

Serving the Whole Person: The Case of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY)

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Abstract

The article explains the theology of serving the whole person as a core vision of the EECMY. It shows how EECMY developed this theology based on inspiration from the missions which established the church and as a part of a Bible-based theological reflection on the local challenges the church had to address in society. The article underlines the role of the indigenous church leaders in the development of the idea "Serving the whole person". They wanted a holistic theology which keeps the proclamation of the gospel and the diaconal service in a proper balance. This theological view was communicated to the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and other churches that held a dichotomized picture of these two aspects, through the letter 'The Interrelation between Proclamation of the Gospel and Human Development'. The article also points out the challenges that EECMY and its holistic theology have faced over the last decades, and indications of a withdrawal from this position because of the challenges. The article therefore calls for a revision of a theology of serving the whole person to maintain its original intention as well as increase its relevancy in the contemporary situation.

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Norsk sammendrag

Artikkelen gjør rede for en teologi om å tjene hele mennesket slik Mekane Yesus Kirken i Etiopia har som sin visjon. Den viser hvordan kirken utviklet denne teologi på grunnlag av inspirasjon fra misjonsselskapene som la grunnen for kirken og som en del av en bibelsk teologisk gjennomtenkning omkring kirkens utfordringer i samfunnet. Artikkelen peker især på lokale lederes rolle i utviklingen av visjonen om «Serving the whole person». De ønsket en holistisk teologi som binder sammen og balanserer forkynnelsen av evangeliet og diakonal tjeneste. Dette syn ble kommunisert til Det lutherske verdensforbund og til andre kirker som fortsatt adskilte disse to aspekter, via brevet 'The Interrelation between Proclamation of the Gospel and Human Development'. Artikkelen peker videre på de utfordringer kirken og dens holistiske teologi har stått overfor de siste årtier, og nevner tegn på at man i noen grad har trukket seg fra den opprinnelige visjon på grunn av utfordringene. Det er derfor bruk for en fornyet gjennomtenkning av teologien om å tjene de det hele menneske slik at man ikke mister den opprinnelige hensikt men i stedet tar tilbake visjonens hensikt i dagens situasjon.

Introduction

“Serving the whole person” is an indigenous theology and a motto of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY). This represents a view of the church to equally addressing both the spiritual and material/physical needs of all human being which are created in the image of God. The spiritual need refers to the sinfulness of all human beings and the necessity of hearing the gospel to receive the forgiveness of sin and God’s grace. The material/physical need is meant to include the concern of fulfilling basic human needs and helping the needy, promoting peaceful and reconciled community, promoting justice, dignity and respect for human right, as well as protecting creation.¹ To get a comprehensive understanding of the characteristic features of such a holistic ministry, a brief presentation of the historical, political, socio-economic and contextual conditions of the country is necessary. Therefore, these factors will be highlighted followed by a critical reflection on the implementation, the relevance and limitation of the theology of serving the whole person from a practical and critical point of view.

The concept of ‘Serving the whole person’ in the context of EECMY’s diaconal work

‘Serving the whole person’ is a theological view developed by the EECMY to address the specific need and challenges of the people and context of Ethiopia. It argues for viewing the proclamation of the gospel and diaconal/social services in an integrated way and give them equal emphasis to cater both the physical and spiritual needs of human beings. This view was based on and inspired by the church’s understanding of God’s saving act, directed not only to the spiritual aspect but to the totality of a human being. The basic document that introduced this theology in 1972 is known as ‘The Interrelation between Proclamation of the Gospel and Human Development’.² The EECMY argued against a one-sided development which excluded evangelistic outreach and the leadership training for congregational work which was given high priority. Megersa Guta who was a general secretary of the church in 1993–2006 presents this commitment to ‘serve a person’s material and spiritual needs’ as the essence of this theology and confirms the dissatisfaction of the church with the reductionist view that restricted either proclamation or diakonia as secondary and side-issues and the fact that the western missions and their funding agencies judged the needs of

EECMY based on their own criteria and on the conditions that they had stipulated.³ Furthermore, he states that the imposition of “ [t]he division between witness and service or between proclamation and development is [...] harmful to the church and will ultimately result in a distorted Christianity.”⁴ To achieve a proper balance between evangelistic and development activities, holistic mission stresses the dual mandate of the church to communicate the Christian faith and express God’s love both in words and actions as underlined in the constitution of the church.⁵

Guided and inspired by this vision, the EECMY as an evangelical and charismatic Lutheran church has been engaged in complex social challenges.⁶ All units of the church are committed to the implementation of this vision and have used it as a central inspiration and goal of their ministries as synods, parishes, congregations and individual members. In this way, the theology of serving the whole person binds together and directs all diaconal/social and justice related services and the proclamation of the gospel. Accordingly, the church’s engagement in the diverse needs and challenges of a human being is expressed by the broad service it has provided to serve the whole person in addition to and as part of the proclamation of the gospel. These services include diaconal services in the form of providing for the needy/orphans/homeless, medical services, education/schools, facilitation of sustainable methods of irrigation and agriculture in drought affected areas and relief to people affected by natural or man-made disasters. At the same time, the church has played a leading role in raising the awareness of caring for God’s creation. The church is also strongly engaged in fighting traditions like circumcision and oppression of women, illegal and forced marriages and in providing family planning programs to improve life conditions and provide opportunity to jobless people, especially the youth. EECMY works to promote an improved attitude towards people with disabilities and stigmatized members of society due to diseases such as HIV, leprosy, fistula, elephantiasis and based on ethnic associations.⁷

The church has also been active in the peace and reconciliation processes in relation to civil wars and ethnic conflicts in various parts of the country to promote peace, justice, equal rights and dignity of every human being.⁸ In general, an important question that needs a response is whether the diaconal work and service of EECMY has been reduced to a door opener for the gospel or whether it was provided to serve the people as an expression of Love. Lack of a proper understanding of EECMY’s diaconal work as a necessary and complementary dimension of proclamation/evangelism entails the risk to look upon diakonia as an instrument or method of evangelism in such a way that the vulnerability of the people is used for evangelistic purpose. As argued by Kjell Nordstokke, “This mission-focused method contradicts the biblical imperative of assisting people in need as a God-given mandate and an important action in itself, as clearly exemplified in the diaconal practice of Jesus.”⁹ However, as it is described in the official documents and expressed in its ministries, EECMY’s diaconal services are provided to everyone in need despite religious, cultural, ethnic and political affiliations with no intentional plan of imposing its faith but to serve people in love and humility. As a dimensional aspect of these services, many have come to faith because and when they were touched by the love of God that compelled the church to provide these services.

History and Context for a Theology of ‘Serving the Whole Person’

Gudina Tumsa was one of the most influential minds behind the development of the theology of “serving the whole person”. He was general secretary of EECMY from 1966 until he was arrested and executed by the Communist government in 1979.¹⁰ According to his observation, theology grows “[...]out of the daily experiences from our dealing with ordinary affairs of life as we experience

them in our situation, in our cultural setting, in our economic life, in our political experience and in our social practice.”¹¹ This indicates how the political, economic and social conditions as well as the historical and cultural aspects of Ethiopia have provided a context where serving the whole person is associated with and shaped by the Ethiopian context. As examples of this, the biblical view of a totality of human life, the socio-economic circumstances as well as the Ethiopian cultural, ideological and political independency provide better insight into the understanding of a theology of “serving the whole person”.

Biblical view and interpretation of the totality of a human life

EECMY affirms a theological anthropology based on the biblical understanding of the human being created in the image of God. The interpretation of the human being and meeting his/her spiritual and physical needs in an integrated and holistic way immerses primarily from the Scripture.¹² The church relies on and is committed to the teaching of the Bible. In line with the teaching of key biblical texts like James 2.14-17 where faith without deeds is expressed as dead and following the example of Jesus¹³ who included both the physical and spiritual aspects in responding to the needs of the people he served, EECMY bases the development of serving the whole person primarily on the teaching of the scripture. According to Wakseyoum Idossa who was the president of EECMY until June 2017

[...] the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, along with its evangelistic mission, has been excreting lots of efforts for promoting inclusive development activities from a Christian perspective [...] based-upon the exemplary deeds of the lord Jesus Christ, dedicated itself to reach out to diverse communities where needy people were offered necessary supports.¹⁴

This highlights the commitment of the church to promote a totality of human life and the provision of such service, with the proper balance between the two dimensions, helping people to experience fullness of life. This fits well with Gudina Tumsa's emphasis on serving the whole person as “an effort in re-discovering total human life.”¹⁵ Therefore, the biblical teaching which LWF has summarized as the biblical imperative of assisting people as exemplified in the diaconal practice of Jesus (Lk. 4:18-19, Matt. 11:2-6), has strongly inspired the theology and practice of serving the whole person, and of diaconal ministries.¹⁶ This demonstrates the church's commitment to remain faithful to its Lutheran heritage and what the Bible teaches about the human being and his/her needs.¹⁷

Socio-economic circumstances and related challenges

Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world. Most of its population is exposed to socio-economic problems.¹⁸ The desperate and miserable situation of the people forced the pioneer missionaries and later on the church to include development and social service in mission to alleviate multifaceted problems paving the way for the theology of serving the whole person.¹⁹ They prioritized social aid and material help as an unavoidable dimension of the proclamation of the gospel.²⁰ The prioritization of development and social services was partly to fulfil the desire of the government which in turn helped them obtain permission for evangelism work.²¹ The needs, poverty and health related challenges, lack of education – all this demanded a theological response from the church in various ways. Therefore, the socio-economic context of the country that demanded the translation of the biblical message in a relevant and meaningful way, provides a background and framework within which holistic ministry was developed.²²

To respond to and meet the diverse needs that people brought to the church and the needs of society revealed through various diaconal situations, the local congregations took full responsibility for countering the needs on a daily basis. The congregations addressed the problems with the help of their own volunteers and leaders, as well as by providing financial and material resources. They organized church members as groups and provided administrative assistance to individuals that wanted to take part to address the needs. Thus, these diaconal services were and are different from big projects financed through external donations at the institutional level as it has happened during the later decades. They are results of the commitments of church members that practice their faith both in word and deed as part of their call and identity as Christians. Diaconal services are provided as an expression of Christian love and care for fellow human beings. The dimension of love and responsibility for caring for one another was not only an important aspect of the Ethiopian culture and tradition and the African worldview which conceives human existence as holistic,²³ but it was a Christian life style shaped by the transforming experience of charismatic renewals within the EECMY.²⁴ It was a new dimension that re-enforced the cultural way of taking care of each other. This is especially in comparison with churches that belong to societies that have a welfare system where most of these services are the responsibility of the state.

Senbeto Wakene, who was a president of Central Gibe Synod - a synod known for pioneering charismatic renewal and for being one of the few self-supportive synods - witnesses to some of these positive consequences. In his master's thesis, which analyzed the self-reliance of EECMY, he said that "[...] Christian communities were revitalized, as it was seen, by the Holy Spirit, instead of hatred and killing came love, care and help. People turned to God and each other producing a loving, compassionate and just community of servants of God. Thus, socio-cultural aspects of the community were transformed into the better."²⁵ This focus on the transformation or sanctification²⁶ is one of the features of EECMY which has significantly contributed to the unique character of holistic service. It increased the quality and scope of diaconal service by motivating and empowering the church members.

Ethiopia's cultural, ideological and political independency

Independent thinking and a strong sense of cultural pride are deeply rooted in the history of Ethiopia. This independent thinking comes from the fact that Ethiopia has not been colonized and is the only African country that defeated a western power that attempted to colonize her. This independency has been expressed and continues through the country's long resistance to religious, cultural and political imperialism and its commitment to preserve its diverse traditions, culture, an own calendar, alphabet etc.²⁷ A reflection on this historical background can provide a hint of how the indigenous leaders of the EECMY questioned and challenged the views of the early missionaries and western theological thought that did not fit into the context and background of the country. Gudina Tumsa began to critically reflect on some of these influences, especially when they were not rooted in the Bible. He opposed the dichotomized western thinking that kept the evangelism and development or proclamation and diakonia separate in favor of the understanding of mission which includes diakonia and communication of the Christian message. The EECMY through leaders like him challenged and resisted views which they thought were influenced by the modern, materialistic concept of development and human progress.²⁸ According to the view of the EECMY church officers, the church was not against the development work which some western agencies preferred but wanted to underline that the church believes in "[...] an integral *human development*, where the spiritual and material needs are seen together, [as] the *only right approach* to the development question"²⁹ in Ethiopian society. For the EECMY,

the proclamation of the gospel and diaconal services or human development are inseparable and proclamation is understood to be a pre-requisite for promoting human and community development because those who have received the gospel are capable agents for bringing about this development.³⁰ They made their position known by saying: "We believe that an integral human development, where the spiritual and the material needs are seen together, is the only right approach to the development question in our society."³¹ In this way, the church argued for a strong Christo-centric orientation, a holistic view of mission and an integrated view of human development and expressed commitment to provide spiritual and physical/material service in an integrated mode to serve the whole person. This was communicated to western churches, mission organizations, and sister churches in Africa.

Reflections on the implication, relevance and limitations of Serving the whole person

EECMY has pioneered the development of the indigenous theology of serving the whole person. This theology has been and still is among the reasons for the positive attitude maintained by Christians and non-Christians in the country, including the Ethiopian government. It is a view that increased the awareness of maintaining a proper balance between the proclamation of the gospel and diaconal services as inseparable and equally important dimensions of the mandate of the church and Christians.³² Nevertheless, this theology and approach as practiced today faces certain limitations and shortcomings that may hinder its continued influence and may negatively affect the approach and service it represents.

Considering today's situation, questions like whether the evangelistic work and the development works within EECMY are still united and integrated and how an imbalance between the proclamation of the gospel and diaconal service can be prevented are among the most relevant questions that need reflection. This can be done at two different levels. At the congregational level, the dual proclamation of the gospel and diaconal services continue to be rendered in an integrated form. At this level, there are not so many challenges or problems observed regarding the imbalance between these two dimensions. But at the institutional level, the theology of 'serving the whole person' seems to be challenged by and suffers from a dichotomy that it once opposed. Yenenesh Geleta Wolteji who has critically evaluated the ministry of EECMY based on her 'several years' experience in the development section of the church, engagement in gender issues and teaching at the leadership department of the church's main seminary, underlines that the development activities are "[...] not integrated within the local church in conjunction with spiritual activities."³³ This indicates the presence of a dichotomized attitude that keeps the social and spiritual activities separate within the church itself. More specifically, a clear separation between the evangelistic work and social responsibility during the last decade³⁴ indicates a growing imbalance and tension between the evangelistic work and social responsibility in contrast to the original intention of the church.³⁵ Wodajo Welde Senbet who works at EECMY's head office and was given a special task by the church to reflect on the 1972 document to make it more integrated and holistic in the contemporary situation, confirms the increasing imbalance based on an observation of a growing higher emphasis and priority given to the development service during the last decades. The external donors "earmarked most of their financial assistance to the Church for *development and social services*" which limited the capacity and success of the church in evangelizing new people or nurturing new converts.³⁶ Due to the pressure from external donors and the local government, the structure and view of the Church regarding holistic service have begun to change. Today the two entities³⁷ that are responsible for proclamation of the gospel and development

work are no longer as united and integrated as they used to be. These challenges may make us wonder if this change is just a matter of structural change and economic limitation or an indication of a shift from the theological view the 1972 document argued for.³⁸ One may also ask if the focus on the holistic approach in general and specifically diaconal services are as relevant today as it was 20 or 30 years ago. An analysis of the situation of the country may reveal an increasing rate of joblessness, poverty, diseases, high inflation without increased wage and increasing gap between the poorer and richer members of society; this shows a continued relevance and necessity of holistic service. Drought and similar effects of climate change have also exposed many people to challenges in most parts of the country. While all this calls for an increased presence and provision of diaconal services, the scope and status of EECMY's holistic service seems to get weaker and weaker.

The new legislation on Charities and Societies, Proclamation No. 621/2009 promulgated in February 13, 2009 has limited the possibility of international agencies to continue to support charity work and other EECMY administered projects, especially those directed to human right and social justices. According to this new policy, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) including the DASSC of the EECMY are not allowed to operate in the country if they receive more than 10% of a total cost of a project and the project involves working with human right and justice related issues.³⁹ The background for the new policy is to fight corruption. But since the church lacks economic capacity to cover 90% of the cost of all its projects at the institutional level, this led to either the closing of the projects or handing them over to the government. In addition to this, due to the church wants to be self-supportive by receiving less block grants from church partners; this has increased the challenge to continue to provide holistic service at the same level. While struggling with this, EECMY's decision to terminate its partnership with Church of Sweden (CoS) and Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) because of their decision on same sex marriage resulted in a huge economic loss.⁴⁰ Most of the development and aid services rendered by EECMY have largely been financed by funds and grants from mission organizations, especially when it comes to large scale projects at the institutional level.

These recent shifts on the status and scope of holistic theology of EECMY are related to the issue of self-reliance which plays a central role in the scope and status of serving the whole person. This is challenging the church's vision of self-reliance. Even if the church had and has a strong wish to become a self-reliant church in leadership, theology, and finance and has succeeded relatively well in terms of leadership and theology, the church still has a long way to go before it can claim to be a self-reliant church that can provide holistic service with its own resources and at full scale as pointed out by a recent study.⁴¹ Based on his earlier experience as a missionary in EECMY and his relationship with the church, Knud Jørgensen has reflected on EECMY's challenge regarding sustainability and self-reliance, especially when most of its ministries and services are heavily depending on donations from outside and the church lacks an own capacity to fully run its ministries. He observes that most of the projects or ministries functioned well only when the budgets for running them kept on coming from abroad and were at risk following the decrease and absence of the funds. Therefore, as he says, "sustainability" has not been a corner stone when establishing projects and institutions.⁴² Similarly, Senbeto's critical analysis of EECMY's vision of self-reliance based on Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson's 'three self-principles, do not only confirm a problem or a challenge pointed out by Jørgensen, but also highlights some of the common issues that lie behind the church's failure to become sustainable. He talks about "[...] lack of awareness, the instability of political situation of the country, natural disaster, economical limitations and the tendency to depend upon the foreign fund have made it difficult to convince people to develop the culture of self-reliance [...]"⁴³ as challenges

for the church. He therefore concludes that, even though the idea of the three-self principles of Venn and Rufus along with Paul Hiebert's principle of self-theologizing was intended to free churches in the global south from economical dependency and paternalism of western views and strategies, EECMY's vision of self-reliance has not been fully achieved yet.⁴⁴

Similarly, and from the perspective of exercising their prophetic role in relation to the wider social and political questions, many of these congregations has still much to be undone.⁴⁵ Even if a shift of attitude among the members of the church to increase common justice and equal rights through active involvement in social justice and politics has started to be given similar attention, more awareness is still necessary. This is due to increasing reservations from full involvement in justice issues due to emphasis on the spiritual dimension. This may give a hint towards an internal change of attitude towards social justice due to the consequences of the price involving in these questions demanded in the past and over emphasized focus attention on spiritual and charismatic dimension of a Christian life and service is given.⁴⁶ This may signify the increasing presence of tendencies of a similar dichotomized view in EECMY although what is given preference is different from what the western churches and missions showed their preferences for.

Conclusion

This article explains how EECMY developed a theology of "Serving the whole person" as a core vision and principle of the church. As a combined effect of the heritage from the missions and an indigenous theological contribution and reflection, the church is committed to serve the material and spiritual needs of human beings. The article has underlined the commitment of the church to let the proclamation of the gospel and the diaconal work go hand in hand as the essence of its holistic theology and the contribution of the indigenous church leaders and theological reflection in the process of developing this theology. EECMY is inspired by the approach and service of the protestant mission organizations but following the legacy of these missions and based on an independent theological reflection on its own context and people, developed a theology of serving the whole person to make its service relevant and to challenge a dichotomized view of the Western churches and missions which separated proclamation of the gospel and human development. The holistic theology developed in the context of EECMY received characteristics that are formed by the history, socio-economic, culture and view of the Bible which are particular to the Ethiopian situation.

Due to several factors, the status and scope of serving the whole person seems to be weaker today. EECMY is an example of churches in the global south that have succeeded in making a long journey towards the development of holistic service and becoming self-reliant.⁴⁷ But as far as my observation and understanding of the changing status and shape of this theology during the last decades are concerned, the journey towards a full realization of EECMY as a self-reliant church that can fully cater to the physical and spiritual needs of the human being, should be re-enforced by a re-visitation of the 1972 document and renewal of the church's commitment to the theology it represents. A re-configuration of the theology of the church will make serving the whole person relevant to today's situation and help the church to encounter the contemporary challenges. Therefore, a renewal and re-configuration of this theology is necessary to bring it back to the original form and status without losing its faithfulness to its original emphasis.

- 1 *The EECMY, Constitution and Bylaws, as amended by the 17th General Assembly, January 2005, 6 (l, a, b, c & 2, c), 9-10* "We have a deep concern, not only for the spiritual needs of a person, but also for his/her physical needs. Our motto of service is "Serving the Whole Person", better known as, Wholistic Ministry." EECMY Official Website, <http://eecmy.org/eecmy/en/>, Accessed 20171116.
- 2 This document was first presented in Olav Sæverås's doctoral thesis in 1973. It became a main subject in an international conference in Nairobi in 1974 and has been thoroughly studied in Lutheran churches in many countries. The procedure for the presentation and discussion of this process is raised by Megersa Guta in Rose Dowsett et al., *Evangelism and Diakonia in Context, Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2016), 325-38. But for a complete version of the document, see Øyvind M. Eide, *Revolution & Religion in Ethiopia: Growth & Persecution of the Mekane Yesus Church, 1974-85*, [2nd ed., *Eastern African studies* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000). 263-68.
- 3 *Foundation, Witness and discipleship*: 127ff.
- 4 Dowsett et al., *Evangelism and diakonia 330, The EECMY, Constitution and Bylaws, 17*, Øyvind M. Eide, *Revolution & religion in Ethiopia: growth & persecution of the Mekane Yesus Church, 1974-85*, [2nd ed., *Eastern African studies* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000). 264.
- 5 *The EECMY, Constitution and Bylaws, as amended by the 17th General Assembly, January 2005, 17*.
- 6 *Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus Development and Social Services Commission (EECMY- DASSC), "Action Plan for Seven Years (2012-2016)"* (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 2012), 1ff.
- 7 Temesgen Shibiru Galla, *The Mission Thinking of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY)* (Oslo: T.S. Galla, 2011), 56-65.
- 8 Senbeto Wakene, "The Historical Development and Practice of Self-reliance in the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus with Special Reference to the Central Gibe Synod" (MTh, *The School of Mission and Theology*, 2010), 52-53. Temesgen Shibiru Galla, 56-57.
- 9 Kjell Nordstokke (ed.) (2009). *Diakonia in Context. Transformation, Reconciliation, Empowerment, The Lutheran World Federation, Geneva, Switzerland*, 83f.
- 10 Gudina Tumsa Foundation, *Witness and discipleship: leadership of the church in multi-ethnic Ethiopia in a time of revolution: the essential writings of Gudina Tumsa, General Secretary of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (1929-1979), 2nd exp. ed., Gudina Tumsa and his legacy* (Hamburg: WDL-Publishers, 2007), 1-12, 85ff. Mirjam Endalew provides a brief overview of Gudina's theology and influence on holistic mission of EECMY. Mirjam Syltebø Endalew, "Working for Empowerment or Working for the Powerful?: A qualitative study of how the leaders of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus understand the Church' vision Holistic Ministry and how this relates to the diaconal ministry of Norwegian Church and Mission organisations in Ethiopia" (Norwegian School of Theology (MF), 2015), 17-19.
- 11 http://www.dacb.org/stories/ethiopia/gudina_tumsa.html, Accessed 150901. For more information about him & his role, visit http://www.dacb.org/stories/ethiopia/gudina_tumsa.html.
- 12 EECMY Officers, "The Interrelation between Proclamation of the Gospel and Human Development," 4, Wolde Senbet, "The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) Holistic Development (Ministry): The Foundational/Original Document Explained," (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: EECMY, 2013), 5, Bryant L. Myers, *Walking with the Poor: principles and practices of transformational development*, Rev. and exp. ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 192f
- 13 "Jesus responded to situations with a touch of the hand, a word of encouragement, or a word of judgment, in each case there was power [...] we, however tend to be reductionist: promoting verbal evangelism alone, or promoting works of mercy alone. Jesus does not recognize this dichotomy". Sunquist, S. W. (2013) *Understanding Christian Mission*, 217ff; see also Ken Gnana-kan, "To proclaim the Good News of the kingdom", 9.
- 14 *The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus Development and Social Services Commission. (2014). "Message from EECMY-DASSC General Assembly Chairperson and EECMY President", Promoting inclusive service from a Christian perspective, EECMY- DASSC, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1.*
- 15 Temesgen Shibiru Galla, 58. Gudina Tumsa Foundation, *Witness and discipleship*, 69ff.
- 16 Kjell Nordstokke (ed.), (2009). *Diakonia in Context*, 83f.
- 17 Tibebe Eshete, 101.
- 18 Dima Noggo Sarbo, "Contested Legitimacy: Coercion and the State in Ethiopi" (PhD, University of Tennessee - Knoxville, 2009), 3ff.
- 19 Yenenesh Geleta Wolteji, *Work and Work Ethic: Integrating Faith and Work as a Strategy for Poverty Alleviation in Ethiopia* (Washington, USA.: Seattle, 2011). 9-12.

20 Senbeto Wakene, 25

21 Ibid. 24-26 22 Eide, 118.19.

23 Senbeto Wakene, 61.

24 Dawit Olika Terfassa, "Trends and Practices of Evangelism among Migrant Churches: Examples from the Ethiopian Diaspora in Scandinavia," in *Evangelism and Diakonia in Context* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2016), 297f.

25 Senbeto Wakene, 52.

26 "It is only an attainment of this spiritual dimension that can bring about the right balance between the material and spiritual development that sets the right perspective for the whole of human life." Wodajo Wolde Senbet, 10-12.

27 Faqada Gurmessa Kusa and Ezekiel Gebissa, 200. Sarbo, "Contested Legitimacy," 131-32, 209-10. Teshale Tibebe, *The Making of Modern Ethiopia: 1896-1974* (Lawrenceville, NJ Red Sea Press, 1995), xv. Staffan Grenstedt, *Ambaricho and Shonkolla: From Local Independent Church to the Evangelical Mainstream in Ethiopia: The Origins of the Mekane Yesus Church in Kambata Hadiya*, *Studia Missionalia Svecana* (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 2000), 16f.

28 Wodajo Wolde Senbet, 1-19. Berhanu Ofg'a'a, "Calling Lutherans Back to Evangelism Work," (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: EECMY, 2013), 6.

29 *The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus*, "The Interrelation between Proclamation of the Gospel and Human Development," 3ff.

30 Eide, *Revolution & religion in Ethiopia*, 264-65.

31 EECMY Officers, "The Interrelation between Proclamation of the Gospel and Human Development," 4.

32 Yenenesh Geleta Wolteji, 12.

33 Yenenesh Geleta Wolteji, *Work and Work Ethic*: 12

34 Temesgen Shibiru Galla, 57-60, 100-04.

35 Wodajo Wolde Senbet, 2-4.

36 Wodajo Wolde Senbet, 1-4.

37 "The spiritual [Department of Mission and Theology (DMT)] and development [Development and Social Services Commission (DASSC)] functions took totally different paths. Today they are totally separate and run as distinct ministries", Ibid, 12., Senbeto Wakene, "72.

38 Lalissa Daniel Gemechis, "An Investigation into the Implications of Confessional Subscription to The Lutheran Confessions on the Understanding of The Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY)," (Concordia Theological Seminary 2017), 71-73.

39 Amnesty International, "Ethiopia: The 2009 Charities and Societies Proclamation as a serious obstacle to the promotion and protection of human rights in Ethiopia," (20th Session of the UN Human Rights Council 2012), 1-3.

40 Kathryn Schifferdecker, "The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus and the ELCA in Dispute: A Time for Humble Listening.," *Word & World* Volume 34, no. 2 (2014): 201,04-05., Samuel Y. Deressa, "The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus and the ELCA in Dispute: A Time for Elevated Discourse," *Word & World* Volume 34, no. 2 (2014): 202-03.

41 Senbeto Wakene, "The Historical Development and Practice of Self-reliance," 72., 7-8, 27ff.

42 Knud Jørgensen, "Sustainability in a Missiological and Ethiopian Perspective: Assumptions and Concerns.," in *Revisiting the history, theology, and leadership practice of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus* (Minneapolis, Minn: Lutheran University Press, 2016).

43 Senbeto Wakene, "35-36.

44 Bosch, David J. *Transforming Mission, Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Mary Knoll, New York: Orbis, 1991), 331f

45 Ibid., 53-63. Tibebe Eshete, *The Evangelical Movement in Ethiopia: Resistance and Resilience* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2009), 209ff. Gemechu Olana, "A Church under challenge: the socio-economic and political involvement of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY)" (PhD, Humboldt-Universität, 2005), 137ff. Øyvind M. Eide, *Revolution & Religion in Ethiopia: Growth & Persecution of the Mekane Yesus Church, 1974-85*, [2nd ed., *Eastern African studies* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000). 87] This applies to other religious institutions and evangelical churches as well. Samuel Yonas Deressa, "Church and State in Ethiopia: The Contribution of the Lutheran Understanding of the Community of Grace," *Word & World* Volume 37 no. Number 3 (2017): 281-91.

46 Temesgen Shibiru Galla, 63ff.

47 Endalew, "Working for Empowerment or Working for the Powerful?" 65ff.

