



Title	Heritage Conservation Challenges on the Rock-Hewn Churches of Tigray, Ethiopia [an abstract of dissertation and a summary of dissertation review]
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## 学 位 論 文 内 容 の 要 旨

博士の専攻分野の名称 博士（工学） 氏名 Ephrem Telele Weldegiorgis

### 学 位 論 文 題 名

Heritage Conservation Challenges on the Rock-Hewn Churches of Tigray, Ethiopia  
(エチオピア・ティグライ岩窟教会群における遺産保存活動)

The study investigates the heritage conservation challenges on the Rock-Hewn Churches of Ethiopia with an emphasis on the Rock-hewn churches of Tigray. Consecutive field researches and case-based onsite investigations were conducted on the rock-hewn churches of Tigray and the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela in Wollo district of Amhara. The methodology of the research is formulated based on the current practices and approaches to the study of living heritage and cultural landscapes. The qualitative research design approach as contextualized by Creswell, J. W., and the case study research design and methods as discussed by Yin, R. K are the benchmarks to devise the research method implemented in this study:- a qualitative case study method. The main purpose of the study was to examine the conservation challenges of the rock-hewn churches of Tigray.

To this end, the investigation of the regression level of the churches, the intensity and impact of the current conservation interventions, and the traditional preservation remedial measures along with the role of the local community and the national and international authorities on the preservation of the churches are set to be the aims of the study. How are the impacts of the preservation projects perceived by the local community? How the traditional conservation know-how and traditional conservation skills were addressed by the national and international conservation authorities? And, how the cultural and religious assets of the heritage sites and the insight of the local community are integrated into the preservation process; were the specific objectives this research dealt with.

As a result, the significance of the study is, then, to demonstrate the regression level of the churches and to examine the local potentials for the conservation of the churches so as to formulate a working recommendation to safeguard the heritages from inappropriate conservation interventions and to slow down further deteriorations.

The thesis is organized into three parts, each part has two chapters and the concluding chapter. The tradition and continuity in religious architecture of Northern Ethiopia highlands are discussed in the first part. Chapter one provides a brief background on the origin and development of church architecture in the Northern Highlands of Ethiopia and it introduces readers to the ancient churches of Tigray. Statement of the research problem, the methodology of the research and the gaps this research intend to bridge are discussed here. The literature review on the origin and continuity of the rock-hewn churches of Tigray along with the case study on the six rock-hewn churches chosen from the rock-hewn churches of Eastern Tigray is presented in chapter two.

The current heritage conservation practices and institutional set-up for the conservation and preservation of heritages in Ethiopia are the focuses of the second part. The origin and development of cultural properties authorities with special emphasis on the national authority and the legal framework

is presented in chapter three. Whereas, the current challenges of the rock-hewn conservation in Tigray are discussed in the following chapter. The regression level of the churches, the impact of the remedial measures introduced by the international, national and local authorities; and the reactions of the local communities towards the interventions are issues addressed in chapter four.

The thirds part is about the lessons from Japan's cultural properties administration systems and practices. The aim of this part is to find out the potential lessons to be adapted for the Ethiopian conservation of cultural properties mainly from the perspective of organizational skills for the conservation of architectural heritage, the legal framework, and institutional set-ups. To this end, Japan's cultural properties preservation authorities and systems are discussed in chapter five. In chapter six, the case study on three Buddhist Temples from Mutsu City in Aomori prefecture is presented. The focus of this chapter is on the local community and local craftsmen's role in the preservation and reconstruction of Temple buildings and the traditional social organizations.

Finally, the conclusion of the research is provided and followed by the reflections on the case studies and recommendations on the way forward on the basis of the findings of the study.