

Tactics of Patriots in Qellem Wallaggaa, Western Ethiopia: The Case of Oliqa Dingil and His Compatriots, 1936 - 1940

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Abstract:

This study focuses on reconstructing history of tactics of Patriots in Qellem Wallaggaa from 1936 to 1940 mainly that of hero-patriot Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots in their guerilla fighting as the theme has not been studied comprehensively. The year 1936 is taken as a point of departure because it was a period when the Italians occupied the country. The year 1940 is also a landmark because it is a year when Oliqa Dingil was died. The study was conducted as part of staff research in Dambi Dollo University from early October 2020 to March 2021. Researcher employed systematic collection, analysis, interpretation and documentation of both oral and written sources. The oral sources were collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion. And most of our written sources constitute both published and unpublished materials. The patriots began their patriotic actions against the internal conquerors during the process of centralization in Ethiopia. The conquerors had harassed the people with suppression, maladministration, exploitation and egotism. After the Italian occupation of Qellem Wallaggaa, the patriots turned their faces towards fighting the Italian invaders and their subordinates. The patriots remained nightmare against their enemies through tactful guerilla fighting. The tactics generally include recruitment techniques, leadership qualities, concealment techniques, sudden mobility, diplomacy, sympathy, and use of land terrain for asylum. The patriots had also refrained from generalizing and equalizing the collaborators as ardent enemies as the Italian troops. Using these tactics, Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots harassed the Italian troops and the committed collaborators for at least four years. Unfortunately, the patriots were dispersed after Oliqa Dingil was killed with poison given to him through conspirators. Though Oliqa Dingil was died without observing the liberation of his country from the Italian occupation, almost all people memorize him as one of the gallant patriots of Ethiopia.

Keywords: compatriots, conquerors, guerilla, invaders, occupation, patriots, tactics

1. INTRODUCTION

Patriots are individuals who work hard to achieve common good and endeavors to bring positive change(s) to their people as well as their country. In the process of achieving the targeted objectives, patriots use different means of struggle, and victory belongs to those who use the best tactics. We have to honor those individuals who had worked and sacrificed for the achievement of the people's freedom. Specifically those who were engaged in

organizing the people and involved in armed struggle were the most dedicated heroes and heroines. Wallaggaa was among the then provinces in Ethiopia where guerrilla fighting remained active throughout the Italian occupation period. Oliqa Dingil was popularly known as "the patriot of Western Ethiopia" (Asafa Jalata, 2007 and Informants: Dula Runde and Tesfaye Megersa in Table 1).

Many of the patriots in Qellem Wallaggaa had grown hearing and being annoyed by the maladministration, egoism, immorality, cruelty, exploitation and suppression carried out against the people by the riflemen of emperor Menilek II and their subordinates before the Italian Occupation of the area. (Informants: Yadasa Dinqa and Tesfaye Megersa in Table 1).

Likewise, Oliqa Dingil was among the outstanding patriots of Qellem Wallaggaa. He was born to Lalo clan in Tajjoo area of Yamalogi Walal warada [administrative unit less than province] around 1890 from his father Dingil Hirpho popularly called Dingil Boka and his mother Ungude Ugga. Oliqa Dingil began his patriotic actions against the suppression and exploitation by the naftanya-gebbar (riflemen-tenant) system before the Italian occupation of Ethiopia. After the Italians invaded the area, Oliqa Dingil delayed his attack against the internal conquerors and turned his face against the external threat [Italian invaders]. Accompanied by other outshining patriots of Qellem Wallaggaa including Likkasa Wage, Gammachu Janko, Firrisa Torban and Kasa Latu, Oliqa Dingil harassed the Italian troops and their collaborators in and around Dambi Dollo; Anfillo, Garjeda, Walal, Lalo Qile, Dalle and Gidami (Lalisaa Warqinaa, 2017, and

Informants: Alemayehu Duresso, and Hundessa Gana in Table 1).

However, none the scholarly studies we reviewed has elucidated the tactics employed by the patriots of Qellem Wallaggaa particularly that of Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots. The objective of this research is examining the tactics of the patriots in the study area mainly during the Italian occupation of Qellem Wallaggaa.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

In conducting this research, qualitative research method was employed. It was done through close examination of historical evidences obtained from both oral and written sources. Unfortunately, we are less successful in obtaining sufficient local archival materials because there were problems of preservation and accessibility. Many of the historical sources were destroyed due to lack of proper management. Moreover, as Qellem Wallaggaa is among the newly formed zones, whereof the historical sources related to the theme is not clearly identified. This made the study a very challenging task. Therefore, oral sources provided us with lion's share in doing the research. Semi-structured and unstructured questions for oral interview were prepared and careful interviews were conducted with 17 key informants listed in the following table.

Table 1: List of Informants

No	Name of Informants	Sex	Age	Place and Month of Interview	Remarks
1.	Alemayehu Duresso	Male	70	Dambi Dollo April 2020	He was a retired government employee who participated in the preparing magazine on the culture and history of Qellem Wallaggaa with Getahun Wandimu during the Derg period.
2.	Cibsa Fayisa	Male	84	Dambi Dollo November 2021	He justified the reasons for identification between bandits and patriots.

3.	Dula Runde	Male	90	Dambi Dollo November 2021	He was a key informant who remembers very important memory concerning Oliqa Dingil and the Period of Italian occupation.
4.	Galata Nonnise	Male	95	Dambi Dollo April 2020	He knew Oliqa Dingil and Gannatworq Ashena personally. He also watched the dead body of Oliqa Dingil on the day it was brought to Dambi Dollo.
5.	Garoma Rare	Male	100	Dhanqa December 2020	He narrated the suppression and exploitation made by the riflemen of the Ethiopian emperors on the people.
6.	Hundessa Gana	Male	96	Dalle Sadi March 2021	He was a key informant and chairman of Peasant Association in Dambi Dollo during the Derg period. He has shown us tear from his eyes before responding to our question on the personality of Oliqa Dingil.
7.	Jirata Raso	Male	75	Dambi Dollo April 2020	He was an informant who provided us both memory and logical thinking on the tactics of patriots in Qellem Wallaggaa.
8.	Mamite Sagi	Female	103	Dambi Dollo March 2021	She had been moving with Oliqa Dingil in her young age simply because she loves him and his tactics.
9.	Mamo Ambisa	Male		Tabor October 2021	He was among the collaborators of the Italians, and served them as translator.
10.	Qanna Ayele	Male	60	Dambi Dollo January 2021	He was a good informant mainly on the tactics of the patriots and its consequences in various dimensions.
11.	Shuma Chaffo	Male	62	Hawa Galan May 2020	He was a good informant who narrates the deeds of the Oromo chiefs in Qellem Wallaggaa.
12.	Tesfa Asafa	Male	53	Hawa Galan May 2020	He was the only informant we could found on an early life history Oliqa Dingil.
13.	Tesfaye Megersa	Male	60	Dambi Dollo May 2021	He was retired government employee previously worked in Qellem Wallaggaa Culture and Tourism office.
14.	Warate Gelalcha	Male	64	Dambi Dollo January 2021	He was a vice president of EECMY in Dambi Dollo who told us tactics of Oliqa Dingil during his guerrilla warfare.

15.	Yadasa Dinqa	Male	85	Alaku	He was a key informant on the socio-political and religious history of Qellem Wallaggaa. He personally knew some of the compatriots of Oliqa Dingil.
16.	Yonas Fayisa	Male	90	Dhanqa May 2020	He remembers good examples when Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots ask people for support on voluntarily bases.
17.	Zewditu Ashana	Female	91	Dambi Dollo December 2020	She was a younger sister of Gannatworq Ashana, the wife of Oliqa Dingil. She remembers well what she was told by her sister concerning tactics of Oliqa Dingil.

The key informants were identified by purposive sampling mainly through snowball sampling technique. Problems of timing of events, exaggerations and forgetting encountered the researcher from the evidences obtained from informants during the fieldwork. Hence, whenever possible, an attempt has been made to ensure the validity of oral sources through checking and cross-checking oral sources with the available written documents.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Recruitment Technique and Leadership Quality:

Oliqa Dingil employed a number of tactics in recruiting and leading his forces. Our informants consensually told us that Oliqa Dingil never allows anyone to join his forces before carefully examining the personalities. He used this tactics to block the chances of being exposed by the then spies or to avoid attack against him and his compatriots (Informants: Yonas Fayisa, Dula Runde and Galata Nonnise in Table 1).

To mention a few examples of the tactics in recruiting forces, most of our informants agreed that Oliqa Dingil often recruits committed and strong individuals as his forces if and only if the person had taken harsh measures on the enemies or at least committed serious 'crimes' against them. This was based on the assumption that

carefully recruited members will not threat Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots at least in two ways. Firstly, it would reduce the chance of the newly recruited forces to return back to their areas. The second was that proper recruitment and leadership of forces will reduce the possibility of discrediting Oliqa Dingil and his groups as bandits. Once Oliqa Dingil recruited committed individuals cautiously, he often divides them into sub-groups and places the sub-groups at different sites. As he made abrupt change of his centers of attack mostly after sudden attack, he joins one of the sub-groups. This was among intelligence and skills Oliqa Dingil had used to hideout himself, and protect his group from attack (Informants: Alemayehu Duresso, Warate Gelalcha, and Hundessa Gana in Table 1).

Oliqa Dingil did his best in organizing his compatriots distinguishing them from a group of puzzling robbers known locally as dillisee. The Dillisees were neither patriots nor collaborators. They were group who sometimes pretend themselves as patriots and attempts to act as if Oliqa Dingil sent them to the house to ask for support. They also came either with weapon or fake armaments, threaten and took away the property of innocent persons. Most of the time, they came at night and request what the individuals have. For instance, they ask for honey, money and cattle. They harshly

punish innocent individuals if their request was not accepted (Informants: Warate Gelalcha: Garoma Rare, Yonas Fayisa and Galata Nonnise in Table 1).

According to oral sources, there were also cases where the dillisees entered into person's home, turn off the existing kind of light in the home and took away anything of value as robbers. Oliqa Dingil strongly opposed the dillisee and distinguishes them from his compatriots. This was because he did not want to threat innocent people (Informants: Garoma Rare, Yonas Fayisa and Tesfa Asafa in Table 1).

Consequently, Oliqa Dingil attracted and approached many through some qualities like his tactics, good deeds, broadmindedness and compassionate characters. He recruits his forces and made contact with anyone who fit the required qualities. His compatriots were neither restricted to his own nation nor to his birth place. For instance, his compatriot from among the neighbors was Firrisa Abba Mogga who was from Ilu Abba Bora. They contact each other through Dabo Anna area (Informants: Tesfaye Megersa and Dula Runde in Table).

Afaan Oromoo

Faranjii adii ajjeeseen
makiinaa boraasise
Hamaasenii ajjeeseen
yasee ishee boraasise
Baandaa kobbortaa ajjeeseen
kobbortaa boraasise

(Source: Unpublished manuscript in Dambi Dollo Town Culture and Tourism Office)

Armament

The patriots got their armaments tactically, using every possible technique. According to our informants, Oliqa Dingil began his measures on the enemies by his own private gun. Throughout the period of struggle, however, he equipped himself and his compatriots through techniques including buying but largely taking it away from the surrendered or killed enemies; disarming the enemies (Informants: Tesfaye Megersa,

Furthermore, Mammo Dasta was among compatriots of Oliqa Dingil who were from non-Oromo nation. He was an Amhara man who had confronted against the Italians in the area. The Italians shot him and wounded his leg. But he lived even after liberation. Some of the compatriots of Oliqa Dingil from Qellem Wallaggaa were Gemmechu Dero, Gemechu Janko, Ammayya Ashana and Likkasa Wage. Oliqa Dingil and Likasa Wage met each other in Akakkil forest and discuss what to do and undo in their oppression (Informants: Yadasa Dinqa, Dula Runde, Tesfaye Megersa and Zewditu Ashana in Table 1).

As a part of his leadership quality, Oliqa Dingil cares for and values the importance of moral strength of his compatriots and encourages them through different techniques. He sometimes used limerick songs to appreciate his deeds and motivates himself and his forces. This was aimed at initiation for the next operations. One of the best examples was his song at Qachi area, near Dambi Dollo town, following his victory over the Italians and collaborators.

Free Translation in English

I killed the whites and
made them to hug their bus
I killed the Hamaseni and
made them to hug their hair
I killed collaborators and
made them to hug their jacket

Galata Nonnise and Zewditu Ashana in Table 1).

Soon after the occupation of Qellem Wallaggaa, the Italians began disarmament policy towards the inhabitants of the area. The disarmament program ranged from guns to home-used sharp instruments like knives. They frightened the people saying that "anyone who is found with arms, refused to submit the arms, or attempts to hide arms for personal use would be

punished harshly even with his/her neighbors”. They killed some individuals who opposed their disarmament policy. Dhosa Abba Qoro was among those who were massacred for hiding armament at Gute Boro area (Informants: Hundessa Gana, Galata Nonnise and Jirata Raso in Table 1).

Both written and oral sources corroborate that Oliqa Dingil had taken away, either by himself or through his agents, the guns and bullets from those people who were on the way being forced to hand over it to the Italian colonial office in Dambi Dollo town. According to these sources, Oliqa began the tactic of equipping himself and his compatriots. Oliqa Dingil had also followed disarming program against his enemies. This was the most known tactic that Oliqa Dingil and his members employed in gaining arms (Informants: Hundessa Gana, Mamo Ambisa and Yonas Fayisa in Table 1).

It was after getting benefit from the disarmament tactic that Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots began to take serious measures on the Fascists and their collaborators. Oral tradition confirmed that the quantity and quality of the armaments of the patriots, patriotic deeds of Oliqa Dingil and his groups, and popularity of Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots increased gradually but continually (Informants: Galata Nonnise and Tesfaye Megersa in Table 1).

Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots had also attempted to improve their tactical and technical problems through time. They evaluated their weakness and tried to solve their problems through their own techniques. Interestingly, informants remembered an extraordinary example in this regard:

“The guerrilla fighters led by Oliqa Dingil had once taken away more modernized gun from the Italian troops. However, they faced skill gap in operating with the new modeled gun. Therefore, they come to a decision that one of them should make purposive surrender to the Italians,

pretending as if he was to work with the Italians for last as a loyal betrayal. Then, one of them was surrendered and trained by the Italians on oppression with modern armaments. After completion of the training, the person accompanied by the some Italians started journey to Jimma Abba Jifar for graduation. As they reached the Qeto River, the person accomplished the calculated tragedy against the Italians where his former groups were shooting. Based on the predetermined calculation, he pretended as if he was shouting and jumped to his ex-group. Then he was said to have solved skill gaps among the forces of Oliqa Dingil in operating with more modern guns”.

(Source: Informants: Warate Gelalcha and Dula Runde in Table 1)

Use of Land Terrain as Shelter, domain and Concealment

Oliqa Dingil was among the known guerrilla fighters against the Italian invaders of the country. Together with his compatriots, Oliqa Dingil moved day and night because he knew the geographic and demographic landscapes of the area. Guerrilla fighters established their camps at different areas. Accordingly, Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots ambushed the Italian invaders, the Hamaseni and other betrayals waiting them at strategic positions (Informants: Tesfaye Megersa, Dula Runde, Hundessa Gana and Qanna Ayale in Table 1).

In Qellem Wallaggaa, the main domains of Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots are the present day waradas like Yamalogi Walal and Sayyoo. Oliqa Dingil began the use of land terrain as asylum at Walal massif, nearby his birth place. Oliqa cave and forest in Soxi, Dorgomme area of Sayyoo, and jungles of Walal Mountain served Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots as asylum and shelter. These are not only areas where Oliqa Dingil stayed for long but also place where he hide out his armaments

(Informants: Dula Runde and Hundessa Gana in Table 1).

However, Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots remained mobile guerrilla fighters. They attacked the Italian troops by using different natural asylum like caves, jungle, holes and mountains. For instance, Oliqa Cave around locality of Dorgomme near Tabor, Gunguma cave underneath the Walal Mountain, mountain of Qallitti Gallabu (formerly called Gaara Maa'oo), and jungles in Walal, Anfillo, Halaku and Garjeda as well as desert that stretched up to Gambella remained some of the natural shelter of Oliqa Dingil and his groups. Other known asylum and natural shelter of the patriots included caves of Qaci, Aggata, Akakkil, Awusa, Macaqeddo, Ondoloqe, Dogga, Cabal, Qilxu Karra and Ulaa Biyyoo, all located in Qellem Wallaggaa (Informants: Dula Runde, Tesfaye Megersa and Hundessa Gana in Table 1).

Both oral and written sources indicates that caves, hills and jungles of Walal mountain were regarded as 'home' to Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots during the Italian occupation of the area. They attacked their enemies from such inaccessible terrain. Our informants told us that Oliqa Dingil destroyed many Italian soldiers at Qexo River waiting them at the bridge (Informants: Tesfaye Megersa, Hundessa Gana and Tesfa Asafa in Table 1).

Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots sometimes blocked roads and bridges to attack their enemies there. When they did so too, identification of strategic positions for blockade remained significant. The best example was the blockade over the Qexo River. There, Oliqa Dingil ambushed the Italians going to Dambi Dollo by blocking the road with big trees. Later, large number of the local population and collaborators feared Oliqa Dingil in similar manner they feared the Italians (Informants: Mamo Ambisa and Garoma Rare in Table 1).

Diplomacy:

Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots had used moderate tactics of approaching the people.

His enemies, particularly, the Italian troops and their loyal collaborators were unable to withstand the tactics of Oliqa Dingil. This was mainly because he not only made good use of terrain, the strategic positions from where he inflicts warfare but he also established smooth relationship with the people including the Italian collaborators and the kappos (leaders of collaborators). The popular support remained the main factor that helped Oliqa Dingil not to be captured despite the Italian's unreserved campaign to capture him (Informants: Tesfaye Megersa, Tesfa Asafa and Qanna Ayale in Table 1).

Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots knew committed individuals with whom to establish friendship and cooperation. Oliqa Dingil investigates committed individuals who could adamantly move with him either physically, materially, financially or morally. The forms of support include the provision of food, asylum, intelligence and advising to Oliqa and his compatriots covertly. The support was also manifested in provision, placing and sending of armaments to Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots (Informants: Tesfaye Megersa, Tesfa Asafa, and Yonas Fayisa in Table 1). Correspondingly, Oliqa Dingil shares what he obtained with others more particularly with those people who are in needy, and with his compatriots. Our informants told us that Oliqa Dingil usually gives money for the poor. And he promised to the poor that no one will take away their property forcefully (Informants: Mamite Sagi and Yonas Fayisa in Table 1).

Both oral and written sources indicate that Oliqa Dingil was labeled as shifta (sic) only by his enemies. Shifta, in Amharic, means bandit. But the name does not practically represent Oliqa Dingil. It was scornful name given to Oliqa Dingil by his enemies to make hunting against him more liable. To endorse their cases and discredit Oliqa Dingil, the group who were not happy with the liberation struggle in the area had been searching for fake evidences to make their hunting against Oliqa Dingil liable.

Regrettably, other people support this idea only because they had not understood the secret behind the naming (Lalisaa Warqinaa, 2017, and Informants: Tesfa Asafa, Cibsaa Fayisa, Mamo Ambisa and Tesfaye Megersa in Table 1).

Taking Proactive Measures:

Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots took proactive measures against the enemy's forces including that of the Italian invaders, and their spies or anyone who either insulted the patriots, refused to take their instructions or attempt to threaten the patriots. The measures would range from warnings to killing, but it was not based on simple rumor. He carefully looks into the context in which individual(s) did or spoke a certain actions against him and/or his group (Informants: Mamo Ambisa, Tesfaye Megersa and Galata Nonnise in Table 1).

The Italians lacked some qualities that Oliqa Dingil possessed. For instance, if the Italians heard any rumor that someone did or spoke against them, they took hasty measurements without cautious investigation. Hence, Oliqa Dingil surpassed the Italians by his careful investigation to detect his real enemies. Narration of the decision and reconsideration that Oliqa Dingil did against his own wife could be taken as best example which indicates his cautious examination while he was carrying out his oppressions (Informants: Mamo Ambisa, Galata Nonnise and Zewditu Ashana in Table 1).

Afaan Oromoo

Oliqa mataa jiksaa
Ati duute moo jirtaa?
Utuu ati jiraattee
Hantuunni maaf warraaqxe
Abbaa coomaaf damma kootii
Hamaaseniin maal nagooti

According to our informants, the suspicious matrimonial life between Oliqa Dingil and his wife, Gannatworq Ashana, was begun due to the immoral intervention of Gebeyehu Wolde. It seems that Gannatworq had embittered Oliqa by making contact with Gebeyehu. However, as it was true to other women of the conquered regions of the period, Gannatworq could not withstand harassment by the then egoistic riflemen. Understanding the harassment of the period, Oliqa Dingil had neither adamantly ceased to support his wife even after he entered into jungle as guerilla fighter nor took hasty measures over her life. Moreover, Oliqa Dingil sometimes brought Maria Theresa Thaler (MTT) to his wife, Gannatworq Ashana and her sister, Bune Ashana. Gannatworq, on her side, had not lost hope of maintaining marriage relation with Oliqa Dingil (Informants: Mamo Ambisa, Garoma Rare and Zewditu Ashana in Table 1).

The following story was directly quoted from the words of key informants

“Oliqa had once determined to take harsh measure on his wife Gannatworq if he found her with any man for sexual relation. Then he came to his house [some informants say that it was on Easter day] to see her at night. While he arrived just in front of his house, he heard Gannatworq's sound singing the following praising and romantic song or rhyme which expresses his valor:

Free Translation to English

you Oliqa of long hair
Are you dead or alive?
had you alive
Why do rat [collaborators] move freely
you the father of my fat and honey
Hamaseni could do nothing [against me]

(Source: Informants: Mamo Ambisa, Garoma Rare and Zewditu Ashana in Table 1)

The other murmuring that Oliqa heard from Gannatworq being outside of his house was as follows:

Afaan Oromoo

Ani niitii dhiiraati
Dur illee cooman mura
Har'a raafuun mummura

Free Translation

I am a wife of [brave] man
In my older days, I chopped fat meat
Today, I am chopping cabbage

(Source: Informants: Mamo Ambisa and Qanna Ayele in Table 1)

Impressed with the song and murmuring sound of Gannatworq, Oliqa reconsidered his decision, turned off his gun, and entered into his house, met her and enjoyed the night with Gannatworq. At the early morning, he returned back to his domain. This indicates that Oliqa Dingil suspects others but did not take hasty punitive measures. He investigates for the reality of his suspicion critically by listening sounds and recognizing the meaning of sounds around him. Based on the meaning of sounds, Oliqa Dingil reconsiders his decisions (Informants: Mamo Ambisa, Garoma Rare and Zewditu Ashana in Table 1).

Moreover, it was stated that Gannatworq was once accused by the Italians and detained at karshalle with a charge of feeding the 'shifta', Oliqa Dingil. Karshalle is the local name of prison in the present day Dambi Dollo town located in 03 kebele. It was originally built by a certain Greek named Wasille whom the surrounding people called abbaa Warqee. While she was in the prison, Oliqa Dingil had threatened and caused the Italians to release Gannatworq. To quote his posted message, "...Those who arrested my wife, just release her soon. If not, I will burn you to the ground like hut". According to our informants, the Italians released Gannatworq because they were irritated by the posted message. However, the Italians and their collaborators continued to hunt Oliqa. Being near his house, they often made unsuccessful attempt to capture him (Informants: Tesfaye Megersa, Galata Nonnise and Zewditu Ashana in Table 1).

Throughout the process of initiative punishment against their enemies, Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots made use of their tactics. For instance, a rich Greek businessman called Demetrius Valantis or Abbaa Nyonyo was once robbed at night by Oliqa Dingil and his group because he had discredited them as bandits. Demitrous Valantis was the owner of the factory found in Meti area of Sayyoo warada until more recent years. The factory produces different products like soap, tea, oil and the like. The soap which reads 'made in Meti' is among the items produced in the factory (Informants: Tesfaye Megersa and Zewditu Ashana in Table 1).

Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots took counter attacking action against Abbaa Nyonyo in the night. By the night, Oliqa Dingil warned Valantis must remain silent until they would allow him through sign that is said to be gunning down. Valantis passed the night waiting for the said sign, not cried until the evening of the next day. People who came to his house at the evening hearing the shouting of Valantis laughed at him for he cries for the past deed (Informants: Tesfaye Megersa, Dula Runde and Zewditu Ashana in Table 1).

Some personalities who were rebuked by the patriots were Fullasa Babil in Yamalogi Walal and Wacila Walo in Anfillo. The first was from the present Yamalogi Walal Warada who had once oath with Oliqa Dingil, not to arrange against each others. Violating the oath, Fullasa Babil entered into agreement with the Italians promising to behead Oliqa Dingil. Five guns were given to Fullasa Babil by the Italians for the actualization of the agreement. However,

Oliqa Dingil took proactive measure against Fullasa Babil and killed him in Tajjo. Fullasa was assassinated in his own home. Oliqa Dingil took the five guns modeled locally as minishiri from Fullasa Babil and equipped it to his compatriots (Informants: Mamo Ambisa, Tesfaye Megersa and Galata Nonnise in Table 1). The measures taken by Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots were not necessarily proactive. They also took revenges against their enemies. The punitive action taken against the life of Wachila Walo by Oliqa Dingil was not in a proactive way. It was a type of revenging. This was because Wachila Walo took initiative by killing one of the compatriots of Oliqa Dingil by the name of Dhaba Bocolo in Anfillo (Informants: Dula Runde and Tesfaye Megersa in Table 1).

Flexibility and Camouflage as Tactics of the Patriots:

Oliqa Dingil and his group were so flexible that they usually made purposeful and sudden change of their centers of domain, speed and directions of movement as well as tactics of warfare. Oliqa Dingil often told misleading information and directions to the spies. He also changes his direction of movement suddenly. While the Italians wait for him at place where he appointed them through messages, letters or spies, Oliqa Dingil attack them from another position using his speedy mobility. These were among the strategies that the Italians and their collaborators could not withstand (Informants: Dula Runde and Tesfaye Megersa in Table 1).

Contrary to this, Oliqa Dingil sometimes sends real message to the Italian soldiers informing them the day he will confront them. Surprisingly, Oliqa Dingil made appointment with his enemies. Sending a kind of message for appointment and letting the enemies necessary preparation for confrontation was among the qualities that made Oliqa Dingil an extraordinary patriot of the period. He also warns the officials of the Italians concerning their possible death in near future unless they ceased the way

they were dealing. He accomplishes these practically (Informants: Alemayehu Duresso, Qanna Ayele and Tesfaye Megersa in Table 1).

During the period when Oliqa Dingil was in a 'shifta' (sic) life, the Italian collaborators and spies could not freely gossip Oliqa even at a night. This was because they feared that Oliqa will either warn, raid or kill them. Therefore, they awed talking on Oliqa Dingil as if he always hears them. This indicates how the tactics of Oliqa Dingil and his group were so complicated (Informants: Qanna Ayele and Tesfaye Megersa in Table 1).

As the Italians invaded the area, they ordered their collaborators to capture and bring Oliqa to them. At this moment, Oliqa used his tactics for escaping away and hiding himself out of his enemies. Throughout his patriotic measures, Oliqa Dingil never treated the Italian collaborators as ardent enemies as the Italians themselves. This, Oliqa believes, was at least for two main reasons (Informants: Alemayehu Duresso, Dula Runde and Tesfaye Megersa in Table 1).

Firstly, Oliqa understood that the Oromo collaborators gave hand to the Italians and served them due to their grievance against the naftanya suppressive system rather than deliberate betrayal. The second reason which prevented Oliqa Dingil not to attack the Oromo collaborators was their origin, being Oromo. Therefore, his primary target was the Italians, not the banda. It was said that Oliqa Dingil had contact with the kappos of Qellam Wallaggaa. However, on those who adamantly ally with enemies, he took harsh measure (Informants: Garoma Rare, Dula Runde and Tesfaye Megersa in Table 1).

For him, the blacks were not equivalent to the whites in the intensity of their enmity. Even he sent message to collaborators warning them to betray the Italians or at best avoid committed work for them. Therefore, Oliqa Dingil refrained himself from taking serious measures on the collaborators unless the latter

persistently work for the Italians by refusing the orders and warnings of the patriots (Informants: Galata Nonnise and Mamo Ambisa in Table 1).

As it was already stated, Oliqa Dingil made secret dealing with some of the disloyal Italian collaborators and their spies. He used the disloyal collaborators and the spies to attack the Italians. The Italians usually follow the footstep of collaborators in hunting Oliqa and his compatriots. Oliqa Dingil and the disloyal compatriots ('double agents') communicate and exchange information through sign markers. As the collaborators bypass, Oliqa wait until the Italians would come. Then he destroys the Italians, not the collaborators. However, Oliqa Dingil did not tolerate the uncompromising collaborators who serve the Italians heartedly (Informants: Tesfaye Megersa and Galata Nonnise in Table 1).

Because of their mobility, the dispersal of their forces into small groups, and their ability to disappear among the civilian population, it was extremely difficult for the Italians to capture the guerilla fighters of the period. The Italians did not properly know Oliqa Dingil physically. He had also established secret relations with most of the collaborators and the leaders of the collaborators. Oliqa Dingil took harsh measures on one who refuses his order or who planned against him. For instance, Qanyazmach Jafaro Milki was killed in the hands of Oliqa Dingil because the former made unsuccessful attempt against the life of Oliqa Dingil. Just following his sudden attack against the Italians, Oliqa sometimes disappear among the inhabitants of the area. Therefore, it was difficult for Italians to capture Oliqa Dingil (Informants: Mamite Sagi, Tesfaye Megersa, Tesfa Asafa and Dula Runde in Table 1).

To quote words of one of our informant, who have been with him, "Oliqa shot to the Italians and run to farmers who were plowing their field. Then he took farming oxen from the farmers to plough the same field. Then when the Italians come to the area and ask him where-about of Oliqa

Dingil, himself responds that he had not seen anyone and pretend as if he was farmer and owner of the field" (Informant: Mamite Sagi in Table 1).

Ways of getting Clothes and Feeding:

Concerning their feeding, Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots depend on the voluntarily provisions from the people across where they move. As the guerilla fighters normally lacked enough provisions of their own, they depend on their people and their environment. They ask the people's support voluntarily. Then the people also gave them the feeding on voluntarily bases. However, Oliqa Dingil and his collaborators sometimes took away the property of their ardent enemies if the latter refused to return back from their wrong deeds and sides with warnings (Informants: Yonas Fayisa and Mamo Ambisa in Table 1).

When he kills the Italian soldiers or the loyal collaborators, Oliqa Dingil took away the military uniforms of the victims. He clothes the military uniform of the Italian soldiers or the kobborta (special long jacket of collaborators) as part of his camouflage techniques (Informants: Mekonen Tola, Galata Nonnise and Tesfaye Megersa in Table 1).

Oliqa Dingil also supports his compatriots to use such techniques and gave them the clothes when he took away the extra clothes from the enemies. When he came to Dambi Dollo, as he often did it at others including Tabor, Muggi, Gidami areas of Qellem Wallaggaa (Alemu Shuie, p.125). Oliqa Dingil made good use of his physical strength, heroism and his intelligence skills in camouflaging himself and investigating his environment carefully (Informants: Tesfaye Megersa, Qanna Ayele and Zewditu Ashana in Table 1).

Accordingly, when he came to Dambi Dollo, Oliqa Dingil dresses the military uniforms or special clothes of the enemies. He came to the town clothing the uniform of the Italian soldiers known as keremenyeri or that of their collaborators called kobborta. Then he ate and drank with

others in the town and return back to his domain collecting the necessary information. This was among the tactics Oliqa used to escape capture. It helped him not to be recognized by the Italians. As a result, Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots move within their enemies. This was because the tactic confused the Italians as if new collaborators or Italians arrived to the areas from other places (Informants: Mekonen Tola, Galata Nonnise and Tesfaye Megersa).

Oliqa Dingil also came to Dambi Dollo town by the night for the purpose of collecting necessary information, assessing location and condition of his enemies, get his feeding from those with whom he had secret connections and made discussion with his close friends. This was because the Italians were anxious to move at the night. Even in the caves and jungles, some individuals brought food to Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots. For example, Kuma Awanno and Nagawo Danno were among those who brought food to the patriots when the latter were in the Gunguma Cave of Walal Mountain (Informants: Tesfa Asafa and Shuma Chaffo in Table 1).

Interestingly, one of the oral informants, Mamite Sagi, narrated the compassionate deeds of Oliqa Dingil on the day he and his compatriots drunk coffee and milk from the house of anonymous person as follows:

“... I was moving with Oliqa Dingil by dressing the trousers of my father. I did this simply because I love Oliqa Dingil. I was not equipped. I was only 18 years old by the time. One day, we were allowed to drink coffee from a given house in Minko area. After we used all things including food, coffee and milk, we had to move out of the home. Unfortunately, I broke the kettle of the coffee with my leg. Oliqa Dingil had not alarmed me as it was happened suddenly. Then Oliqa Dingil paid the price of the kettle to the person who invited us. Then we went out and left for Walal.”

In addition to the provisions they gained from the people, Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots also hunt wild animals for

feeding. They also ate the wild fruits. The quality of Oliqa Dingil in beating the targeted things (addaanyummaa) helped Oliqa Dingil and his close friends to kill wild animals with their guns at hand (Informants: Zewditu Ashana and Tesfaye Megersa in Table 1).

It was said that Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots had never robbed the innocent people. They usually asked for support of individuals in cajole. Particularly, Oliqa Dingil was compassionate toward the poor. He often gave tamuni (birr of the period) to the poor. He also encourages and gave hope to the poor that no one would confiscate their property (Informants: Tesfaye Megersa, Hundessa Gana and Mamite Sagi in Table 1). Considering the plausible arguments of majority of our informants, it is suffice here to identify Oliqa Dingil and his group as patriots, not bandits.

Consequences of the Tactics of Oliqa Dingil and His Compatriots:

The existing historical sources corroborate that Oliqa Dingil remained a nightmare to the Italians troops and their collaborators for four solid years. As the black lion organization failed to continue their initial success against the Italian invasion of Wallaggaa, Oliqa Dingil took their position and elongated their attempts in Western Oromia. He scored many victories on the Italians and their collaborators through sporadic guerrilla warfare. The Italians were usually troubled when they even hear the very name of Oliqa Dingil (Informants: Galata Nonnise, Garoma Rare and Mamite Sagi in Table 1).

Oliqa Dingil and his close friends took serious and determined measures against their enemies. The most known grounds of attack against the Italians and their collaborators took place at Fincho and Dubisi. There, the average death of the Italians was numbered thirty. Another more or less historically known battle was at Wallagge again in Yamalogi Walal. At Wallagge, more than 700 collaborators accompanying the Italians were destroyed.

It was said that only three collaborators and an Italian called Tininti Biche survived the battle (Lalisaa Warqinaa, 2017, and Informants: Dula Runde, Hundessa Gana and Tesfa Asafa in Table 1).

Oliqa Dingil also took harsh measures against those individuals who stubbornly feed either the Italian soldiers or the loyal collaborators. For instance, after destroying the Italians who campaigned to hunt him at Dinbo in 1937, Oliqa Dingil killed nine individuals who were providing food for collaborators. Oliqa also had carried out surprising attacks on and booted the Italians at Laga Qunche toward the end of the 1930s (Informants: Shuma Chaffo and Tesfa Asefa in Table 1).

Generally, some of the main fields where Oliqa Dingil and his compatriots attacked the Italians and their collaborators in Qellem Wallaggaa were Wallagge in Yamalogi Walal, Fincho, Dubisi, Dinbo and Qeto River. More particularly, Oliqa Dingil attacked the Italians on the bridge on Qeto River. Qexo River is located between Mechara and Canqa. Oliqa destroyed the Italians on the bridge and thrown them to the Qexo River. The death of Oliqa Dingil was come about partly involving people whom he trusts. He was among the Oromo heroes whose way of death remained source of deep sorrow (Informants: Tesfaye Megersa and Mamite Sagi in Table 1).

Toward the last years of 1930s, Oliqa had mobilized his compatriots from the area called Boni, and prepared to attack Italians in Dambi Dollo. Meanwhile, he was caught by tapeworm (koso). Oliqa was caught by tapeworm perhaps because he often ate raw meat. The use of traditional medicine for the treatment of different kind of diseases was the trend of the period. The medicine has to be prepared for the koso carrier by someone who is trusted either to avoid the possible side effects or to control the tension concerning the quality of the medicine (Informants: Galata Nonnise and Mamo Ambisa in Table 1).

Then Oliqa Dingil approached to a certain woman whom he trusts. Our informants

told us that Oliqa Dingil persistently went to the house of the woman whom he trusts in the locality of Tabor near Dambi Dollo in the area called Oddoo Butaa, on the way to Anfillo (Informants: Tesfaye Megersa and Dula Runde in Table 1).

We had attempted to get the details of the woman. However, most of our sources could not even mention her name. Though the precision of her name and detailed personality of the woman needs further investigation, many of our oral informants told us that the woman was an addooyyee (close friend) of Oliqa Dingil and wife of Babure Wagi. Her house was in the locality of Oddo Butaa nearby 'Oliqa's Cave'. The woman gave poisoned traditional medicine for Oliqa Dingil based on the alleged promise of getting reward in return from the enemies of Oliqa Dingil, mainly from the remnants of the riflemen of Menilek II (Informants: Galata Nonnise, Tesfaye Megersa and Dula Runde in Table 1).

The Italians were tired of military means to win Oliqa Dingil. Therefore, they had promised to reward [pay] someone who could follow up and expose whereof Oliqa Dingil. This was because their repeated attempts to capture Oliqa Dingil were unsuccessful. Therefore, the Italians resorted to political and diplomatic alternative of bribery which resulted to his death in 1940 (Informants: Galata Nonnise and Tesfaye Megersa in Table 1).

Accordingly, an individual by the name of Wadajo was assigned to persuade the woman on the ground that she has to prepare traditional medicine mixed with poison and give it to Oliqa Dingil. Wadajo was from among the servants of the naftanya group who had settled at Tabor accompanying the riflemen. Wadajo did it because he opted to get benefits at the expense of Oliqa's life. Then the poisoned traditional medicine weakened Oliqa Dingil. It was against the dying Oliqa that Wadajo shot to get the promised reward, and recognition of praise as a killer of great man (Informants: Galata Nonnise, Tesfaye Megersa and Zewditu Ashana in Table 1).

Oliqa Dingil was killed in 1940 nearly at the age of 40 a year before the Italians' withdrawal from Ethiopia. The Italians were unable to believe that Oliqa could be killed because they had attempted many times. Therefore, they called up on his wife for confirmation and asked her if the dead was really Oliqa Dingil. Then she approved for them. An Italian by the name of Governo Dhae had shown his annoyance against the death of Oliqa Dingil and alarmed to Wadajo by asserting that such great man must not be killed rather captured safely and would be made war leader (Informants: Galata Nonnise, Yonas Fayisa and Garoma Rare in Table 1).

Some of his compatriots including Gammachu Janko and Jifar Jona were with him at the moment he was given the poison. But they did nothing but changed the place where the dead body of Oliqa was buried from the area then called Biherawi Tor to Gabriel church. After his uneventful death in 1940, the compatriots of Oliqa Dingil were weakened, disorganized, disguised, or at best lost their strong and committed leader. Hence, Italians did not face strong resistance in Qellem. Thus, no strong figure had replaced Oliqa (Informants: Mamo Ambisa, Tesfaye Megersa and Zewditu Ashana in Table 1).

4. CONCLUSION

Internal problems and external invasions had initiated patriotic sentiments among the heroes of Qellem Wallaggaa. The internal problems were brought about by the internal conquerors by the force from the center. The escalation of problems from the enemies further strengthened the determination and popularity of the patriots. The patriots were so flexible that they delayed their attack against the internal conquerors and diverted their target against the invaders as well as their collaborators after the Italian occupation of the area.

In the processes of destroying invaders and their collaborators, the patriots of Qellem Wallaggaa carried out guerilla fighting by employing their own tactics. Throughout

their guerilla warfare, the patriots depend on the local inhabitants and landscape around the area they move. In doing so, they got provisions including recruits, feeding, information and advisers. They also operated from bases established in inaccessible terrain, such as forests, caves, hills, valleys, mountains and jungles. The measures taken by the patriots against the Italians, the Eritreans and betrayals were not the same. It was severe against the Italians and Eritreans but follow more moderate often accompanied by warning against the collaborators.

Capturing the guerrilla fighters remained extremely difficult. The leadership qualities, armament techniques, speedy mobility, flexibility, concealment, taking of proactive measures and cheating the enemies through pseudo betrayals, and strong diplomatic skills were among the tactics of the patriots that the Italian invaders and their collaborators did not withstand.

As the Italians were tired of either capturing or defeating the guerilla fighters, they arranged conspiracy against the determined and compassionate leader of the patriots, Oliqa Dingil. Needless to say, Oliqa Dingil who was a nightmare against both internal conquerors and the external invaders was killed by secret arrangement made against his life by someone he trusts. The death of Oliqa Dingil had worsened the fate of his compatriots because they lost their strong and committed leader. After the death of Oliqa Dingil, his compatriots were weakened and almost dispersed, and since then the Italian invaders did not encounter such astonishing attacks in Qellem Wallaggaa. Careful analysis of the study indicates that the popular support and appreciation to Oliqa Dingil was increased gradually and continually mainly because the people understood the factors which brought the patriots to guerilla fighting.

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