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## Lars Folke Berge: Swedish Evangelical Mission, Popular Mobilization for Schooling and Egalitarian ideals in Ethiopia 1868-1935.

A fairly large number of the social reformers and intellectual elite that emerged in Ethiopia in the decade before the 1936 Italian occupation - one of the most articulate groups of intellectuals that Ethiopia has ever seen - had a background in the Swedish Evangelical Mission (SEM). After 1936, resistance to Italian Fascist rule appears to have been most intense among those with a Protestant education and particularly those with a SEM schooling. Interestingly, very little is known about the SEM connection. The chapter explores what in the SEM schooling may have promoted the modernizing views. How were egalitarian and democratic ideals born in Swedish 19th century popular movements transmitted to SEM schools? To what extent can literacy be seen as a prime mover in spreading modernizing values? In what way did developments in Ethiopia bounce back to Sweden with new knowledge about the outside world – and thus contribute to the modernization of that country too? The article is inspired by what largely can be characterized as Global history. In my case, this evolves around questions of how disparate regions have been subject to a number of simultaneous cross-cultural and long-distance influences – the proliferation of knowledge, expertise, and ideas between regions and areas. As part of such global entanglements, Swedish missionaries and their counterparts in Africa can be said to have functioned as “portals of globalisation”, serving as entrance points for cultural transfer and global connectedness. In providing the empirical sources, my research draws on previous research on the SEM and the huge collection of source materials provided by the SEM periodicals. My attempt is to demonstrate that the SEM-factor was an essential component when contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the pre-war Ethiopian modernization and nation building process. (290 words)