1. Equipment Tests

To begin the studio work on my project I started by exploring and experimenting with my sound equipment. Here is the list of the equipment I currently have access to:

- a. Zoom H6 Handy Recorder
- b. XY Microphone for Zoom H6
- c. MS Microphone for Zoom H6
- d. Sennheiser HD 380 pro Headphones
- e. Zoom H1 Handy Recorder
- f. Sennheiser MKE 600 Shotgun
- g. 2x Sennheiser EW-102 p G3 Lavaliere Microphones + Body + Transmitter
- h. K&M Boom Pole

Since the Zoom H6 will be my constant tool for recordings and I am yet unfamiliar with its (new) functions, I dedicated time to exploring them this week. With help of the manual and through test recordings I familiarized myself with the following functions/effects:

- a. The difference between the recording field of the XY & MS Microphones
- b. Adjustment of the input volume
- c. Recording process/steps and folder & file structure
- d. Pre-recording function and count-in function
- e. Backup recording at a level 12dB below the original recording
- f. Mixing using the Project Mixer on the recorder to adjust and balance playback tracks
- g. Changing project names and using and checking the track mark function
- h. Dividing a project (recording) into multiple projects
- i. Recording a voice memo that goes along with a project
- j. Exploration of the low cut filter at different Hz settings

Especially the internal mixer, the volume control knobs, and the choice of microphone make recordings very diverse and adjustable to situations.

I began my exploration of sound with the evening hours that I have already referred to in my proposal. There is something very unique that lies in the air here in Addis Ababa and much radiates out of the diverse sounds scape that encloses the hour.
2. Recordings

Addis Ababa is a bustling city that grows daily. Roads begin to expand into highways; little houses make room for skyscrapers. The constant rhythm of construction, metal breaking, and hammering, could form a soundscape that is anything but calm, fresh, and unique. And yet, the mix of additional sounds that peak in the evening hours when the city begins to rest creates exactly such an environment: a metropolitan city rooted in its natural and traditional environment.

As I am fascinated by this phenomenon I decided to begin my sound exploration here. At the rise of one of the city’s many mountains I sat and listened. As the small rainy season is approaching the evening hours not only invite the citizens of Addis Ababa to rest but also its natural environment to speak up: Thunder roaring. There is a constant contrast between the calm and the rough, the sweet and the sour, and between the spoken and unspoken.

My first recordings were not directed at one particular sound, I did not try to isolate a particular sound from others. Instead, I used the 120 degree set up of the YX mic and the omnidirectional quality of the MS mic to capture a depth of several sound recordings at the same time. These recordings of the environment can stand as a general guideline for my future recordings, as they unite what the evening soundscape has to offer. However, due to this approach the dB level is mostly recorded at around -30, which is very low and in playback the files are too quiet overall. Perhaps manipulation of the files in post can aid to improve the volume of the tracks. Here are some of the sounds that struck me during the recording and that I would like to capture individually for a better sound quality.

a. Hammering on metal (rhythmic)
b. Preaching of the Coptic priest (through stereo speakers)
c. Prayers from the mosque
d. A wide variety of birds
e. Kits playing football
f. Horses
g. Flies buzzing
h. Soft rain
i. Thunder
j. Heavy rain
k. Music in the distance
l. Conversation of men passing by
m. Metal bucket being pulled across stone floor, water spilling
n. Dogs barking
o. Hyena crying