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The Rights of African Children, the Save the Children Fund and Public Opinion in Europe and Ethiopia: The Centre of Child Welfare of Addis Ababa, Spring 1936*

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In the winter of 1936, the Save the Children International Union sent a field worker to Addis Ababa to run a child welfare centre for four months. Possibly the "first modern relief operation" in Africa, it relied on traditions of mobilisation of European opinion. But the original encounter with relatively autonomous Ethiopian social and political traditions helped create features of Non Governmental Organisations which are still with us.

In the winter of 1936, a few months after the invasion of Ethiopia by Mussolini, the Save the Children International Union (SCIU) sent a field worker to Addis Ababa. Frederique Small opened a child welfare centre, which she called the *Ghèbi de l'enfant* ('Palace of the Child'), from January to April, when the capital remained under the control of the Emperor. Hers was the first field trip of the Save the Children movement on the continent, and it may represent the "first modern relief operation [in Africa]"¹.

The Save the Children Fund, the Rights of Children at the League of Nations and the Conference on the African Child of 1931

Five years before, at a Conference on the African Child convened in Geneva by the SCIU, 200 people had resolved to send missions of study and experiments in child welfare in Africa. Based in the same city, the lay and charitable association, which grouped the Save the Children Fund (SCF) of London and national organisations of its like, had been promoting children's rights for a decade. It was born to channel the movement of sympathy deployed to feed children of foreign and enemy nations during the First World War. In the aftermath of the conflict, international child savers expected that the continuation of international co-operation on social matters would help to keep peace. They promoted universal rights, and relied heavily on public opinion, a wide appeal, they hoped, that would do away from the secrets of embassies' corridors. The SCF drafted a Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which the General Assembly of the League of Nations adopted unanimously in 1924².

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¹ JOHN ILIFFE, *The African Poor. A History* (Cambridge, 1988), 195; RODNEY BREEN, *Into Africa. Save the Children's Long Journey to the African Continent*, Save the Children Fund Paper, Archive paper No. 2 (London, 1997).

² DOMINIQUE MARSHALL, "The Formation of Childhood as an Object of International Relations: the Child Welfare Committee and the Declaration of Children's Rights of the League of Nations", *International Journal of Children's Rights* 7, 2 (1999), 103-147.

Having helped to secure social work for children as a permanent activity of the Secretariat of the League, the Save the Children members wished to act as a watchdog for the new international public institution and a forerunner. It is in this capacity that in the early 1930s, they shifted their attention towards "non-European children". Their Declaration insisted on children's rights "beyond any consideration of race, nationality or creed", and social work in Africa would be the best way to implement this universal commitment.

Frederique Small herself devoted her time to the preparation of the Conference of 1931, which was well attended. Missionaries answered the invitation in the greatest number, followed by a mixed group of charity workers, social scientists, government representatives, politicians and civil servants attached to the many agencies of the League of Nations. But, of the 200 or so present, only seven persons were native of Africa. A further two were from African descent. Furthermore, it was hard to envisage how Africans could take part in a "new diplomacy" based on universal rights and social co-operation. The League of Nations' Charter respected the sovereignty of metropolises over their colonies, and this stance jeopardised any free enquiry on children's status, such as the one the bureau of indigenous work of the International Labour Office projected to do on child labour.

After the congress, the SCIU set up a Commission on African Children and a Permanent Bureau for African Child Welfare in Geneva; in parallel, in London, it founded a "Child Protection Committee" devoted to non-European children³. Soon the Union found itself in a vicious circle: it failed to interest "public opinion" enough to raise the necessary funds to send a worker in Africa at the same time that only such a mission could encourage people to support children's charities in Africa. Three years after the Conference, the head of the London committee was discouraged: "... [I] can't *imagine* where the money could come from ..."⁴

The Italian Invasion of Ethiopia and the Sympathy for Children

The Italian invasion of Ethiopia offered an unprecedented opportunity to solve this financial and diplomatic quandary. From September 1935, the philanthropists witnessed "the very important fact that the public is ready to give to Ethiopia now, which was not the case before and won't be the case later". We are, they wrote, "pressed by the public opinion and by most of our constituent national committees - ... - we have authorised our delegate to proceed."⁵

A campaign for funds was launched in the autumn of 1935 in the newspapers of Geneva, Zurich and London. The President of the SCF of London, Lord Noel-Buxton, wrote an appeal entitled "Aid for women and children" in the *Times*. Aware of the large number of

³ "Procès-verbal de la séance du 1er 2(?) mai 1935", p. 2, Archives de l'Union internationale de protection de l'enfance, Archives d'état de Genève (thereafter AUIPE), M.8.9 (the call numbers of this collection are temporary); "The Save the Children Fund Child Protection Committee for Non-European Children" (AUIPE, Great-Britain, 12.1.2. Save the Children Fund. Matériel de propagande, 1920-1940, "1934-1936").

⁴ Schlemmer, 10 January 1934, in AUIPE, UISE, *Procès-verbaux Comité exécutif, 1934-1937 et documents connexes*, Documents concernant les séances 212 à 232', 147-148. Van Notten to Barton, 1 January 1936, AUIPE, "Ethiopie. Divers". De Bunsen to MacKenzie, December 1933, AUIPE, Great Britain, 12.3, "de Bunsen".

⁵ L.B. Golden, Secretary General of the SCF in London, to Small, 19 February 1936, AUIPE, "Suisse-Mme Frédérique Small - Lettres reçues (1935-1936)".

organisations appealing for money for Ethiopia, he insisted that children would be the first beneficiaries of the help and quoted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child⁶.

Charitable donations followed. The French branch launched a system of photo-cards of children whose father was fighting and it found godfathers for 32 of them. In London, the head of the African work believed that such public interest would only be sustained by sensational propaganda. She wrote to Small: "Give us some really harrowing stories, and the cure for the troubles and we will find the money ... Please let us have news and photographs. The Red Cross have raised considerable sums owing to their being so much in the news." The leaflet for subscriptions to the SCF called for help for children "driven from their homes" and invoked the "lack of funds" of "our administrator"⁷. Approximately £1000 were collected, from Britain, France, Finland, Turkey, Ireland, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United States, in that order of importance⁸.



Fig. 1: The Save the Children fieldworker in Addis Ababa from December 1935 to March 1936, Frederique Small, in front of her tent with the flag of the movement, on the land rented from the daughter of the deceased Minister of War of the 1920s, Habta-Giyorgis. From: AUIPE, not numbered, file entitled «Éthiopie».

By December 1936, Geneva and London had enough funds to send their most experienced welfare worker in Addis Ababa, a British woman of Central European descent, who had helped to create welfare systems in the Balkans for a decade, Mrs. Frederique Freund Small⁹ (see fig. 1). On her arrival, she understood that immediate work of war relief would be impractical. Food was in sufficient quantities in the city, and the care of families in the front was the re-

⁶ LORD NOEL BUXTON, "Aid for women and Children. 'Save the Children Fund' Action", *The Times*, 10 October 1935.

⁷ Golden to Small, 4 February 1936, AUIPE, "Suisse-Mme Frederique Small - Lettres reçues (1935-1936)". CAROLYN MOREHEAD, *Dunant's Dream. War, Switzerland and the History of the Red Cross* (London, 1998), 305 and after.

⁸ Beside 7,500 Swiss francs from the trust of Eglantyne Jebb, authorised by her sister, approximately 3,500 francs came from France, Turkey and Great Britain. £ 600 had been collected by Lord Noel Buxton. Golden to Small, 4 February 1936, op. cit. EDWARD FULLER, *The Rights of the Child, a Chapter in Social History* (London, 1951), 152. "Action en Ethiopie. Répartition finale des dépenses", 1p., AUIPE, box "Afrique", folder "Afrique (indigène) - Correspondance diverse, 1934-1936". FREDERIQUE SMALL, "Union internationale de secours aux enfants. Mission en Ethiopie", *Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge* 18, 208 (April 1936): 279-82 and 18, 209 (May 1936): 376-92. (Thereafter *RICR*).

⁹ Born Salonica, she may have benefited from the presence of an important Greek colony in Addis Ababa as Theodore Natsoulas has kindly suggested.

sponsibility of the Red Cross. She promptly reported on her prospective work to the Empress of Ethiopia: she hoped to convert European sympathy for the young victims of war into support for "normal and constructive" work, which did not necessarily strike the imagination¹⁰.

But, from London, her colleagues were warning Small of the limitations of the movements of public sympathy towards her project: "You can see for yourself that the children in the necessitous quarters of Addis Ababa with the addition of some rough social services is very little basis of appeal, and will not bring in large sums of money [...] We can get money for bombed civilians, especially if we have lots of details, but we can't get money for endemic misery."¹¹

Child Welfare and the Emperor's Politics

From the elites of Addis Ababa, meanwhile, the wish to collaborate with an European agency on matters of child welfare was strong. In their search for international support, the members of Hayle-Sellasse's government had welcomed the neutral offer of the SCF. The agreement they concluded was marked by the spirit of the social collaboration for peace featured in the Covenant of the League of Nations. The SCF seemed to be respecting the principle of equality between member nations of the League's covenant. The humanitarians promised to rely on local work as much as possible and to respect local ways: they pledged a short stay and offered to work towards structures of welfare which could function autonomously on their departure. To reassure those who criticised the inclusion of an absolutist state in the League, Hayle-Sellasse had offered to liberalise political structures. It may be in this spirit that the Emperor welcomed new forms of social work born in the civil society. In his preparation for war, during the first half of 1935, he asked for Ethiopia to become a member of the International Committee of the Red Cross. This demanded the creation of a local chapter, which the Emperor provided, under the form of an Association of Ethiopian Women's Work prepared to care for the wounded. Furthermore, speaking of universal rights in a non binding declaration such as the Declaration of



Fig. 2: The three cooks hired by the Save the Children: one uniquely for the berberi, the two others for the kitchen installed in the old garage. A separate bakery was used for baking *injera*-bread. From: AUIPE, not numbered, file entitled «Éthiopie».

¹⁰ "Mémoire remis à S.M. l'Impératrice d'Éthiopie de Mme Small", 26 January 1936, AUIPE, 5.2, Folder entitled "Généralités", subfolder entitled "Mission en Éthiopie de Mme Small"; UISE, Procès-verbal du XVIIe. Conseil Général. 21–22 April 1936, 12.

¹¹ Golden to Small, 19 February 1936, op. cit.



Fig. 3: The canteen of the Social Centre (a building which was the reception house of the old master) where meals were served to up to 200 children daily. From: AUIPE, not numbered, file entitled «Éthiopie».

she and her “Indian builder” had converted the old reception house into a day canteen, and the old garage into a kitchen for which she hired three cooks (see figs. 2 and 3). Two separate buildings served for cooking, one of them especially for baking *indjera*-bread. She organised a playground, for which the government lent the services of a teacher of physical education (see fig. 4), and she transformed the old bedroom into a dispensary for free daily clinics, a maternity clinic and a store for combustible. In a building in the third courtyard, she placed three baths, one in cement divided in three and one in zinc for babies, filled with thermal water, used mainly on Saturday mornings and for partial baths the three other days of the consultation. When the original water well was declared unhealthy, she used the public tap of the neighbourhood. A wall built around the complex, and trenches, were used for practice in case of bombing raids.

The fieldworker organised home visits for mothers of the area, briefly training local women in the European techniques of “casework” for that purpose. She hired tailors to make clothes from 30 yards of fabric she purchased, night and day watchmen, and an administrator: a “Catholic [woman], from a good family, who was in need of the money to raise alone two children.” The imperial family provided her with a personal bodyguard.

Colonial Traditions of Religious and Medical Work with Children

The work of the SCF resembled that of missionaries. In Addis Ababa, they received the help of a Protestant missionary and, for the Conference of 1931, the fund had already relied on the missionary tendency to “capitalise on the appeal of small black infants” to mobilise public opinion¹³. Documents illustrating their work were reprinted in the SCF

Children’s Rights would have agreed with the Emperor’s own rhetoric of rights, a stance he had adopted in the 1920s as a way to ensure the support of the population for central institutions against the power of regional rulers¹².

The *Ghébi* was installed in a “populous quarter”, in the rented property of the daughter of the minister of war who had died in 1926, Habta-Giyorgis. It was soon able to welcome up to 250 children at a time. In the report she wrote for the monthly journal of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Small reported that

¹² BAHRU ZEWDE, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855–1991* (Oxford, 2001). RICHARD PANKHURST, *An Introduction to the Medical History of Ethiopia* (Trenton, 1990), 217f. The committee “equipped the first ambulance unit sent to the north and provided all the bandages and dressings for the southern unit.” They comprised Madame Berhané Marcos, vice-president, Belachew, secretary, Rev. A.F. Matthews and Ato Belachew, treasurers; the founders included Princess Yesash Warq (the Emperor’s kinswoman), “and the wives of several prominent officials: Madame Zeleke Agedaw, Walda Maryam, Georges Herouy, Ayale Gabré, Tasfai Tegagn, Sirak Heruy, Tadessa Meshasha”.

¹³ DEBBY GAITSKELL, “‘Getting close to the hearts of mothers’: medical missionaries among African women and children in Johannesburg between the wars”, in: VALERIE FILDES – LARA MARKS – HILARY MARLAND (eds.), *Women and Children First. International Maternal and Infant Welfare*

monthly journal, and a picture sent by a missionary figured on the cover of the programme of the Conference. From them, the SCF also borrowed the symbol of the virgin and Christ to convey the impression that European protection of black children had a maternal and a divine quality¹⁴. Small pictures of women of the wealthy Ethiopian class with black children converged with the missionary practise of training relatively autonomous native



Fig. 4: The playground of the Social Centre, built by the Save the Children with the assistance of a local carpenter. From: AUIPE, not numbered, file entitled «Éthiopie».

nurses and welfare workers. But Small insisted that her work departed from the missionaries' in important ways. She criticised their insistence on conversion as a prerequisite to their cure and she underlined the inaccessibility of their hospitals: "In reality, the price of a bed in [their] hospital is much too costly for an Abyssinian of small means."¹⁵

Similarly, the medical actions at the *Ghébi* were in accordance with the main tenets of the colonial medicine of the day. At the same time, however, the promotion of the right to health for African children lead the Save the Children worker to be critical of Western methods. Such efforts converged with those of reformers of the medical departments of British colonies tropical medicine, where more doctors of tropical medicine now focused on the welfare of African children¹⁶.

Small's work in Addis Ababa started with the systematic vaccination of the children visiting the Centre. She organised soap and nappies demonstrations with the help of servants of the members of the Association and their children, in the presence of the Princess and of a minister's wife¹⁷. The method was typical of the old certainty of colonial doctors and administrators: to benefit from the fruits of irrefutable science, natives only had to witness the method and they would adopt it¹⁸.

1870–1945 (London, 1993), 197, 202; JENNIFER BEINHART, "Darkly through a Lens. Changing Perceptions of the African Child in Sickness and Health, 1900–1945", in: ROGER COOTER (ed.), *In the Name of the Child: Health and Welfare 1880–1940* (London, 1992), 210–43.

¹⁴ "The Save the Children Fund", AUIPE, Great Britain, 12.1.2, Save the Children Fund, Matériel de Propagande, 1920–1940', Folder entitled "1934–1936". EMILY S. ROSENBERG, *Spreading the American Dream. American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890–1945* (New York, 1982), 9; PASCAL BLANCHARD – ARMELLE CHATELIER (eds.), *Images et colonies, Nature, discours et influence de l'iconographie coloniale liée à la propagande coloniale et à la représentation des Africains et de l'Afrique en France, de 1920 aux Indépendances* (Paris, 1993), 80.

¹⁵ RICR, May 1936, 467; MEGAN VAUGHAN, *Curing their Ills. Colonial Power and African Illness* (Cambridge, 1991), 66.

¹⁶ MICHAEL WORBOYS, "The Discovery of Colonial Malnutrition Between the Wars", in: DAVID ARNOLD (ed.), *Imperial Medicine and Indigenous Societies* (Manchester, 1988), 208–225, here 211.

¹⁷ RICR, April 1936, 282.

¹⁸ ANNE MARCOVICH, "French colonial medicine and colonial rule: Algerian and Indochina", in: ROY MACLEOD – MILTON LEWIS (eds.), *Disease, Medicine and Empire. Perspectives on Western Medicine and the Experience of European Expansion* (London, 1988), 103–16.

The brief fieldtrip took little account of the concern some participants of the Conference of 1931 had shown for the study of indigenous drugs. When Small reported natives' practices, it was mostly those which interfered with her work. Like many others at the Conference, she blamed "ignorance in puericulture", as well as lack of hygiene¹⁹. However, she often attributed children's problems of health to poverty, an understanding which was not equally widespread amongst Western colonial elite.

Still, Small praised some aspects of Ethiopian tradition. Proud of the knowledge she gained from her staying in an Ethiopian home (which distinguished her from most Europeans in the capital), she suggested that African parents provided children with better earlier years than Europeans: the young ones were loved, their manners were "natural", their intelligence "awakened" more than Europeans', until 12 or 13 years old, when "the sexual development seemed to stop the intellectual development".

Women, the High Society of Addis Ababa and the Save the Children Fund

Small intended to provoke "the interest of the local population for this work"²⁰. From her Balkan experience, she brought the project of encouraging the responsibility of the elite for the poor. "Before all", she reported, "one has to know the country, its mindset, its people and to earn its trust as well as the trust of its leader. [...] it is the first attempt to interest Ethiopians in their children and to have the people of the well to do class enter the conditions of living of the needy class."²¹



Fig. 5: The Save the Children fieldworker, Frederique Small (standing on the right) together with some of her collaborators: she listed, on the back row, "Mrs Lorenzo Daepaz [Taezez], her father, the Kantiba Geboron [Gabru], (80 ans)." On the lower row: "Blate Kidoma Marianz, director of education" and "Hailon, nephew of Mrs LD [Taezaz]". From: AUIPE, not numbered, file entitled «Éthiopie».

Thus, the fieldworker envisaged her engagement with the local population mainly through the elites of the welcoming country. In Ethiopia, like in most SCF fieldtrips, the *Ghébi* relied mainly on the voluntary work of women. This Ethiopian Women's Work Association counted 50 members. It was the only one in its kind in the country. Placed under the honorary presidency of the Princess Tsahai, it received the high patronage of Empress Manan. The Association paid for the doctor and for the consultation²². The reliance on elite Ethiopian women influenced the nature of welfare visits organised by Small: visitors were to be accompanied by horses and servants.

¹⁹ *RICR*, May 1936, 465.

²⁰ *RICR*, April 1936, 376.

²¹ *RICR*, May 1936, 470, 485, my translation.

²² ADRIEN ZERVOS, *L'empire de l'Éthiopie. Le miroir de l'Éthiopie moderne 1906-1935* (Athens, 1936), 79, 260. *RICR*, May 1936, 468. RICHARD PANKHURST – DENIS GERARD, *Ethiopia photographed: historic photographs of the country and its people taken between 1867 and 1935* (London, 1996), see especially picture 305, p. 167, showing Empress Manan watching the preparation of bandages, with Princess Tsahai, for the newly founded Ethiopian Red Cross.

The fact that many of these women had been educated in Europe may have given them the sense of responsibility to create such charity. Traditions of women's involvement in the "peaceful mechanism of building Ethiopia", may also have informed this work²³. In many other areas of the African continent which had economic and educational resources, such charitable work in collaboration with white colonists offered educated and relatively wealthy African women a legitimate opportunity to act²⁴.

The Possibilities and Problems of the Neutrality of the Save the Children Fund

The neutral claim of the SCF helped secure funds from a public weary of European diplomatic interests. In addition, the absence of direct colonial rule over Ethiopia, conferred much autonomy to its fieldworker. The expedition was organised against the approval of the British Minister in Addis Ababa, Sidney Barton, who was reluctant to accept the responsibility for the security of woman British newcomer in these times of war, arguing instead in favour of missionary societies already present²⁵. Instead, Frederique Small obtained a visa from the Ethiopian legation in Paris, which the British consulate in Geneva was obliged to confirm. The Save the Children Fund continued to be favored by the royal family and it enjoyed the benevolence of representatives of the Ethiopian elite. The Empress of Ethiopia became President of the *Ghèbi*, Princess Tsahai, one of its main workers, and members of the government such as the *Kantiba* Gebru and the "Director of Education Blate Kidoma Marianz", collaborated (see fig. 5). The Save the Children authorities already enjoyed cordial relations with the Ethiopian government, as the President of the British Branch, Lord Noel Buxton, had visited the Emperor in 1932, in an effort sponsored by the Anti-Slavery Society, of which he was also Vice-President, to discuss



Fig. 6: In front of the old bedroom of the master, converted into a dispensary, "from left to right: Humechnal, Director of the Social Centre, Dr. Seniavine, the Russian] doctor [residing in Addis Ababa and hired by the centre], Mrs. Angela, President of the Committee [of the Ethiopian Women's Work Association], Mrs. Martha, Secretary of the Committee, Mrs. Lorenzo Tazaz, Vice President". From: AUIPE, not numbered, file entitled «Éthiopie».

²³ ZERVOS, *L'empire de l'Éthiopie*, 260; HERAN SEREKE-BHRAN, "Building bridges, drying bad blood: note on elite marriages, politics and ethnicity in 19th and 20th century imperial Ethiopia", paper presented at the 15th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Hamburg, 2003 (see the present volume, pp. 266–274).

²⁴ "Interview radiophonique le 18 Mai 1936", AUIPE, 5.2, "Généralités", "Mission en Éthiopie de Mme Small". For a similar "co-operation of European and well-to-do African women performing good work together", see JENNIFER STANTON, "The Rise and Fall of State Provision on Infant Welfare Services in the Gold Coast, 1919–1939", paper presented at the Postgraduate Seminar on 'Health and Empire', Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 1992, 9.

²⁵ UISE, Procès-verbal du XVIIe. Conseil Général, 21–22 April 1936, 11.



Fig. 7: Children of soldiers waiting for the medical consultation. Only children of soldiers or children brought by education or religious authorities could benefit from the services. From: AUIPE, not numbered, file entitled «Éthiopie».

Seniavine discovered a rate of 85 % of syphilis; and of 90 % of diverse sicknesses of the skin²⁷.

Abiding to the neutrality of its constitution became increasingly difficult for the SCF. War loyalties, for one, determined some of the SCF work. The Emperor had placed conditions on the existence of the *Ghébi*: it would welcome only children referred by schools or by missions or, if children showed up by themselves, only those whose father was a soldier at war (see fig. 7). Moreover the SCF would have to depart from the premises it rented if they were needed for the care of soldiers or wounded civilians. The raising of the flag and the singing of the national anthem were performed daily at the *Ghébi*. It is as if the Emperor had to present humanitarian help as an exceptional and temporary measure, for it not to be construed as a foreign infringement on his prerogatives. More generally, as we will now see, it seems that it is largely war patriotism that encouraged the Ethiopian elite to give energy and money for medical attention to children.

Accordingly, in Addis Ababa, the SCF field worker tried to keep references to the Italian Red Cross to a minimum, not to shake the trust of her Ethiopian collaborators. From the Italian side, the director of the Italian Red Cross was also the director of a fascist institute that had participated in the Conference on the African Child in 1931. He had agreed to conduct future studies of infant mortality on the behalf of the SCF. After the invasion of the capital, Small kept hoping that Italian authorities would respect the neutrality of the centre and welcome its work. But the Italian Red Cross denied support to humanitarian agencies other than Italian, and they regarded the women's association as political. In May 1936, the centre was inactive but apparently intact. Italian troops occupied a part of it and converted it into a hospital for their wounded soldiers²⁸. In the five

“ways and means of abolishing slavery”²⁶.

The neutral stance also helped to gather workers from different nationalities. Small relied on the collaboration of a Russian doctor, Olga Seniavine, the head of a private clinic for women and children, a member of the community of expatriate Russians in Addis Ababa (see fig 6). She worked three mornings a week and all day Saturday. On these occasions, children would go to the dispensary to be examined, vaccinated, weighed and treated if necessary.

²⁶ *The World's Children*, May 1932, 116.

²⁷ *RICR*, May 1936, 471.

²⁸ A.F. Matthews to SCIU, 8 August 1936, AUIPE, “Mme Frederique Small – Lettres reçues (1935–1936)”, Suisse – Mme Frederique Small; PANKHURST, *An Introduction to the Medical History of Ethiopia*, 227.

years following occupation, they developed racist institutions of health and welfare which, eventually, came to take care of native Ethiopian children²⁹.

Epilogue

In April 1936, a few weeks before the Italians seized Addis Ababa, Frederique Small left the centre in the hand of the Association of Ethiopian Women, together with four months of financial aid³⁰. On her return, she still hoped that the sympathy generated abroad by the war in Ethiopia would help build a national institution of child protection³¹. She complained to the International Committee of the Red Cross about the bombing of children, published two long articles on her experience for the *International Review of the Red Cross*, and spoke of her experience in London³². The London Committee counted on films shot at the *Ghébi* by the Soviet camera operator Zeitlin, apparently sent to Moscow, to attract a large public, but they never retraced the images³³. The Save the Children movement used other agencies to send the money remaining in the Ethiopian fund, in order to assist refugees outside of the occupied country. But without a war to help raising funds and interest, with the Emperor in exile, the SCF field activities in the name of the rights of African children dwindled. The Save the Children movement now turned its international attention toward Spain, where the emergency of another war attracted popular charity, and this is where Frederique Small went. Sylvia Pankhurst despaired of the larger popularity the new conflict attracted compared to the situation in invaded Ethiopia, for which she never stopped trying to attract sympathy³⁴. Small had projected to open work in four other places, but not until 1966 did the Save the Children work resume in Ethiopia³⁵.

The consequences of the SCIU intervention were indirect. Lady Barton, who also came back in Britain in 1936, became a member of the Council of the SCF in London. She helped to send five Red Cross nurses to Ethiopia that year. She kept in touch with the Ethiopian Women's Association which had continued to work during the occupation. The clinic "was reopened in 1944 as a welfare centre, and the association [Ethiopian

²⁹ RICHARD PANKHURST, *The Ethiopians* (Oxford, 1998), 241, 227.

³⁰ UISE, *Procès-verbaux Comité exécutif, 1934-1937 et documents connexes*, AUIPE, 21 November 1935, 5 December 1935, 30 January 1936, 23 April 1936. F. Small, "Pour les membres de la sous-commission de l'Éthiopie" and Douglass to Small, 19 June 1936, "Ethiopie. Divers", AUIPE, Box not catalogued entitled "Afrique. 1932-38".

³¹ Mémoire remis à S.M. l'Impératrice d'Éthiopie de Mme Small", 26 January 1936, AUIPE, 5.2, "Généralités", "Mission en Éthiopie de Mme Small". UISE, Procès-verbal du XVIIe. Conseil Général, 21-22 April 1936, 12.

³² ASCF, CPC, Minutes, 7 July 1936.

³³ Golden to MacKenzie, 29 April 1936; A. Sadovsky, Représentation commerciale en France de l'URSS (no 38/855), to Miss Small, 26 May 1936; in AUIPE, "Suisse-Mme Frederique Small - Lettres reçues (1935-1936)". Small to Brown, 27 April 1936; Brown to Small, 27 April 1936 and 29 April 1936; Small to Lady Barton, 18 May 1936; AUIPE, Folder not catalogued entitled "Ethiopie. Divers"; Eugene Finn of the National Film and Television Archives has kindly provided this information. Their copy of "Abyssinia" shows Red Cross work and images of children running towards a bunker, of children in uniform, and of children playing, which may be the images shot with Small. *National Film Archives Catalogue Summary*, Title Ref. 126279.

³⁴ SYLVIA PANKHURST, *Italy's War Crimes in Ethiopia* (Woodford Green, 1946), 24.

³⁵ "Save the Children's Work in Ethiopia", SCF Website, 1997. In 1941, Barton sent a memo to Sir Philip Mitchell, the "new administrator of the Enemy-occupied territory in Africa". ASCF, CPC, Minutes, 29 May 1941; 26 June 1941.

Women's Work Association] also support[ed] an orphanage for the children of patriots killed in action", which seems to have lasted until the Derg³⁶. The SCF kept in close relation with the exiled Emperor. His private secretary at the time, Jamaican born Una Marson, became a member of the SCF committee on non-European children. Small had an audience with the Emperor, and Lady Barton helped Princess Tsahai to study child welfare work in the Great Ormond Street Hospital during the exile of her father. The princess died shortly after the reinstatement of the Emperor, and a hospital was opened in her name in Addis Ababa (1951), equipped mainly with money raised in Britain by Sylvia Pankhurst in the memory of the Princess. Thus, war, which had been determinant in the opening of the *Ghèbi*, was also responsible for its closing.

The practical work in Ethiopia carried many of the features of conservative traditions of charities between rich and poor, of Western ambitions of converting natives to their practices. It was also original in its constant reference to the new language of universal social rights, mutually ensured by the independent members of the new League of Nations and by international public opinion. Respect for local cultures, reliance on local institutions and emphasis on local autonomy all led to enough independence from colonial powers and established churches to engage with the society of Addis Ababa in some unprecedented ways. The SCF acted in independent fashion from colonial powers and established churches. In the volatility of funding campaigns, in the quest for means to attract international sympathy, in the difficulties of remaining neutral in front of invasions and dictatorships, the people of Europe and Ethiopia involved in the Save the Children Fund's experiment, however short-lived, faced many of the current dilemmas of Non-Governmental Organisations, earlier than historians generally acknowledge³⁷.

³⁶ CHRISTINE SANFORD, *Ethiopia under Haile Selassie* (London, 1946), 67; RICHARD PANKHURST, *Sylvia Pankhurst. Counsel for Ethiopia* (Hollywood, 1993), 190. Sylvia Pankhurst visited the orphanage in 1944, during her first trip to the capital, an event pictured on p. 210 of the latter book. A picture of Princess Tsahai at the Great Ormond Children's Hospital figures on p. 189. The book also explains that, in London, Pankhurst's project of a hospital, mentioned later in this article, competed with other agencies' appeals, a rivalry that she and the SCF attempted to bridge by a joint conference, in January 1943. Finally, on p. 132, Richard Pankhurst mentions the Princess' participation to a general Red Cross appeal, in April 1941, at a football match in South London.

³⁷ ONDINE BARROW – MIKE JENNINGS, *The Charitable Impulse: Non-Governmental Organisations, Relief and Development in East and North-East Africa* (Oxford, 2001), 12–62.