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978-1-107-03531-7 - Making Citizens in Africa: Ethnicity, Gender, and National Identity in Ethiopia

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## Making Citizens in Africa

*Making Citizens in Africa* argues that citizenship creation and expansion is a pivotal part of political contestation in Africa today. Citizenship is a powerful analytical tool with which to approach political life in contemporary Africa because the institutional and structural reforms of the period since the 1990s have been inextricably linked with the battle over the “right to have rights.” Professor Lahra Smith’s work advances the notion of meaningful citizenship, which refers to the way in which rights are exercised, the effective practice of citizenship. Using data from Ethiopia and developing a historically informed study of language policy and ethnicity and gender, this book analyzes the contestation over citizenship that engages the state, social movements, and individuals in consequential ways. By combining original data on language policy with detailed historical study and an analytical focus on ethnicity, citizenship, and gender, this work brings a fresh approach not only to Ethiopian political development but also to contemporary citizenship concerns relevant to other parts of Africa.

Lahra Smith is assistant professor in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. She has written extensively on ethnic identity, African elections, and gender and politics in Africa. Her research has been published in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, *Democratization*, and policy briefs for organizations such as the United States Institute of Peace. She has received grants and fellowships from the National Science Foundation and the Fulbright-Hays program. In 2010 she was the Fulbright Visiting Research Chair in Ethnicity and Multicultural Citizenship at Queen’s University (Kingston, Canada).

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LAHRA SMITH

*Georgetown University*



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*For Dawit, Abraham, and Milo*

*In memory of*

*Jotham Tezare Gebru*

*and*

*Emily Kathleen Arndt*

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## Acknowledgments

One rainy afternoon in July 2003, I sat on a patio with my father-in-law, and he sang to me three different national anthems for Ethiopia. A man in his early seventies, he has lived through three major political regimes and three constitutions. He has been both a subject and a citizen: a subject of the imperial monarchy and a citizen of two other regimes. The implications of those three songs echoed through my research in Ethiopia. As many African states celebrate fifty years of independence, Ethiopia, a country with the distinction of never being colonized by European powers, constitutes a critical case of citizen making. My own understanding of how citizens are made anywhere, and especially in contemporary Ethiopia, has been shaped not only by my academic training and the formal research documented here but also by the personal relationships that have inspired and sustained my intellectual pursuits. I wish to acknowledge those individuals and their contributions here.

Perhaps the greatest intellectual and personal debt I have is to my mentor and friend, Dr. Edmond J. Keller. Ed has been a tireless critic and champion, sharing my enthusiasm for the complexities and uniqueness of Ethiopia, yet always pushing for thematic and disciplinary insights that could move beyond any one case. But most of all, he is a scholar of the utmost integrity and compassion and a true model of all that a teacher can be. My warmest thanks to you, Ed, for your guidance over the years and your tremendous leadership and vision with respect to African studies.

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I dedicate this book to the memory of two friends whose lives were lost far too young, but who live on in our memories, Dr. Emily Arndt and Jotham Tezare Gebru. We miss them so. And to the future as well, to Abraham and Milo especially, who are my deepest joy. May the citizenship of the future be even more equal and sustainable for you and future generations. Finally, to Dawit, in deep gratitude for an intellectually rich and gentle companionship through each and every stage of this project. Words cannot convey the depth of my appreciation for all that you are to my life.

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## Abbreviations

AAPO	All-Amhara People's Organization
AAU	Addis Ababa University
BPLM	Benishangul People's Liberation Movement
CCI	Council of Constitutional Inquiry
COR	Council of Representatives
CUD	Coalition for Unity and Democracy
ECSC	Ethiopian Civil Service College
EOC	Ethiopian Orthodox Church
EPDM	Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
EPRP	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
ESM	Ethiopian Student Movement
EUS	Ethiopian University Service
EWLA	Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association
GPRDM	Gurage People's Revolutionary Democratic Movement
HOF	House of Federation
HPR	House of People's Representatives
ICDR	Institute for Curriculum Development and Research
ISEN	Institute for the Study of Ethiopian Nationalities
KMG	Kembatti Mentti Gezzimma (NGO)
MEISON	Amharic acronym for the All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOI	Medium of instruction
MT	Mother tongue language (first language)
NDRP	Program of the National Democratic Revolution
NETP	National Education and Training Policy

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*Abbreviations*

NL	Nationality language
NLCCC	National Literacy Campaign Coordinating Committee
OFDM	Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
OPDO	Oromo People's Democratic Organization
PA	Peasant associations
PDO	People's Democratic Organization
PDRE	People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
PMAC	Provisional Military Administrative Council
REB	Regional Education Bureau
SEPDF	Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Front
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region
SPDUP	Siltie Peoples Democratic Unity Party
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front
TTC	Teacher Training College
TTI	Teacher Training Institute
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UEDF	United Ethiopian Democratic Forces
WEO	Woreda Education Office
WPE	Worker's Party of Ethiopia
WSLF	Western Somali Liberation Front
ZEO	Zone Education Office



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## Glossary

**Ateetee:** Oromo deity that bestows upon women fertility, happiness, health, prosperity; ritual performed by women in the name of the deity (Oromo)

**Balabbat:** nobleman, chief (Amharic)

**Beher:** nation (Amharic)

**Behereseb:** nationality (Amharic)

**Chaffee:** grassy place where rituals and meetings are held among the Oromo; regional parliament for Oromiya regional state (Oromo)

**Fidel:** letter, alphabet, script, character (Amharic)

**Gabbar:** tenant farmer, serf, bondsman (Amharic)

**Gadaa:** age-grading socio-political system of the Oromo (Oromo)

**Gult:** land granted by a ruler to an individual or religious institution as an endowment; fief (Amharic)

**Hanfala:** belt worn by married women among the Arsi Oromo (Oromo)

**Hebretesebawinnet:** a kind of Ethiopian socialism espoused by the Derg regime, with principles such as equality, self-reliance, and unity (Amharic)

**Hizb:** people, community, public (plural: Hizboch) (Amharic)

**Kebre Negast:** lit. “glory of the kings,” volume of biblical stories and legends as Ethiopian national epic

**Ketema:** town, city (Amharic)

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**Malkañña:** local governor, owner of land and person to whom a gabbar owes tribute (Amharic)

**Mannenet teyyaqe:** “question of identity”: legal term used in House of Federation rulings (Amharic)

**Meserete timhirt:** foundation of education; especially the educational campaign of the Derg period (Amharic)

**Naft’añña:** rifleman, especially a soldier of Emperor Menilek often given land in conquered territory (Amharic)

**Odaa:** Sycamore tree, now used as the symbol for the regional state of Oromiya (Oromo)

**Qebelle:** district, precinct (Amharic)

**Qubee:** Latinized Oromo writing system or letter of Qubee alphabet (Oromo)

**Rest:** inherited land or land-use rights (Amharic)

**Resteñña:** owner of rest land, landowner (Amharic)

**Seera:** traditional law (Oromo)

**Siiqqee:** decorated stick given to Arsi Oromo married women; used by women during ceremonies such as the Ateetee (Oromo)

**Wayyuu:** sacredness, sanctity; of person, place, or thing (Oromo)

**Wereda:** district, administrative subdivision (Amharic)

**Yeluññeta:** sensitivity to opinions of others, public spiritedness, sense of propriety (Amharic)

**Zega:** national, subject, citizen (Amharic)

**Zegannet/Zegennet:** nationality, citizenship (Amharic)

**Zemeccha:** campaign, especially the Derg regime’s National Campaign for Development Through Cooperation (Amharic)

## Notes

The meaning of words not listed in this Glossary is given in the text. The two primary dictionaries used were Kane (1990) and Tilahun (1989). Usage of others is cited where necessary.

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MAP 1. Regional States of Ethiopia.

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MAP 2. Oromiya Regional State Zonal Map.

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MAP 3. Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Regional State (SNNPR) Zonal Map.

Source: Leonardo Arriola