

## On-site Education of Practical Languages for Area Studies

### Report in 2011

–English, SOAS, UK, Summer Term (18 April– 01 July 2011)–

**Year of Enrollment: 2006**

**Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies**

**Teshome, Dilu Shaleka**

#### **On the Dispatch Institution**

Founded in 1916 with the aim of building knowledge on Africa, the Middle east and Asia, the school of Oriental and African Studies(SOAS) is a college of the University of London, specializing in the study of Asia, Africa and the Near and Middle East. It has a rich collection of resources on Africa and the expertise as well. Its programs combine language scholarship, disciplinary expertise and regional focus has the largest concentration in Europe of academic staff concerned with Africa, Asia and the Middle East. SOAS is one of the international partner institutions of the ITP. Since 2009, the ITP through its output dispatch program has sponsored graduate students spend a term or two in SOAS and take advantage of the courses and library resources, and also participate in seminars and symposia that are held in SOAS premises.

#### **Dispatch Aims and Activities**

My research looks at the processes of changes and continuities in the religious traditions of the Sidama of southern Ethiopia. From the output dispatch to SOAS, I expected to take advantage of the library resources and to have the opportunity to discuss my work with researchers on African religion. While I made the best use of the library collection on religions and Africa, I also registered for courses that were running during the term I was there. One of the courses was contemporary international issues. As a fulfillment of requirements to this course, I wrote an essay by the end of the term that focused on an examination of the problem of IMF privatization policy as applied in Ethiopia. Based on review of written sources, I argued that poor planning and execution of privatization in the specific circumstances of Ethiopia has led to poor outcome in terms of investment, growth and employment.

#### **Degree to which objectives were achieved**

SOAS (IFCELS) staff cooperation, the ease of finding reading materials and the environment that encourages academic debate and reflection (from which I gained a lot of useful insights and experience) made my stay at SOAS productive and worthwhile. The diversity of the course participants that consisted of students from the Middle East, Africa, Germany, Turkey, Korea and Japan was a very enriching experience for me.



Inside a classroom in the Faber Building, SOAS, Russel Square



With course participants, photo taken in front of the Vernon Square Campus, SOAS