

### 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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# Making Citizens in Africa

Ethnicity, Gender, and National Identity in Ethiopia

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.

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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

MOE

MOI

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 Ministry of Education Medium of instruction

MT Mother tongue language (first language)

NDRP Program of the National Democratic Revolution

NETP National Education and Training Policy



xvi 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



### 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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xviii Glossary

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

**Mannennet 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: Latinate 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)

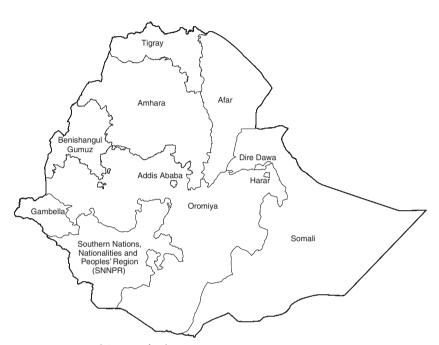
**Zegannet/Zegennet:** nationality, citizenship (Amharic)

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.

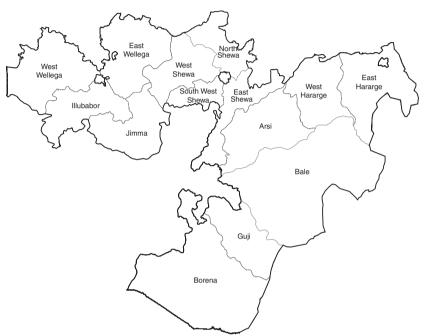




MAP 1. Regional States of Ethiopia.

Source: Leonardo Arriola





MAP 2. Oromiya Regional State Zonal Map.

Source: Leonardo Arriola





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

Source: Leonardo Arriola