

V.I ROOTS DAWTAS

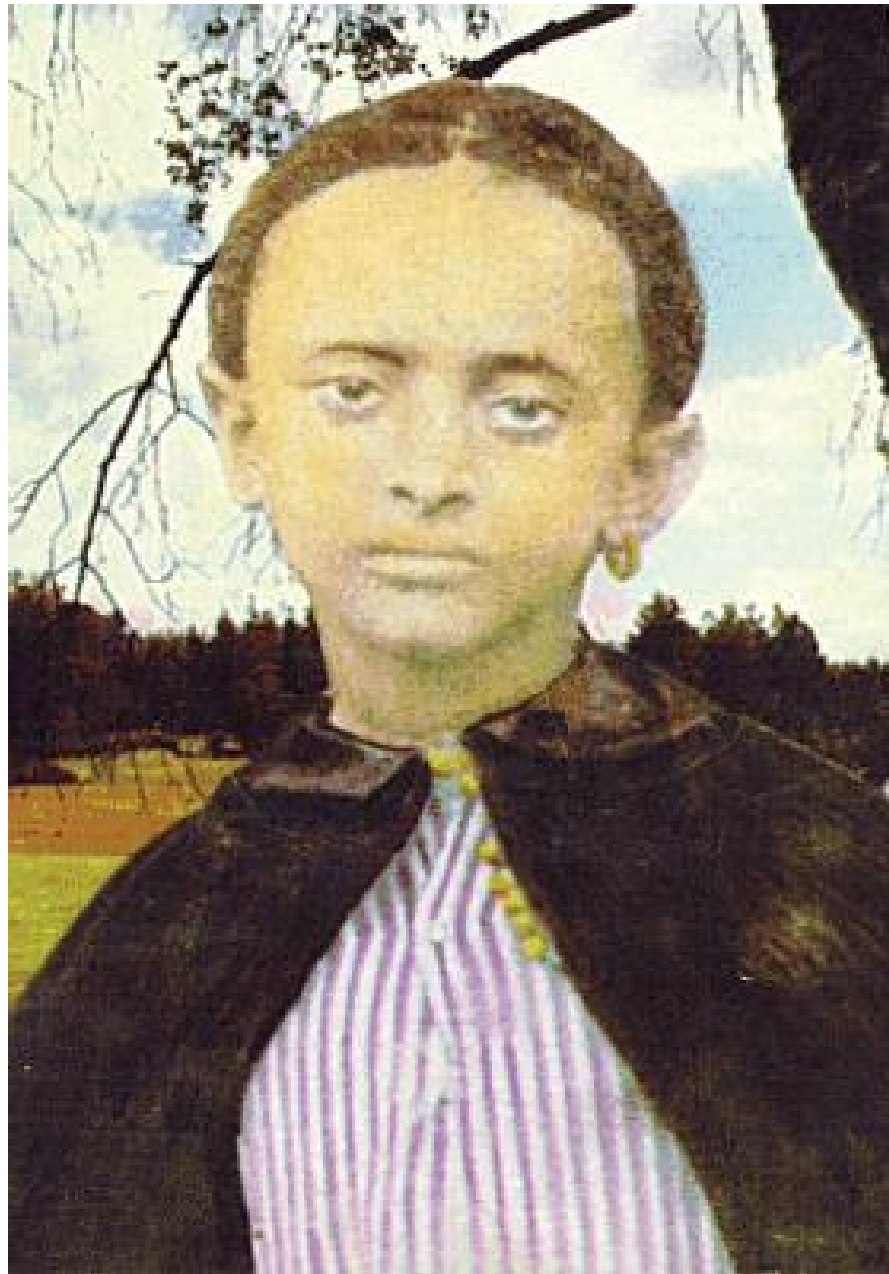


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His Majesty Earthday Special

Editor in Chief

Haile Selassie the first

Author

Haile Selassie the first

Co-Editors

Ruth Auyhmahn Gabriel

&

Sarai Ikembe Divinity

Publishing

Sista Mega (Nina)

Herbal Advisor

Sis Inisea and Sis I-peace

Treasurer

Sis Isan Senerenity

Email

vi_rootsdawtas@yahoo.com

Website

www.freewebs.com/rootsdawtas

Editorial

Greetings in the name of Their Imperial Majesties Haile Selassie First, First Incient King of Iration. Come bow down and adore HIM for He is the King of all Kings and Lord of all Lords, Conquering Lion of the tribe of Judah. For the scepter shall not depart from Judah and the Rod of Correction is in His hands. This month V.I. Roots Dawtas honour Jan| Editor in Chief, HIM Haile Selassie the first, by commemorating His Earthday. Jan| should seriously iditate on this day in the livity and trodition of the Rastafari faith. Jan| need to focus Jan| self together and move forward progressively, in total inity, for Jan| live not for ourselves but for His Imperial Majesty, so all that Jan| do, should be to glorify HIM name. So happy Earthday Haile and Jan| defend you King, to the very end, with minds of thanksgiving and total submission.

Selah



**IT IS A GOOD THING TO GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD,
AND TO SING PRAISES UNTO THY NAME, O MOST HIGH. TO
SHEW FORTH THY LOVINGKINDNESS IN THE MORNING,
AND THY FAITHFULNESS EVERY NIGHT, UPON AN
INSTRUMENT OF TEN STRINGS, AND UPON THE
PSALTERY; UPON THE HARP WITH A SOLEMN SOUND. FOR
THOU, LORD, HAST MADE ME GLAD THROUGH THY WORK:
I WILL TRIUMPH IN THE WORKS OF THY HANDS.**

PSLAMS 92: 1-4

FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN AND UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN



On July 23rd, a baby was born on Ejarsa Gora and was suckled in the fertile lands of Harage province, some eighteen miles from the city of Harar. On the first day the stern-faced nobleman kept a vigil outside a round house of dried earth and ash with a conical thatched roof of wattle-wood, listening for the child's first crackling cries for breath and life. He wore a black bombazine tunic, against which shone a smart sword in a silver sheath. Around his waist as bandolier or cartridges, an ivory-handled pistol tucked in it at the belly, and upon his head was an Italian-made fedora black felt.

A gun-bearer stood beside him, cradling the man's fine rifle in a scarlet cotton sheath, holding it high above the swirling dust.

Farther back from the pair, fanned out in a wide half-circle upon the sloping hillock, was a large contingent of soldiers in ceremonial dress, each grasping a loaded carbine. And beyond this mass of men was a tight cluster of peasants, prostrate in prayer, the torrid breezes from the desert carrying their fervent chanted zemas (prayers) into the cool recesses of the house.

Inside, physicians and servants ministered to the mother under the watchful gaze of priests clutching long malwamiyas (prayer sticks). Keeping their heads bowed and their gaze averted, the servants fulfilled all requests quickly and quietly, but with extravagant care, knowing that their very lives depended on their serving their mistress well on this momentous occasion. The mother was in the final stage of labor, and as they forced back impulses towards panic the servants almost failed to hear the spluttering whimpers as the babe emerged from the womb, his tiny body steaming slightly.

The awful tension exploded with a shrill bawling from the tawny male infant, and all hands concentrated on preparing the child for inspection by his father. The servants' eyes blurred with tears of relief as they washed him, anointed him with fine oils and daubed his thin lips with melted butter, and their tears rang with the din of rifle reports as hundreds of guns saluted from every valley and hilltop the nativity of TAFARI Makonen, son of Governor Ras Makonnen's wife, Woyzaro Yashimabet.

The child was believed to be a direct descendent of the Biblical King Solomon of Jerusalem and Queen Makeda of Sabo (Sheba), the southern lands of Ethiopia. Indeed, his bloodlines had been traced back to Solomon's grandfather, Jesse, the blackest Jew the world had ever known.

For several years, Ras Makonnen's chaplains and astrologers had been foretelling the infant's birth; Neptune and Pluto, they explained, had started slowly moving towards each other in the year 1399. Both planets traveled along the Heliocentric line, taking 493 years to intersect. The moment would come in 1892, sparking off radiations from other zodiacal signs that would mystically influence the constellation Leo, which corresponds to the Biblical House of Judah, Jacob's fourth son, who was born the same month, as recorded in Isaiah. But before this birth, said the seers, there would be a great drought in Ethiopia, beginning in 1889, despite the fact that the country traditionally enjoyed two rainy seasons. The eventual return of the rains would confirm the identity and destiny of the child, as it is written in Isaiah 9, 6:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. When a was in readiness, a saddled mule was brought to carry Ras Makonnen the few yards from where he had been waiting to the front door of the house. He entered, beheld the luminescent baby, and offered a solemn prayer that, unlike all his previous offspring by Yashimabet, this son might survive his infancy. The priests made similar supplications to worn off demon spirits and buda – the human agents of the evil eye who transform themselves by night into predatory hyenas.

The customarily stiff and taciturn ras (prince) murmured a few words of comfort and praise to Yashimabet, who thanked him meekly. Then he departed on his mule, his retainers and soldiers following close behind him as he headed off in the direction of the walled city of Harar. At some point along the way he would partake of a celebratory meal of wat, a strongly spiced beef stew, traditionally eaten with the highly absorbent flat bread called injera, and washed down with sweet wine and talla, a robust beer.

As Ras Makonnen reached the main road leading to Harar, a few raindrops stained his tunic. A servant scurried up alongside his master, deftly covering him with a barnos, a black cloak of fine wool with cowl for the head that was standard foul-weather equipment for the wealthy during the summer rainy season. Deep in contemplation, Makonnen scarcely noticed either drizzle or the obsequious gesture.



*Tafari & his father Ras
Makonnen*

He wondered if this child of his would live manhood. For what reason had so many others perished in the cradle? Was his own seed cursed by a devil, a zar, dispatched by sorcerers to mock his ambition? Or had corrupt servants poisoned the infant with bad coffee? And if the boy thrived and grew strong, would he succeed where his father had not in securing the Emperor's crown for the house of Makonnen? Or was it God's will that the son should rise as high as the father – but no higher – in order to teach this proud family the meaning of true humility?

Yet there was no guarantee the boy would have the governorship, not even as the lineal descendent of Jesse and Solomon and the great grandson of King Sahla Sellassie, regional sovereign of Shoa Province, who had imposed his will on the powerful Galla people, made treaties with foreign monarchs like Queen Victoria, and carried on the traditions, responsibilities, and glories of the Solomonic dynasty, as set down in the holiest of Ethiopian books, the *Kebrä Negast*.

This was a land of treachery, deceit and low deeds in high places, Makonnen knew.

While Menelik II could be his beloved cousin, a man to whom he pledged undying loyalty, the Empress Taitu was a scheming serpent who stop at nothing to install one of her own line on the throne when the ageing Emperor died. If his son would endure, he would have to learn a great deal about the responsibilities of noble birth, obedience and the art of manipulation.

The rain intensified as the governor and his retinue crossed a lush field of durra, a sudden high wind knifing through the dense sorghum and scattering some guinea fowl that had been hiding among the shorter stalks by the road. The party pulled off into a mango grove to take shelter until the squall died down.

Still brooding, the prince absently pulled a ripe, rose-red mango from a low-hanging branch as his mule passed under it, causing his retainers to gape with shock. It is most uncommon for Ethiopia nobles to perform even the smallest tasks themselves, especially one so menial as picking fruit. Ras Makonnen bit deeply into the custard-soft flesh, warm juice spilling out of his mouth. He was about to gulp down the generous lump of pulp when he felt a strange quivering against his tongue. He spat and examined the fruit in his hand: the remaining half of a large grey worm wriggled out of the mango's creamy center.

Makonnen slammed the rest of the fruit to the ground in revulsion and spat again, rubbing the inside of his mouth with his cloak. Just then a violent gust of wind and rain threw back the sheltering mango boughs, a thick bolt of lightning lit up the charcoal sky and in the ghostly flash it appeared to the prince as if the trees themselves were cowering in alarm, as their seasoned fruit was ripped from their limbs and flung a great distance by the furious blast of the storm.

The drought was over! Makonnen exulted to himself, but then the prince' mood darkened. Truly, mighty signs and portents were rapidly multiplying on this most curious and fateful birthday, but they were in conflict. The rains had come, the drought was at an end, but the spoilt fruit of the earth and the harsh, skeleton fingers of the sky were contrasting omens. Makonnen longed to trust completely in the fulfillment of the oracles, but he could not; instead he wanted to curse God aloud for His cruel uncertainties. Yet something in him made him hold his tongue.

The rain grew heavier, rendering the flimsy shelter of the trees worthless. So the party took to the road again and pressed on to Harar, each of the prince's retainers wearing the same uncertain expression as his master.

Makonnen decided that young Tafari would have the benefits of both a traditional and a European education. This was considered most unusual by the isolated, ethnocentric citizens of the late-nineteenth-century Ethiopia. The nation's peoples, most of whose ancestors entered the country from Arabia, are divided into two main linguistic families, Cushitic and Semitic. The Galla (Tafari's mother's people) were the most formidable of the Cushites, and the most influential of the Semites, with the language, politics and religion (the autonomous Ethiopian Orthodox Christian or Coptic Church) of the latter becoming predominant as Ras Tafari came of age.

A member of the Shoan-Amharic nobility, Tafari was brought up as befitted a young prince who would one day be wedded to a worthy *woyzero*, or titled lady. Makonnen, having made a number of trips to Europe on state business (including the coronation of Edward VII of England), shared Menelik's view that an awareness of European politics, commerce and culture was essential if Ethiopia was to ever awaken from its feudal doldrums and join the modern family of nations. So Makonnen hired a French tutor from Guadeloupe, Dr. Vitalen, and later invited Abba Samuel, an Ethiopian working in the French Mission, to provide his son with a solid Western education.

But Makonnen also believed that a future Ras must learn to accept and appreciate the unusual dignity and pre-eminence over his countrymen that his descent from the Solomonic dynasty afforded. The trembling of the peasants and the tenant farmers whenever they found themselves in the presence of royalty was natural, respectful and appropriate, he felt, as well as a sign of favour from God. An Amharic aristocrat, endowed with vast, untaxed lands, handed down from his ancestors and augmented with gifts from his Emperor, should be able to impose – with the confidence of Divine Right – strict standards of administration for his properties, and to employ his soldiers (Makonnen had more than 6,000 in his private army) to protect his holdings and to collect rent and taxes. The privileged must be vigilant in preserving a social order based on loyalty and humble submission on the part of their inferiors, while showing the same respect and fealty to the imperial court. Makonnen had spent a lifetime learning a painful lesson: he who does not know how to identify and assess power, in oneself and others, will be deceived by it, and he who does not know how to wield the power he possesses will eventually be undone by it.

From the start Tafari was aware of a queer dichotomy between his father's European enthusiasms – specifically, an admiration for the orderliness and social mobility of Western society – and the Shoan-Amharic traditions that his father nonetheless adhered to, maintaining a rigid, regal household. The objective, his son eventually came to realize, was somehow overlap these contradictory elements in his world without one canceling out the other.

It soon became obvious that he would be left to his own devices in this matter. His mother, Yashimabeth, had died two years after his birth, and his father, a loving but extremely reserved man, was traveling most of the time on official errands, or serving as a judge in the civil court of Harar. Tafari admired his distant father for his detachment from sentimental bonds and attachments. In several respects, Tafari was nothing if not his father's son: he amplified Makonnen's romantic notions about the edifying value of cultural links with West; he shared his esteem and his thirst for power, as well as his cold, aloof, temperament. At a very early age, Tafari had developed the personality of a thoroughgoing autocrat.



The Mystical Youth

Tafari was named Ras by the church in recognition of his Royalty Striking hand some, extraordinarily soft spoken and deferential. He was with a minor appointment as governor of Selale in a small and insignificant corner of a realm located at the north west of the Imperial city of Addis Ababa. He was also in the southern frontiers of Ethiopia to serve as governor of Sidamo province.

Tafari as a youth, maneuvered his way to a position of political indispensability. He is the one who ushered Ethiopia into the League of Nations.

This child also fulfill the prophecy written in Isiah 9 V 5, "For unto us a child is born and unto us a son is given and the Government shall be on his shoulder and his name shall be called wonderful counsellor, the Might of God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace".

Rumours cropped up in Addis Ababa that even Ras Tafari's trusted personal counselors were terrified of him, reluctant to shake his hand or gaze directly upon his stark features with pointed nose, sparse beard and penetrating, almost black eyes, all framed by wild bushy hair. Queer tales began to circulate about Tafari's boyhood, the most notable concerning his supposed ability to speak to animals. During his youth it was claimed he had, on several occasions been seen conversing in the bush with leopards and lions, the fierce jungle beast becoming docile at his feet.

Further, it was said that as a young student, Tafari was quite bright,

competent at his lessons, but that he had truly astounded the priest with the depth of his knowledge concerning religious and mystical matters. Not only could he quote freely from the book of Kufale, the book of Enoch, The Shepherd of Hermas, Judith, Ecclesiastics, Tobit, The Matshafa Berhan (Book of Light), The Sixth and Seventh books of Moses, the book of Eden (Secretly deleted from Genesis during the dark ages), all thirty-one books of the Hebrew Bible, the twenty-one Canonical books of the New Testament but numerous Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphic books.



One priest asked Tafari where he got his knowledge. Tafari replied that much of it had come to him at the moment of his baptism, conducted according to tradition on the fortieth day of his life. The priest who presided at the ceremony had opened Tafari's eyes with the first touch of holy Chrism that everything that ensued was comprehensible to the infant as if he had been an adult. The priest pronounced his surnamed he remembered and next his baptismal name and then he blew softly in Tafari's face to drive off the evil spirits. At that instant Tafari claimed he felt himself enveloped by a golden glow and as the priest began to anoint him, water touching his forehead, breast, shoulder and all of the other thirty-seven prescribed places, he felt his knowledge increase filling him up like a vessel and endowing him with a great sense of clarity about creation and the final purpose of man.

When the birds and the beasts and even the insects began to greet him and speak to him, reminding him of what he

already knew, Tafari replied, "Which was the first creature to speak to him".

Tafari requested a sheet of paper and some pastels and began to draw with extraordinary facility, a picture of a bird. It resembled a dove, but with exotic, multicoloured plumage. The priest was about to ask Tafari what sort of bird it was when he was dumbfounded as it flew out through the nearby window disappearing into the sky.

The chief priest arranged meetings with him to question and perhaps catch him with what he supposed might be blasphemous mischief or pagan magic.

At one of these meetings Rastafari is said to have made it plain that he was well acquainted with the rare manuscripts of Abba Aragaive and the other Coptic monks known as the Nine "Saints", who entered Ethiopia in 480 A.D. and founded the first monasteries in Tigre province. He also revealed that he was acquainted with the occult applications of Urim and thummin and the Mezuzah as well as the use of the magic word Gematria and Notarilon in Egypt Necromancy and also of the magical names writing of Gilgamesh. The pagan rituals surrounded the worship of Isis of the serpent Arwe and of the Abyssinian Gods of earth (Meder) sea, (Beher) and war (Mahrem) as well as the Arcana of astrology and numerology. But most importantly Tafari exhibited to the priest his understanding of the central messages in the Egyptian book of the dead and the Egyptian book of two ways.



At one point an old abmnet (Abbot) allegedly asked to examine Tafari's palms, said he saw that there were Stigmata there and the lifeline back upon itself in an emblem of infinity, Tafari whispered a word in the abbot's ear and all colour drained from the old man's face. He left the room apparently in shock, refusing to return or to speak with his colleagues.

Tafari addressed a monk who served in the Cathedral of Azum, where the ark is kept. Tafari described to him in Kushed the Kedusta Kedussan, the Holy of Holies or inner sanctum where the Tabot - The Ark - is kept and recited various inscriptions written upon it. Close to fainting with the shock of what Tafari was disclosing, the monk is said to have covered his ears to shut out these blasphemous

revelations and he and the rest of the priests hurriedly dispersed.

Later they made a solemn pact among themselves to do everything within their means to keep the young Tafari from ever gaining power in the land as he was considered too dangerous, dangerous beyond belief.

The stories about Tafari's boyhood encounters with the priest, his occult wisdom and uncanny powers were spreading like brush fire throughout Ethiopia in 1930 as the country prepared to carry out Ras Tafari's vow that his coronation in November would be the grandest and most solemn that Africa had ever known.

The Government Shall Be On His Shoulders



Tafari at 14 years old

At the age of thirteen, Lij Taffari Makonnen was created a Dejazmatch by his father, and given the district of Garra Muleta to rule. Ras Makonnen also summoned all his officers and informed them that it was his wish that his son Dejazmatch Taffari succeeded him as governor of Harrar, and asked them all to swear their loyalty to Taffari. However, when Ras Makonnen died suddenly in 1908, the situation in Ethiopia was not what most had anticipated. The Ras died at Kulibi on his way to Addis Ababa from Harrar possibly of typhus. He was taken back to Harrar and buried at St. Michael's church there. Emperor Menelik was beside himself with grief upon hearing that Ras Makonnen was dead. He had the huge funeral tent set up on the grounds of the Imperial Palace in the capital, and proclaimed that he would be the chief mourner for Ras Makonnen. He summoned Dejazmatch Taffari, and Ras Makonnen's entourage from Harrar to Addis Ababa. Dejazmatch Taffari and the officers of Ras Makonnen arrived in Addis Ababa, and they walked into the Emperor's presence weeping and carrying a large portrait of the dead prince. Traditionally, royalty in Ethiopia did not show emotion in public, so it stunned and moved the assembled courtiers when suddenly, Emperor Menelik rose up from his

throne and embraced the portrait of his dead cousin, weeping bitterly and loudly, sobbing repeatedly, "Makonnen my son, Makonnen my brother! I have lost my right hand!" Menelik did not expect the younger Makonnen to pre-decease him. Indeed it was often speculated that because Menelik had no sons of his own, he might name Makonnen his own heir. This was not to be however. Although Ras Makonnen had made clear that he had wanted Dejazmatch Taffari to succeed him as governor of Harrar, Menelik was not disposed to following through on that. Empress Taitu was especially opposed to Taffari inheriting Harrar, arguing that he was far too young. Instead, she argued for the appointment of the elder son of Ras Makonnen, Yilma, who had been at the Imperial Court for several years, and was now given the title of Dejazmatch and appointed to succeed his father as governor. The Empress also arranged for Yilma to marry her niece. Dejazmatch Taffari was instead given the honorific governorship of Selale, and told to remain at court where he became a member of the Emperor's personal retinue. Empress Taitu may have advised this course of action also because she suspected that the young prince may have been unduly influenced by the Roman Catholic priests that had been teaching him in Harrar, and suspected that he may have had Catholic leanings because he held so many of the progressive views of his father. She would soon be reassured that he was firmly Orthodox however as far as religion went. He was placed in the new school built in the capital for young nobles, the Menelik II School. This situation continued until in 1910 when his brother Yilma died, and Empress Taitu, acting on Menelik's behalf due to the Emperor's stroke, appointed Taffari to the governorship of Harrar. It was to be her last official act, as the very next day, the nobility led by Fitawrari Hapte Giorgis and Dejazmatch Gebre Selassie Baria Gabr, deposed her, and put power in the hands of the Lord Regent Ras Tessema. They limited the Empress to caring for the stricken Emperor. In 1913, Emperor Menelik II died, and Lij Eyasu ascended the throne, with Ras Tessema Nadew as his Regent. That same year, Ras Tessema also died under mysterious circumstances, and Lij Eyasu took the reigns of government himself, although he refused to be crowned as yet. In 1916, Dejazmatch Taffari Makonnen was removed from Harar by Lij Eyasu, and appointed



Tafari and Menelik

governor of Kaffa. Dejazmatch Taffari was very resentful of the loss of his birthright. In addition Lij Eyasu, after taking Harrar for himself, had moved into the governors palace there, and ordered that his niece, and Taffari's wife, Menen, be evicted immediately. Lij Eyasu was informed that Woizero Menen was in the midst of giving birth, and could not possibly be moved (she was giving birth to Prince Asfaw Wossen, later Emperor Amha Selassie). He resentfully agreed to allow his niece to give birth, but ordered her to leave immediately afterwards. This embittered already poor relations between Taffari and Eyasu. Not long after this, the nobles and ministers of the Empire began to openly express concern about the erratic behavior of the heir, and his apparent sympathy for Islam. The diplomatic missions of the Entente Powers, concerned about Lij Eyasu's pro-German leanings encouraged this dissention. Finally, the Nobility, led by Fitawrari Hapte Giorgis, became convinced that Lij Eyasu had secretly converted to Islam, and following a two day meeting at Jan Meda in Addis Ababa (the Imperial Parade Ground), the nobility convinced the reluctant Coptic Archbishop, Abune Mattiwos, to declare Lij Eyasu an apostate, and release them from their oaths of loyalty to him. The nobles decided to swear fealty to the daughter of the late Emperor Menelik, and so Empress Zewditu was proclaimed Elect of God, Conquering Lion of Judah, and Queen of Kings, at the feast of Maskal (Feast of the Holy Cross' discovery by St. Helena) which fell on September 27, 1916. Dejazmatch Taffari Makonnen was proclaimed Heir to the Throne, and Crown Prince with the title of Ras as a compromise to progressives who were feeling relegated from the action which was being led by the conservative forces. Ras Taffari soon afterwards assumed the title of Regent, and became the true ruler of the Empire.



Tafari at 15 years old

A PROGRESSIVE PRINCE

Ras Tafari Makonnen began to institute wide spread reforms in order to bring Ethiopia into the modern age. In order to qualify for membership in the League of Nations, the Regent proclaimed the end of slavery in 1923, and all slaves were declared free. A school was established in Addis Ababa for former slaves as well. The first newspapers were established to disseminate the progressive views of the Crown Prince and his supporters to the people in order to win support. He also went on a tour of the Holy Land and the European capitals, being the highest ranking member of the Imperial family to ever travel abroad. He visited Rome and was greeted by the new Prime Minister, Benito Mussolini, as well as by King Vittorio Emanuele. The King of Italy invested the Crown Prince of Ethiopia with the Order of the Annunziata, which entitled him to be called a "cousin" of the King of Italy (Something that would be regarded with such irony only a few years later). He went on to Paris, Luxembourg (Where the reigning Grand Duchess Charlotte gave birth to her heir Grand Duke Jean during his visit), Belgium, the Netherlands and Britain in an official capacity and paid private visits to Sweden and Germany. He met the Pope as well, and received an honorary degree from Cambridge University. In an effort to convince the nobility of the Empire that the path of modernization and progress was the best way to guarantee Ethiopia's continued independence and future prosperity (as well as to keep a close eye on them), the Prince-Regent had brought with him to Europe the leading nobles and aristocrats of his country. This exposure

to the west with its wealth, its technology and its military might as well as to its many material advantages was instrumental in getting the nobility to relax their long time conservative opposition to the progressive trends of the Prince and his predecessors, Emperors Menelik and Tewodros. The visit was very successful in that respect. However, he failed to convince France, Italy and Britain to cede Ethiopia a sea port in one of their colonies. The Ethiopian delegation caused quite a stir in Europe

and aroused the interest of many who were not aware of the only ancient independent state in Africa. Much comment was made on the impeccable aristocratic

manners and traditions of the delegation, and on the enlightened attitude of the Crown Prince. His desire to bring progress and education to his people was applauded in the European press. Among several anecdotes from this trip, is one involving Ras Hailu Tekle Haimanot of Gojjam. This Prince was one of the most wealthy men in the Ethiopian Empire. He was the son of a king, and a man who carried himself as such. When the Crown Prince and his entourage were received by King George V and Queen Mary at Buckingham Palace, Ras Hailu along with the other princes was introduced to the King. King George in meeting Ras Hailu asked if His Highness could speak English. The interpreter said no. He asked if he could speak French or German, again the answer was no. King George, rather irritated told the interpreter to tell His Highness that he was an ignorant man. Ras Hailu listened quietly and asked the interpreter if His Majesty could speak Amharic. When told no, he asked him if His Majesty could speak Tigrigna or Guragigna, again he was told no. The prince then haughtily told the interpreter to tell the King that His Majesty was equally ignorant. King George burst out laughing and took a great liking to Ras Hailu, Prince of Gojjam. Ethiopia was said to be opening up to the world.

Upon his return, the Crown Prince was able to please the Empress with the news that the British government would be returning one of the crowns of Emperor Tewodros II that the Napier expedition had seized and carried off from Magdala in 1867. He did have to face however the deepening hostility to his modernizing zeal on the part of the conservative camp led by Fitarwari Hapte Giorgis (who had not accompanied him abroad) and the Archbishop Abune Mattiwos who was displeased with the delegations call on the Pope in Rome. They rigorously opposed his every move towards modernizing the administration of the Empire, raising objections, saying that the things the Prince wanted to do were "un-Ethiopian". Particularly, when told that slaves were to be freed, Fitawrari Hapte Giorgis is said to have sputtered with outrage "...so is my wife to carry water on her back from the springs herself?" With the deaths of these two powerful but elderly men, Ras Tafari was able to consolidate his power by co-opting much of the Fitawraris personal forces and staff into his own, and by postponing the appointment of a new Archbishop by entering into negotiations with the Coptic Patriarchate of Alexandria over the possibility of having an Ethiopian appointed to the post for the first time. The reluctance of the Patriarch to agree to this resulted in the Ethiopian born Echege (Abbot of Debre Libanos Monastery) being the highest ranking cleric in Ethiopia, and he being much more in sympathy with the regent than the Archbishop had been, it was in the interests of the Prince to let things remain as they were and let the negotiations with the Holy See of St. Mark drag on. The power of the conservatives was thus greatly reduced. The Empress, although a staunch traditionalist was increasingly devoting her time and energies towards prayer and church building. She was therefore never an effective leader for the forces of conservatism. Part of the reason for this behavior may have been a deep sense of guilt that she bore for having defied her father's will and replaced his designated heir on the throne, and also because of her deep sorrow at being forcefully separated from her husband. These events may have put her in a position of helplessness, and at the mercy of her nobles. After a series of plots and counter plots, an attempt was made to arrest the Prince-Regent at the Imperial Palace by conservative elements in the cabinet, possibly with the Empresses knowledge and agreement. However, the Crown Prince's wife got wind of the plot, and was able to alert him as well as send a force of his guards to the palace to liberate him. The Empress claimed ignorance of the plot, although it had been carried out in her name. Progressives and modernizers in the nobility and the army held an unprecedented demonstration in support of Ras Tafari on the grounds of the palace. In order to appease the angry progressives who rallied to the Crown Prince, the Empress agreed to crown him king. In November of 1928, Empress Zewditu of Ethiopia crowned Taffari Makonnen as King and Heir to the Throne of Ethiopia. It was an unusual arrangement as the King would remain in the capital with the Empress, and that no territory such as Wollo or Gondar was given him with the title. It was assumed that he was king of all Ethiopia, an unprecedented situation. His coronation as Nigus was regarded as a dress rehearsal of sorts for his eventual coronation as Niguse Negest. He would later see to it that no one else would ever be crowned king once he became Emperor.

BIRTH & ANCESTRY

Lij Taffari Makonnen parents were Ras Makonnen Wolde Michael, the governor of Harrar, and his wife, Woizero Yeshimebet Ali AbaJiffar. Ras Makonnen was the son of Dejazmatch Wolde Michael Wolde Meleket, a noble of Doba in norther Shewa. Ras Makonnen's paternal grandfather was Ato Wolde Meleket Yemane Kristos a Tigrean noble from Tembien who had moved to Shewa. Ras Makonnen's mother however was Woizero Tenagnework Sahle Selassie, daughter of King Sahle Selassie of Shewa, sister of King Haile Meleket of Shewa, and aunt to Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia.

Ras Makonnen was thus the first cousin of Emperor Menelik II and a member of the Solomonic Dynasty. Woizero Yeshimebet his wife was the daughter of Dejazmatch Ali AbaJiffar, an Oromo chieftan of Wollo, and his wife Woizero Welete Giorgis Yimeru,

a Gurage woman once married to Ras Darge Sahle Selassie (Menelik II's uncle). Woizero Yeshimebet died before her son was 2 years old. Ras Makonnen had an elder son Yilma whom he did not acknowledge until later in life (some say after Yilma saved his fathers life during the battle of Adowa). Dejazmatch Yilma Makonnen was Emperor Haile Selassie's only sibling, and was the father of four children, Kegnazmatch Sehalu Yilma, Kegnasmatch Asfaw Yilma and Dej. Mengesha Yilma, and Her Highness Princess Yeshashework Yilma. Ras Makonnen had several siblings however.

His elder sister Ihite Mariam had a daughter Mazlekia, who was married to Fitawrari Haile Selassie, and was the mother of Ras Imiru Haile Selassie, who was to be the Emperor Haile Selassie's life long companion and close confidant. As Ras Makonnen spent a great deal of time traveling on diplomatic business for Emperor Menelik, so he entrusted the care of his son

Taffari to Fitawrari Haile Selassie. Therefore, Taffari grew up with Imiru more as brothers rather than cousins. Lij Tafari also was cared for by his maternal grandmother

Woizero (later Emahoi after taking vows and becoming a nun) Welete Giorgis, and his maternal aunt Woizero Mammit. The boys were given the traditional education given to the children of Ethiopia's aristocracy. They were taught by Orthodox priests,



and could recite the psalms in Ge-ez by age six. They were ordained deacons and served as such at Harrar's St. Michael's Church. Later, Ras Makonnen approached a French Catholic Capuchin monk residing in Harrar, Father Jarresseau to teach the boys. The Catholic priest taught them French, geography, world history, philosophy and some latin as well. Over the next years, Taffari also picked up English, and German, as well as the Ethiopian languages of Amharic, Tigrigna and Oromigna(called Galligna in those days) and became a scholar in Ge-ez

HIM Speaks

His Majesty Speaks To The Youth Of Africa

His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I - Malawi State Visit 1965



Your legacy of independence and freedom is an unquestioned, inevitable and inalienable heritage. Your challenge is to create a new Africa based upon the oneness of all her diverse people, and their united growth and development in happiness and prosperity. If you, the young generation of today, work hard and maintain a high standard of morality and discipline then you will be proud of what you have to pass on to the next generation.

Africa desperately needs her youth. She needs skilled, courageous, adventurous and responsible young men and women in ever increasing numbers. She requires that they apply the education which she has bestowed upon them at great cost, and the intelligence, strength and energy which are theirs by gift of God, in disciplined and devoted fashion to the accomplishment of the great African future which is theirs for the effort but which will never come to

exist without it.

To the youth of Africa has been entrusted the great task of shaping and forging a united continent free from oppression, committed to the principles of the individual dignity and worth of all her peoples, and to the preservation and propagation of the great cultures of Africa and of the world to which these youth are the rightful heirs.

It is a magnificent and wholesome task. If you fail in it we who have hoped and planned and struggled in other ways would have also failed. You have a commitment to us and to the generations, which came before, and which will come after us. You are part of an historical chain, which is no stronger than its weakest link. We hope that you will not disappoint us and that the youth of Malawi and you young brethren throughout Africa will rise to the great task which awaits you, and will fulfill it to the utmost in the spirit of the age into which you were born.

The legacy, freedom and independence which is yours is also a legacy of courage and devotion. If you are truly worthy of that legacy then from your efforts will come greater unity, greater strength, greater hope and greater accomplishments than generations past have ever dared to dream.

Worthy Contributions

If ones and ones would like to contribute some funds to V.I. Roots Dawtas, they can do so by making a deposit at the Development Bank (account #1100825 in the name of Strassa Fevrier and/or Susan Sealey), Wickham's Cay, Road Town (in the Social Security Building).

African for Africans

Lack Of Co-Operation In The Negro Race

It is so hard, so difficult to find men who will stick to a purpose, who will maintain a principle for the worth of that principle, for the good of that purpose, and if there is a race that needs such men in the world today, God Almighty knows it is the race of which I am a member. The race needs men of vision and ability. Men of character and above all men of honesty, and that is so hard to find. The greatest stumbling block in the way of progress in the race has invariably come from within the race itself.

The monkey wrench of destruction as thrown into the cog of Negro Progress, is not thrown so much by the outsider as by the very fellow who is in our fold, and who should be the first to grease the wheel of progress rather than seeking to impede it. But notwithstanding the lack of sympathetic co-operation, I have one consolation - That I cannot get away from the race, and so long as I am in the race and since I have sense and judgment enough to know what affects the race affects me, it is my duty to help the race to clear itself of those things that affect us in common.

Word Sound Power

Fasting And Prayer – By Elder Dr. Roots (5/9/98)

Nothing of the flesh can enter into the kingdom of Zion, therefore to hold on to anything of this flesh for the attainment of true livity is futile. In the word, it is written that InI's stomachs will pass away (I Corinthians 6:12-13). So as HIM Imperial Majesty I Selassie I says, InI must

prepare now for that time. For in truth, that time is within InI, and at the same time approaching InI.

Fasting is not only abstaining from food. Fasting is moving away, for a time, from anything that keeps InI away from InI Lord and God Haile I Selassie I. It is upon HIM word, which InI must feast in abundance and partake of, in InI daily livity (I Corinthians 5:8-9). However, fasting without prayer is of no value. In everything there must be physical and iritual balance. As InI prayer in the irit is strengthened by fasting from that which keeps InI away from HIM, InI faith to do HIM works is manifested. InI main reason for fasting is to cast out evil irits from Iself or another (Matthew 17:14-21). The Hola Irit must be the supreme guide of InI fast from beginning to end.

In fasting from food, HIM may lead InI to fast only from certain foods (Daniel 10:3), or go completely on the the Bread of Life which is the foundation of InI nourishment (Ex. 34:28, I Kings 19:5-8, Acts 97-9). HIM shows InI how HIM may call the whole body (collective) together in a public fast (Leviticus 23:32-33) to cast out evil, or deal with InI on an individual basis (Matthew 6:6). Because of different situations that come forth in life, InI may just feel and know that it is time to afflict the soul and move forward in a voluntary fast (Daniel 6:10-23). On the flip side, everything could be going fine and dandy in InI sight and then HIM says "FAST for this period of time, I have work for you to do" (I Kings 13:7-10). This is an example of a fast that is involuntary (I Samu-el 30:11-15). This calls for discernment on the part of InI.

In all of these methods and types of fasting and praying, InI must focus InI sight on the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, and not do as the hypocrites who fast for a fashion or for attention (Matthew 6:5, 6:16-18). HIM shows InI the power of fasting and praying, and reveals unto InI the TRUE FOOD (Matthew 4:1-4, Deut, 8:1-3). InI RastafarI, as HIM children, must be strong enough iritually to turn down every temptation that sa-tan, the world, babylon, ourselves may send InI way. InI are known to HIM as the called, chosen, and faithful...and must not give up InI crowns in Zion for the sins of Sodom (Ezekiel 16:48-50). Separation from this world is a must, more so iritually than physically in this time (Numbers 6). It is not the food that goes into the mouth which defiles the body, rather it is

the love of food, for it is InI heart which is the wellspring (Matthew 15:10-11).

As InI are shown in Matthew 4, it is the wiseness of HIM to at least partake of water when on a total fast (he was hungry but not thirsty), and in Genesis 1:29, HIM directs InI to the Ital physical

food when not fasting. InI human flesh and HIM know this, so eat in abundance HIM children, of the WORD OF LIFE. Itinually it is the balance of the physical and iritual that keeps InI wellspring pure. Haile I Selassie I. Selah.

Dawta of Zion

By: Sista Roots



Highly Bless...

One may have knowledge and acknowledges the self as 'Rasta' according to the knowlegements, the real deal is how and where you direct the fire on and in your individual path. Knowing self is an everlasting trod, we learn something new on a daily basis, which adds to the growth and development of shaping and molding our perception of our self-realities. I have been in this trod for almost 10 years now and there is still so much to learn. I would encourage a one to always seek to continuously study self. Not so much materialistically (material meaning books and so on) but naturally I've learned (from whence I am holding 21 day purification) that if we are made up in the elements of Mother Nature then this is truly where we can find or know even more so our diviness. I would also like to encourage a one to have book fasts or even a computer fast. Meaning put the book or piece of paper down for a while humble and observe the elements as you meditate on certain things in life. Spiritual development is a MUST and everlasting, the flesh is only but a time.

I remember when I first came into the Livity I thought that just because I agreed/defended the information that I was told about HIM and because I shouted "RASTAFARI!" daily that I was 'Rasta'...well...not so. Not entirely...that was the baby step. Now from time I fasted of these things and went within this is where I truly felt the diviness of my royalty of who I am. All that I have read and know.... haffie be applied and lived.... now not everything haffie be applied...a one haffie suit to the fitting you know? Moreover, this is where I always come up with that question, "what is a true Rasta?" Nuff people say to me sometimes oh...one thing you are a true Rasta because you always have on your turban or something like that, but I show dem, "nah dat nah make me a true Rasta, by deeds is one known."

Dictation is another vibe to be cautious of. I found that ones who had been in the livity longer than I were quick to tell me don't do this and don't do that gave me all this literature and certain scripture to check for, I was even shown that I should not check for ones who were really not of my livity. Consequently, none of them showed me to study myself, which is VITAL and in studying self InI built/am still building a closer relationship with the Highest of I's.

His Kingdom is within. In addition, how can a one come with these dictations then tell me fi live in the reflect of HIM and HerIM yet Daddah and Mama nah come partial?? They loved and respected people for who they were and even what they looked like and rather than pointing fingers they learned and sought to understand the different ways of life in maintaining their own at the same time. Not every 'mans' path is the same and this MUST be respected through the inspiration of LOVE...through the POWER of LOVE. If I can sit up with a sister who is not 'Ras' and reason about the Almighty and Righteousness then why should I
(CONTINUED ON PG 16)

Poetic Heights

I Am The Tree Of Life – By Ras Creation King aka Moeketsane

I am the Tree of life
Many of you do
know my touch
Most of you enjoy
my kiss
Few of you spread
rumours about me.

I gave you wisdom
I made you clever
I disciplined your
mind
And I am only your
lover.

I am the Tree of life
I made you strong
I hide your faults and weaknesses



All people blame me for your mistakes
All people blame me
for your madness
But I remain one and
the same,
yesterday, today, and
tomorrow.

I make you do things
you love most
I drive you to laugh
when they beat you
I teach you love,
honesty, purity, and
Holiness

By so many names I am called
Cannabis, Marijuana, ganja, wisdomweed
But I am the Tree of Life.

Recipes

½ stick soy margarine
1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
1 cup corn meal
1 tbsp honey, sugar or turbinado
2 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp baking soda
1 cup soy, rice, oat milk
1 tbsp lemon juice
1 tbsp powder egg replacer

Corn Muffins

2 tbsp water mix *optional

Mix milk and lemon juice in separate bowl and let set for 5 minutes. Combine dry ingredients in large bowl. Melt the margarine in small saucepan until slightly brown. Add milk and egg mixture to dry ingredients, then add margarine. Pour into muffin tin or muffin cups. Bake at 450 degrees for 15 – 20 minutes.

*When your neighbor's horse falls into a pit,
you should not rejoice at it,
for your own child may fall into it too.*
(African Proverb)

(CONTINUED FROM PG 14)

diss her because she does not claim Ras Ta? I might as well go around saying that My way of life is THE way of life...all else is nought.

Be wise Jah children. Be cautious in your words and be cautious of what you consume yet you can only do these things through power of choice. Move on a one two (heartbeat) and keep an open mind about life and all it has to offer you through any type of vessel. From you deal with goodness, uprightness, humbleness, peace, love etc., you bun iniquity, jealousy, envy, haughtiness etc. then to me that is a 'TRUE' way to live... a TRUE way of life.

Learn from the youths, the sucklings. Observe how the little ones vibe and move. Dem rate people off of vibez not appearance and technical knowledge and I say to the persons who are just coming into this way of life don't ever think that just because a one knows more about HIM or the livity more than you.... that you cannot teach them something as well. Everyone have something to teach, everyone have something to learn. HIM is most definitely an example in this sense.

Garnet Silk sing..."**humble thyself and not be easily lead astray. Prove not what you are about just praise Jah everyday. Trust not even thyself at times cuz wah all imperfect....**

Something I learned up Bobo Hill....
REVERENCE is UNIVERSAL in the Royal Courts of King David

Bless-ed be our Comforter and Redeemer
Glorify and Sanctify without Apology

Honours
Wise



Fallaci: *Your Majesty, I would like you to tell me something about yourself. Tell me, were you ever a disobedient youth? But maybe I ought to ask you first whether you have ever had time to be young, Your Majesty?*

Selassie: *We don't understand that question. What kind of question is it? It is obvious that We have been young: We weren't born old! We have been a child, a boy, a youth, an adult, and finally an old man. Like everyone else. Our Lord the Creator made Us like everyone else. Maybe you wish to know what kind of youth We were. Well, We were a very serious, very diligent, very obedient youth. We were sometimes punished, but do you know why? Because what We were made to study did not seem enough and We wished to study further. We wanted to stay on at school after lessons were over. We were loath to amuse Ourselves, to go riding, to play. We didn't want to waste time on games.*