚስዮን ካቶሊክ። ኣሥመራ በማኅተመ ካቶሊካውያን። ፲፱፻፲፬ ዓመተ ምስረት። 162 pp. 12 x 8 cm. [Imprimatur 12 Decembre 1921]
Library: LSK
17. [on cover] R. Corpo di Truppe Coloniale dell'Eritrea: 4 November 1921. – Parole pronunciate dal Colonnello Commmandante Comm. Mecchiade Gabba. Asmara, Tip. Franciscana. 1921, XVI pp., 20.5 x 15 cm.
Library: APL
18. Ciampi, E., (Prof. Avv.), Istruzione di procedura civile del: Regno e compendio dell'ordinamento giudiziario dell'Eritrea: Per uso Universitario e di preparazione ai concorsi giudiziari. Asmara, Tipografia Franciscana, (Miss. Catt.), 1921, 24 x 17 cm.
Library: LPECV; APL
19. መዛሙራት፡ ዘዳዊት፡ ማኃልዮ፡ ነቢያት፡ ወማኅልያተ፡ ሰለሞን፡ ውዳሴ፡ ማርያም፡ ምስለ፡ ኣንቀጽ፡ ብርሃን፡ ተኅትመ፡ በሀገረ፡ ኣሥመራ፡ በማኅተመ፡ ካቶሊካውያን፡ እምልደተ፡ እግዚእ፡ ኢየሱስ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ ፲፱፻፲፬፡ ዓመት። 374 (1) pp., 15 x 10 cm.
Library: CLLPM
20. Lettera Circolare del Rev.^o P. Generale dei Cappuccini ai Padri e Fratelli Missionari in Eritrea. Asmara, Tip. Franciscana, 1922, VIII pp., 24 x 16.5 cm.
[At the end it is signed by Fr. Giuseppe Antonio da Persiceto].
Library: CLLPM; APL
21. Biblioteca Circolante “Gulielmo Massaia”. Catalogo generale (Missione Cattolica Asmara). Asmara (Eritrea), 1922, 6 pp. 24 x 18 cm.
Library: CLLPM
22. –Comitato Eritreo Pro Cattedrale Asmara. Asmara, Tip. Franciscana (Missione Cattolica), 1922, 13 pp. 23 x 18 cm.
[It is indicated that it was a supplement to the periodical “Parole Buone” of October 1922].
Library: CLLPM
23. N. 83, Colonia Eritrea: Imposta sui redditi mobiliari e tassa sugli Affari. Asmara, Tip. Franciscana (Missione Catt.), 1922, 61 pp., 24 x 16 cm.
Library: AVA

24. Tipografia Franciscana. Asmara, Campionario, Carattere e Fregi, Asmara, 1923, 24 unnumbered pages, 24 x 15 cm.
Library: LCILB
25. Libro per Scuole Elementari Indigene della Colonia Eritrea pubblicato per cura della Missione Cattolica. Vol.II Classe III. ቆልዓ፡ ብንኡሱ፡ ቆርብት፡ ብርሐሱ። (prob. Abissino), Asmara, Tipografia Franciscana (Missione Cattolica), 1924, (8), II, 293 pp. + 2 maps out of text. 21.5 x 13.5 cm.
Library: CLLPM, LCILB
26. Libro per le Scuole Elementari Indigene della Colonia Eritrea pubblicata per cura della Missione cattolica Vol.III, Classe IV, (ስነ ሥርዓት፡ ዘይብሉ፡ ሕዝቢ። ጨው፡ ዘይብሉ፡ መግቢ). Asmara, Tipografia Franciscana (Missione Cattolica), 1925, 380 pp., 21.5 x 13.5 cm.
[Preface is signed : P.Giandomenico].
Library: CLLPM
27. 88. Colonia Eritrea: - G. Brunetti. La lingua Təgərawayə parlata nel HAMASIEN. Asmara, Tipografia Franciscana, 1925, 17 pp., 25 x 15 cm.
Library: LPECV; CMLA; AUA
28. Governo dell'Eritrea:- Ruolo del personale indigeno in servizio dell'Amministrazione. Al 1° Aprile 1925 (Decreto Governatoriale 9 aprile 1925 n. 4280). Asmara, Tipografia Franciscana (Missione Cattolica), 1925, 10 pp., in sheet.
Library: APA
29. Deposito Franco di Massaua. Gestito della Banca d'Italia:- Norme Interne di Servizio. Asmaara, Tipografia Franciscana, 1926, 32 pp., 22 x 14.5 cm.
Library: APA
30. Per Eternare l'Inaugurazione della Chiesa Cattolica di Massaua, 4 Novembre 1926, Asmara. 1926, 22pp., In sheet ill.
Library: LCILB
31. Deposito Franco di Massaua. Gestito della Banca d'Italia: Regolamento approvato con Decr. Di S.E. il Governatore della Colonia Eritrea 4 agosto 1925. N. 4313. Asmara, Tipografia Franciscana, 1926, 32 pp. 22 x 14.5 cm.
Library: APA
32. Nel V Annuale della Marcia su Roma: Discorso del prof. M. Zingarelli tenuto nel "Circolo di Cultura Fascista" in Asmara -Eritrea il 30 Ottobre 192. (estratto da "parole Buone", Asmara, Tipografia Franciscana, 1928, 11 pp. 24 x 16 cm.
Library: APA
33. Statistica dei Missionari Cappuccini in Eritrea. Asmaara, Tipografia Franciscana, 1928, 23 pp. 21 x 15 cm.
Library: LSK
34. ብሓጺር፡ ቃል እተጠቃለለ ናይ ክርስትያን፡ ትምህርቲ፡ ብሳላ፡ ማኅበ፡ ሚስጥን፡ ካቶሊክ፡ ትግሃት፡ ኣሥመራ፡ ብማሕተም፡ ካቶሊካውያን፣ ብሸሕን፡፲፱፻፳፪፣ ዘበን ተሐትመ። 16 pp. 15.5 x 11.5 cm.
Library: CLLPM; CMLA
35. ቅዱስ፡ ታሪኽ፡ እንካብ፡ ብሉይን፡ ሓዲስ፡ ኪዳን፡ ብትግሃት፡ ማኅበር፡ ካቶሊካውያን፡ ኣሥመራ፡ ማኅተም፡ ፍራንቶስካና፡ ፲፱፻፳፭፡ 10, [4] pp., 16.5 x 11 cm.

[Imprimature: Coelestinus Catt. Vic. Ap.Eryt. 1932].

Library: CMLA

36. Ospedale Coloniale. "Regina Elena": Scuola Infermieri Indigeni: Nozioni di Medicina Pratica ad uso degli Indigeni: Racolte dal Prof. D'Alberto Ciotola. Asmara, Tipografia Francescana (Istituto S. Giuseppe), 1932, 219 [5] pp.

22.5 x 15.5 cm.

Library: CLLPM

[At the end of the book there is – "La traduzione in lingua Tigrigna è stata fatta per cura del Rev. Prete Cattolico Abba Johannis Ghebrazgieber di Hebo"]

37. Profilo di Emma Bolgiani maestra elementare della Comune di Milano (1877-1931), Asmara, Tipografia Francescana, 1932, 116 [2]pp., with 19 tables.

22.5 x 15.5 cm.

Library: LCILB

38. Sillabario Cunama-Italiano e numerazione fino a 100. Asmara, Tipografia Francescana, (Istituto S. Giuseppe), 1933 –XI,38 pp. 1 x 12 cm.,

Library: APL

39. Vol. III della Colazione:- Manuale di Letture Scelte Italiane Tigrai ad Uso delle Scuole Idigene per cura della Missione Cattolica. Terza edizione, Asmara, Tipografia Francescana, (Istituto S. Giuseppe), 1934, 333[3] pp. 23 x 14.5 cm

Library: APL

40. P. Francesco da Offeio, Grammatica della lingua Tigrai, Terza ed., Asmara, Tipografia Francescana, Istituto S. Giuseppe, 1935, 25 pp., 21 x 14.5 cm

Library: The Capuchin Convent of Gaggiret, Library, Asmara

41. Programma disciplinare e Scuolastico per il Seminario della Missione Cattolica Eritrea in Cheren, Asmara, Tipografia Francescana, WD, 19 pp., 17 x 12 cm.

Library: LCILB

O₂. M. Fioretti: Asmara

1. N. 43 Colonia Eritrea:- Tributi. (esercizio 1911-12). Asmara, Tipografia M. Fioretti, 1911, 9 pp. 24 x 1 cm.

Library: APL

2. N. 45. Colonia Eritrea:- Assab, (Allegato 1° alla Raccolta degli Atti dell'Autorità). Asmara, Tipografia M. Fioretti, 1911, 23 pp., 24 x 17 cm.

Library: APL

3. Governo della Colonia Eritrea:- Ufficiospeciale per le costruzioni Ferroviarie. Norme per itracciamenti delle curvee per l'armamento. Asmara, Tipografia M. Fioretti, 1913, 26 pp. 30.5 x 20.5 cm.

Library: APL

4. 48 bis Colonia Eritrea: - Condizioni e Tariffe per Trasporti a mezzo della Ferrovia (Sostituisce il fascicolo 48 del 1911). Asmara, Stabilimento Tipografico Coloniale Ditta M. Fioretti, 1914, 49 pp. 24 x 16 cm.

Library: APL

5. N. 55. Colonia Eritrea: Raccolta dalle disposizioni vigenti nella Colonia Eritrea per i funzionari civili dellevarie amministrazioni dello Stato. Asmara, Tipografia M.Fioretti, 1913, 30 pp. 23.5 x 16.5 cm.

- Library:** APL
6. N. 59. Colonia Eritrea: Regolamento per la gestione amministrativa e contabile della Colonia Eritrea. (Pubblicato nel n. 1161 della raccolta Ufficiale delle legge e dei decreti del regno).Asmara, Tipografia Coloniale M. Fioretti, IV, 1914, iv, 118 pp.,
24 x 16 cm.
- Library:** APL
7. N. 60. Colonia Eritrea: Servizio di Tesoreria, Banca d'Italia. Asmara, Stabilimento Tipografico Ditta M. Fioretti, 1914, 17 pp., 24 x 17 cm.
- Library:** CMLA; APL
8. N. 67, Colonia Eritrea: Regolamento per la circolazione dei veicoli a trazione meccanica, approvato con decreto Governatoriale 16 aprile 1915, n. 2205 in esecuzione del Regno Decreto 29 aprile 1913, n. 411.Asmara, Stabilimento coloniale Ditta M. Fioretti, 1915, 35 pp., 24 x 1 cm.
- Library:** CMLA
9. N. 68. Colonia Eritrea: Regolamento per l'edilizia della Città di Massaua. Pubblicato nel "Bullettino Ufficiale" della Colonia Eritrea n. 42 del 23 ottobre 1915., Asmara, Stabilimento Tipografico Coloniale Ditta M. Fioretti, 1915, 28pp. 24 x 16 cm.
- Library:** AUL
10. Banca Cooperativa Popolare eritrea, Società anonima a capitale illimitato sede in Asmara. Satuto. Asmara, Stabilimento Tipografico Coloniale Ditta M. Fioretti, 1915, 25 pp., 24.5 x 16 cm.
- Library:** APL
11. Comitato Cittadino per raccolta di offerte per i bisogni della guerra: "sulla nostra guerra". Conferenza tenuta in Asmara dal Cav. Uff. Dante Odorizzi la sera del 23 agosto 1915. Prezzo lire una. A favore delle famiglie dei militari morti e feriti in guerra e di altre opere d'assistenza civile. Editto gratuitamente dalla Tipografia Coloniale M. Fioretti, 1915, 16 pp. 24.5 x 16 cm.
- Library:** APL
12. Marittima Eritrea: Società di Navigazione a vapore per il Cabotaggio nel Mar Rosso sede in Massaua. Atto costitutivo e statuto. (Legalizzato a rogito del notaio della Colonia Eritrea, n. 315-5672, in Massaua l'8 luglio 1916), Asmara, Stabilimento Tipografico Coloniale Ditta M. Fioretti, 16 pp. 24 x 1 cm.
- Library:** APL
13. Ferrovie Eritree: Regolamento Quadro Organico – Competenze Accessorie del personale Europeo dell'esercizio delle ferrovie (approvato con decreto Governatoriale n. 3057), Asmara, Stabilimento Tipografico Coloniale Ditta M. Fioretti, 1918, 58 pp., 23.5 x 15 cm.
- Library:** APL
14. Circolo Ufficiale d'Asmara. Statuto Sociale, Asmara. Tipografia M. Fioretti, 1922, 9 pp., 21.5 x 15.5 cm.
[It is signed by the Presidente del Cicolo Ufficiale Melelli].
- Library:** APL
15. Brunetti, Giorgio, Storia ed Archeologia dell'Etiopia, Conferenza letta al Cilcolo Ufficiale. Asmara, 23 giugno 1923, Tipografia M. Fioretti, 1923, 29 pp.

- 22.5 x 16.5 cm.
Library: CMLA; APL
16. Servizio Doganale e Marittimi, Tabella dei valori delle merci per l'applicazione dei dazi doganali a decorrere dal 1° ottobre 1923, Asmara, Tipografia M. Fioretti, 35 pp., 22.5 x 15cm.
Library: APL
17. N. 86. Eritrea: Norme per l'assunzione in servizio ed il trattamento del personale a contratto nella Eritrea approvato con decreto Governatoriale n. 4262 del 19 marzo 1925, Asmara, Tipografia Ditta M. Fioretti, 1925, 42 pp. 23.5 x 1 cm.
Library: CMLA
18. Comando del Regio Corpo Truppe Coloniali dell'Eritrea. L'Arte militare in Eritrea. Conferenza letta a Torino il 19 novembre 1896 agli Ufficiali allievi della Scuola di Guerra del Maggiore Generale Filippo Gazzarelli Comandante della Scuola. Asmara, Tipografia M. Fioretti, 1926, 20 x 14.5 cm.
Library: APL
19. N. 89. Colonia Eritrea: Ordinamento Giudizario (pubblicato nel Bollettino Ufficiale della Colonia Eritrea n. 10 del 31 maggio 1926). Asmara, Tipografia M. Fioretti, WD, 77 pp. 23.5 x 16.5 cm.
Library: CMLA; APL
20. N. 90 Colonia Eritrea: Ordinamento Fondario e Regolamento per la sua applicazione (pubblicato nel supplemento di Bollettino Ufficiale n. 13 in data 21 luglio 1926), Asmara, Tipografia M. Fioretti, WD, 103 pp. 24 x 16 cm.
Library: AUL
21. N. 91, Colonia Eritrea: Regolamento per l'esercizio della Caccia da parte dei cittadini italiani ed assimilati. Approvato con D.G. 18 dicembre 1923, n. 4154 e Relative Modificazioni Approvato con D.G. 12 maggio 192 n. 4431, Asmara, Tipografia M. Fioretti, 192, 19 pp., 24 x 16 cm.
Library: APL
22. Malladra, G.A., Le acque del del Territorio compreso fra Massaua, Asmara, Acsum e Adigrat: Contributo allo studio della Geografia Militare della Colonia Eritrea (Estratto della Rivista Militare Italiana 1910. Roma, Tip. Erino Voghera. Ristampa a cura del Comando del R. Corpo di Truppe Coloniali dell'Eritrea gennaio 1927), Asmara, Tipografia M. Fioretti, 1927, 46 pp. + 1 sketch map inc., 23 x 14 cm.
Library: APL
23. Malladra. G.A., Note Geografico. – Militare sul territori compreso fra Massaua, Asmara, Acsum e Adigrat.- Contributo allo studio della Geografia Militare della Colonia Eritrea. Estratto dalla Rivista Militare Italiana anno 1909, Roma Tip. Erino Vogher, 1909. Ristampato a cura del Comando del R. Corpo di Truppe Coloniali dell'Eritrea (gennaio 1927), Asmara, Tipografia M. Fioretti, 1927, 65[1]pp., + a sketch map, 23.5 x 16 cm.
Library: APL
24. N. 96. Colonia Eritrea: Regolamento sulle Bande Armate e Guardie Carcerarie. [Pubblicato nel Bollettino Ufficiale della Colonia Eritrea 20 supplemento al n. 7 del 25 aprile 1931—IX e supplemento al n. 9 del 15 maggio 1931—IX,], Asmara, Tipografia M. Fioretti, 1931, 31[1]pp., 24 x 16 cm.

- Library:** APL
25. N. 97. Colonia Eritrea: Ordinamento Scuolastico per suddeti Coloniale ed Assimilati, [Pubblicato nel Bollettino Ufficiale della Colonia Eritrea 2° supplemento di n. Del 25 aprile 1931—IX.]. Asmara, Tipografia M. Fioretti, 1931, 31 pp., 23.5 x 17 cm.
- Library:** CMLA
[This is a quadrennial curriculum of the Italian colonial educational system in Eritrea].
26. Società cooperative di consume fra gli Imiegati dell'Eritrea: Statuto Sociale. Asmara, Stab. Coloniale Ditta M. Fioretti, 1932- anno X, 26 pp., 23 x 16 cm.
- Library:** APL
27. N. 101, Colonia Eritrea: Ordinamento Organico per l'Eritrea e la Somalia. (Legge 6 luglio 1933, n. 999, pubblicato nel Bollettino Ufficiale del Governo dell'Eritrea n. 17 del 15 settembre 1933—XI). Asmara, Stab. Tip. Coloniale Ditta M. Fioretti, 1933—XI, 24 pp., 23 x 16.5 cm.
- Library:** APL
28. N. 102. Coloniale: Istruzioni generali per la gestione e la contabilità dei beni mobili in colonia. (Decreto interministeriale 28 giugno 1933 n. 4141 pubblicato nel "Bollettino Ufficiale" del Governo dell'Eritrea n. 20 del 31 ottobre 1933—XII). Asmara, Stab. Tip. Coloniale Ditta M. Fioretti, 1933—XII, 23 pp., 23.5 x 16.5cm
- Library:** APL
29. Governo dell'Eritrea: Conoscere a scopo agricolo dei terreni delle pendici Orientali. Decreto Governatoriale 28 maggio 1932 n. 6090. Asmara, Stabilimento Tipografico Coloniale Ditta M. Fioretti, WD, 11 pp., 23.5 x 16 cm.
- Library:** APL
30. Governo della Colonia Eritrea: Ufficio Studi e Propaganda: Piccola Bibliografia dell'Africa Orientale con speciale riguardo all'Eritrea e Paesi confinanti, Compilata da Alberto Pollera. Stab. Tip. Coloniale Ditta M. Fioretti, Asmara, 1933—XI, 61 pp., 23.5 x 16.5 cm.
- Library:** APL
31. N. 104. Colonia Eritrea: Capitolato Generale delle opera pubbliche per le Colonie. Decreto Ministeriale n. 231 dell'8 settembre 1934—XII. (Pubblicato nel bollettino Ufficiale della Colonia n. 19 del 15 ottobre, 1934—XII). Asmara, Stabilimento Tipografico Coloniale Ditta M. Fioretti, 1934—XII., 31 pp. 23.5 x 16.5 cm.
- Library:** The Capuchin Convent of Gaggiret, Library, Asmara
32. Colonia Eritrea: Ordinamento Giudiziario per la Colonia Eritrea. (Regio Decreto 20 giugno 1935—XIV, n. 1649, pubblicato nel "Bollettino Ufficiale" del Governo dell'Eritrea n. 4 (straordinario) del 22 novembre 1936- anno XV). Asmara, Tipografia Ditta M. Fioretti, 1936—XV, 50pp. 24 x 16 cm.
- Library:** APL

1. Capitolato per l'appolato del servizio dei trasporti e della manutenzione stradale nella colonia Eritrea. Asmara, Pre. Tip. E. Cicero, 1921, 22pp., 24 x 17 cm.
Library: APL
2. Governo dell'Eritrea: Regolamento d'esercizio per il servizio trasporti affidati alla Società Eritrea Trasporti Automobili, Asmara, Pre. Tip. E. Cicero., 1921 9 pp. 23.5 x 17cm.
Library: APL
3. VII Battaglione Indigeni, Asmara, Premiata Tipografia, Emanuele Cicero, 1922, 41 pp., 23 x 16.5 cm.
Library: APL
4. Governo della Colonia Eritrea: Ufficio per le costruzioni Ferroviarie: Linea Cheren—Agordat—Setit Tranco tratta fra le progr. 124.55 e 195000, Progetto di Appalto. Tariffa dei prezzi unitari. Asmara. Prem. Stab. Tipografico E. Cicero, 1922, 17 pp. 24 x 17cm.
Library: APL

P₂. A. A. F. Cicero; Asmara

1. N. 88. Governo dell'Eritrea: Servizi Doganali. Testo unico del regolamento doganale e di tutte le disposizioni in materia doganale in vigore al 1° luglio 1925. Asmara, Pre. Tip. A. A. F. Cicero, 1926, 105 pp., 24 x 16 cm.
Library: AUL
2. Aldo Molinari, La visita di S. M. Il Re in Eritrea, 2-9 ottobre 1932—X., Asmara, Tipografia A.A. F. Cicero 1932—XI, 42(1)pp., 23.5 x 17 cm.
Library: APL

R.E. DE ANGELI, ASMARA.

1. Tribunale d'appello della Colonia Eritrea (Asmara). Relazione letta dal Cav. Avv. Ranieri Falcone. Procuratore del Re nell'udienza inauguriale del 22 gennaio 1903, Asmara. Tip. Coloniale E. De Angeli, 1903, 150 pp., 23 x 15.5 cm.
Library: APL
2. L'amministrazione della Giustizia nella Colonia Eritrea. Resoconto letto nel 23 gennaio 1905 dal Procuratore del Cav. Rainieri Falcone all'assemblea Generale del Tribunale d'appello sedente in Asmara. Asmara, Tipografia Coloniale E. De Angeli, 1905, (6) 54 pp., 23 x 15 cm.
Library: APL
[Leggato con Relazione Statistiche Amministrazioni della Giustizia].
3. N. 5. Colonia Eritrea: Immigrazioni Operai, Mano d'opera e contratti di lavoro. — Bollettino Ufficiale della Colonia Eritrea n. 13 del 28 marzo 1903 n. 40 del 1° ottobre 1904 Gazzetta Ufficiale del regno n. 115 del 15 maggio 1908. Asmara, Tipografia Coloniale E. De Angeli, 13 pp., 24 x 16 cm.
Library: AVA
4. N. 28 Colonia Eritrea: Tabelle Organiche del R. Corpo di Truppe Coloniale. Asmara, Premiata Tipografia E. De Angeli, 1910, 16 pp., 24 x 17 cm.
Library: APL

5. N. 40. Colonia Eritrea: - Tributo e Imposta fondaria (Esercizio 1910 -1911). Asmara, Tipografia Premiata E. De Angeli, 1911, 11pp., 24 x 17 cm.
Library: APL

S. CATHOLIC MISSION, SAINT LAZARE, DIRE DAWA.

1. Mng. Jarosseau, Dembi nama Kristian kan gosa Oromo, Dire Daoua, Imp. St. Lazare, 1917, a few pages, 22 x 14 cm.
Library: AVAH
2. Haile Sellasie I Emperor d’Ethiopia Loi sur Nationalité Ethiopienne (Ethiopici et Gallice). Dire Daoua, Imp.St. Lazare, (1930), 16 pp., 19.5 x 14 cm.
Library: LCILB
3. (from Book Cover) Nécrologe de la Mission Galla. Dire Daoua, Imp. St. Lazare, 1931, 8 pp. 21 x 13.5 cm.
Library: AVAH
4. አጭር፡ ትምህርተ፡ ክርስቲያን፡ በጉራጌ፡ በቸሓ፡ ቋንቋ። የሶኦትራ፡ ጳጳስ፡ አቡነ እንድርያስ፡ እንዳሳተሙት። ድሬ፡ ዳዋ፣ በቅዱስ፡ አልአዛር፡ ማተሚያ ቤት፡ ፲፱፻፳፮ - ፲፱፻፴፫፡ ዓመተ፡ ምሕረት። 1933 (40 95 pp. Ill., 15.5 x 10.5 cm).
Library: AVAH
5. Injilk Qodus e Isa Kristos Rabigena. O Badrinta iyo Kristianka Somaied e Missionka Berbera (Ilama sannadi 1910) “Vulgate” Kagarogen af Somali. Imprimerie Saint Lazare—Mission Catholique, Dire Daoua, (Ethiopie), 1935, 258 (2) pp. 30 ill. Incl., 21 x 13 cm.
Library: AVAH.
[This was published by the Catholic Mission of Aden Vic. Ap. Of Arabia (p.2) and it was a Somali language in Latin characters].

U₁. TIPOGRAFIA DELL’AFRICA ITALIANA. MASSAUA

1. Tribunale Civile e penale di Massaua. – Relazione Statistica dei lavori compiuti nell’anno 1893 letta all’udenza del 6 gennaio dall’avvocato Fiscale Militare incaricato delle funzioni di Presidente. Sicher Cav. Luigi. Massaua, Tipografia dell’Africa Italiana, 1894, 10 pp., 23 x 15 cm.
Library: APL

U₄. Roman Catholic Mission – Massawa

1. ትምህርተ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ ናይ አቡነ፡ ያዕቆብ፡ ምእንቲ፡ ናይ ኢትዮጵያ፡ ካቶሊካውያን፡ ሕጂ፡ ብአቡነ፡ ጴጥሮስ፡ ናይ፡ ኢጋቶፖሊስ፡ ጳጳስ፡ ፈቃድ፡ ትምህርቲ፡ ተወሲኹ፡ እንካብ አምሓራ፡ ቋንቋ፡ ናብ፡ ትግራይ፡ ቋንቋ፡ እተመልሰ። አብ፡ ምጽዋ፡ ተኃትመ፡ ብናይ ካቶሊካውያን፡ ማኅተም። ጎይታና፡ የሱስ (sic) ክርስቶስ፡ እንካብ፡ ዝውለድ ፲፰፻፳፯, 1-16 + 1-48 pp. 15 x 11 cm
Library: Oriental School library collection of I. Guidi of Rome University.

[This book was first noted by S. Strelycn and published in his first supplement to that of S. Wright “Ethiopian Incunabula” in RSE XXV(1971-72) , 1974 ed) p.504 n.1. Here I repeat it because I found another book of pages 1-16 pages fastened in it which Strelycn have not reported].

V₁. TIPOGRAFIA COLONIALE, ASMARA.

1. Governo dell’Eritrea: - Ufficio Tecnico—Capitolato Generale per gli appalti Colonia. Asmara, Tipografia Coloniale, 1899, 17 pp., 30.5 x 20 cm.
Library: APL
2. Regio Tribunale Civile e Penale di Massaua. Relazione dal Cav. Ettore De Luca, Procuratore de Re nella seduta innaugurale del gennaio 1900, Asmara, Tip.Coloniale, 1900, 44 pp., 23 x 15 cm.
Library: APL
3. [on cover] Primo Congresso Coloniale Italiano in Asmara. Settembre 1905, Itinerario Massaua—Asmara, Asmara, Tipografia Coloniale, 1905, 26 pp., 15.5 x 11.5 cm.
Library: The Capuchin Convent of Gaggiret, Library, Asmara

V₃. STABILIMENTO TIPOGRAFICO COLONIALE, ASMARA.

1. [on cover] 74 bis. Colonia Eritrea: Libaneti, Michele, Relazione sull’amministrazione della Giustizia in Eritrea dal 2 luglio 1908 al 31 dicembre 1916. Asmara, Stabilimento Tipografico Coloniale, 1918, 91 pp., 23.5 x 15 cm.
[This book does not appear in the “Colonia Eritrea” collection list and is different from that of S. Wright in N 3 page 96].
Library: AUL
2. N.76. Colonia Eritrea: Norme che modificano il regolamento edilizio del piano regolatore di Asmara. Pubblicato nel supplemento al “Bollettino Ufficiale” della Colonia Eritrea n. 15 del 28 maggio 1919. Asmara, Stabilimento Tipografico Coloniale, 1919, 23 pp., 24 x 16 cm.
Library: AVA
3. N. 77. Colonia Eritrea: Azienda Trasporti: Parte Prima. Prontuario delle tariffe in vigore come da Bollettino Ufficiale n. 18 luglio 1919. Parte seconda. Regolamento per i trasporti di persone e di cose. Asmara, Stabilimento Tipografico Coloniale, 1919, 40 pp., 24 x 16 cm.
Library: AUL
4. [on cover] Paperini, C, I Canti dell’Ambe, Asmara, (Eritrea) Pietro Baltrami ed., Asmara, Stabilimento Tipografico Coloniale, 1919, (IV) 173 pp., 21 x 15.5 cm.
Library: APL
5. Governo dell’Eritrea: Direzione Servizi Vari. Capitolato Generale per l’appalto dei lavori pubblici nella Colonia Eritrea. Asmara, Premiato Stabilimento Tipografico Coloniale, 1920, 13 pp. 24 x 16 cm.
Library: APL

V₄. TIPOGRAFIA MILITARE, ASMARA.

1. Comando delle R. Truppe D’Affrica: Istruzione per servizio dei trasport (dicembre 1898), Asmara, Tipografia Militare, 1898, (1) 39 pp., 25.5 x 18.5 cm.
Library: APL
[This press was not identified by Strelycn and assigned to it V₄ tag].

X. UNIDENTIFIED PRESSES

1. ተአምኖ፡ ዘሃይማኖት፡ ርትዕት፡ ዘይደሉ፡ ያንብብዎ፡ ወይትአመንዎ፡ ሰብኣ፡ ምሥራቅ፡ (WI), 8 pp., 23 x 15.5 cm
Library: CMLA
[It resembles that of Catholic mission press, Keren].
2. Comando del R. Corpo di Truppe Coloniale dell’Eritrea. Stagione Ippica Eritra e Garedi Tennis del Circolo Ufficiale, gennaio 1931. Programma funzionerà nell’ippodromo il totalizzatore. (WI)., 29 pp., 21 x 15 cm.
Library: APL

CHAPTER TWO

I. COLLECTION OF THE “LEGISLAZIONE, NOTIZIE E STUDI SULL’ERITREA”

Stefan Strelycn first came across this collection in the list given on one sample book with the title “No. 72 – Colonia Eritrea – Ercole Petazzi, Dottore in Scienze Politiche e Coloniali, R. Agente Coloniale, L’odierno diritto penale consuetudinario dello Hamasien (Eritrea). This book was published in the Franciscan press of Asmara in 1918 and the list this booklet carried a *Raccolta Degli Legislazione, Notizie e Studi Sull’Eritrea*; (a collection of legislations, news and studies on Eritrea), with serial numbers ranging from 1 to 95.¹⁷ Out of these 95 serial numbers of the collection some 37 titles were not yet found. Strelycn published this unfound list in a separate chapter in his first supplement and asked the collaboration of the people who could help him with further information. Furthermore, he made studies in the public libraries of Israel and Naples, Italy and published his findings. In this publication he revealed that he had found 10 samples out of the 37 that was not found before. Then, again he posted the list of the 27 titles of this collection yet not found in his second supplement.¹⁸ In this article Strelycn claimed he had some information from M. Antonio Mordini who reported to Strelycn that he had some of the collection samples.¹⁹

In my research I found 22 titles out of the 27 samples that were not found by Strelycn, thus, reducing the number of not found into five (5).

But, the most significant findings I have a break through is about the nature and the true serial number of the collection. First, according to S. Zanutto’s *PUBBLICAZIONI EDITE Dall’Amministrazione Coloniale O Sotto I Suoi Auspici 1882-1937, Fascicolo Secondo*, published in 1940 the collections on Eritrea were of two types. One was “Collezione di Pubblicazioni Scientifiche Sull’Eritrea,” that means, Collection of Scientific Publications on Eritrea, that was compiled in Vol. I, under the title *Studi di medicina tropicale* (Study of tropical medicine) and published in Bergamo, in 1914. This comprised several articles contributed by half a dozen writers on several topics related to health. The second was the “*LEGISLAZIONE, NOTIZIE E STUDI SULL’ERITREA, ASMARA, 1908 -1937, 8°, Fascicoli 106*”, (Legislation, News and Studies on Eritrea). As Zanutto’s publication was undertaken under auspices of “Ministero Dell’Africa Italiana: Uffici Studi”, that is under the Ministry of the Italian Africa: Office of Studies”. This source besides of been latest compared to that of 1918 Strelycn was based on, it is more authoritative. Most of this collection were pamphlets (extract of articles from the Eritrean Government periodicals, such as, *Bollettino Ufficiale del Governo dell’Eritrea* or *Foglio d’ordini e di comunicazioni (del) Governo dell’Eritrea, etc.*),²⁰

Another observation I had here is that the topics of some serial numbers of the collection sometimes differ. For instance, the topic of the serial no. 88 in N 27 my entry differs completely from that of P₂ 1. Then there is still some difference between that of P₂ 1 and of n. 88 in the list of S. Zanutto. Let us look at it.

- N 27 88. *Colonia Eritrea: - G. Brunetti. La lingua Təgərawayə parlata nel HAMASIEN*. Asmara, Tipografia Francescana, 1925, 17 pp., 25 x 15 cm.

- N. 88. *Governo dell'Eritrea: Servizi Doganali. Testo unico del regolamento doganale e di tutte le disposizioni in materia doganale in vigore al 1° luglio 1925.* Asmara, Pre. Tip. A. A. F. Cicero, 1926, 105 pp., 24 x 16 cm.
- *Testo unico del regolamento doganale (1926)*

The discrepancies in the topics, I think, is from difference of their sources or even from that each press had different cumulative entries.

Whatever the reason is I would like to present the list of the “Legislazione, Notizie e Studi Sull’Eritrea- Colonia Eritrea” which was neither indicated before by Strelycn nor found by me in this work.

- 96. Regolamento sulle bande armate e guardie carcerie (1930). *Found in O₂ 24*
- 97. Ordinamento scolastico per sudditi coloniali ed assimilati (id.). *Found in O₂ 25*
- 98. Istruzione del Corpo delle Guardie forestali indigene – Disposizioni in materia forestale (id.). *Not found*
- 99. Regolamento per il servizio carcerario (1931). *Not found*
- 100. Ordinamento sanitario (1932). *Not found*
- 101. Ordinamento organico per l’Eritrea e Somalia (1933). *Found in O₂ 27*
- 102. Istruzioni generali per la gestione e contabilità dei beni mobili in colonia (id.). *Found in O₂ 28*
- 103. Norme per l’esecuzione delle Opere pubbliche nelle Colonie. *Not found*
- 104. Capitolato generale delle opere pubbliche per le Colonie. *Found O₂ 31*
- 105. Regolamento per la direzione contabilità e collaudazione dei lavori. *Not found*
- 106. Norme per l’accettazione di liganti idraulici e per la esecuzione delle opere in conglomerato cementizio nelle Colonie. *Not found*

Others titles that were identified by Strelycn were neither found by him nor by me the following five serial numbers.

- 1. N. 6 – Giurisprudenza Colonialie. Sentenza 1-13 maggio 1908 del collegio di appello di Asmara. P. 13, Asmara. Tipogr. Colon.De Angeli, 1908. *Not found*
- 2. N. 11 – Norme di servizio di econmato per l’Amministrazione coloniale. P. 16. Asmara. Tip. Colon. De Angeli, 1908. *Not found*
- 3. N. 14 – Bastimenti indigeni. P. 14. Asmara. Tip. Colon.De Angeli, 1909. *Not found*
- 4. N.59 – Regolamento per la gestione amministrativa e contabile. *Not found*
- 5. N. 78 – Convogli e carovane di cammeli. *Not found*

II. SOME NEW CLARIFICATION ON THE HISTORY OF PRINTING PRESS ESTABLISHED WITHIN ERITREA AND ETHIOPIA BEFORE 1936

With the help of recent publications and dairies I was able to find a new light in determining the history of some presses which were neither known nor clear with my predecessors. Therefore, hereby I present my findings one by one.

L₁. THE CATHOLIC MISSION PRINTING PRESS OF KEREN (1879 – 1911)

The Catholic Mission Press of Keren a newly acquired press by Msgr. J. Touveir CM, the Vicar Bishop of the Abyssinian Vicariate, in 1878.²¹ According to O’Mehoney

(1987:217) the Bishop acquired this printing press while he was in Europe; and the equipment arrived to Massawa in 1879. This printing press was transported by camels from the coast (Massawa) to Keren where at that time the headquarters of the Vicariate was centered. There, it was immediately assembled and Brother Vincent was made in charge of it. This press was run by the Vincentian Lazarist Missionary Community who at that time was in charge of the Abyssinian Vicariate. The books produced during the time of the this community carried their publication year in Geez numerals though in Gregorian calendar; otherwise by conversion would go over to the Capuchin period (after 1894) which is unlikely.

As some the books published in this press do not carry date I cannot say which book was the first issue of the item printed in this press. However, according to a source published by Abba Teklemariam Semahary who has been a student in Seminary of Keren and later an author of two books published by this press confirms it was used as early as 1879.²²

The production activity of the press can be divided into four historical phases. In the first phase which goes from 1879 – 1884 this press produced some 8 items out of 19 items known to have been produced in it. Then, in the second phase that goes from 1885-88 there is no any known item produced and can be ascribed to the situation due to political disturbance the community was forced to abandon Keren and stay in Massawa.²³ The third phase goes from 1889 – 1894 where the community was back to Keren and press now produced another 7 items out of 19 items. The fourth phase goes from 1894- 1911 the press was under the Franciscan Capuchins before its transfer to Asmara to became the Catholic Mission press or the Franciscan Press at Asmara. At this time the press has produced only 3 items out 18 items.

By the end of 1884 the missionaries had a strong desire to publish a Geez –Amharic dictionary, a Latin – Amharic grammar, and the New Testament,²⁴ but I do not know whether they were able.

Besides of publishing books, this press was used for training printing for the students.²⁵

L2. TIPOGRAFIA DELLA SCUOLA GOVERNATIVA DI ARTI E MESTIERI **“SALVAGO RAGGI” CHEREN (1911 -1941)**

This was an instrumental press assigned to the Italian Government School of the ‘Arti e Mestieri’ of Keren by official decree n. 135 of 31 January 1909.²⁶ I some reliable old people (Maria Luisa to mention one) told me that this press was used to train the students printing and the Italian colonial Government had recruited Atto Mengasha Beru of the Swedish Evangelical Press to be an instructor.

They said that this school press was used to publish some leaflets for the benefit of the school itself. In addition, it published some public notices and at times booklets, like the one I have found.

The site of this press was in the current “Selam School” near the bridge to Keren Lailai. According to the sources this press was operating until the British occupied Keren early 1941.

N. THE CATHOLIC MISSION (THE FRANCISCAN) PRESS, **ASMARA (1911- TO PRESENT)**

Mgr. C. Carrara, the first Capuchin bishop of the Vicariate of Eritrea, established his seat in Asmara in March 1911 and by July it was revealed that he had a plan to reactive the press.²⁷ Although the Eritrean Church history authorities agree that the Catholic Mission Press of Keren was transferred to Asmara, they do not agree on the date when it was transferred.²⁸ Metodio (70) categorically states that it was implanted the “Franciscan Press” in Asmara in February 1912.

However, we have one controversial issue on the first product of this press in Asmara. It is the መልእክት፡ ኤንቺክሊካ፡ በእንተ፡ ትምህርት፡ ክርስቲያን። S. Strelycn found it to have been printed in 1912 with 24 page numbers and with the dimension of 25 x 17.5 cm.²⁹ However, I have found this very booklet with same title and the same number of pages published in Asmara in 1911, but with different dimensions 23 x 15 cm. My finding is backed by bibliographers of that time and Strelycn had a note of it.

This fact raises the question when was this press was removed from Keren to Asmara and when was it first started to function in Asmara.

Critically analyzing the history of the press we find first, there was enough time of reactivating plan by Mgr. Carrara in July 1911 and its execution before the end of the year and second, February 1912 was the inauguration date of the press and this does not necessarily rule out its function before the inauguration. The difference in dimension of the two findings also indicates to two different edition of the same book, though not indicated. From this convincing possibility of two editions and the fact we have at hand I conclude that the Catholic press from Keren was removed before the end of 1911 and first started to function in Asmara still in 1911. I can say also the first known publication of this press is the መልእክት፡ ኤንቺክሊካ፡ በእንተ፡ ትምህርት፡ ክርስቲያን of 1911.

U₄ The Catholic Mission Printing Press of Massawa (1863- 1877)

The Catholic Mission Press Massawa was the first press that was ever known to have been established in Eritrea and Ethiopia, the target area of this study. It was S. Strelycn who first discovering a book in the library of the Oriental School, University of Rome identified the ever existence of this press.³⁰ In the catalogue of the “Ethiopia Incunabula” he assigned capital letter U referring for all presses to have ever existed in Massawa and subsequently U₄ for this press.³¹

However, this press was used very little, and its products are hard to find. Because of lack of proper documentation and the existence of books allegedly produced by this press, if exists they are very rare, there is more confusion about the Catholic press that was in Massawa. For instance, S. Strelycn based on the information he had got from the *bibliografia etiopica* of G. Fumagalli proposed three theories for the first edition of this press with the implication of the whole region.³² Just to mention Strelycn’s theories are: (a) a catechism book in Amharic language published in early 1864, (b) a catechism book in Tigré language published in 1866, and (c) a catechism book in Tigrigna language published in 1867. Strelycn with the copy he had on hand that of 1867 the right one of these theories was the last.

I did a lot of effort to verify these theories from available documents in archives and publications of the Lazarist missionaries who were in charge of the Catholic mission at that time.

First, in the end of the dairy of Mgr. Biancheri³³ I have found a story related to this press. Mgr. wrote in 1863 “Perciò io da Roma partii al principio di aprile, e andai a Parigi per far fondare nell’imprimeria Imperiale i caratteri etiopici, le machine, e tutti gli altrezzi, cola tipografia abissina, e con questi partii da Parigi alla volta di abissinia li 2 agosto. Propaganda pagò otto mila franchi per le spese fatta dall’Imprimeria imperiale, ma le spese del trasporto, e del viaggio dovuta curarle dall’assegnamento che fà alla missionela propagada delle fede. Tutto spese montavano a cinque mila cinquecento franchi” (Mgr. Biancheri in the last few lines of the dairy reported that he had arrived in Massawa on December 1, 1863 and here he does not give anymore information about the press. Nevertheless, Mgr. Biancheri gave us substantial information how this first press in Massawa was acquired.

Besides the dairy of the Mgr Biancheri there is another source where some information could be found. The alternative source is the “Annales de la mission” published in Paris by the Congregation of Mission who was in charge of the Catholic Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Again here I have found some valuable information about the press in Massawa from a letter published in this Annales of 1864.³⁴ In this letter Fr. Delmonte was confirmed that he was in Massawa in April 1864 assigned by Mgr. Biancheri to supervised a construction of a room to be used for the printing press. He told that the construction work was finished by the middle of June and he had undertaken the first test of print in Ge’ez characters. Here Delmonte does not give specifications about the book he had produced as a test, however, it’s to be a catechism book as reported by Fumaggali. From December to June Mgr. Biancheri had enough time to translate and to compose the catechism book.

Anyway, Mgr. Biancheri died on 13 September 1864, and after sometime Delmont wrote to his superior General a letter where he confirmed that the catechism printed by Mgr Biancheri in June 1864 was written in Ge’ez language. (cfr. *Annales de la Congregation de la Mission*, XXX (1865), p. 78).

Then, after a long silence about this press in the chronicle of Mgr P. Bel who succeeded Mgr. Biancheri I got breaking information. In this chronicle in page 86 Mgr Bel gives a clear report on 27 May 1867 the community in 15 days of hard and continuous concerted work has finished the publication of some 500 copies of a small catechism book in translated into Tigrigna language and another 1500 copies syllable book composed in the same language and contained the alphabets, Our Father, Haile Mary, the creed, the acts of faith, hope, charity, the commandments of God and of the Church, and the Abyssinian numerals.³⁵ In his report Mgr. Bel adds that these were the two first books which came out from their printing press that had begun to operate on 10 May 1867. One sample of these we have the catechism book in the library of the Oriental School of the University of Rome. Besides this, Mgr. Bel in his Chronicle confirms that it was Fr. Delmonte who operated the press at that time.

Taking into consideration the words of Mgr. Bel that this press had begun to operated on 10 May 1867 now what about the theories of 1866 in Tigré and of 1864 in Amharic proposed by Strelycn? Based on the primary data from archive at hand, I think they do not have any weight to hold without further analysis. Particularly, the existence of 1866 Tigré catechism theory is out of question for until September 1866 Mgr. Bel, the new bishop who succeeded Mgr. Biancheri who was requesting for a qualified printer.³⁶ However,

there appears a new theory of Ge'ez edition of 1864, based on the assertion of Fr. Delmonte in a letter above mentioned.

While Fr. Delmont was himself who tested the press in mid June of 1864, he informs his superior that it was Mgr. Biancheri the one that published the Ge'ez catechism, as mentioned above. However, Mgr. Biancheri left no data about the printing of Ge'ez catechism book in 1864. To complicate things more Mgr. Biancheri had a catechism in Amharic published in Rome in 1851 together with Mgr. Jaccob which the clergy were recommended to use it in their teaching. So, the question rises was Fr. Delmont really referring to that of Mg. Biancheri's 1864 Ge'ez edition of Massawa or that of 1851 Amharic edition of Rome? This problem becomes real when we consider the conflict that rose between Mgr. Bel and the clergy on the 1867 catechism in Tigrigna.

In a circular letter Mgr. Bel had ordered the clergy to use the new Tigrigna edition in all their teachings instead of the other they had; but, the priest found it to leave the one they were used to. Abba Teklehaimanot Teklezghi, the biographer of St. De Jaccobis vividly presents this conflict in a manuscript I consulted and quote here.

The first presents circular letter (in Amharic language) of Mgr Bel literary and its date corresponds to that given in Chronicle (Diary) of Mgr. Bel in page 70.

“ክፍል ፹ ዛቲ መልእክት ዘኣባ ጴጥሮስ፡ ትብጻሕ ኅበ ከሎሙ ካህናት ካቶሊካውያን ዘኢትዮጵያ። ሰላማና ቡራኬ የጌታችን የዮሴስ ክርስቶስ በእላንተ ላይ ይሁን።
፩ ይህንን ወርቀት ከተቀበላችኑ በኋላ ትምህርተ ክርስቶስ በትግርኛ ቋንቋ ስለ ኢትዮጵያ ካቶሊካውያን ያስገለበጥነውን ዛሬም ያስተማርነውን እርሱን ብቻ በሰብከታችን እንድታስተምሩ እንፈልጋለን። ...በጳጅ ቀን ሐምሌ በሄዶ ተጻፈች። በ፲፰፻፱ (sic) ከጌታችን ልደት በኋላ።”³⁷

“Part 80: the letter of Abba Petros; to all Ethiopian Catholic priests. Peace and blessing of our Lord of Jesus Christ be with you.

1. After receiving this piece of paper I want you to teach in your sermons only the catechism we have translate into Tigrinya language for the Ethiopian Catholics and we are also teaching nowadays... written in Hebo, on July 25, 1859 EC after the birth our Lord.”

The author after mentioning the background (in Geez language) and gives the in response (in Amharic).

“ክፍል ፹ ወ፩... ወእምድኅረ መጽአ በ፩ ዓመት ጸሓፊ ወኣኅተማ በልሳነ ትግርኛ ኣስተዋጺኦ እምነ መጽሐፉ ለኣቡነ ቢያንኬሪ ወወሲኮ እም ኅቤሁ። በከመ ንቤ እምቅድመዝ ኣመ ኣዘዘሙ ለካህናት ከመ ይኅድጉ ቀዳማዊ ወይምህሩ በዝዚኣሁ ኣጸቦሙ እስመ ሀለወት ትእዛዙ ለኣቡነ ያዕቆብ በላዕሌሆም። ወበእንተዝ ተጋቢኦሙ ጸሐፊ ዛቲ መልእክተ ኅቤሁ።

...ኣባታችን ሆይ ለልባችን እጅግ የሚያስጨንቀን ነገር ኣገኘነ። ይህም እንድህ ነው። ኣባታችን ኣቡነ ያዕቆብ ጌታው ኣቡነ ቢያንኬሪ የጻፍዎትን ትምህርተ ክርስቶስ ትተው በዚህ ኣስተምህሩ ብለው ሌላን መጽሓፍ ጻፉ። ዳግመኛም ከኔ በኋላ ያስተማርኋችኑን ለውጡ ክፉም ነው ኣይጠቅምም የሚል ቢመጣ ሮማ የያዕቆብን ትምህርት ከንቱ ነው ካላለች ኣትሰሙ ስላሉን በፊተኛው መጻፍ ነው የምናስተምር ያለን። መጻፉንም ለማየት ቢወዱ እንሰድዋለዎኣለን። ኣይተውም መልካም ነው ቢሉን መልካም። ክፉ ነው በሰጠኋችኑ ብቻ ኣስተምሩ ቢሉ ግን ወደ ሮም ልንጽፍ ይፈቅዱልን ብለን እንለምናለን። ለታላቅነትዎ የምንገዛ በሓላይና በኣውህነ በሰገነይቲ ያለን ቀሳውስት መነኮሳትም በቅድስት

እጅዎን እንዲባሩን እንለምናለን። ተጽሕፈት በሀገረ ሄቦ አመ ፳፬፻ ለጎዳር ወበዓመተ ምሕረት በ፲፰፰ (sic)።³⁸ Translation:

“Part 81: One year after he came, by culling from the book of Bishop Biancheri and adding of his own he (Bel) have composed and printed [catechism] in Tigrinya language. As we said before, when he ordered the priests to leave out the previous and teach by his [book] found it difficult for they had the order of Abbune Yaccob of not to do so. Therefore they have met and wrote to him this letter [in Amharic language]. ... My Lord; we got something that disturbs our hearts. And this is it. Our father Abbune Yaccob wrote another book, by leaving out the catechism written by Sir Abbune Biancheri, and told us to teach by it. Next, he told us saying that if anyone one comes after me and tells you that what I have taught is bad and useless and asks you to change it, do not listen if Rome does tell you otherwise. Thus we are teaching by the previous book. If you want to see the book we will send it for you. When you see and agree it is good, all right. But if you say it is bad and ask to teach only by what you have given us, we ask you to allow us to write to Rome.

Obeying your Excellency and asking the blessing of your blessed hand,
Clerics and monks who are in Halay, Awhine, and Segheneiti,
Written in Hebo on October 22, 1860 EC,”

Again he wrote to them clearly referring to Rome Amharic edition of 1851 as in question in words and he included parts of it in his Tigrigna edition of 1867 by saying:

**ወውእቱሂ አውሥአ ወፈነወ ሎሙ ዛቲ መልእክተ እንዘ ይጽሕፍ በልሳነ ትግራይ።
ዘተጽሕፈት አመ ፳፬፻ ለጎዳር በምጽዋ።**

...እኔኼ ምላሽይ ናይ አቡነ ያዕቆብን ናይ አቡነ ቢያንኬሪን ትምህርተ ክርስቶስ ናይ አምሐራ ቋንቋ አብ ሮማ እተጎተሚ ጽቡቅ እዩ። እዚ መጽሐፍ በይኑ ምእንቲ ናይ ኢትዮጵያ ካቶሊካውያን ናይ ሐለቃታት ፈቃድን ማኅተምን ነበሮ። ሐደ ንእሽቶይ ወገን እንካብ አምሐራ ቋንቋ ናይብ ትግራይ ቋንቋ ምስ ሐዴ ሐዴ ሐዲስ ነገር ብፍቃደይ እትመልስ ናይ ሕዝበይ ኪለው ትግራይ ቋንቋ እዩ። ... ምእንቲዚው ሎሚ እነ ብወረቀተይ ብሐምሌ ወርኂ ዝነበረ ትእዛዘይ አሕድስ አሎኹ። ቀሺ ኪለው ንዛ መጽሓፈ ናብ ትግራይ ቋንቋ ዝተመልሰት ምስትምህር ዘይደሊ ብዘይ ቅዳሴ ብዘይቀረባን ከምዚነብር ፈቃደይ እዩ። ... አብ ምጽዋዕ ብናይ እግዚእትነ ማርያም ፅንሰታ ተጻሕፈት።

³⁹

“And he responded and sent them this letter written in Tigrinya language on November 29 in Massawa

... ‘This is my answer: the catechism book in Amharic language of Bishop Yaccob and Bishop Biancheri published in Rome is good. This book, specifically for the Ethiopian Catholics had the permission and signature of the authorities. I deliberately translated some small parts from Amharic language into Tigrigna language with some other things for Tigrigna is the language of my people ... Therefore, still with this piece of paper I renew the order I had in July. If any priest does not want by this book translated into Tigrinya, it is my will he live without celebrating mass and receiving the Eucharist. ...

Written in Massawa on Immaculate Conception of our Lady Mary ”

Here he concluded the letter by threatening that if any one of them does not comply he will be excommunicated.

Then, they responded to him with another letter where they stated: “ወካዕበ ጸሓፊ ሎቱ ውእቶሙ ዛተ መልእክተ በሓላይ አመ ቿ ለታኅሣሥ በልሳነ ትግራይ።

ክቡር አቦና እኩዬ ንዝሰደዱልና ወረቀት ብዐቢይ ክብሪ ተቀቢልና።...ጎይታና አቡነ ቢያንኬሪ ንዝኃተምዎ መጽሓፍ አሪሞም ኪለው ሰብ ከምዜጽንያ በዚኣ አስተምህሩ ቢሎም ካልዕ መጽሓፍ ከምዝሀቡና ብአምኖ ጽሂፍናሎም።

እታ መጽሓፍውን እዚኣ ኢያ እኒሂ ይርአይዋ። ሕዝቦም ምንባብ ዘይክእሉ ስለ ዝኾኑ ናይ ዜስተምህራቶም ቃል ይስምዑ እምበር በምሐርኛ፣ ብትግርኛ እንቶ ተኃትመ ግዲ አብላቶም። ምእንቲዚውን አቡነ ያዕቆብ እንካብ ዚመጹ ጀሚሮም ክሳብ ሎሚ ብትግርኛ፣ ብሽሁኛ፣ ብአምሐርኛ አስተምህርና።”⁴⁰

Again they wrote to him this letter in Tigrigna language on December 8, EC from Halay.

“Our father, we have received with great respect the letter you have sent us...

Last time we have written you that you have corrected the book our Lord the Bishop Biancheri had published and you gave us another book asking us to teach by it, so that all people should study it.

That book was this, here for you to see it. Because your people are illiterate, they need to hear the words of those who preach, yet do not bother them whether it is published in Amharic or Tigrinya. Therefore, since Abbune Yaccob came until today we have taught in Tigrinya, in Saho, and in Amharic.”

By comparing and contrasting analysis of the correspondence between H.E. Bishop Peter Bel on one hand and his clergy on the other hand, one can easily understand that there were three catechism books involved in question.

First, there was a catechism book of Mgr Yaccob and Mgr Biancheri published in Amharic which Mgr Bel claim it had the permission and signature of Church Authorities (by implication that of Rome 1851).

Second, there was another catechism book in Tigrinya language Mgr. Bel had composed by culling some from the Amharic catechism of Mgr. Biancheri and adding of his own which he have published recently and requested the clergy to teach by it and all his people study it. But, the clergy were reluctant on the basis that they have another book that was accepted by Bishop Yaccob and replaced that of Mgr Biancheri Amharic catechism, at least by implication that of 1851, published in Rome.

Third, the clergy had one catechism book accepted Abbune Yaccob and later published by Mgr. Biancheri of which Mgr Bel was not aware and the clergy wanted him to know and see for himself.

Out of these three books the public has samples of the first two while of the third no one knows whether it existed, yet from the correspondence between Mgr Bel and his clergy the was a conflict.

At the bottom-line, the cause of the conflict rest squarely on that the Amharic catechism of Mgr. Biancheri of 1851 published in Rome was not accepted by Bishop Yaccob and the clergy under his order, and later even Mgr. Biancheri agreed and produced another acceptable by Mgr Yaccob and the priests. Then the newly arrived Mgr. P. Bel (he arrived in Massawa on March 23, 1866) probably unaware of this issue he had translated

the Amharic catechism into Tigrinya and by requesting the clergy to adopt this Tigrinya catechism triggered the conflict between him and the defiant clergy.

The credibility of the existence of third book beyond the argument of the clergy depends on the fate of the catechism of Mgr. Biancheri published in 1850, in Rome and the practice of setting up of printing presses.

First, According to a letter of Mgr. De Jaccobis written from Zenà Daglië in July 26, 1852 to Fr. Biancheri most of the Amharic catechism book published in Rome was remained in Moncullo while those which reached Alitiena all were available for him. In addition, Abbune Yaccob advised Mgr. Biancheri that it is good two of them meet before the distribution of the booklets.⁴¹ Mgr. De Jacobis did not hide his concern about the booklet the opponents might find support in some phrases as to undermine it. However, there is no any information whether the two authorities meet on the subject, and if they meet what decision they have taken. Nevertheless, there was another catechism composed by Mgr. Biancheri which De Jacobis commended as a precious work and eventually if they could publish it either in Rome or in other place.⁴² And this catechism as Mgr. De Jacobis observe already well adopted.⁴³

These facts strongly indicate that the Rome published catechism of Mgr. Biancheri was censored and though Mgr. De Jacobis died some 14 years ago the priest were aware and vigilant. So, when Mgr. Biancheri got the first opportunity of introducing the printing press in Massawa, as reported in the Annales most likely he used as prove the the catechism which was commended by Bishop DeJacobis.⁴⁴ The Annales presents a letter of Fr. Delmonte whom Mgr. Biancheri made in charge of supervision of the building for the printing press reported that by mid of June the construction was completed and he made the first test of printing in Geez letters.

Second, the books usually produced in testing are accepted and used by some part of the public. For instance, there are two samples known to have been produced by the Catholic Mission press of Asmara before its inauguration and formally starting production in 1912.

With these facts, though the public has no any sample of the first book printed in 1864, it is most likely that the clergy was talking in their correspondence was one printed for test. With this one can conclude that, though was not formal, the first book printed in the region was in 1864.

III. Presses and their production
Known to have existed in Eritrea and Ethiopia before 1936

| No. | Tag | Press Name | Foundation Date | Source | Source | Source | Source | Total |
|-----|----------------|---|-----------------|----------|---------|----------|--------|-------|
| | | Ethiopia | | S.Wright | Suppl.I | Suppl.II | Kibrom | |
| 1 | S | ቅዱስ ላዛሬ ማህተሚያ ቤት ዲረዳዋ | 1908 | 14 | 10 | 9 | 5 | 38 |
| 2 | A | የኢየሱስ መንግሥት ማህተሚያ ቤት | 1910/11 | 9 | | 7 | 1 | 17 |
| 3 | B | የሙሴ ደስዋዥ ማህተሚያ ቤት | 1917/8 | 2 | 1 | 4 | | 7 |
| 4 | C | ራስ ተፈሪ ማህተሚያ ቤት | 1921 | 46 | 2 | 37 | | 85 |
| 5 | D | መርሐ ጥበብ (የኢትዮጵያ መንግሥት) | 1924/25 | 16 | | 3 | | 19 |
| 6 | E | ጎሀ ጽባሕ | 1928/29 | 33 | | 4 | 2 | 39 |
| 7 | I | Imprimerie du Courrier d'Ethiopie | 1930 | | 1 | 1 | | 2 |
| 8 | F | ለቤተ ሳይዳ የተሰጠ ማህተሚያ ቤት | 1931/2 | 17 | | 10 | | 27 |
| 9 | G | ራስ መኰንን ማህተሚያ ቤት | 1933/4 | 1 | | | | 1 |
| 10 | T | አንቶን ዩሶን - ሓረር | 1934 | 1 | | | | 1 |
| 11 | H | አርትሱቲክ ማህተሚያ ቤት | 1934/5 | 9 | | | | 9 |
| | | Unidentified books of Ethiopia | | | | 11 | | 11 |
| | | Eritrea | | | | | | |
| 13 | U ₄ | ናይ ካቶሊካውያን ማህተሚያ - ባጽዕ | 1863 | | 1 | | | 1 |
| 14 | L ₁ | ናይ ካቶሊካውያን ማህተሚያ - ከረን | 1879 | 1 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 18 |
| 15 | K | ምንደሉ ምስዮን ማህተሚያ | 1885 | 3 | 7 | | | 10 |
| 16 | U ₃ | Tipografia Militare - Massawa | 1888 | | 5 | | | 5 |
| 17 | U ₁ | Tipografia dell'Africa Italiana - Massawa | 1893 | | 1 | | 1 | 2 |
| 18 | U ₂ | Tipografia Nazionale - Massawa | 1894 | | 2 | | | 2 |
| 19 | M | ቤት ማህተሚያ ምስዮን ስዌደሴ- አስመራ | 1895 | 45 | 56 | 19 | 5 | 125 |
| 20 | V ₄ | Tipografia Militare - Asmara | 1898 | | | | 1 | 1 |
| 21 | V ₁ | Tipografia Coloniale - Asmara | 1899 | | 3 | 1 | 3 | 7 |
| 22 | V ₂ | Direzione Affare Civile - Asmara | 1903 | | 1 | | | 1 |
| 23 | R | De Angeli - Asmara | 1908 | | 29 | 15 | 6 | 50 |
| 24 | L ₂ | Tipografia della Scuola Governativa | 1909 | | | | 1 | 1 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|----------------|--|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | di Arti e Mestieri “Salvago Raggi”, Cheren | | | | | | |
| 25 | V ₃ | Stabilimento Tipografia Civile - Asmara | 1918 | | 3 | | 5 | 8 |
| 26 | N | ቤት ማህተም ካቶሊካውያን - አስመራ | 1911 | 20 | 66 | 32 | 42 | 160 |
| 27 | O ₁ | Fioretti e Beltrami - Asmara | 1911 | 1 | 8 | 4 | | 13 |
| 28 | O ₂ | M.Fioretti - Asmara | 1913 | 3 | 14 | 6 | 31 | 54 |
| 29 | P ₁ | E. Cicero - Asmara | 1918 | | 4 | | 3 | 7 |
| 30 | P ₂ | A.A. & F. Cicero - Asmara | 1926 | 2 | 1 | | 2 | 5 |
| 31 | Q | ማህተም ሲላ - አስመራ | 1933 | 1 | | | | 1 |
| | | Unidentified book of Eritrea | | | 6 | | 2 | 8 |
| | | Total | | 224 | 231 | 166 | 114 | 735 |

Table 1: Presses known to have been established before 1936 in Ethiopia and Eritrea arranged ascending order of their foundation years in Gregorian calendar with their products noted by the authors ‘Ethiopian Incunabula’. The blank space under each source indicates that there was no item from that particular press was found.

The above table gives a clear historical picture of the presses established in Eritrea and Ethiopia. Analyzing by country we find that out of 31 known printing presses in the considered period 11 presses were in Ethiopia with the production of 264 titles which is 35.92 % of the total 735 titles. The remaining 20 presses were in Eritrea and had the production of 487 titles which is 66.26% of the total.

As it is evident in the table be it in Ethiopia or Eritrea it was the missionaries who first introduced the presses. However, when compared with the known 15 colonial printing presses in Eritrea the five missionaries founded presses had more production. That is, 314 titles out of 487 titles produced in Eritrea, which mean 64.48%. The remaining 35.52% were of the colonial government and the other non- religious private presses.

In conclusion the findings is valuable in as much it can enrich the bibliographies of the two countries and lead to collecting the specimen as to create national library for each mentioned countries.

ENDNOTES

¹ **Note:** Printing and printing press existed long before Gutenberg. The Chinese were using wooden block presses as early as A.D. 600 and had movable clay type by A.D. 1000. A simple movable metal type was even in use in Korea in the 13th century. Gutenberg is credited with the invention of the printing press for he was the first to use metal type crafted lead models in place of types made from wood or clay; and for his intention as way to produce books – instead of use to produce attractive artwork.

² Conti Rossini, *Storia D’Etiopia*, Bergamo, Istituto Italiano D’Arti Grafiche, 1928, p.11

³ According S. Strelycn, Stephen Wright died, on 14 February 1976.

⁴ **Note:** Ethiopian bibliographies that existed at that time were the ones compiled by scholars outside of the country.

⁵ Stephen, Wright, *Ethiopian Incunabula: compiled from the collection in the National Library of Ethiopia and the Haile Sellassie I University*, Addis Ababa, Commercial Printing Press, 1967

⁶ Ibid p.IV

⁷ Ibid p.III

⁸ S. Strelycn, “Incunables” Ethiopiens Des Principales Bibliothèques Romaines: Supplément à Stephen Wright, *Ethiopian Incunabula*, 1967 in RSE xxv(1971-2(1974) pp. 456

⁹ S. Strelycn, “Incunables” à Stephen Wright, *Ethiopian Incunabula*, 1967 in RSE xxv(1971-2(1974) pp. 456-519

¹⁰ S. Strelycn, “Incunables” Ethiopiens Ethiopiens de la collection Faïtlovitch (université de Tel-Aviv) et l’Istiteo Orientale di Napoli (deuxième supplement Supplément à Stephen Wright, *Ethiopian Incunabula*, 1967 in RSE xxvii(1978-79) pp.63-121; In addition, presented this subject in the 5th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies which was published in: Joseph Tubiana ed., *Modern Ethiopia: From the Accession of Menelik II to Present; Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Nice/19-22 Dec. 1977*, A.A. Balkema/Rotterdam/ 1980, pp.35-51.

¹¹ **Note:** While my article is in suspension, a friend of my published an article that contributes to this study and can be referred: Osvaldo Raineri, “Test in lingue etiopiche” della Bilioteca dell’Istituto Italo-Africano in Roma in *AFRICA: Rivista trimestrale di studi e documentazione dell’Istituto Italo-Africano* XLVI(N. 1 Marzo 1991) 75-91. Other publications worthy of mention here are: ALAIN ROUAUD, Quelques precisions sur les impressions et imprimeries éthiopiennes, in *Bulletin des Etudes Africaines de l’Inalco* (Paris), VI, n. 11(1986) pp. 131-145; and Vincenzo LAZZARINI, “I momenti ‘Incunaboli’ della stampa Etiopia”, In: *Vincentiana*. 1987, pp.329-330.

¹² Stefan Wright, *Ethiopian Incunabula compiled from the collections in the National Library of Ethiopia and the Haile Sellassie I University*, (Addis Ababa, Commercial Printing Press),1967, p. 7

¹³ S. Strelycn, “Incunables” Ethiopiens Des Principales Bibliothèques Romaines: Supplément à Stephen Wright, *Ethiopian Incunabula*, 1967 in RSE xxv(1971-2(1974) pp. 459

¹⁴ S. Strelycn, “Incunables” Ethiopiens Ethiopiens de la collection Faïtlovitch (université de Tel-Aviv) et l’Istiteo Orientale di Napoli (deuxième supplement Supplément à Stephen Wright, *Ethiopian Incunabula*, 1967 in RSE xxvii(1978-79) pp.101-117

¹⁵ **Note:**Information about the production of this printing press could found in: Giandomenico da Milano (padre) in La “Tipografia francescana” di Asmara: *L’Italia Francescana* (Roma), 4, 1929, p. 466 – 2, III.. The article gives general information and list of the publications made by this press since 1912 to 1929 arranged by subject. The same article is found published in 1930 in the “*Antischiasmismo*” pp 107 – 15. However, itn its quality, it is sloppy and of little value.

¹⁶ This is the first ever known product of this press since its establishment in Asmara. S. Strelycn is found to have confused this book with its second edition of 1912. Cfr S. Strelycn, “Incunables” Ethiopiens Des Principales Bibliothèques Romaines: Supplément à Stephen Wright, *Ethiopian Incunabula*, 1967 in RSE xxv(1971-2(1974) p. 481 N. 1

¹⁷ S. Strelycn, “Incunables” Ethiopiens Des Principales Bibliothèques Romaines: Supplément à Stephen Wright, *Ethiopian Incunabula*, 1967 in RSE xxv(1971-2(1974) p.507

¹⁸ S. Strelycn, “Incunables” Ethiopiens Ethiopiens de la collection Faïtlovitch (université de Tel-Aviv) et l’Istiteo Orientale di Napoli (deuxième supplement Supplément à Stephen Wright, *Ethiopian Incunabula*, 1967 in RSE xxvii(1978-79) pp. 118 - 121

¹⁹ Ibid. P.66

²⁰ S. Zaqnutto, Pubblicazioni edite dalla’amministrazione coloniale O Sotto I Suoi Auspici 1882-1937, FascicoloSecondo, Roma, Società Anonima Italiana Arti Grafiche, 1940-XVIII, p. 88

²¹ O’Mahoney K., *The Ebullient Phoenix: A History of the Vicariate of Abyssinia, Book II*, Asmara, Ethiopian Studies Centre, 1987, p. 217

Note: Taking into consideration the similarities of the characters between that of Massawa and of Keren; and, still Mgr. Touvier’s statement who said the press that was in installed in Massawa, in 1863 has no anymore usably parts except that of its letters while describing it in a letter written on 15 June 1877 from Keren before he left for Europe it is probable the Keren press used that of Massawa. In fact, Mgr. Touvier stated clearly that except the characters every thing else should be renewed, then it should be transferred and installed in hinterland, for example at Keren (*Annales*, Tomo XLII, Parigi 1878, p.535).

²² አባ ተክለማርያም ሰምሳራይ ሰለም፡ ጥንታዊ ሆኔ ዘልሳነ ግዕዝ። Roma, Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1930, p.17, note: 2

²³ O’Mahoney K., *The Ebullient Phoenix: A History of the Vicariate of Abyssinia, Book III*, Addis Ababa, United Printers, 1992, p. 22

- ²⁴ A letter of Fr. Paillard from Keren of 25 December 1884 in *Annales, Tomo L* p.246.
- ²⁵ O'Mahoney K., *The Ebullient Phoenix: A History of the Vicariate of Abyssinia, Book III*, Addis Ababa, United Printers, 1992, p.50.
- ²⁶ N.9. *Colonia Eritrea: Istruzione Publica*. Asmara, Tipografia Francescan (Missione Cattolica), 1914, p. 9
- ²⁷ Metodio da Nembro P. *La Missione Dei Minori Cappuccini In Eritrea (194-1952)*, Roma, Institutum Historicum Ord. Fr. Min. Cap., 1953, p.69
- ²⁸ O'Mahoney K., *The Ebullient Phoenix: A History of the Vicariate of Abyssinia, Book II*, Asmara, Ethiopian Studies Centre, 1987, p. 217; Metodio, Op. Cit, p. 70
- ²⁹ S. Strelycn, "Incunables" Ethiopiens Des Principales Bibliothèques Romaines: Supplément à Stephen Wright, *Ethiopian Incunabula*, 1967 in *RSE xxv*(1971-2(1974) p. 481 N. 1
- ³⁰ S. Strelycn, "Incunables" Ethiopiens Des Principales Bibliothèques Romaines: Supplément à Stephen Wright, *Ethiopian Incunabula*, 1967 in *RSE xxv*(1971-2(1974) p. 504, U4. 1.
- ³¹ *Ibi.*, p. 459
- ³² S. Strelycn, "Incunables" Ethiopiens Ethiopiens de la collection Faitlovitch (université de Tel-Aviv) et l'Istituto Orientale di Napoli (deuxième supplement Supplément à Stephen Wright, *Ethiopian Incunabula*, 1967 in *RSE xxvii*(1978-79) pp.106-108
- ³³ Diario di M. Biancheri (150 – 63) in Archivio del Vicariato Apostolico dell'Eritrea Cas. 4 Vol. 6, Asmara.
- ³⁴ A letter of Fr. Delmonte written on 13 Septemeber, 1864 in *Annales de la mission*, Tomo XXX, Parigi. P.78.
- ³⁵ Note: The Chronicle of Mgr. Bel was written in French however here I insert its translation into Italian by Prof. Endrizzi Pio, also preserved in the same archive. [May] "27. Abbiamo terminato la tiratura dei 500 esemplari del piccolo catechismo tradotto in tigrigno e di 1500 esemplari del sillabario composto nella stessa lingua e contenente l'alfabeto, il pater, l'ave Maria, il credo, gli atti di fede, speranza e carità, i comandamenti di Dio e della chiesa, e le cifre abissino. Sono i due primilibrari usciti dalla nostrastamperiacheha comiciato a funzione il10 maggio 1867. Noi non avevamo nessun operaio tipografo che ci aiutasse e dirigesse: è il signor Delmonte che ha ilmerito d'averpotuto mettere in marcia la stamperia. Per 15 giorni tutta la comunità, ivi copresi i seminaristi più grandi, ha lavorato sodo e con costanza, nonostante il calore, per questa edizione cheha dato alla luce due libri necessari per la formazione delle classi elementari operl'istruzione religiosa dei cattolici del Tigré, privi sino ad oggi di qualiasi libro scritto nella loro lingua. Che Dio si degni di benedire questo primo saggio e di facilitarci la comosizione e la stampa di altre opere per il benespirituale ed intelletuale di questo pover vicariato!!!"
- ³⁶ *Annales* , Tome XXXI (1866), p. 39
- ³⁷ ታሪክ ካቶሊካውያን ዘኢትዮጵያ። ብኣባ ተለሃይማኖት ዘምምሳሕ (እንተ ኣደዋ) Memorie ዜና መዋዕል
- ³⁸ *Ibid*
- ³⁹ *Ibid*
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid*
- ⁴¹ De Jacobis G., *Scritti: II Epistolario*, Roma, CLV-Eizioni Vincenziane, 2003, p. 1178
- ⁴² *Ibid.* p. 1119
- ⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 1130
- ⁴⁴ *ANNALES DE LA CONGREGATION DE LA MISSION*, Tomo XXX, Parigi, 1865, p. 78