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**INDIGENOUS INSTITUTIONS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND ITS
CHALLENGES IN EAST HARARGE: THE CASE OF KOMBOLCHA
DISTRICT (WEREDA): 1875 - 1991**

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**Indigenous Institutions of Conflict Management and Its Challenges in East
Hararge: The Case of Kombolcha District (*Wereda*): 1875 - 1991**

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HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY
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DEDICATION

This thesis is devoted to my family, friends, and all of my siblings and loved ones for encouraging me with love and support, and for their dedicated collaboration in contributing to my achievements in life.

STATEMENT OF THE AUTHOR

First, I declare that this thesis is the result of my own work, and that all source ~~of~~-materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has been submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for M.A degree at Haramaya University, which will be made available and is deposited at the University library under the rule of the library. I confidentially declare that this thesis has not been submitted to any other institution anywhere for the award of any academic degree, diploma, or certificate.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The individual behind this thesis came into the world in December 1986 from his mother Halima Ahmed Boru and his Father Abdosh Ahmed Adam, in East Hararge, specifically in the Kombolcha district's Malkaa Raafuu Town. Beginning at Nikolas Primary School, he pursued his elementary education, followed by his high school studies at Kombolcha Secondary School and Haramaya Preparatory. In 2007, he enrolled at Jimma University, completing his B.Ed in 2009, after which he embarked on a decade-long teaching career at Kombolcha Secondary Schools. In 2017 E.C, he commenced his postgraduate studies, pursuing an MA in History and Heritage Management at Haramaya University. Since 2019, he has held the position of school principal at Kombolcha Secondary School.

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ACRONYMS

ACCORD	African Center for the Reconstructive Management of Disputes
OCTB	Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau
ICR	Indigenous Conflict Management
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
IK	Indigenous Knowledge
WCIP	World Council of Indigenous Peoples
MOSTP	Management of Social Transformations Program
CIRAN	Centre for International Research and Advisory Networks
JOS	Journal of Oromo Studies
MoE	Ministry of Education

KEY TO TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM

In this thesis, the original Afan Oromo terms such as *gumaa*, *Gadaa*, *araara*, and various other names from Oromo literature are presented following the convention observed by the majority of Oromo scholars.

I. Vowels

- a – pronounced shortly as /a/ as in '*mana*' (/mana/) meaning 'house' or 'home'
- aa – pronounced for a longer duration as /a:/ as in '*laafaa*' (/la:fa:/) meaning 'soft' or 'smooth'
- Examples: *Araara* - reconciliation, *Beellama* - appointment, *Diimaa* - red, *mooraa* - residential area, *miila* - leg, *odaa* - sacred tree

II. Vowel Sequences

- Sequences containing more than two vowels are admissible only if separated by a glottal stop (,)
- Example: *Qe'ee* – residential area, *Ba'aa* - load

III. Paired Phonemes in Qubee

- Qubee encompasses five paired phonemes created by combining various consonant letters: ph, ch, sh, dh, and ny. of these, Ch and Sh have corresponding English equivalents:
 - Ch - equivalent to English Ch, for instance *Dibicha*, *Gudifacha*, *Kombolcha*
 - Sh - equivalent to English Sh, for example *Shäntam*. However, the remaining three (dh, ny, and ph) lack English equivalents:
 - Examples: Dh: Voiceless, dental, implosive, as in (taste) or “*dhadhaa*” (butter), ny: Voiceless, palatal, nasal, as in “*nyaapha*” (enemy), “*nyaara*” eyelash, ph: Voiceless, ejective, such as in “*kophee*” (shoes)

Consonants

- Among the consonants, (C), (Q), and (X) have distinct sounds, while the others align closely with English consonants. Examples include:
 - C: *Caffee* - Parliament or assembly, - Q: *Qondaala* - officer - X: *Xumure* – Finished

Arabic	Oromo
- البوكوروى (al-būkū RWY)	- Ali bokkuu Raayya
- عثمان ياور (‘Uṭmān YĀWR)	- Usman Yeroo
- علي كارو (‘Alī KĀRW)	- Ali Karroo

Key to Amharic Transliteration System

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Wereda

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on exploring the role of indigenous conflict management institutions in East Hararge, with specific emphasis on the Kombolcha District (District) from 1875 to 1991. The primary objective is to investigate the practices of conflict resolution, socio-political systems, and the cultural and historical connections of Afran Qallo. Moreover, the study examines the historical development, functioning, and challenges encountered by these indigenous institutions. To carry out this research, a qualitative approach was adopted, which involved conducting interviews and consulting relevant academic publications, books, and articles dedicated to the study of indigenous conflict management institutions. These secondary sources provided insights into various aspects, including the history, cultural practices, and socio-political systems related to Afran Qallo. By doing so, it contributes to a deeper cross-cultural understanding and knowledge of the historical and socio-political background of this indigenous community. The findings of the study highlight significant transformations that have occurred within indigenous law and the center of assembly, shaped by both internal and external factors. Internally, changes in social, cultural, and economic aspects of the community have played a role in shaping amendments to indigenous law. Factors such as shifts in power dynamics, generational gaps, changes in livelihood patterns, and the erosion of traditional values and practices have influenced the functioning and adaptability of indigenous systems. Externally, factors like invasion, legal pluralism, and the influence of contemporary legal frameworks have had a profound impact on indigenous law and the center of assembly (Caffee). These external factors have brought forth new norms, legal structures, and governance systems, resulting in the integration, reimagining, or marginalization of indigenous law and the center of assembly. Despite these changes, the research reveals elements of continuity within indigenous law. The flexibility of customary practices, the importance of community participation in decision-making processes, and the preservation of oral traditions all demonstrate the enduring nature of indigenous legal systems. By understanding the complex interactions between internal and external factors affecting indigenous law and the center of assembly, this research contributes valuable insights into the dynamics of legal and cultural systems. The findings add to the ongoing

discussions surrounding topics such as legal pluralism, community governance, and the preservation of indigenous law and traditions.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Indigenous conflict management institutions have been prevalent in societies worldwide. These institutions often operate alongside formal state processes, relying on community customs, familial relationships, and embedded institutional practices. The involvement of elders or individuals appointed on an informal basis to settle disputes plays a crucial role in resolving conflicts. Even today, these mechanisms continue to be widely practiced among different ethnic groups to address conflicts and other issues. Even now the Oromo have *jarsuma* and the Amhara *Shimgilina*.

Nevertheless, the specific indigenous conflict management institution in Kombolcha *district* has not been thoroughly explored. This research aims to fill this knowledge gap by conducting a comprehensive study using Kombolcha as a case study. Through this research, we seek to shed light on the unique characteristics, changes, and factors influencing indigenous conflict management institutions in the Kombolcha District community, contributing to a broader understanding of indigenous conflict resolution practices.

Indigenous conflict management institutions are integral to maintain social order and harmony, rooted in local customs, traditions, and cultural practices. These institutions operate alongside formal legal systems and are guided by principles such as communal participation, consensus-building, and restorative justice. The *Gadaa* system is a foundational institution for the Oromo people in Ethiopia, encompassing much more than just conflict resolution. The Oromo community has a rich cultural legacy, with the *gadaa* system serving as an integral part of their traditional conflict management approach. Yet, across the East Hararge region, the *gadaa* system and other indigenous institutions have experienced substantial changes over time. These transformations have been influenced by a variety of factors including political affiliations, external interventions, and the impact of colonial governance, all of which have played a role in shaping the development of these institutions within the Oromo society.

However, it was the the imposition of Ethiopian rule since 1880s, that effectively suppressed the *gadaa* system in most parts of Oromia. Despite the internal challenge and the external attack on the indigenous *gadaa* system, the system has been the foundation and pillar of

Oromo society with its principles remaining as the hallmark of the Oromo nation.¹ Menilik had even prohibited the famous Oromo pilgrimage to *muda* ceremonies. After forbidding the pilgrimage he abolished the mark of indigenous Oromo religion. The emperor also forbade the *caffé* assembly at Oda Bultum, in Badessa, the traditional assembly center of the Eastern Oromo.²

The objective of this research is to understand the dynamics of indigenous conflict management among the Oromo people in East Hararge Kombolcha district, focusing on historical shifts, driving forces for change, and the current state of these institutions. By exploring the types and factors contributing to the transformation of indigenous conflict management institutions and traditional law, this study aims to provide insights into the resilience and adaptability of these systems. Additionally, it seeks to highlight the implications of these changes for the broader field of indigenous conflict management and shed light on the challenges and opportunities faced by indigenous institutions in maintaining their traditional practices within a changing socio-political landscape.

To achieve these objectives, a comprehensive investigation was conducted, employing historical analysis, ethnographic research, and interviews with community members and key stakeholders. The research was conducted in Kombolcha district situated in the East Hararge zone, known for its rich Oromo cultural heritage and the historical significance of its indigenous institutions. By closely examining the historical context, socio-political influences, and community perspectives, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the evolution of indigenous conflict management institutions within this specific cultural and geographical context.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The research focuses on the challenges faced by indigenous conflict management institutions among the Oromo people in East Hararge. Specifically, it aims to examine the adaptability and resilience of these institutions in the face of external influences and socio-political transformations. Within the Oromo sub-group Afran Qallo, certain areas, including Kombolcha district, have received limited attention from scholars. The lack of scholarly

¹ Tsega Etefa. *The Journal of Oromo Studies*, Publication of the Oromo Studies Association. 2008

² Mohammed Hassen Ali. "A Short History of Oromo Colonial Experience, 1870s-1990s. part One" *The Journal of Oromo studies* V.6 1999, Pp 109-158.

sources on Kombolcha district has made it relatively unknown to historians and researchers. This study seeks to fill this knowledge gap by investigating and reconstructing the indigenous institution of dispute management in the district.

Additionally, the research will examine the practices and challenges of indigenous conflict management in Kombolcha district, with a focus on the period from the Egyptian occupation (1875-1885) to 1991, taking into account the changes and continuity of the indigenous socio-political institution in the community. The impact of external invasions, such as the Egyptian occupation, on the indigenous *gadaa* administration and religion of the Hararge Oromo brought about a dismantling of the *gadaa* system and triggered significant changes in the religious landscape of the Hararge Oromo. Islamic practices were imposed forcefully, replacing the traditional Oromo religious beliefs and practices will be explored. The Oromo leaders who resisted the foreign occupation were either eliminated or marginalized, leading to a loss of traditional leadership and the emergence of colonial subjects.. The study also considers the application of indigenous laws for dispute settlement within the Oromo community, particularly in East Hararge, Kombolcha district, where indigenous institutions and practices of dispute resolution exist.

Conflict management through traditional methods is a common practice among various ethnic groups in Africa, including the Oromo people. The Oromo utilize traditional institutions and procedures, such as 'jarsumma' and *gumaa*, to resolve disputes and shape their identities. In relation to how the Oromo traditionally deal with conflict management, some scholars write that the majority of the Oromo in eastern mecha use traditional methods to resolve conflicts.³ Lewis and Knutson, explain that the majority of Oromo people settle conflicts through traditional procedures.⁴

While some scholars acknowledge the prevalence of traditional conflict resolution methods among the Oromo, there is limited research on the indigenous institution of conflict management, specifically the practice of *gumaa*, within the Oromo community in the study area. Existing studies often overlook important aspects such as the details of blood price,

³ Lewis, H. S. "Values and Procedures in conflict Resolution among Shoa Oromo". *Proceedings of the 8th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*; Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University. 1984, pp. 91- 100

⁴ Knutsson, K. E. *Authority and Change: A study of the K'allu Institution among the Mecha Galla of Ethiopia*. Gote-borg: Etnografiska Museet 1967)

types of conflicts addressed, and the laws governing the relationship between humans and their environment. The gradual changes and continuity, as well as the types of *gumaa* as a center for assembly and lawmaking, have been unseen in relation to the study area, particularly in East Hararge, Kombolcha district. Therefore, this study aims to fill these knowledge gaps and sheds light on the traditional practice of *gumaa*, its transformation, and its enduring significance in the study area.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This study covers the time from 1875 to 1991. The year 1875 is taken as a bench mark for this study because; indigenous institution of administrative and dispute management began to face challenging condition following the Egyptian occupation of Harar and its surroundings. Besides, it was during the Egyptian occupation period in 1975 that Afran Qallo Oromo forced to abandon their *gadaa* system and accept foreign administrative system through *damina* and *garada*.

On the other hand, the year 1991 witnessed the collapse Derg regime and the beginning of EPRDF era with the new constitution that gave recognition to indigenous customary courts that had state recognition and functioned prior to the adoption of the constitution. In East Hararge there are various indigenous conflict management institution; among these *Gumaa* is used as a means of conflict management in Kombolcha District. The Study was mainly focuses on indigenous institution and traditional laws of conflict management like family, neighbor, jarsumma and *Gumaa* with its types in East Hararge, for the case of Kombolcha District up to 1991.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The outcome of this study is expected to provide valuable knowledge about indigenous institutions of administration and conflict management specifically in East Hararge, with a focus on the Oromo community. This knowledge will be beneficial for researchers who are interested in understanding and studying indigenous conflict management institutions. Furthermore, this study will act as a foundation for future research, enabling and inspiring others to delve deeper into the study of indigenous conflict management institutions, both before and after the discussion period. The intention is to build upon and contribute to existing research on the topic, particularly regarding the Oromo indigenous conflict management practices.

Additionally, this study aims to provide information that will be useful to upcoming researchers and scholars who wish to study the indigenous institution of conflict management within the Oromo community in East Hararge. It also aims to fill the gap in the understanding of the unstudied aspects of the history of Eastern Oromia and Ethiopia, creating interest among students of history and other readers.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

1.5.1 General Objectives

The general objective of the study is to explore types of indigenous institutions of conflict management in line with the change and continuity of the Oromo socio-political organizations and challenges posed by external and internal factors on indigenous institutions in East Hararge, Kombolcha district.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

- To identify the types of indigenous institutions of conflict management in Kombolcha district.
- To assess the impact of internal and external factors on indigenous institutions of conflict management in the study area.
- To investigate the relationship between the central and local caffee (assembly) of lawmaking in Eastern Oromia.
- To assess the impact of series Ethiopian government on the indigenous institutions of conflict management.
- To explore change and continuity of indigenous laws made at the central assembly, and local levels.

1.5.3 Research Questions:

- What are the main indigenous institutions of conflict management in Kombolcha district?
- What factors contribute to the decline, change, and continuity of indigenous institutions?
- What are the common centers of assembly and lawmaking for Ittuu and Afran Qallo?
- How does the central Ethiopian government impact the administration of indigenous institutions?
- What are the main types of laws made at the central, regional, and clan levels?

1.6 Research Methodology

1.6.1 Description of Study Area

Kombolcha District is located in the East Hararge zone of the Oromia Region in Ethiopia. It is situated in close proximity to various regions, with Harari Region to the South, Haro Maya to the Southwest, Dire Dawa to the Northwest, the Somali Region to the North, and Jarso to the East. The administrative center of Kombolcha District is Melka Rafu. In terms of geographical features, the district encompasses a range of altitudes, varying from 1200 to 2640 meters above sea level. This diverse topography contributes to the ecological diversity and natural resources found in the area.

Kombolcha district is located approximately 541 kilometers southeast of Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. It is also relatively close to Haramaya University, situated around 40 kilometers away. This description highlights the geographic context of the study area, providing information on its location and proximity to other regions. The altitudinal range and distance from major cities further define the characteristics of Kombolcha District.

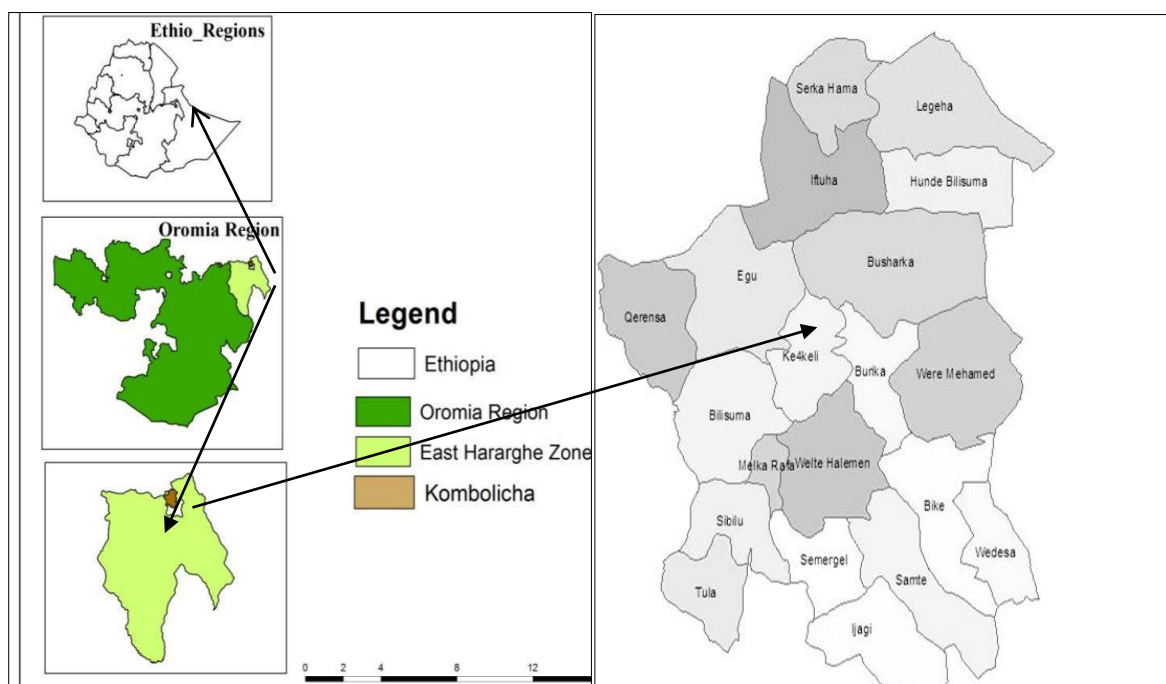


Figure 1: Location of Kombolcha *district* in Ethiopia. (From Kombolcha district land administration office (March, 2021).

Figure 2: Map of East Hararge. (From Kombolcha district land administration office (March, 2021))

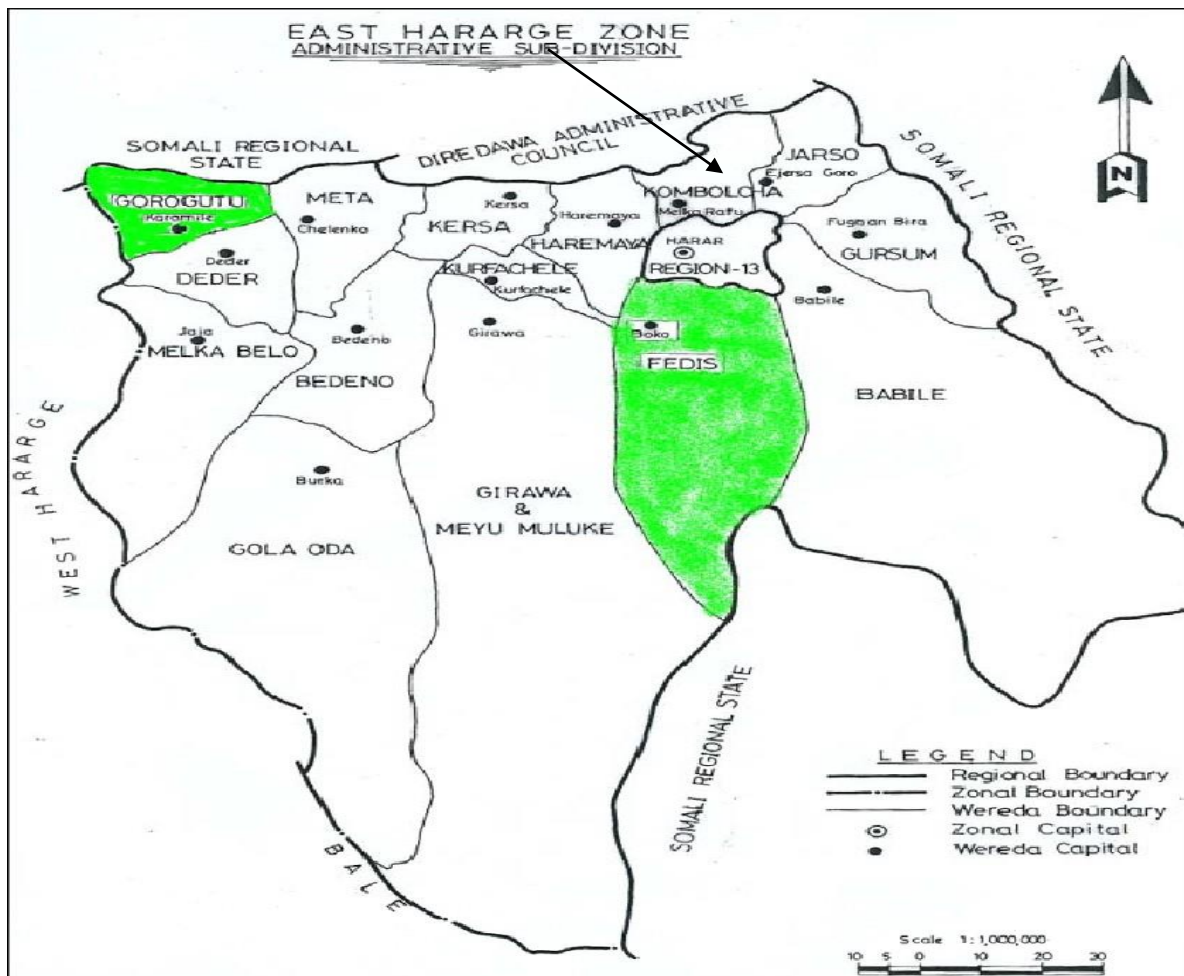


Figure 3: Map of East Hararge. (From Kombolcha district land administration office (March, 2021))

1.6.2 Research Design

The chosen research design is narrative, a methodology highly regarded by scholars in the realm of social research. This design facilitates a descriptive approach to interpret various written materials and oral informants' data, providing a comprehensive understanding of the indigenous conflict management institution within the context of Kombolcha District.

1.6.3 Methods of Data Collection

Systematic methods were employed in gathering data for this study, primarily through interviews and document analysis. Information was sourced from both secondary materials and direct oral interviews. Secondary sources, focusing on the historical evolution of socio-political institutions among the Oromo people, provided essential contextual background. Additionally, oral information crucial for exploring themes of change and continuity in traditional Oromo conflict management practices was obtained through interviews. These interviews were conducted in the afaan Oromo language and later translated into English. Knowledgeable elders and clan heads served as key informants, contributing valuable insights.

Throughout the data collection process, research assistants and primary data collection facilitators played a pivotal role in providing support, ensuring the integrity and richness of the gathered information

1.6.4 Methods of Data Analysis

This study employs qualitative research methods to thoroughly explore indigenous conflict management mechanisms within the Kombolcha district. Non-numerical data collection techniques, including interviews and secondary sources, were utilized to gain profound insights into the underlying structures and processes involved in conflict management. The researchers approached the analysis phase with thorough care, starting with the transcription, organization, and systematic analysis of the collected data. This rigorous process ensured accuracy and the identification of relevant themes pivotal to understanding indigenous conflict management mechanisms.

Qualitative research methods were intentionally chosen for their capacity to provide in-depth insights and collect rich data. The objective was to offer a comprehensive understanding of historical phenomena related to conflict management in the Kombolcha district. This approach contributes to a robust and systematic analysis, contributing significantly to the overall comprehension of the historical context and processes involved.

CHAPTER TWO

2. HISTORICAL AND SOCIO-POLITICAL SETTING OF THE AFRAN QALLO OROMO

2.1 The Oromo: An Overview Assessment

The statement that "the Oromo are the single largest ethnic group in the Horn of Africa" can be supported by various facts and evidence. The Oromo indeed occupy a vast territory that stretches from northeastern Ethiopia to east central Kenya and from the Sudan in the west to Somalia in the east. This expansive presence indicates a significant population size. Additionally, the Oromo people share a common language categorized as eastern Cushitic, which further strengthens their identity as a cohesive ethnic group.⁵ Under the *gadaa* system, the Oromo were organized into confederations, clans, and other social structures, emphasizing their collective organization and shared cultural practices. While there may be regional variations in certain cultural practices, these differences should not be misinterpreted as significant distinctions within the broader Oromo culture. Rather, they reflect the richness and diversity of the Oromo culture across different geographical locations.⁶

The Oromo people are divided into many clans, known as *gosa* and *qomoo*. They are descended from two major groups, Borana and Barentu, which are said to represent the two 'houses' or moieties of the Oromo. Borana is considered senior (*angafa*) while Barentu is junior (*qutisu*). This division is common in Oromo society and plays a significant role in their political and social life. The descendants of Borana and Barentu make up the major Oromo clans and sub-clans, including Borana, Macha, Tulama, Wallo, Garrii, Arsi, Karrayyu, Itu, Qallo, Anniyya, Tummugga or Marawa, Orma, Akkichuu, Liban, Jile, Soddo, Galan, Gujii, and others. However, there is extensive overlap in the areas occupied by these clans and their community groups. Additionally, since marriage among the Oromo only occurs between different clans, there is a high degree of homogeneity within the community.

⁵ Cherri Reni Wemlinger, "Identity in Ethiopia: the Oromo from the 16th to the 19th century", MA thesis, Department of History, (Washington State University, 2008, pp. 3-4; Mohammed Hassan Ali. *The Oromo of Ethiopia: A History 1570 - 1860*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 1990, Pp xi

⁶ Huntingford, George. *The Galla of Ethiopia: The kingdoms of Kafa and Janajero*. London, International African Institute. 1955, pp:19

Gammachu Magarsa's research categorizes the Oromo people into five main groups. These groups are the Ituu and Humbannaa, the Tulamaa and Macha, the Sabboo and Goonaa, the Rayyaa and Aseboo, and the Sikkoo and Mando. This classification provides a framework for understanding the diversity within the Oromo community.⁷

Trimingham noted that nearly half of the population in the Harar province was Oromo people. The Oromo people, as described, all professed allegiance to the Barentu confederacy. This information provides insights into the demographic makeup and cultural affiliations within the Harar province during the period studied. It indicates the significant presence of Oromo people within the province, along with their collective identification with the Barentu confederacy. The observation by Trimingham serves as a valuable historical insight into the ethnic and cultural dynamics of the Harar province during 1950s.⁸

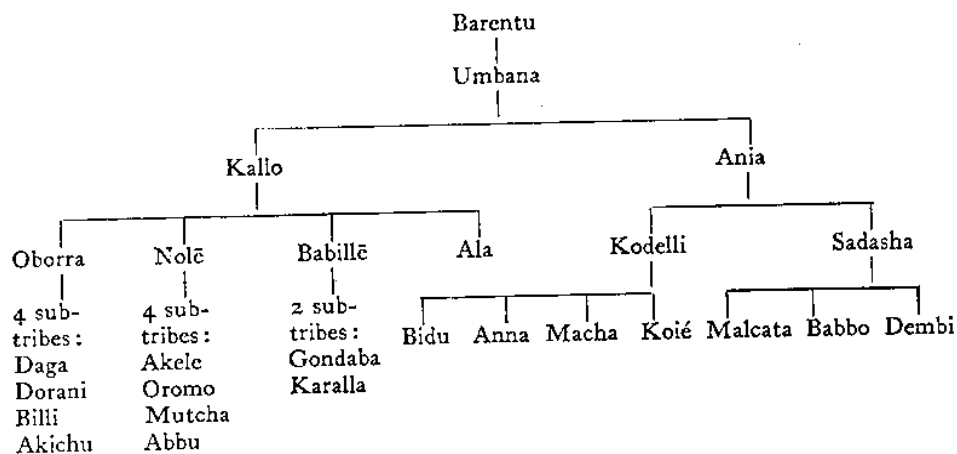


Figure 4 The Genealogical tree of Afran Qallo.⁹

2.2 Settlement pattern of Afran Qallo

The Afran Qallo is indeed one of the four main regions of the Barentu Federation, along with Obera, Daga, and Ala. The Afran Qallo settled in an area stretching from Boroda to the south

⁷ Gemechu Megerssa. "Identity, Knowledge system and the colonizing structure". Ph.D. thesis; *School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London. 1993. Pp. 171

⁸ Trimingham J. Spencer. "*Islam in Ethiopia*" London: Oxford University Press, 1952. Pp 206

⁹ *Ibid* Trimingham. "*Islam in Ethiopia*" pp 206

of the Jijiga Plain.¹⁰ Within the Afran Qallo family, there is an incomplete lineage structure. The Oboraa halves are divided into sub-halves, (Yassa, Dorani, and Mana-Gaja). Akkichuis is divided into two clans (Taye and Gorbe), Billy is divided into two clans (Haara and Hinne), and Dorani is divided into four clans (Yassa, Gutta, Gutaya, and Abichu). The Oborra Cooperative is a significant cooperative of the Afran Qallo people, primarily settled on the eastern bank of the Burqa River and in the town of Baroda, including Karra Mille, Dadar, and Calanqo. The Oborra neighboring areas are Ittu to the west and Southwest, Issa to the North, Anniya to the South, and Ala to the East.¹¹

Daga, the second son of Qallo, had three sons named Noole, Jarso, and Hume. They primarily established their settlements in Haramaya, Kombolcha, Jaarso, Gursum, and Cinaksan regions. According to Mohammed (2016), Noole settled in various areas such as Harar town, Kombolcha, and parts of Haramaya. Noole had biological sons named Halele, Mucha, and Oromo, and there were also assimilated families known as Mana Jarte, Mana Salala, Mana Geto, Mana Bundha, and Gergedu. These assimilated families were adopted into the sub-moiety and considered part of the lineage. The reference to assimilated families implies that over time, certain families or groups integrated into or were absorbed by Noole's lineage.¹²

Adoption, known as *Gudifacha*, holds significant role in Oromo culture. It serves as a means for individuals who are unable to have biological children to become parents. Through the process of adoption, one can have children either from their relatives or non-relatives. This practice of adoption is not limited to the Oromo community but is also prevalent among non-Oromo communities, contributing to demographic growth and expanding geographical coverage.¹³

Additionally, the Noole, the sons of Daga, are also widely scattered outside their settlements, especially in the Oborra and Ituu areas. This dispersal is attributed to their involvement in the

¹⁰ Mohammed Hassen, "The Evolution of Tenancy in Harage (ca.1887-1975)" PhD Dissertation, Addis Ababa University, 2016, Pp. 77 - 80

¹¹ Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau, "History of the Oromo to the Sixteen Century", (Finfinne: Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau, June 2006/2014), pp. 292-300 A

¹² *Ibid* Mohammed Hassen, "The Evolution of Tenancy in HaragePp. 77 - 80

¹³ Jeylan Wolyie Hussein, "A Critical Review of the Political and Stereotypical Portrayals of the Oromo in the Ethiopian Historiography", *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, (Alemaya University, 2006), 15(3): 256–276, pp. 258-259

16th-century Oromo expansion when Oborraa and Ituu fought against the Adal sultanate. After a victorious battle, *Gumaa* (compensation) was distributed for the men who died. Ala took the cattle and returned to their place, while Noole Daga requested land instead of cattle for his sons as *Gumaa*. Oborraa and Ituu granted them land to settle in Ituu and Oborraa.¹⁴

The carcar Oromo says in *mirriysa* when they boast the heroism and strength of their brothers; ‘the Noole Oromo’ as follow: *Nooleen Habalee cittee irraan hafuu dadhabe*. Which means; Noole is like broken sword, I could not get away with it. i.e., it is easy to imagine how discouraging it is when the weapon or knife (*Habalee*) you are using or clinging to is broken in your hands. Noole is a hard working people, who win life by working day and night, they achieve what they turn their faces to, but they don’t know how to stop in the way. Besides being hard working; they have been able to prove to be heroic *clans*; The Noole Daga paid great sacrifice in the 1870s when the Egyptian invaders came to invade our country.¹⁵ For this they praised the whole *Noole* clan in *mirrissa* as follow:

<i>Nooleyye Nooleyyee</i>	Noole Noole
<i>Noole lammii tiyya</i>	Noole my countryman
<i>Noole jechuun gosa</i>	Noolee is the <i>clan</i> ;
<i>Sadeen ilmaan dagaa</i>	the Three sons of the daga
<i>Ilmaan Afran Qalloo</i>	the sons of the Afran Qalloo
<i>Hortee Oromoodha</i> ¹⁶	the Oromo decsendents

Source: Afandi Mutaki

The above *mirrissa* implies the Noole clan belongs to the sub of sub-clan of Oromo decsendents, the son of Daga Qallo Barento. “*Nooleyye Nooleyyee, Nooley* my countryman; Noole is the *clan*,

The Jarso clan is primarily settled in Jarso, Gursum, and Cinakson. They are surrounded by the Nole clan to the west, Hume clan to the south, and Somali clans to the East and North. The Babile clan, on the other hand, encompassed the northern region of Harar, while the Erer and Fiqi clans of Somalia are situated to the south, Gursum to the west, and Fadis to the

¹⁴ Mohammed Hassen. “The Evolution of Tenancy in Harage (ca.1887-1975)” PhD Dissertation, Addis Ababa University, 2016. Pp: 76-77, Informant: Murad Ahmed,

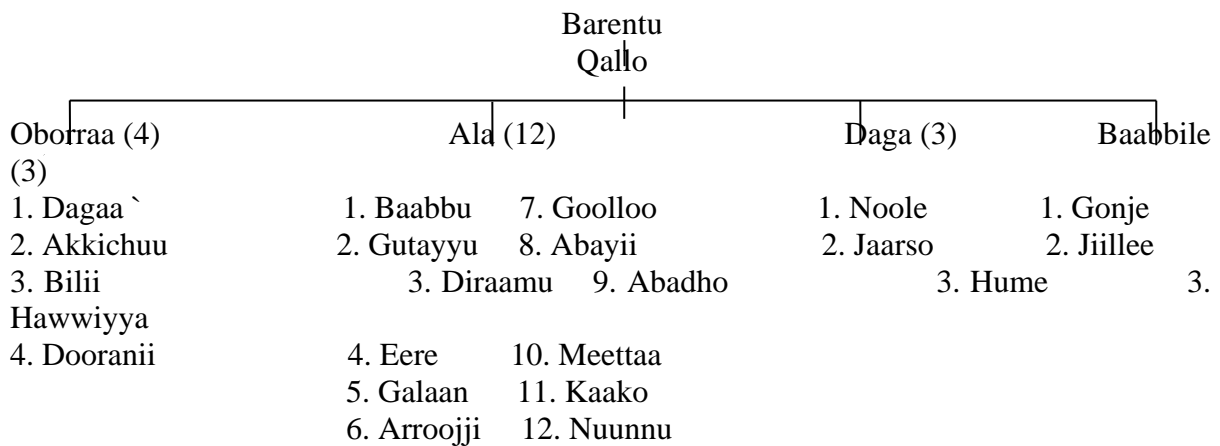
¹⁵ *Ibid*

¹⁶ Informant: Afandi Mutaki, Murad Ahmed

Sagharrah, and Mount Condura. These locations are referred to in historical accounts.²⁰ The four Afran Qallo clans hold a significant presence in the East Hararge zone, with the Ituu Oromo to their west, Anniyyaa Oromo to their south, Issa to their north, and Somalia to their east.²¹

Furthermore, the Afran Qallo (the four sons of Qallo), which was in turn divided into four major clans, namely, Ala (with more than twelve subdivisions), Dega (with three subdivisions), Babile (with ten sub-divisions) and Oborra (with four sub-divisions). These four major clans spread over the central highlands of Harar, which include during the Derg regime *awrajas* (sub-provinces) of Harar, Gursum, Dire Dawa, Oborra and parts of Gara Mulata.²²

Chart 2. The geneology tree of Qallo



Source: OCTB P, 286

The genealogy tree presents a detailed breakdown of the genealogical subdivisions within the Barentu Qallo, illustrating the intricate family relations and lineages within each major clan. The chart showcases the distinctiveness and complexity of each subdivision, reflecting the rich historical legacy and cultural diversity of the Oromo people in the East Hararge zone. Daga was Qallo's second son, who had three sons; they are Noole, Jarso and Hume. They mainly settled in the regions of Haramaya, Kombolcha, Jarso, Gursum and Cinaksan. Mohammed, (2016) stated the following: Noole settled around the city of Harar, Kombolcha, part of Haramaya, which created the son of *gudeda* or the natal son and son of *barcuma* or

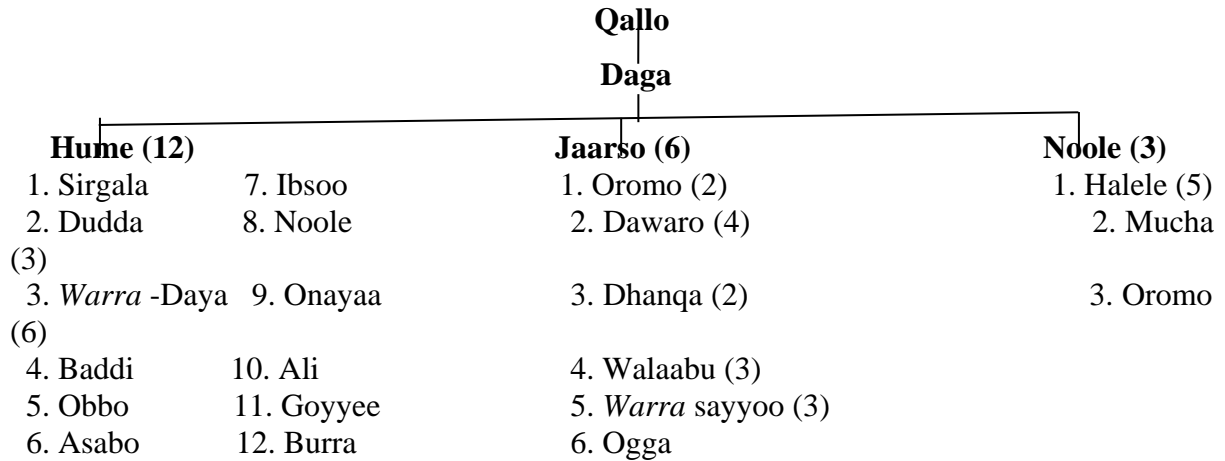
²⁰ Richarch Barton: First Footsteps in East Africa 1856, Pp. 278

²¹ *Ibid* ... Pp. 278

²² Mohammed Hassen. "The Egyptian Occupation of Harer and Its Impact on the Oromo in Harerge." *journal of oromo study*, (2008) Volume 15, No 2.

assimilated by applying adoption. The biological sons are "Halele, Mucha and Oromo", while the assimilated families are "*Jarte, Salala, Geto, Bundha and Gergedu*".²³

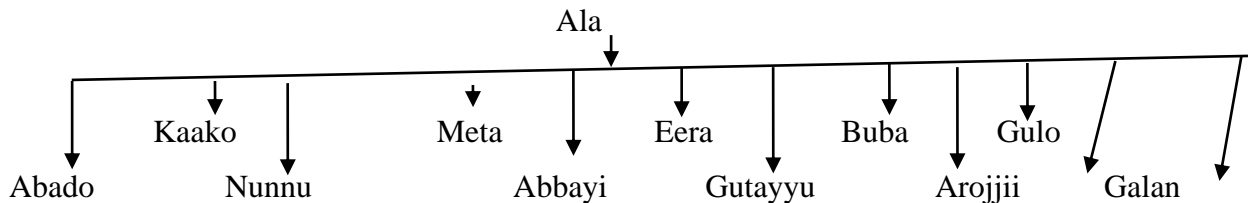
Chart. 3 the geneology tree of Daga Qallo



Source: OCTB P, 301

This geneology tree shows the hierarchical relationships among the clans within the Daga Qallo. Each level represents a different clan, with subclans listed as branches.

Chart .4 The Genealogical tree of Ala



Diro

Source: OCTB P, 296

This genealogical tree represents the hierarchical relationships among the clans within the Ala group. Each level represents a different clan, with subclans listed as branches.

According to my informants; from among the *Nole* clans; Halele is the eldest son, where as *mucha* is the youngest son, but the middle ones, the Oromo Noole is named as *haadha Nole* (*Nole* mothers). Elders mentioned why he was named haadha Noole as follow: According to

²³ Jeylan Wolyie Hussein, "A Critical Review of the Political and Stereotypical Portrayals of the Oromo in the Ethiopian Historiography", *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, (Alemaya University, 2006), 15(3): 256–276, pp. 258-259. Mohammed Hassen, "The Evolution of Tenancy in Harage (ca.1887-1975)" PhD Dissertation, Addis Ababa University, 2016, Pp. 77 - 80

oral traditions; Jarso and Noole clans being descended from one father and common lineage once upon a time a conflict happened between them; that led to the death of Noole clan cavalry soldiers at a place called ‘*qarree biche*.’²⁴ As a result the number of men’s diminished in the Noole area. The Oromo Noole clan (*haadha* Noole) made Jarso and Noole clans to negotiate, as they are brothers. To solve the shortage of man power happened due to war, Oromo Nole arranged the settlement of some Jarso clan members into Noole area by allowing them to inter-marry with Nole women’s. For them; it is not allowed to say “I belong to such clan and you belong to such and such clan.”²⁵ On the other hand if the conflict happened between jarso and Noole clan members, including that of homicide, reconciliation is made by Hume Daga clans, which is known as *iddoo*. From the three clans of *Daga Qallo*, if the conflict arises among the two of them, the remaining neutral clan serves as negotiators. According to informants, parties in conflict considered as ‘*amba*’ or enemy and would not serve as negotiators to each other.²⁶

2.4 Socio-Political Organization

2.4.1 The Gadaa System Administration

The Gadaa System is a democratic system of governance that has been an integral part of the socio-political organization of the Oromo nation for centuries. It encompasses political, economic, and social aspects and is deeply rooted in Oromo culture, history, language, society, and economy. The system is characterized by its egalitarian nature and complex democratic structure, which has persisted despite facing constant open and covert warfare from foreign forces over the past century.²⁷

The officials of *gadaa* are democratically elected every 8 years from representatives of the lineage, governed by an oral law of *heera gosa*. In addition, there were ‘*Saglan* or *erganoo*, a group of nine judges to gather and scrutinize information, and *Shanan Lammi*’, the representative of the fifth council of elders concerning create favorable conditions for

²⁴ Informant: Sabit Garada; damina, Abdurahman Hassan, Qadi Adame

²⁵ Informant: Sabit Garada; damina (head of Noole clan), Abdurahman Hssan,

²⁶ *Ibid*

²⁷ Mohammed Hassan. “The Egyptian Occupation of Harer and Its Impact on the Oromo in Harerge.” *journal of Oromo study*, (2008) Volume 15, No 2 p 36, Asmarom Legesse, "Oromo Democracy: An Indigenous African Political System" (Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1996), 72. Cherri Reni Wemlinger, “Identity in Ethiopia: the Oromo from the 16th to the 19th century”, MA thesis, Department of History, Washington State University, 2008, pp. 75

harmonious conflict management.²⁸ Furthermore, the mention of '*Saglan* or *erganoo*,' a group of nine judges, signifies the presence of a structured judicial system within the gadaa governance. Their role involves gathering and scrutinizing information, suggesting a commitment to ensuring fair and informed decision-making, especially in matters of conflict resolution and dispute adjudication. This role likely involves mediating disputes, promoting dialogue, and fostering reconciliation within the community, demonstrating a proactive approach to maintaining peace and stability.²⁹

Informants have underlined the present-day application of specific aspects of the *Gadaa* system, such as arbitration and the council of elders. While the *Gadaa* system itself may not be fully operational in the study area, its individual components have undergone modification and integration into present-day practices. An example of this adaptation is seen in the shift from the traditional method of compensating victims with livestock to the use of cash, aligning the system's principles with current economic practices. Moreover, the ongoing collaboration among clan members in compensation and the shared monetary contributions from clan members in the current *Gumaa* practice illustrate the enduring influence of collaborative and communal approaches originating from the *Gadaa* system.³⁰

There has always been a strong cultural Narrative associated with the knowledge and skill of *abbaa bokku* (*gadaa* official) in the Afran Qalloo community. *Abbaa bokku* is a leader of a community in Oromo tradition. He holds a position of *gadaa* authority and responsibility within the community, overseeing various matters and decisions pertaining to the society and its members. For example, we can present what used to be said in the mirriga which serves as a form of public praise for individuals who have shown exceptional courage and leadership.

Oromo

Halayyaan dhuugoo daba
Gaalli bu'a ittiin tahu
Bokkuu mana garii Heerri itti hin dabu
Aboo! Guyyaa heeraa
Bokkuun walirraa jala;
Aboo! Yoo qotan Raaree waya
Gaarri faan lafa daba

Gloss

The Dhugo hill is difficult
 Camel through it imposible!
 Some Bokkus not bend the law
 on the day of law making
 Bokkuu exceed each other
 Ploughing is good at plain
 Mountain is difficult

²⁸ Informant: Mohammed Yakub, Abdusamad Mohammed

²⁹ Hayward. R. J. and Mohammed Hassan. "The Oromo Orthography of Shaykh Bakri Sapalo." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 44, no. 3 (1981): 550–66.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/616613>.

³⁰ Informat: Sabit Garada, Mohammed Yakub, Abdusamad Mohammed

*Aboo! Bokkuu faan jabaaw wayya
Darree faan Nama dhaba.*³¹

intelligent *bokkuu* is better
the weak one is lack of wise.

The sayings provided offer a cultural narrative and highlight the importance of the knowledge and skill of the *abbaa bokku* (*gadaa* official) in the Afran Qalloo community. They portray the challenges faced by the *abbaa bokku*, the significance of adhering to the law, the competitive nature among officials, and the value of wisdom in their role. The sayings also indicate the importance of the law-making process and the suitability of certain skills in specific contexts. They emphasize the role of the *abbaa bokku* in governing and maintaining justice within the community.³²

2.4.2 Raaba Dori Administrative System

The Afran Qalloo people had a unique political and military institution known as Raaba-Dori, which played a crucial role in their governance structure. The system consisted of different stages, each serving specific purposes in shaping leadership, resolving conflicts, and managing military affairs. The Raaba stage, a military class, involved the training of individuals as soldiers and their initiation into the nation's values through the *gadaa* system. Every eight years, the Raaba council, elected based on comprehensive knowledge of Heera gosa, managed disputes and conflicts. This council played a vital role in maintaining day-to-day interactions within the society.³³

The *abbaa gadaa*, leader of the *gadaa* council, guided people in resolving disagreements, applying customary law, and addressing cases of crime. The Doorii stage focused on learning about culture, history, religion, and laws, preparing individuals for *gadaa* power. Different regions referred to this stage by various names, such as Raabaa-Doorii in Afran Qalloo.³⁴ In Hararge, the Oromo community's governance system, known as the *gadaa* government, was centered on *caffee* assemblies at the local, regional, and central levels. These assemblies addressed conflicts within clans, broader regional matters, and national-level issues like declaring war and enacting laws. Oda Bultum in Ittu land served as a common ground for the Oromo parliament, where laws were made, conflicts were settled, and governments changed peacefully every eight years.

³¹ Informat: Murad Ahmed- Murad Ahmed, researcher and ethnographer

³² *Ibid*

³³ Asafa Jalata, “*gadaa* (Oromo Democracy): An Example of Classical African Civilization”. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, vol.5, no.1, March 2012, Pp 126-147. Informant: Murad Ahmed,

³⁴ Mohammed Hassan. “The Egyptian Occupation of Harer and Its Impact on the Oromo in Harerge.” *journal of Oromo study*, (2008) Volume 15, No 2 p 35-36

Over time, the influence of regional assemblies in Hararge increased at the expense of the central assembly, leading to the establishment of separate central assemblies at different centers. This shift reflected the dynamic nature of governance structures in response to regional dynamics.³⁵ In addition to the mentioned aspects, the Afran Qalloo *gadaa* system had its own *Jila ardaa* (center), with different gooroo gadaa (centers) like Gooroo Gutoo. The *Baalli*, a symbol of power, was taken in the eighth year at Gooroo Gutoo, signifying the transition of leadership. The *Raabaa Doorii* council, responsible for military affairs, played a vital role in decision-making regarding military campaigns, defense programs, and mandatory military service.³⁶

The diverse use of the term gadaa and the inclusion of Raaba-Doorii varied across regions, showcasing the adaptability of the system within the broader Oromo culture. Overall, the Afran Qalloo gadaa system exemplifies a complex and comprehensive approach to governance, combining political, military, and cultural elements in a dynamic and adaptable manner.³⁷

2.4.3 Indigenous Religion and Cultural Practices

The Oromo people had their own religion and cultural tradition in the socio-economic, political and spiritual lives organized under the *gadaa* system. The groups of Oromo who moved to Hararge like other parts of Oromo used to practice the indigenous religion called *waaqeffanna*; until they were influenced by Islam. In this traditional belief, there was no elaborate and complex set of rules and obligations to be performed regularly, as the case of the Abrahamic religions Christianity and Islam.³⁸

Cultural practices among the Oromo people include the *Gumii* Festival, a public assembly that evaluates the adherence of serving *Gadaa* officials to previous laws. This festival allows decision-making on political, cultural, religious, and economic matters. The *Gumi* in the *Man-Bulti Oda Bultum* is an integral part of the spiritual leadership within the Oromo society.

³⁵ Ibid. , pp 35-36

³⁶ Informat: Murad Ahmed, sabid Garada

³⁷ Informant: Murad Ahmed, Sabit Garada, Mohammed Umaro

³⁸ Jon Abbik, "An Historical-Anthropological Approach to Islam in Ethiopia: Issues of Identity and Politics", *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, Vol.11, No. 2, (Taylor& Francis, Ltd, Dec.1998), p.112-117, Cherri Reni Wemlinger, "Identity in Ethiopia: the Oromo from the 16th to the 19th century", MA thesis, Department of History, Washington State University, 2008, pp. 75

The *qaallu*, who is elected through a worshipper's ceremony (*qaallooma*), holds significant responsibility within this institution. They are involved in various spiritual practices such as forecasting, spirit intermediation, rituals, and hold deep knowledge of *waaqa's* laws and earthly matters.³⁹

According to Dereje Tadesse, the *Qaallu* institution holds a vital role in reconciliation initiatives and is responsible for bestowing blessings upon and appointing the *Abba Gadaa* within the *Gadaa* system. This highlights its crucial significance in collective decision-making and adherence to both man-made laws and the rule of law. Additionally, within the Oromo community, *qaallus* serve as leaders in the *waaqeffanna* religion, exemplifying qualities such as patience, prayer engagement, upholding moral values, and dedicating time to religious practices. Their blessings are believed to carry spiritual authority, as they are thought to be heard by *waaqa*, underscoring their significance in the spiritual realm.⁴⁰

In the past, the Afran Qallo Oromo clans prayed to *waaqa*, their supreme God, for sufficient rainfall, good health for their children, and successful crops. They would express gratitude for the blessings received and perform traditional worship of *waaqeffanna* individually or collectively. During times of significant challenges like drought, they would gather under a sacred tree called "*Qilxu*" and pray to *waaqa* led by the *qaallu*.⁴¹

Additionally, the practice of *Guddifacha* (adoption) is significant among the Oromo, allowing individuals who are unable to have children naturally to expand their families through adoption. This practice has contributed to the broad demographic and geographic reach of the Oromo people, showcasing their inclusive cultural practices. There were also other indigenous traditional practices in Kombolcha and its surrounding areas. These practices included *Wadaaja* and *Killa Qala*. *Wadaaja* was a ritual ceremony held under a large oak tree at a place called *Hujuba* (burial site). It involved giving thanks to the Supreme God for blessings and seeking forgiveness for deceased family members, relatives, and ancestors.

³⁹ Informant: Qaadi Adame, Yaasiin Mohammed Umar.

⁴⁰ Dereje Tadesse Birbirso, "Qaallu Institution: A theme in the ancient rock-paintings of Hararqee—implications for social semiosis and history of Ethiopia". 2013

⁴¹ Informant: Murad Ahmed, Abraham Callo

Killa Qala was a ceremony where a wealthy individual would be submerged in milk prepared underground using coffee seeds and butter, possibly for divination purposes.⁴²

2.4.4 Lineage and Kinship

Lineage and familial connections within the Oromo tradition can be traced back to the distant ancestor *Barentuma* (*Bari'antu*), who plays a significant role in Oromo national myth as one of the two founding moieties. Specifically, the Afran Qallo Oromos identify themselves as descendants of the Barentu moieties. The clan is further structured into sub-clans referred to as *gosa*, and these clan institutions exert influence over various aspects of familial and social life, particularly in rural areas where customs and traditions hold significant importance. For instance, the Noole clan, a sub-clan of the Afran Qallo moieties, is subdivided into *mana*, each of which can encompass twelve to eighteen generations. This *mana* are further divided into sub-clans known as *Ibidda* or *balbal*, and these sub-clans are then divided into kinship groups called *warra*, each named after its ancestor, with a genealogical depth of eight to twelve lineages.⁴³

The naming of a family is based on the husband, and a house is constructed with five doors side by side, symbolizing parents with a common entrance and a compound called *Ardaaga* or *mooraa*. Additionally, five families come together to form a sub-clan with a shared settlement area. The smallest category, *mana*, refers to the extended family, with the Noole clan alone having four sub-lineages (*mana Gato*, *mana Aabbu*, *mana Jarte*, and *Mana Garir*).

Gosa → *Mana* → *Ibidda (balbala)* → *Warra* → *Maatii*.⁴⁴ ▼

The Eastern Oromo's social organization follows an ascending order, including *wara*, *mana*, *ganda*, *gosa*, *sabi-Iami*, and *Saba*, spanning from the nuclear family to a larger national context. Notably, *gosa* emerges as the most widespread and essential social structure among the Oromo people. It plays a pivotal role in shaping socio-economic, political, and military aspects within the Raba Dori. The *gosa* is responsible for safeguarding the well-being of its members, ensuring access to vital economic resources like land and cattle. Additionally,

⁴² Informant: Abdulqadir_Abrahim

⁴³ Informant: Abdusamad Mohammed, Murad Ahmed, Mohammed Hassen Hinika, "The Evolution of Tenancy in Hararge (Ca. 1887-1975)" Dissertation Addis Ababa University, June 2016, Pp 73

⁴⁴ Gemetchu Megerssa.. "Identity, Knowledge system and the colonizing structure." *Ph.D. thesis; School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London. 1993, Pp. 169-170

members of the gosa are actively involved in fulfilling obligations such as paying *diyya* and *gumaa*.⁴⁵

As a result of belonging to common descent and kinship the study area community used it to resolve conflict Cases; such as: Disputes at the *warra* and clan level; between wives, siblings and street fights involving children and adopted children or relatives and they adapted Immediate conflict management measures, like: blaming troublemakers and appeasing those offended; "*Warra* " must visit the offended and thank them for accepting to resolve the conflict peacefully. In the past, kinship ties such as gosa, mana, and *warra* were of practical significance in resolving conflicts between family members, clans, and outside clans. The saying "*xiqqaattu kiisha guddattu gosa*"⁴⁶ "for minor you pay out of pocket; more is paid by your clan" it implies how a person relies on his clan for help when in trouble, especially when there is a *gumaa*.

A person from the Oromo nation is called a "*lammii*" and can become one in two ways: by birth or adoption. Those born to Oromo parents are directly considered "*lammii*" and are often called "*ilma gudeedaa*" or "child in the womb."⁴⁷ Before the Egyptian occupation of Harar, the Oromo people categorized their neighbors into three groups to determine who they saw as hostile or cooperative. The first group is called "*fira*" or family, consisting of those with a common lineage or bloodline, or those who have been adopted into the family. The second group is "*amba*" or community, which includes those with whom they trade, work, and sometimes marry, but who are neither relatives nor enemies. The Harar Emirs and other rulers formed alliances and marriages with the Oromo people based on economic exchanges, considering them part of the "*amba*" group.⁴⁸

In Oromo society, it is important for individuals to adhere to the cultural practices and norms. This includes speaking Afan Oromo and showing respect for societal rules and ethics. Living in Oromo land without having a "*lammii*" status is possible, but it requires making a pledge to the society and obtaining the "*amba*" status as a non-citizen. *Ambas* have limited rights and cannot participate in political or administrative affairs, but they are exempt from military

⁴⁵ Mohammed Hassen Hinika, "The Evolution of Tenancy in Hararge (Ca. 1887-1975)" Dissertation Addis Ababa University, June 2016, Pp 81.

⁴⁶ Informat: sabit Garada, murad Ahmed, mohammed Umaro.

⁴⁷ Ibid. The Evolution of Tenancy in Hararge, Pp 73.

⁴⁸ Klemn, Peri M. "Oromo Fashion: Three Contemporary Body Art Practices among Afran Qallo Women." *African Arts* (2009): Pp 54-63.

service. The term "*diina*" refers to different types of relationships. It can denote clans with whom the Oromo have historically had conflicts but can now intermarry with. Some Oromos categorized Egyptian rulers under this definition.

The other meaning of *diina* refers to eternal enemies who harm and kill without mercy, even targeting Oromo women, children, and the elderly. This is considered a serious violation of Oromo law. The Habasha, (Abyssinian) rulers are included in the latter group according to the Afran Qallo. The leaders of the *Raaba Doorii gadaa* administration, along with oral history, determined the appropriate actions for each type of relationship. When seeking to restore peaceful relations with enemy groups, men strategically wore clothing, particularly women's clothing from the *diina* relationship, to gain their attention and sympathy. This included wearing a married woman's *saddetta* or *guftaa*, which became a practice in the 1890s.⁴⁹

2.5 Internal and External interaction of Afran Qallo

2.5.1 Interaction of Afran Qallo with Harar City

In the 18th century, the Afran Qallo Oromo experienced a significant shift in their way of life, transitioning from a pastoral economy to sedentary agriculture. This transformation was primarily driven by the interests of wealthy Oromo individuals who received land and titles under the emirate. The allocation of land favored those who could maximize their income through agricultural activities, leading to the emergence of Oromo landlords known as "abba lafaa." By the 1870s, the majority of Afran Qallo and Ittu Oromo had become sedentary agriculturalists, while the Anniya Oromo remained pastoralists. Wealth among the Oromo had traditionally been measured in cattle ownership; however, with the shift to agriculture, land also became a significant indicator of wealth. This resulted in the emergence of landowning classes known as *Abba Burka* ("father of springs") among the Ittu and *Abba Lafa* ("father of land") among the Afran Qallo. This shift in power undermined the traditional political organization, as positions of authority gradually came to be occupied by the landowning nobility instead of elected leaders chosen for their qualities.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Klemn, Peri M. "Oromo Fashion: Three Contemporary Body Art Practices among Afran Qallo Women." *African Arts* (2009): Pp 54-63; Waldron, Sidney R. "The Political Economy Of Harari-Oromo Relationships, 1559-1874." *Northeast African Studies* 6, no. 1/2 (1984): 23-39.

⁵⁰ Muhammad Hassan, *The Relations between Harari and the Surrounding Oromo b/n 1800-1875*, BA Thesis Haile Sillassie I University, 1973, P 10

During that time, the rising Oromo upper class found potential allies among the emirs of Harar. As they became more involved in the market economy, the Oromo elite shifted their focus towards the Harari influence, moving away from traditional Oromo economic practices. This change allowed them to exert more power over their fellow Oromo. In return, the emirs of Harar solidified this alliance by granting privileges such as land, tax collection, and titles within the Harari administrative system to these emerging Oromo elites.⁵¹ The wealthiest and most influential figures like Orfo Jilo, along with others such as Caamma Nur as the Chief of Law and Balla Buba as the Abba Duulaa (war leader), achieved leadership positions due to their wealth in livestock and land. They served in *gadaa* offices until the system fell during the Egyptian invasion in 1875. Subsequently, a new system of administration known as *Damina* and *Garada* was introduced over a wide area after the exhaustion of the *gadaa* system.⁵²

Harari's first experience with the Oromo system offered no structural equivalence for the Amir, who was the elite of a stratified society. The main problem was to find an ally who could represent Oromo politics in the context of an institution that would replace the contractual relationship. Harari was on the self-protective and had to deal with the Oromo institutions, not the other way around. It therefore seems as if the only institutions available to the amir for establishing relation are those defined in terms of kinship, marriage and adoption.⁵³

The first contact between the Harari and the Oromo was substantial, possibly in the second half of the 16th century during the reign of Emir Nur Ibn Mujahid. Amir Nur built the wall of Harar to protect the city from possible annihilation by Oromo's attack.⁵⁴ The first negotiated relationship between Harari and the Oromo was a market agreement negotiated by Amir Noor's successor, Othman al-Habasi, giving the Oromo the right to purchase imported cloth at a fixed price, etc. has market privileges. The treaty apparently minimized the gap between these two groups, but many of its aspects were unclear. Violation of the terms sometimes created conflicts among the signatories. By the early 19th century, relations between the

⁵¹ Ibid. Muhammad Hassan, *The Relations between Harari ...* pp 10-15

⁵² Mohammed Hassen, "the Egyptian occupation of Harer And its impact on the oromo of Harerge" *Jouornal of Oromo Studies*, V-15, No-2-2008, Pp 44-45

⁵³ Sidney R. Waldron: *The Political Economy of Harari-Oromo Relationships, 1559-1874, Northeast African Studies*. Michigan State University Press. V.17. 1984, pp. 23-39

⁵⁴ R. A. Caulk, "Harar Town and Its Neighbors in the Nineteenth Century", *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 18, No. 3 London: Cambridge University Press, 1977, pp.371

Harari and the settled Oromo had developed into economic interdependence. The Oromo used the city as a major market place, exchanging surplus coffee, leather, livestock and some ivory for imported or manufactured goods. Such as: Cloth and salt.⁵⁵

Harar reached out to foreign merchants such as: Yemen, Arabia, India and China, through two trade routes from Zeila or Barbara, The first route goes through the Somali territory of Isa and the second route goes through the mountains of the Noole clan of Kombolcha district, which belongs to the Afran Qallo clan.⁵⁶ As a result most Afran Qallo communities settled along the main trade route of zeila immediately adopted trade as a means of their livelihood. The Noole Oromo; not just controled the Djibouti Line but also they created their own trading center at Jaldessa.⁵⁷

On the other hand the Babile clans allied themselves with the Hauwiyah and Giri clans and began to control the entire trade route of Zeila. The Ala, Oborra and Giri clan have not only strengthened their trade ties with the city of Harar, they also made an agreement from 1734 to 1783 with Amir Abdushakur Yusuf to buy and sell through *Mahalak* in Harar. From 1856-1875, Amir Mahmud Ali Mayu put the *Mahalaq* into full operation in the Afran Qallo area. Immediately this condition changed the geopolitics of the area. As a result of; merchant class that controls the *Mahalaq* (money) in the area became so influential, the gadaa system was gradually replaced by *Garada* and *Damin* administrative system).⁵⁸

In general, by the early 19th century, relations between the Harari and the settled Oromo developed into an economic interdependence. Alliances of both are not limited to economic matters but also alliances with politically influential people or groups. Thus, the marriage contract created more special conditions for economic relationships in particular and politics in general for a long time.⁵⁹

In terms of the administrative hierarchy, the *Damina* held significant authority as the governor of a district. They owned vast lands and properties and were appointed by the *Amirs*

⁵⁵ Muhammad Hassan, *The Relations between Harari and the Surrounding Oromo b/n 1800-1875*, BA Thesis Haile Sillassie I University, 1973, Pp 1.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*

⁵⁷ Sidney R. Waldron: *The Political Economy Of Harari-Oromo Relationships, 1559-1874*, *Northeast African Studies* Vol. 6, No. 1/2 (1984), pp. 23-39; Caulk, Richard A. "Harär Town and its Neighbours in the Nineteenth Century." *The Journal of African History* 18, 1977: 369 - 386.

⁵⁸ Mohammed Hassen. "The Egyptian Occupation of Harer and Its Impact on the Oromo in Harerge." *journal of Oromo Study*, Volume 15, No 2. 2008, P. 51 - 56.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p.1

of Harar. Similar to a king, power was shared among them. There were also *Damina* of land and *Damina* of clan. Land *Damin*, divided the lands based on their fertility such as 'shibata, Arab *kasara*' (forest and bare lands), *nusa* 1/2, and *rubu* 1/4. They ruled within the boundaries assigned to them. On the other hand, the tribal domain of the *Damina* extended beyond these boundaries, allowing them to lead tribal affairs even if their clan resided within the jurisdiction of other *Damina*.⁶⁰

The *Garada*, appointed by the *Damina*, played a crucial role in enforcing laws, collecting taxes for security purposes, and serving as a village governor. Similar to the position of a king, power was hereditary in this role. To provide further clarity, the *Damina* acted as the district governor, while the *Garada* fulfilled the role of the village governor. The *Malaaqa*, as the village leader, dealt with minor village issues. In areas where irrigation systems existed, the community took turns in utilizing the water. The appointment of *Malaaqa* was carried out by the *Garada*. The lowest-ranking officers were the *malaqa*, who acted as district administrators. They settled disputes, collected taxes, regulated irrigation, and were responsible for maintaining law and order.⁶¹

Indeed, the Oromo people of East Hararge were undergoing a period of transition during 1887s. The introduction of the *Damiina*, *Garada*, and *Malaaqa* in the administrative system, which weakened the *Raaba* and *Doorii gadaa* systems during the Egyptian invasion, posed challenges for the Afran Qalloo. As a result, they struggled to adapt to the new system. The Oromo people were caught in a transitional phase and could not effectively resist the invading forces of Menelik in an organized and united manner.⁶²

Several factors likely influenced the outcome of this situation. Firstly, the *gadaa* system experienced a leadership crisis after ten years of Egyptian rule, making a return to the previous style of governance impractical. Secondly, the growth of Islam in certain regions may have led to the emergence of a new ideological stance that did not necessarily support the idea of holding fresh elections. Additionally, a considerable group of landowners, who were cultivated by the Egyptians to support their indirect rule, likely opposed the idea of a

⁶⁰ Informant: Abdalla Durri, murad Ahmed, Mohammed Hassen Hinika, "The Evolution of Tenancy in Hararge (Ca. 1887-1975)" Dissertation Addis Ababa University, June 2016, Pp 110-112.

⁶¹ Informant: Murad Ahmed, Abdalla Durri,

⁶² Mohammed Hassen. "The Egyptian Occupation of Harer and Its Impact on the Oromo in Harerge." *journal of Oromo study*, Volume 15, No 2. 2008, P. 51 - 56.

new election. Ultimately, the occupation of Harar by Menelik in 1887 effectively extinguished any hopes of Oromo *gadaa* governance and independence.⁶³

2.5.2 Islamic Religion

In the heart of Harar, a distinguished center of Islamic learning, a profound transformation unfolded as Islam reached out to the neighboring Oromo communities. Scholars and educated individuals from Harar played a pivotal role, dedicating themselves to reciting the Quran, evangelizing, and imparting the teachings of Islam to the Oromo population. Their efforts were not in vain, as Islam gradually took root, permeating the broader society, including regions like Mount Gorogarbi where its influence blossomed. Muslim missionaries, driven by a fervent dedication, extended their reach to small villages, contributing to the steady expansion of Islam among the Afran Qallo villages until an unforeseen disruption—the Egyptian conquest.⁶⁴

The year 1875 marked a significant turning point, as Harar fell under Egyptian occupation, ushering in a new era with profound consequences for the spread of Islam and the traditional Gadaa system. Amidst this historical upheaval, Abba Fugugi Orfo Jilo, the last gadaa official, faced a forced conversion at the hands of the Egyptian colonial agent, Mohammed Rauf Pasha. Following his conversion, Abba Fugugi assumed the role of an Egyptian colonial agent in Gaara Mul'ata, where he employed force to compel the local population to embrace Islam. These events vividly illustrate the intricate and coercive dynamics entwined with the spread of Islam among the Oromo people during this tumultuous period.⁶⁵

Scholars such as Trimingham and Mohammed Hassen meticulously documented the coercive methods deployed during the Egyptian occupation from 1875 to 1885. The tactics included the imprisonment of Afran Qallo leaders, the dissolution of traditional governance structures, and physical alterations such as circumcision and the cutting off of long hair (*dunfura*), all aimed at ensuring the forcible conversion of the Oromo population to Islam.⁶⁶ The history of Islam's influence extends beyond coercion, delving into the interconnected sociocultural

⁶³ *Ibid*, P. 51 - 56. Caulk, Richard A. "The Occupation of Harar: January 1887." *Journal of Ethiopian Studies* 9, no. 2 (1971): 1–20. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41967469>.

⁶⁴ Jeylan Wolyie. "A Critical Review of the Political and Stereotypical Portrayals of the Oromo in the Ethiopian Historiography" *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 15 (2006): 256-276.

⁶⁵ Mohammed Hassen. "The Egyptian Occupation of Harer and Its Impact on the Oromo in Harerge." *journal of Oromo study*, Volume 15, No 2. 2008, P. 51 - 56.

⁶⁶ Trimingham J. Spencer. "*Islam in Ethiopia*" London: Oxford University Press, 1952, Pp. 121

interactions between neighboring communities, particularly the Hararis, and the Hararge Oromo. As highlighted by Mohammed Hassen, these interactions played a crucial role in shaping the religious transformation that unfolded during this era.⁶⁷

Although the Oromo had contact with Islam and Muslim culture long before their reported arrival around the city in the 1550s, specially when Sheikh Abadir, the leader of the *Awliya* or *sheikhs*, came to Harar from Yemen with 44 *Awliya*, from Beeta-Zabit and settling there. He sent Sheikh Ali from the Noole clan and Sheikh Usman from the Jarso clan to Yemen to study religious education; these people are said to have returned home after completing their studies and assisted Sheikh Abadir in converting the Oromo living in the area to Islam, But Islam witnessed a rapid expansion in the 19th century under the auspice of the city state of Harar.⁶⁸

Before the Italian occupation of Harar, the echoes of Islam were already heard in the construction of mosques in Kombolcha at the Fallana warra Mohammed area. The Italian colonial rule from 1936 to 1941 implemented a classic "divide and rule" policy, favoring Ethiopia's Muslim population over the Christian political elite. Acknowledging and encouraging Islam as the dominant religion in Hararge, the Italians strategically built and repaired mosques, discouraging the Christian elites and securing support from the Muslim communities, primarily through their land policy. Thus, the intricate tapestry of Harar's history unfolded, woven with the threads of Islam, conquests, and the dynamic interplay of cultures and faiths.⁶⁹ In the case of Kombolcha district, they built a mosque which is still known as "Italian Mosques" located at Kombolcha malka Raafuu, 02 kebele.

⁶⁷ Mohammed Hassen, "The Relation between Harar and the Surrounding Oromo Between 1800-1887": (B.A Thesis, Department of History, Haile Sellassie I University, 1973), pp.6-18.

⁶⁸ Informant: Murad Ahmed, Abraham callo

⁶⁹ Braukämper, Ulrich. (2013). Indigenous Views on the Italian Occupation in Southern Ethiopia A Post-Colonial Approach. *Aethiopica*. 14. 10.15460/aethiopica.14.1.418. Caulk, R. A. "Harär Town and Its Neighbours in the Nineteenth Century." *The Journal of African History* 18, no. 3 (1977): 369–86. Doi: 10.1017/S002 1853 700 027316.

Figure 6: Italian mosque at kombolcha



Source: Biblioteca Digitale. <http://digitale.bnc.roma.sbn.it/tecadigitale>

2.5.3 The Egyptian Occupation Period (1875-1885) and Its Impact

The Egyptian occupation of Hararge from 1875 to 1885 had a significant impact on the Oromo people. The occupation was part of Egypt's imperial ambitions under Khedive Ismail Pasha and aimed to expand influence and control over the region for economic reasons. The Egyptians imposed new administrative structures, disrupting traditional Oromo governance systems. They introduced cash-crop agriculture, displacing Oromo farmers and exploiting them on plantations. Land ownership and use patterns changed, favoring Egyptian settlers and leading to displacement for many Oromo families. The Egyptians also attempted to assimilate the Oromo into Egyptian culture, threatening their language and traditions. Oromo resistance emerged but was eventually suppressed by the superior military power of the Egyptians. The occupation's effects are still felt in the region today, shaping the historical memory and collective identity of the Oromo people.⁷⁰ Despite these oppressive measures, Oromo resistance emerged during the occupation. The Oromo people, led by their leaders like Orfo Jiloo Bikoo, Balla Bubba, and Chamma Nur, fought against the Egyptian forces.

⁷⁰ Mohammed Hassen. "The Egyptian Occupation of Harar and Its Impact on the Oromo in Hararge." *journal of oromo study*, Volume 15, No 2 2008, p 45

However, their resistance was eventually suppressed due to the superior military power of the Egyptians.⁷¹

According to Mohammed Hassan, when the Afran Qallo forces clashed with the Egyptians in 1875, they employed a unique tactic. They would advance in a formidable formation, stretching across several ranks and filled with ten or even a dozen fighters deep. This arrangement ensured that any fallen soldiers were promptly substituted by others, allowing the forward progression to remain uninterrupted and undeterred by the loss of their comrades. The Afran Qallo forces displayed exceptional bravery and resilience, confronting death with utmost boldness and exhibiting a fearsome attack. Nevertheless, the Egyptian conquest of Harar and its surrounding areas hastened the decline of indigenous Afran Qallo institutions and significantly undermined their military strength.⁷²

2.5.3.1 Battles Fought in the Area

The Battle of Iftuha in 1875 marked a pivotal engagement in which the Oromo fighters suffered a swift defeat at the hands of the Egyptians. After this triumph, the Egyptian forces advanced towards Eegu, located roughly 30 miles from the city of Harar. Employing intense firepower, the Egyptians decisively overcame their adversaries, leading to the hoisting of Egyptian flags and the imposition of Egyptian rules and religious practices in the villages of the vanquished Oromo community. This victory not only secured territorial gains for the Egyptians but also exerted a profound influence on the social and cultural landscape of the defeated Oromo populace.⁷³

2.5.3.2 The Massacre of Afran Qallo Leaders (1875)

After controlling Harar, Rauf Pasha continued sending his soldiers in various directions against Afran Qallo fighters known as *Murti Gutoo*. Through karra fallana direction he sent large army into Noole area (*Ona*), but at *Dirre Gofle* or *Dooyaa Gofle*, when they reached specific area known as *Bishan Bunaa* they came face to face with Egyptians fighters; on this battle the *Murti Gutoo* were defeated.⁷⁴ The Noole Oromo confronted the Egyptians at

⁷¹ *Ibid*, Pp. 51 - 56

⁷² *Ibid*

⁷³ Adam, Nieuważny. "Civil Status Documents from Harar under Egyptian Administration, 1875-1885." *Studia Arabistyczne i Islamistyczne. Monografie*, Volume 6. Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Warsaw, 2021. Pp 17-18. ISBN 8395443080, 9788395443084.

⁷⁴ Informant: Murad Ahmed, Abdalla Durri,

Goflola, where many of their soldiers were killed, giving the place its name meaning "the field of the skull."⁷⁵ Despite their heroic efforts, the Afran Qallo fighters couldn't achieve victory due to the imbalance in military armament and training between them and the better-equipped Egyptians.⁷⁶ On the subsequent day, October 10th, two leaders from the Noole Oromo, ሁጠላን ሃላው (‘Uṭmān YĀWR or Uaman Yero) and አላላ ገላው (‘Alī KĀRW or Ali Karro), approached the Egyptian forces. Their mission was to plead for mercy and negotiate the terms of surrender.⁷⁷

In response to the persistent attacks from Afran Qalloo fighters against Egyptian rule, Rauf Pasha, the Egyptian leader, devised a new strategy to neutralize the threat posed by the Murti Gutoo fighters. Drawing on the indigenous conflict management practices of Oromo culture, Rauf Pasha implemented a plan involving the use of Oromo women known as *Haadha Sinqee*. These women, recognized as negotiators wielding a stick (sinqe) for negotiation purposes, were gathered from Harar town and its surroundings and were dispatched to Murti Gutoo centers for negotiations.⁷⁸

The negotiation initiative led to the arrival of sixty-two participants, comprising Afran Qalloo *gadaa* leaders, including heads of clans, *Abba Gadaa*, and Bokkus, in Harar. However, the anticipated negotiation process took an unexpected and threatening turn when Rauf Pasha promptly imprisoned the Oromo leaders. In a bid to consolidate control and ensure compliance with Egyptian rule, Rauf Pasha demanded that the Oromo leaders not only accept Islam but also pledge obedience and become agents for the Egyptians.⁷⁹

In a brave and defiant stance, the Oromo leaders fearlessly rejected Rauf Pasha's demands, opting instead to face death. This decision proved consequential, as Rauf Pasha seized the opportunity to weaken and break the public morale of the Afran Qallo society. In a brutal turn of events, he ordered the massacre of all the leaders, resulting in the loss of notable figures and heroes within the society. The tragic casualties included individuals such as Wadaay Iruu, Wadaay Rigaa, Roobaa and Baabboo Daga, Ali Bokkuu Raayyaa, Usmaan Yeroo, and Ali

⁷⁵ Mohammed Hassen. "The Egyptian Occupation of Harer and Its Impact on the Oromo In Harerge." *Journal of Oromo Study*, Volume 15, No 2. 2008, Pp. 51 - 56

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* The Egyptian Occupation of Harer ... Pp. 51 - 56

⁷⁷ Adam, Nieuważny. "Civil Status Documents from Harar under Egyptian Administration, 1875-1885." *Studia Arabistyczne i Islamistyczne. Monografie*, Volume 6. Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Warsaw, 2021. Pp 17-18. ISBN 8395443080, 9788395443084.

⁷⁸ *Ibid* ... "Civil Status Documents from Harar under Egyptian Administration

⁷⁹ *Ibid* Mohammed Hassen The Egyptian Occupation of Harer

Harawwee. The ruthless act by Rauf Pasha not only silenced key voices within the Oromo leadership but also left a lasting impact on the Afran Qallo society, marking a dark chapter in their history.⁸⁰

The amusing information conveyed by informants to the researcher on July 10, 2022, was encapsulated in *mirriyisaa* form as follows:

Afaan Oromo	English
<i>Biluu dooyaa Goflee</i>	look a corpse at gofle field
<i>Bokkuu Awwaala dhoorke</i>	they forbidden funeral of our bokku
<i>Jiraa qubsuma tarree</i>	they put the alive one in a row
<i>Lafa irra harkise Arabni</i>	the Arabs dragged them on the ground
<i>Akka reefa harree,</i>	like the carcass of a donkey
<i>Eegee gaalaa canqollee</i>	like the camels tail;
<i>Abbaan if dhaadun tolle,</i>	it is not good to self-praise!
<i>Eegaa gaalaa saata</i>	the protector of the camel
<i>Jiraan keenya goota.</i> ⁸¹	Watch our head (bokku) is a hero.

Source: informant, Shekh Mohamednur Adam

Within Oromo culture, "*mirriyisaa*" serves as a means of expressing admiration and jubilation, especially when paying tribute to and recognizing the heroic efforts of those who have fallen, be they leaders or individuals who have greatly contributed to the community or the Oromo cause. The Afaan Oromo *mirriyisaa* (praise poetry) supplied offers significant insights into the courage displayed by Oromo warriors who sacrificed their lives while safeguarding their land from Egyptian invaders. The messages within the above *mirriyisaa* express the cruelty and atrocities committed by the Egyptians, highlighting the prohibition of funerals for fallen leaders, the mistreatment of living individuals, and the inhumane actions and the need for sympathy towards the fallen heroes.⁸²

During the occupation, the Egyptians conducted a thorough search of the territory under their control and recorded the property of the Oromo people. They imposed two taxes: zakat (one-tenth of harvest) and Arafa tax, a land tax based on the quality of the land.⁸³ The Egyptian government regulated that land could only be held by purchasing it from the government, as

⁸⁰ Informant, Shekh Mohamednur Adam, Abdella Durri

⁸¹ *Ibid*

⁸² Informant: Shek Mohammednur Adam, Murad Ahmed, Abdalla Durri

⁸³ Mohammed Hassen Hinika, "The Evolution of Tenancy in Hararge (Ca. 1887-1975)" Dissertation Addis Ababa University, June 2016, Pp 110-112.

the rights to the land belonged to the khedive. The local community had to repurchase their own lands after paying the initial price, and this process repeated four times during the ten years of occupation. Local community can acquire property (land) after paying the first price (the amount of previous purchase); they had to be re-bought by the local population.⁸⁴

2.6 The Impact of Menelik Occupation of Harar in 1887

After the evacuation of the Egyptians, Menelik II aimed to expand his territorial power and wealth, leading to the end of Afran Qallo's two-year autonomy in 1885-1887. Menelik II launched a military campaign against Arsi with the intention of acquiring cattle, slaves, and other possessions as rewards for territorial expansion. In 1886, Menelik's forces defeated Arsi's military resistance at Azule, clearing the path for further conquest towards Hararge. Led by Dajazmach Walda Gabrel and equipped with modern weaponry, Menelik's army faced the Ituu Oromo forces in mid-1885 and emerged victorious due to their superior firepower.⁸⁵

Walda Gabrel established a command center at Galamso, establishing the first permanent military installation and imperial administration in Hararge. Menelik, using the pretext of seeking revenge for Amir Abdullahi's attack on the Italians, urged Walda Gabrel to conquer Hararge, was furthering his ambition for territorial expansion and catching up with Harar. Asma Giyorgis and Mikael, both renowned Amhara scholars proficient in the Oromo language, had arrived in Harar in 1885 to work under Father Taurin, who oversaw the Catholic mission there. With Father Taurin's cooperation, they clandestinely gathered crucial intelligence on Amir Abdullahi's military weaknesses and the disorder within his government. This covert operation allowed King Menelik to be well-informed about significant political and military developments in Harar for nearly two years, while Amir Abdullahi remained oblivious to the imminent threat posed by Menelik's swift advance towards his city.⁸⁶

Menelik's involvement in this process underscores the strategic importance of intelligence and information gathering in the context of regional power struggles and historical conflicts. This type of engagement reflects a dynamic and competitive environment in which leaders

⁸⁴ Mohammed Hassen. "The Egyptian Occupation of Harer and Its Impact On The Oromo In Harerge." *Journal Of Oromo Study*, Volume 15, No 2. 2008, Pp. 51 - 56

⁸⁵ Mohammed Hassen *The Invention of Ethiopia: Reinterpreting Menelik's Conquest of Harerge and Its Impact on the Oromo. 1887-1900 Journal of Oromo Studies*, Vol. 18, Number-2-2011, pp. 109-141.

⁸⁶ Mohammed Hassen *The Invention of Ethiopia: Reinterpreting Menelik's Conquest of Harerge and Its Impact on the Oromo. 1887-1900 Journal of Oromo Studies*, Vol. 18, Number-2-2011, pp 123

and factions sought to understand and exploit the vulnerabilities and strengths of their adversaries to advance their own interests. When Menelik's army commenced their onslaught, Amir Abdullahi rallied the spirit of jihad in Harar, calling upon surrounding Oromo groups to join the resistance against Menelik. The combined forces of Adare, Somali, and Oromo confronted Menelik's ill-organized, poorly trained, and limited logistics army, while Menelik's troops possessed superior training and modern weapons.⁸⁷

However, the brave and relatively well-organized Afran Qallo army stationed at Gara Mulata, under the leadership of Orfo Jilo, did not coordinate effectively with Amir Abdullahi's forces in the confrontation with Menelik II. On January 7, 1887, at the Battle of Challenqo, Menelik successfully routed the Muslim force. Shortly thereafter, Menelik captured the city of Harar, gaining control over a vast and prosperous region, bringing him closer to the sea, enabling access to large quantities of European weapons. Therefore, Menelik II's occupation of Harar not only expanded his territorial domain but also allowed him to establish a powerful armed force that became the largest in Black Africa at the time.⁸⁸ The traditional Oromo institution of the *Damina* saw a partial replacement by appointed representatives known as *Melkegna*. This shift in leadership roles continued under Emperor Haile Selassie's rule (1930-1974), with the restructuring of the system and the appointment of landlords referred to as *Garada*.⁸⁹

In the region of Hararge, the indigenous democratic institution known as the *gadaa* system had already experienced significant weakening during the Egyptian administration. Emperor Menelik II strategically undermined the *gadaa* system further through various measures, including an executive order in 1900. He also banned the famous Oromo pilgrimage to the land of Abba Muda, which had previously served as a symbol of Oromo unity and solidarity. Emperor Menelik II's policies went as far as prohibiting the election of political leaders and the assembly of the *chaffe*, the Oromo deliberative parliament responsible for important matters such as lawmaking, declaring war, and making peace. The allocation of conquered territories by Menelik II to his armed settlers, known as *Neftanya*, further perpetuated a

⁸⁷ *Ibid* The Invention of Ethiopia:.... pp. 121-122

⁸⁸ Mohammed Hassen. *The Invention of Ethiopia: Reinterpreting Menelik's Conquest of Hararge and Its Impact on the Oromo. 1887-1900 Journal of Oromo Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (July 2011), pp. 109-150.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*

system in which these settlers exerted dominance over the political landscape and treated the conquered people as tributaries, disrupting traditional structures and ways of life.⁹⁰

The settlement of various ethnic groups in the region led to shifts in land ownership, with newcomers gaining control at the expense of indigenous high-ranking officials like the *Damina* and *Garada*. This process continued through changing rulers and governments until 1974, with laws and policies often favoring newcomers and administrators, thereby further undermining and replacing indigenous institutions and laws.⁹¹ This sudden change since 1880s led to a rapid increase in the Islamization of the Oromo community. Islam provided the Oromo with resilience and psychological strength in the face of conquest, land alienation, and the erosion of their cultural institutions caused by the Christian newcomers. The Oromo's cultural and religious shrines and places of worship were replaced by those of the colonizers. One example is the transformation of the sacred Oromo shrine into a modern pilgrimage site for both Christians and Muslims. In addition, the church of Archangel Gabriel was built on a traditional Oromo shrine in the garrison town of Qullubi. This act deprived the Oromo of their indigenous sacred place of worship, which was central to their identity. Similarly, a major Jami mosque in the center of Harar, where Muslim Oromos used to pray, was converted into an Orthodox Church.⁹²

In seeking to counterbalance the encroachment on their cultural practices and reinforce their unity and independence, many Oromo communities embraced Islam as a vital unifying factor. This shift was not simply a religious conversion but also a strategic move to assert their cultural identity and fortify them against the encroachment of Abyssinian nationalism. Trimingham's observation regarding the adaptation of Islam by the Oromo of Wolo as a means to gain more independence holds merit. The acceptance of Islam served as a form of protection against the dominance of Abyssinian nationalism, offering the Oromo a sense of cultural autonomy and resilience against external pressures. Indeed, Islam emerged as a

⁹⁰ Mohammed Hassen. "Conquest, Tyranny, and Ethnocide against the Oromo: A Historical Assessment of Human Rights Conditions in Ethiopia, ca. 1880s–2002." *Northeast African Studies* 9, no. 3 (2002): Pp. 15-49. doi:10.1353/nas.2007.0013.

⁹¹ Mohammed Hassen, "a short history of oromo colonial experience 1870's-1990's: part one 1870's to 1935" *The Journal of Orama Studies*, Vol 6, 2, PP 139 - 141

⁹² "Menilek's conquest of Harar, 1887, and its effect on the political organization of the surrounding Oromos up to 1900" In Donham, D. and James, W. (eds.) *Working Paper on Society and History in Imperial Ethiopia: The Southern Periphery from the 1880s to 1974*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980: pp. 227-246.

powerful symbol of Oromo identity and a reliable defense against the predominance of their Christian neighbors.⁹³ .

⁹³ Mohammed Hassen. *The Invention of Ethiopia: Reinterpreting Menelik's Conquest of Harerge and Its Impact on the Oromo. 1887-1900 Journal of Oromo Studies*, Vol. 18, Number-2-2011, pp. 109-141.

CHAPTER THREE

3. INDIGENOUS INSTITUTIONS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

This chapter discusses types of indigenous mechanisms of conflict management among the community of Kombolcha *district* of eastern Hararge zone and also sheds light on *gumaa* whose details will be investigated later in Chapter Five.

3.1 Understanding the Concept of Indigenous Conflict Management

Indigenous Conflict Management involves the techniques and beliefs utilized by indigenous groups to manage and settle disputes within their communities. It is deeply connected to the cultural and historical background of the community and makes use of traditional wisdom, principles, and organizations. This idea covers various approaches and tactics employed by indigenous populations to peacefully handle conflicts and uphold balance within their societies. These methods commonly rely on values like consensus-building, collaborative decision-making, mediation, and restorative justice.⁹⁴

Conflict is the process that starts when one party perceives that the other party harmfully affected something the first party cares about.⁹⁵ When confrontation begins, it can be understood as engagement in a fight or confrontation between two or more parties aspiring towards incompatible or competitive means or ends. Conflict is a situation in which two or more parties try hard to acquire the same scarce resources at the same time.⁹⁶ Though it is almost impossible to avoid conflict in human relations, to reduce its negative consequences people tend to solve conflicts, which we call it conflict management. According to scholar, conflict management is a set of strategies which can be used to satisfy human needs of security, identity, self-determination and quality of life for all people who are engaged in a conflict.⁹⁷ In similar context others explain conflict management as the suppression of conflict that has already broken out in the form of searching for solution that would reduce

⁹⁴ Christopher Allan Miller; Mary E King (): University for Peace A Glossary of Terms and Concepts in Peace and Conflicts Studies. 49. 2005

⁹⁵ Thomas, D. A., and Robin Ely. "Making Differences Matter: A New Paradigm for Managing Diversity". Harvard Business Review 74, no. 5 1996, Pp 79–90.

⁹⁶ Swanstrom, N. L. P, & Mikael, S.W; *Conflict, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Management and beyond: A Conceptual Exploration*. 2005

⁹⁷ Christie, Daniel & Tint, Barbara & Wagner, Richard & Winter, Deborah. Peace Psychology for a Peaceful World. *The American psychologist*. 63, 2008, Pp 540-52.

the levels of violence and prevent its intensification either through formally or using indigenous conflict management mechanism.⁹⁸

Indigenous Conflict Management emphasizes the preservation of community relationships, restoration of balance, and the pursuit of long-term reconciliation. It recognizes the interdependence and interconnectedness of individuals, their communities, and the natural environment. This holistic perspective highlights the significance of understanding the broader context and underlying causes of conflicts.⁹⁹

The Oromo nation have well-developed indigenous systems for resolving internal and external social disputes, managed through negotiation and *heera gosa* (federation structure). Each crime is classified according to the degree of damage, destruction, and psychological attack, such as simple, medium and severe, and the crime handling system is also different. The elder of the *gosa* (*daminaa*) applies punishment in kind, balanced with the omission of obligations established by communal law that subject the offender to punishment under that law.¹⁰⁰

The conflict management institutions in East Hararge are diverse and multifaceted, each with its own unique approach to resolving disputes and maintaining peace within the community. These approaches include dialogue, which allows conflicting parties to engage in constructive conversation to find common ground and resolve their differences. Family participation, known as *Angafaa*, involves the involvement of families in conflict resolution processes, leveraging their influence and counsel to bring about reconciliation. Neighborhood resolution mechanisms focus on addressing conflicts at the local level, promoting harmony within residential areas.

Moreover, the *Jarsummaa* institution plays a significant role in mediating disputes and fostering understanding between conflicting parties. Similarly, the *Gumaa* systems provide structured processes for conflict resolution and regulation within the societal framework. These institutions have historically contributed to the effective management of conflicts and

⁹⁴ Murithi, T, 2006, 'African Approaches to Building Peace and Social Solidarity', *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp.9-34

⁹⁹ Lawal, Rasaki & Orunbon, Nurudeen & Olalekan, & Ibikunle, Ganiyu & Oluranti, Grace. Resolving Conflict in African Traditional Society: An Imperative of Indigenous African System *Euro Afro Studies International Journal*. 2019

¹⁰⁰ Informants: Mohammed Umaro, Sabit Garada,

the preservation of peace in East Hararge. In addition to these community-based conflict management institutions, specific figures within the community, such as village elders, *garadas*, *daminas*, *qarmame*, and *ergannoo*, are entrusted with the responsibility of addressing criminal cases. These cases may include incidents such as theft, adultery, insult, and assault. These individuals play vital roles in ensuring that justice is served and conflicts are resolved in accordance with the community's norms and values. Their involvement brings a sense of order and accountability to the resolution of criminal matters within the community.¹⁰¹

These systems are: "*fayyisaa*, *uwwisaa*, *Areera* and *Shaffee*", which is meant to provide cloth (*saddeeta*, *maamuudii* and *maanquxa*), sheep, and jug of milk and treatment of the victim with traditional medicine. For *shaffee*; sheep is more preferable than goat; to feed the victim for its richness in fat. Medium crime is damage to body parts, i.e. physical injury such as mutilation or inability to function of an important part of the body. This system is *diyaa*, in which criminals are punished by paying cattle or sheep. The payment of Diya varies widely depending on the damage on the body. Sometimes it even goes as far as with guma or blood price; once done, simple payment up to; five cattle were fixed by the gosa.¹⁰²

3.2 Key Indigenous Institutions for Managing Conflict

The indigenous conflict management institutions in East Hararge, Ethiopia, represent rich approaches that have evolved over centuries to address disputes and maintain peace within the community. These mechanisms have played a crucial role in shaping the social fabric of the region, providing avenues for resolving conflicts and upholding societal harmony. Let's delve into the details of these unique conflict management institutions:

Indigenous Institutions of conflict management mechanisms include: family, *Jarsummaa*, Neighborhood, *gadaa* and *Gumaa* system; negotiation, through mechanism of mediation, arbitration, avoidance and burying dispute in the symbolic process. Indigenous conflict management and sustaining a culture of traditional conflict management in post-conflict is not new phenomenon for Oromo nation in general. It transcends to ancient Oromo nation and

¹⁰¹ Informants : Mohammed Yaqub, usso mammade, sabit Garada

¹⁰² *Ibid*

it is transferred from generation to generation; though its essences are relatively declining with coming of different regimes in Ethiopia from time to time.¹⁰³

A study conducted by various researchers describes that indigenous conflict management process is qualitatively distinct from judicial process. It is a process where conflicts are managed with the assistance of a neutral third party and the neutral third party depend generally on parties own choice. After choosing the neutral third parties based on the willingness of the conflicting parties, conflict parties have started to discuss on the issue that leads them to involve into conflict.¹⁰⁴ After discussing on different issues, facts have to be established and the truth has to be exposed. Once a consensus regarding the facts and the truth has been achieved, perpetrators can declare their illegal behaviors say sorry and ask for forgiveness, and victims can understand and accept the apologies and forgive.¹⁰⁵

As long as people live in the form of group or society, there are conflicts arising from differences of interests, prejudice, needs and ambitions. Therefore, indigenous conflict management approaches were adopted to prevent or manage such difference of interests and determine its management. In other words, when a conflict happens, the crucial point should be the effective adoption of the necessary principle of the management. Indigenous mechanisms are grass root approaches to solve conflicts by the society. The most important elements involving in this mechanism include the tradition of forgiveness, respect for elders because of their symbolic authority to enforce decisions and transfer of resource as compensation.¹⁰⁶ There are many indigenous institutions of conflict management in Kombolcha district. Of these: family, *Jarsummaa*, Neighborhood, and *Gumaa* system; through indigenous mechanisms; like: negotiation, mediation, arbitration and conciliation are outstanding one.

3.2.1 Family

In East Hararge, the family unit is considered a central institution for conflict resolution. Elders and esteemed members play a crucial role in mediating disputes and fostering

¹⁰³ Abebe Demewoz Mengesha, the Role of Sidama Indigenous Institutions in Conflict Resolution: In the Case of Dalle Woreda, Southern Ethiopia, *American Journal of Sociological Research*, Vol. 6 No. 1, 2016, pp. 10-26.

¹⁰⁴ Volker, Boege. *Traditional Approaches to Conflict Transformation: Potentials and Limits*. The Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies Occasional Papers Series. University of Queensland, Australia. 2007

¹⁰⁵ Eshetu, T. & Getu, M. "Alternative dispute resolution." (Teaching material). Justice and Legal System Research Institute, Addis Ababa. 2009

¹⁰⁶ Zartman, I. W. *Traditional cures for modern conflicts: African conflict 'Medicine'*. Boulder Colorado Lynne Rienner. 2000.

reconciliation within the family and community. The family head, often revered for their wisdom and experience, inherits the art of conflict management from their ancestors and has the ability to settle disputes within the family structure (as '*angafni abbaadha*') or the eldest son is a father. They convene meetings to allow all family members to express their opinions and concerns, offering guidance and emphasizing the importance of maintaining familial bonds.¹⁰⁷

This approach to conflict resolution reflects the interconnectedness of families and their influence in resolving issues within the society. Minor disagreements among co-wives, polygamous children, and disputes regarding property inheritance are addressed within the family compound, emphasizing the familial bond as the basis for resolution.¹⁰⁸ The involvement of respected figures in the community is a key in resolving conflicts and maintaining peace within kombocha community.¹⁰⁹

3.2.2 Jaarsummaa (Arbiteration by Elders)

The *Jaarsummaa* or *Mangudummaa* traditional mediation system is an integral part of the Afran Qallo Oromo community, deeply rooted in its cultural and social fabric. This system involves the mediation of conflicts by respected elders, who use traditional techniques to facilitate dialogue and negotiation between conflicting parties. The significance of this traditional mediation system lies in its ability to effectively resolve disputes and maintain peace and harmony within the community. The elders play a crucial role in mediating conflicts and their wisdom and experience are highly valued in the community. *Manguddoo Biyyaa* is literally the elder of the community. Therefore, the term *jaarsa ganda* or *manguddoo biyyaa* refers to all adults in conflict management roles. The term *Jaarsa* according to age grades of *gadaa* system refers to an Oromo man whose age is 80 and above. *Jaarsa* also means ones husband. But in the context of conflict management, it refers to any person (male) who participates in the process of settling dispute. It refers to the role of the person rather than his age.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Informant: Mohammed Umara, Sabit Garada, Mohammed Yaqub,

¹⁰⁸ Sangree, W.H (n.d). "The Bantu Tiriki of Western Kenya", in J.L. Gibbs, Jr. (ed.) *Peoples of Africa – Cultures of African south of the Sahara* waveland press, Inc.

¹⁰⁹ Informant: Sabit Garada, Mohammed Yaqub, Abdusamad Mohammed

¹¹⁰ Alemu, Disassa (2013). A Discourse Analysis of *Jaarsummaa*; A Traditional Method of Dispute Resolution by the Community Elders: Arsi Oromo in focus: Addis Ababa University

The Oromo's adherence to traditional conflict resolution mechanisms like *Jaarsummaa* signifies the enduring significance of cultural practices and norms within the community. Despite external influences and the passage of time, the fundamental principles and rituals associated with *Jaarsummaa*, including the involvement of elders, the recitation of specific blessings, and the emphasis on reconciliation, have stood the test of time.

<i>Afaan Oromo</i>	<i>English</i>
<i>Rabbiin tokko isin haa taasisuu.</i>	May Allah make you one?
<i>Yaada keessan tokko haa taasisuu.</i>	May your spirit be one?
<i>Ija jaalalaatin wal- ilaalaa.</i>	My you look each other with love
<i>Lafti Kan margaa haa ta'u</i>	Let the earth belong to the grass
<i>Qabeenyi Kan abbaa haa ta'u.</i>	Let the wealth belong to the owner
<i>Hammmeenyi isin gidduutti hin argamin.</i> ¹¹¹	Let there be no evil among you

Source: Sabit Garada, *Damina* of Noole Clan

The recitation of meaningful phrases during the reconciliation process reflects the continuity of traditional values, as these phrases convey the community's enduring commitment to unity, peace, fairness, and respect for spiritual and material aspects of life. This continuity underscores the community's resilience in upholding timeless traditions to address conflicts and promote social harmony. While the core values and practices of *Jaarsummaa* have persisted, changes have also emerged in how the mechanism is approached and applied. For instance, contemporary adaptations may include the integration of modern legal principles or the consideration of evolving societal dynamics within the reconciliation process. Additionally, there has been a shift in the broader context within which *Jaarsummaa* operates. The Oromo community's interactions with external societal influences, legal systems, and modern governance structures have necessitated some adaptation in the application of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms

Moreover, as society evolves, the Oromo community's understanding and interpretation of conflict, justice, and reconciliation may have evolved, influencing the way *Jaarsummaa* is practiced and approached in contemporary settings. This adaptation showcases the community's dynamic response to changing circumstances while staying rooted in its cultural heritage. Ultimately, the practice of *Jaarsummaa* among the Oromo community represents a delicate balance between continuity and change. Respect for tradition and the timeless values

¹¹¹ Informat: Sabit Garada, Abdurahman Hassan, Mahammad Umara

upheld in the reconciliation process coexist with a willingness to adapt and respond to the evolving needs of the community and the larger societal context.

3.2.2.1 Issues Resolved by Jaarsummaa

The *gumaa* reconciliation process and Jaarsummaa are integral parts of Oromo conflict resolution mechanisms. In the *gumaa* reconciliation process, a council of nine Salgee elders, elected at the clan level, plays a pivotal role in addressing conflicts between two clans. Similarly, Jaarsummaa serves as a conflict resolution mechanism within families, providing a structured process for mediation and reconciliation. In cases where marital disputes or family conflicts cannot be resolved, the involvement of elders is crucial, with the Jaarsummaa process facilitating open dialogue and providing guidance to the concerned parties. Additionally, beyond family disputes, elders also play a crucial role in resolving boundary problems, especially in the context of the Oromo community's engagement in cash crop agriculture.¹¹²

The socio-political organization and conflict resolution mechanisms within Oromo society not only reflect the rich cultural heritage and traditions but also cultivate a sense of community, unity, and fairness in resolving conflicts. These historical practices underscore the enduring legacy of democratic governance and conflict resolution within the Oromo community, providing valuable insights into their historical and cultural development.

As noted by Mohammed, the legacy of Islam in Hararge is inheritance and polygamy. The number of children born to the same father from different wives is increasing, and all of them claim land from their fathers. This exacerbates the land shortage and is a frequent source of disputes, even violent conflicts between parents and even between brothers. This has been and is a common experience in Hararge, especially in Noole where the population density is very high.¹¹³ Therefore resolving such kind dispute is the responsibility of community elders and clan head (*Damina*). similar to issues between husbands and wives; resolving border disputes between family, relatives, neighbors, clan and non-clan members resolved by jarsummaa. Most of the population in our region is engaged in agriculture. In the course of Ploughing or tilling farm work, occasional clashes can arise between those digging on each other's borders. Therefore, in resolving boundary issues, local elders in good standing in the

¹¹² 'Kebede L. & Aregash E., 2019:36). *Role of Customary Conflict Resolutions Mechanisms: In Case of Dawo of South west Shewa zone*:

¹¹³ Mohammed Hassen Hinika, "The Evolution of Tenancy in Hararge (Ca. 1887-1975)" Dissertation, Addis Ababa University, June 2016, Pp: 369

community, especially those who know the boundaries of these people, should sit closely in the body of the elders and identify the source of the problem. Get those boundaries fixed through demarcation and the issues between these people will be resolved.¹¹⁴

In the study area, traditional ceremonies and rituals are used to resolve conflicts and restore harmony. For example, *Wadaja* is a ritual practice performed by believers to make contact with *Waaqa*, seeking peace for their family, country, and rain for a good harvest. Additionally, Blessings (*Ebbissa*) are celebrated by the elders in the community during dispute settlement. In more serious conflicts, such as homicide, elders can play a role in implementing restorative justice approaches. This may involve bringing together the offender, the victim's family, and community members to address the harm caused, promote understanding, and find ways to repair relationships and reintegrate the offender into the community. These practices are essential in understanding the cultural context of conflict resolution and promoting reconciliation within these communities.¹¹⁵

3.2.2.1 Selection of Elders for Jaarsummaa

The selection of elders for conflict resolution, particularly within the context of Jaarsummaa in the Gadaa system and culture, follows specific criteria. Elders chosen for reconciliation purposes must embody certain characteristics. They need to be individuals of advanced age, possessing substantial life experience and a lifetime of learning. Additionally, they should possess the skills, patience, and understanding required to effectively solve problems, as well as be well-versed in traditional oral law and be capable of making judgments while maintaining confidentiality. Furthermore, the selected individuals must be accepted and respected by the society for their expertise and understanding.¹¹⁶

In the gadaa system and culture, the selection of reconciled elders is not arbitrary. Instead, these individuals are chosen based on their predictability of age, life experience, problem-solving abilities, understanding of traditional oral law, and acceptance by society. Their selection is founded on the belief that they possess the necessary wisdom and knowledge to manage conflicts, uphold justice, and guide the advancement of the community. Furthermore, the selection of elders for arbitration is based on a range of factors, including personal

¹¹⁴ Ibid. Informant: Sabit Garada, Abdusamad Mohammed, Mohammed Yakub

¹¹⁵ Informant: Mahammad Umara, Mahammad Daawwee, Mohammed Garada

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*

wisdom, social standing, talent, reputation, experience in dispute resolution, respect within the community, selflessness, and the ability to reconcile disputing parties.¹¹⁷ Moreover, the decisions of the elders are based on detailed information about the causes, course, and consequences of the disputes, rooted in truth and reason.¹¹⁸

The number of elders chosen for conflict management may vary, ranging from three to six individuals, depending on the circumstances. Each selected elder is expected to adhere to certain principles, including patience in problem-solving, knowledge of effective tactics, social acceptability, and expertise in oral law. The process involves careful consideration to ensure a balanced and fair representation, as evidenced by the inclusion of members from both disputing parties and neutral clans in Jaarsummaa's trial. Overall, the selection and role of elders in conflict resolution reflect an intricate set of criteria and principles deeply ingrained in the cultural and societal fabric, designed to ensure effective and impartial conflict management within the community.¹¹⁹

According to informant the selection of elders for conflict management ranges from three to six elders. In other words the number of *Jaarsolii* in kombolcha wearada depends on six principles that all *Jaarsolii* chosen for mediation must adhere to patience to solve problems, he knows the tactics and he must be socially acceptable and expertise in oral law. Another informant argued that; Five Jaarsolii is chosen in our society. Right and left (*manguddoo mirgaa fi bitaa*) choose two elders on their side and the 5th Jaarsaa (elder) in community was called *Jaarsa ambaa* (from neutral clan) in Jaarsummaa's trial.¹²⁰

3.2.3 Neighborhood (*Ollummaa*) as a Means of Indigenous Conflict Management Avenue

Clearly, the role of neighbors is important in traditional conflict management (conflicts such as family conflicts) to reduce gaps between people or conflicting parties and to overcome mutual understanding or solidarity. People are social beings and have lived together for a

¹¹⁷ Kebede L. & Aregash E., 2019:36). *Role of Customary Conflict Resolutions Mechanisms: In Case of Dawo of South west Shewa zone:*

¹¹⁸ Lenin Kuto et al, 2018: An Indigenous Inter-Ethnic Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Institution among the People of South Central Ethiopia VL - 18 DO - 10.2478/eas-2019-0004 JO - Ethnologia Actualis. Kopytoff, Igor. "Ancestors as Elders in Africa:" *Journal of the International African Institute* 41, no. 2 (1971): 129–42. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1159423>

¹¹⁹ Informant: Mohammed Yaqub, sabit Garada,

¹²⁰ Informant: Abadalla Duri, Sbit Garada, Abbas Jafer,

long time. Neighborhoods are the best essence of people around the world. The role of neighborhoods, especially in grassroots conflict prevention and management is undoubtedly essential to control violent conflicts and strengthen social solidarity in conflict management. In this regard according to my informants; there is one common saying: “*Allah jedhanii ollaa jedhanii*’ and also ‘*abbaan iyyatu ollaan dirmata.*”¹²¹ Meaning: when conflict arises first of all they called God (Allah) and then neighbor. If parties in conflict scream the neighbor arrives first to resolve disputes. Neighbor is nearer to each other at the time of peace and conflict than relatives and kinship.¹²²

Neighborhoods, therefore, primarily promote mutual understanding, solidarity, humanity, and a culture of emotional states of the parties to soften the spirit of trauma in conflict management. Neighbors of conflicting parties play a central role in fostering actual reconciliation, a fundamental measure for supporting a culture of peace. It is clear that the ultimate goal of reconciliation is to maintain harmonious relations and prevent degeneration into conflict, and that restoring previously positive relations between conflicting parties is essential to local communities. It is not the only task assigned to the elders of the parties. Therefore, the process is very insubstantial and each party must form its attitudes to achieve common agreement and change of character, so the neighbors of the parties in conflict are very essential.¹²³

3.2.4 The *Gumaa* Institution

All Oromo clans have common indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in which *gumaa* are the known one. *Gumaa* is a conflict resolution technique related to killing particularly unintentional killing of individual from another clan or within the same clan. It helps to avoid grievances and revenge that follow the case of killing.¹²⁴ Assefa defines the core meaning of the word *gumaa* as follows:

Gumaa is a general institution of settling blood feuds. Therefore, the word ‘*Gumaa*’ is used here in its strictest sense to refer to the general institution of settling blood feuds between two persons, families, groups, clans, communities, or even nations.¹²⁵ What

¹²¹ *Ibid*

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ Informant: Ahmed Usso Mamade, Mohammed Yaqub, sabit Garada

¹²⁴ Mussa et al. Indigenous conflict management and resolution mechanisms on rangelands in pastoral areas, Ethiopia. *Journal of African Studies and Development*, Vol. 10(9), 2017, pp. 115

¹²⁵ Aseffa Dibaba, T. Theorizing ‘*Waadaa*’ as a non-violent principle in Salale: Confronting law without justice. Addis Ababa. Oromo Folklore and Resistance Studies. 2012.

makes *Gumaa* unique, among the Oromo indigenous conflict management methods (a few of which have been mentioned here) – is its commonness across all locales of Oromia and among all *clans* and clans of the Oromo, and its persistence to date, in spite of internal dynamics and external pressures. The definition and detail of *gumaa* process will be discussed in chapter five.

3.3 Indigenous Mechanisms of Conflict Management

3.3.1 Negotiation

The Oromo tradition promotes resolving disputes through negotiation, allowing the parties involved to settle the matter independently. This practice is referred to as *ilaaf-ilaamee* within the Oromo community. This negotiation method is applicable when the parties can communicate effectively and are willing to resolve the issue politely. Asefa explains that the phrase *ilaaf-ilaamee* refers to the negotiation process itself. *Ilaa* is a term that means 'look' or 'listen,' used by one party to initiate the conversation and gain attention. The other party responds with *ilamee*, which roughly translates to 'please' and emphasizes politeness. Negotiation is a direct dialogue between the parties to a conflict in order to reach an agreement. This involves a give and take process in which each party presents its interests, positions and Negotiation can be conducted informally or with the help of a mediator or facilitator. It requires effective communication, active listening, and compromise to find a win-win solution.¹²⁶

3.3.2 Mediation

Mediation is a voluntary process in which a neutral third party helps the conflicting parties reaches a mutually acceptable solution. The mediator encourages understanding facilitates communication, and helps parties discover their interests and needs. The mediator does not make decisions but helps the parties find common ground and develop their own solutions. Mediation is an ancient method of conflict management covered in privacy. It is the non-coercive intervention of the mediator(s), known as third parties, to reduce, remedy or bring the conflict to a peaceful management; which Olaoba describes mediation as a method of conflict management that is essential to traditional societies.¹²⁷ In mediation the role of elders

¹²⁶ Dejene Gemechu. "Some Aspects of Conflict and Conflict Resolution Among Waliso Oromo of Eastern Macha, With Particular Emphasis on the Guma." MA Theses, Addis Abeba university, (2002), Pp 69-70

¹²⁷ Olaoba, O.B. (2001), An Introduction to Africa Legal Culture, Hope Publications, Ibadan

or third party is to advise and guide parties in conflict to reach on agreement without coercive power of mediators.¹²⁸

Mediation is commonly utilized in family disputes, such as divorce. A mediator helps divorcing couples or separated parents negotiate agreements on issues like property division, and visitation rights. Mediation can reduce adversarial conflicts and promote cooperative decision-making. Mediation is valuable in resolving conflicts within communities or neighborhoods. It can address disputes arising from property boundaries, noise complaints, or disagreements between neighbors. Mediators work with community members to find mutually agreeable solutions that promote ongoing harmony and understanding.¹²⁹

3.3.3 Arbitration

Arbitration is a method of resolving disputes where the parties agree to have their case heard and decided by an impartial third party, known as an arbitrator. The process involves agreement to arbitrate, selection of the arbitrator, a hearing where both parties present their case, and then the arbitrator issues a binding decision known as an award. Arbitration is often chosen for its efficiency, flexibility, and expertise in conflict resolution, and its awards are enforceable like court judgments. Arbitration is a more formal and structured process in which a neutral third party, the arbitrator, listens to both disputing parties and makes a binding decision. The parties agree to submit the dispute to arbitration and abide by the arbitrator's decision.¹³⁰

Mediation and arbitration serve as dispute resolution methods, but they contrast in several key aspects. In mediation, a third-party mediator aids disputing parties in reaching an agreement while not imposing a decision. In arbitration, an arbitrator acts as a decision-maker, rendering a final, binding resolution. Additionally, mediation grants the parties control over the final outcome, is less formal and adversarial, and allows for non-binding agreements. Conversely, arbitration often follows formal procedures, with the arbitrator's decision

¹²⁸ Informant: Sabit Garada; Damina (Blood Father) Of Noole Clan

¹²⁹ Carbonneau, Thomas E. "The Handbook of Arbitration and ADR." Juris Publishing, 2017.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*

typically being final and enforceable. Lastly, mediation tends to be confidential, whereas confidentiality in arbitration can vary based on the parties' agreement and applicable laws.¹³¹

Negotiation, mediation, and arbitration represent distinct approaches to dispute resolution, each offering unique benefits and processes tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of the parties involved. These methods underscore the importance of effective communication, understanding, and collaborative problem-solving in achieving peaceful and satisfactory resolutions.

3.4 The Decline of Indigenous Institutions

The paragraph highlights the historical context of Ethiopia and how the formation of the modern Ethiopian state has impacted indigenous institutions. It also discusses the importance of preserving indigenous institutions and societies in the face of modernization and globalization. However, the scholars argue that with the formation of the Ethiopian Empire, traditional conflict management institutions have been greatly affected and distorted. This could be attributed to factors such as the imposition of a centralized governance system and other related factors. The paragraph references Tessema and Mohammed, who suggest that many ethnic groups incorporated into the modern Ethiopian state, were previously peripheral in historical and cultural studies, further diminishing the recognition and preservation of their traditional conflict management practices.¹³²

Agrawal, who emphasizes the importance of preserving indigenous knowledge, and societies worldwide, highlights that the disappearance of indigenous knowledge is a direct consequence of the pressures of modernization and globalization. Agrawal argues that indigenous communities possess valuable strategies for survival, and efforts should be made to save and apply these strategies to address various development challenges in the modern world.¹³³

¹³¹ Ronaldo G. Cheek, *Getting to Yes - Negotiation Agreement Without Giving In* by Roger Fisher and William Ury, 3 B.C. Third World L.J. 136 (1982), <http://lawdigitalcommons.bc.edu/twlj/vol3/iss1/>. Fisher, Roger, and Ury, William. "Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In." Penguin Books, 2011. Pp.146

¹³² Tessema Ta'a, "The Oromo of Wollega: A Historical Survey to 1910." 1980. Mohammed Hassen Ali. "Conquest, Tyranny, and Ethnocide against the Oromo: A Historical Assessment of Human Rights Conditions in Ethiopia, ca. 1880s-2002." *Northeast African Studies* 9, no. 3 (2002): 15-49.

¹³³ Agrawal, A. Indigenous and scientific knowledge: some critical comments. *Indigenous Knowledge and Development Monitor*, 3 (3): 1995, 3-6

In the latter half of the 19th century, there were significant changes in the power dynamics within the Oromo society. The offices of *abbaa Gadaa*, which held considerable authority, saw a decline in their influence. Instead, the *Raabaa Doorii*, a different governing body, became the dominant force in the Afran qallo. The *Abbaa Duulaa* emerged as the central figure exercising full authority over the *abbaa gadaa*. During this time, wealth became the primary criterion for attaining leadership positions, sidelining skilled and wise individuals who may have been capable of serving the society in various capacities. This created a crisis in leadership, leading to a loss of common strength among the Oromo people of Hararge.¹³⁴

The arrival of foreign invaders further exacerbated the situation, resulting in the complete collapse of the native and democratic administrative system. Factors such as, the expansion of trade and the need to protect commercial interests, internal economic transformations, the introduction of new beliefs and religions (Islam and Christianity), and intermittent conflicts with the Abyssinians gradually weakened the Gadaa system. The lack of unity and cooperation among the Oromo rulers prevented the formation of a united front against the common enemy that ultimately brought about their downfall.¹³⁵

¹³⁴ Mohammed Hassen Ali, "the egyptian occupation of Harer and its impact on the oromo of Harerge" *Journal of Oromo Studies*, V-15, No-2-2008, Pp 44-45

¹³⁵ Mohammed Hassen Ali, Testing the Thesis of The Invention of Ethiopia: Reinterpreting Menelik's Conquest of Harerge and Its Impact on the Oromo 1887-1900. *Journal of Oromo Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (July 2011), pp. 109-150

CHAPTER FOUR

4. THE GUMAA INSTITUTION: THE BLOOD FEUD SETTLEMENT

4.1 Definition of *Gumaa*

Once upon a time in the lands of the Oromo people of Ethiopia, there existed an ancient practice known as *gumaa*, steeped in tradition and folklore. This practice, derived from the Afaan Oromo language, held deep significance within the Oromo society. At its core, *gumaa* symbolized the act of cleansing and purifying an individual who was held responsible for the death of another, intricately entwined with the victim's family and their closest kin.¹³⁶ The term *Gumaa* carries multiple meanings.¹³⁷ This is why it has often been misunderstood by scholars not well versed in Afan Oromo, and Oromo culture. For example, Meron in her article, '*Ye Shakoch Chilot* (the court of the sheikhs): A traditional institution of conflict management in Oromiya zone of Amhara regional state, Ethiopia' give a picture of the term '*Gumaa*' as if it refers solely to killing for revenge.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Wakgari, L., Fufa, B., & Taye, B. "*Gumaa*: The Oromo indigenous conflict resolution mechanism; practices and prospects: Focus on the Oromo of Ilu and Bunno, south western Ethiopia." *Journal of Legal, Ethical and Regulatory Issues* 25, no. S5 (2022): 1-13.

¹³⁷ Dejene Gemechu, C. Some aspects of conflict and conflict resolution among Waliso Oromo of Eastern Macha: With particular emphasis on the *Gumaa*. 2002

¹³⁸ Meron Zeleke, *Ye Shakoch Chilot* (the court of the sheikhs): A traditional institution of conflict resolution in Oromiya zone of Amhara regional state, Ethiopia. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 10 (1) 2010 pp: 63

The payment of *gumaa*, a time-honored custom, served as a form of restitution or compensation offered to the family of a victim who had endured physical harm or even the loss of a loved one.¹³⁹ The amount of *gumaa* to be paid was determined by the circumstances surrounding the harm or loss and was intricately linked with the customs and traditions of the specific community. It was seen not only as a means of justice and closure for the victim's family but also as a pathway to rehabilitate (*hirpha*) and honor the deceased.¹⁴⁰

4.2 Historical Development of Blood Price (Law of *Gumaa*)

Most African societies follow their native informal conflict management mechanisms. During colonial times, almost every African society had its own conflict management mechanism. As in other African societies, Ethiopia's various ethnic groups have their own conflict management bodies and mechanisms. However, the 19th-century state-building process undermined its subsequent political achievements in many ways. In this case, the Oromo *gadaa* system can be seen as a prime example. While colonization was the main cause of the deterioration of the indigenous system, each ethnic group in Ethiopia continued its own indigenous system to resolve various types of conflicts such as murder and blood feuds. In the event of a blood feud, it sums up the role of the Indigenous judges in the killing of a clan, and once both the killer and the deceased are identified, the elders summons the leaders of the clan involved. After the elders call, people gather for the final verdict. Elders asked the victims' families what they wanted regarding the death penalty or other related punishment for the assassin. Once the criminal is forgiven, a specific time is set to pay blood money.¹⁴¹

Martial De Salviac in his book, *An Ancient People, Great African Nation*, stated that "in Harar and surrounding areas, eighty thalers of Maria Theresa represent the price of blood", in the last decade of the 19th Century.¹⁴² *Gumaa* is an indigenous conflict management mechanism which restores peace and stability of society based on justice and truth. *Gumaa* is a justice based social institution to compensate the victim through punishing the criminal.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Country of Origin Information Center: Blood Feuds, Traditional Law (Pashtunwali) and traditional Conflict Resolution. LANDINFO Report. Afganistan. 2011.

¹⁴⁰ Informant: Ahmed Uso mummade, Qaadi Adame

¹⁴¹ Kelemework T (2006) Indigenous Conflict Resolution among the Alaba Afar of North Eastern Ethiopia: MA Thesis AAU fills (2006).

¹⁴² Martial, de Salviac, Ayalew Kanno, (Ed), Oromia (Etiopia). *The Oromo Great African Nation: An Ancient People in the Sate of Menelik*. Addis Ababa: Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau. 2013.

¹⁴³ Areba, A and Berhanu, a: "*Customary Dispute Resolution Institution in Oromia Region*," The Case of Jaarsa Biyyaa." In Alula Pankhurst and Getachew Assefa (Eds) *Grass Root Justice in Ethiopia: The*

The following quotation from Richard Burton mentions the Bursuk people and provides some information about their social structure and conflicts they were involved in 1854:

The *Bursuk* number about 5000 shields; owns no chief, and in 1854 were at war with the *Girhi*, the *Berteri*, and especially the Afran Qallo Oromo. In this country, the feuds differ from those of the plains: the hill-men fight for three days, as the End of time phrased it, and make peace for three days. The maritime clans are not so rapid in their changes; moreover they claim blood-money, a thing here unknown.¹⁴⁴

The Bursuk are a clan group indigenous to Gursm area, but further details about their specific location are not provided. It is worth noting that historical information about specific ethnic groups in Ethiopia can sometimes be limited. Regarding Social Structure and Chief, the Bursuk people do not have a chief. This suggests that their social structure might be different from hierarchical societies with centralized leadership. Instead, decision-making and power were more distributed among the community. Accordingly, in 1854, the Bursuk were at war with the Girhi, Berteri, and the Afran Qallo Oromo. These are other clan groups or communities that the Bursuk were in conflict with during that particular time period. Unfortunately, there is no further information provided regarding the reasons or specific dynamics of these conflicts.

However, the feuds of the highland men (referring to the Bursuk or other local populations in similar areas) differ from those in the lowlands. They fight for three days and then make peace for three days. This suggests a cyclical pattern of conflict and reconciliation, potentially serving as a mechanism to maintain stability and limit the intensity or duration of hostilities. on the other hand about Maritime Clans, (likely referring to coastal communities) briefly mentions that they have different practices compared to the highland men, the maritime clans claim blood-money.¹⁴⁵

4.2.1 Maddaa Walaabuu

The main purpose of enforcing the Barentu law is to facilitate reconciliation (*Gumaa Baasuu*) between families and clans, as well as between clans and non-clan members. The Oda

Contribution of

Customary Conflict Resolution in Ethiopia. Etudes ethiopiennes: Addis Ababa, 2008, Pp169-184.

¹⁴⁴ Richard Burton, *First Footsteps in East Africa*, Vol. I, London. Every Man's Library. 1910, p. 221.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

Bultum law serves as a means of administration and reconciliation.¹⁴⁶ The first Oromo law regarding *gumaa*, also known as the human blood price, was established at Madda Walabu. According to oral informants, the initial Oromo law concerning *gumaa*, which refers to the compensation, paid for causing harm or death to an individual, was established in a place called Madda Walabu. This implies that Madda Walabu played a significant role in the development and implementation of this law within the Oromo society. It suggests that this location holds historical significance in relation to the establishment of the law of *Gumaa*, indicating that it might have been a center for legal practices or a place where important decisions were made within the Oromo community.¹⁴⁷

Informant Usso Mummmed, states that after the establishment of the law in Madda Walabu, it was brought to Oda Bultum in Badessa. This suggests that the law was not only limited to one specific location but was spread and implemented in different regions within the Oromo society. He states that the blood price for men was set at one hundred cattle, while for women, it was set at eighty cattle. This indicates that there were different compensation amounts depending on the gender of the victim, highlighting a potential gender distinction within the law of *Gumaa*.¹⁴⁸

4.2.2 Odaa Bultum

The establishment of Odaa Bultum as the center of the Oromo Gadaa system was significant in fulfilling the laws of the Oromo people. Previously, these laws were not fully enforced, but under Odaa Bultum, they were implemented. This highlights the comprehensive nature of the legal system established at Odaa Bultum, which governed various aspects of Oromo society such as: administration, children, women, youth, cattle, murderers, Eye-breakers, the election of the *Abba Gada*, and unauthorized cutting tree.

4.2.3 Afran Qallo

In the past, the Afran Qallo society had a common *gadaa* administrative system led by *abba gadaa*, who held power for only eight years according to *gadaa* laws. However, when the Egyptian occupation of Harar began, it posed the first challenge to the *gadaa* administrative

¹⁴⁶ Informant: Murad Ahmed, Abdulqadir Abraham

¹⁴⁷ Informant: Usso Mummmed Wadee, Qadii Adame, Shekh Mohamednur Adam

¹⁴⁸ Informant: Usso Mummmed Wadee, Qadii Adame

system. As a result, they replaced the role of *abba gadaa* with administrative agents known as *garada* and *Damina*.¹⁴⁹

Subsequently, the Afran Qallo clan adjusted the *gumaa* for men to eighty cattle and for women to seventy cattle. The Noole clan further revised the *gumaa* at a place called *mana Bullo Ali*, setting it at seventy cattle for males and fifty cattle for females, which became known as *Heera Mana Daga Qallo*.¹⁵⁰ Since then, the Jarso clan has been applying this law in dealing with *gumaa* cases. However, the Noole Daga clan later revised the law at a place called Iftuha, establishing a *gumaa* of fifty cattle for both males and females, as it is believed that all human lives carry equal value in the eyes of Waaqa (the Oromo God).¹⁵¹

One of the significant laws enacted by the *mana Bullo Ali* was the law of *gumaa*, particularly addressing the crime of murder within the Daga Qallo moieties. For accidental murders without intent, reconciliation is sought, and no *gumaa* is required unless it is specifically spoken of and resolved through reconciliation. In cases of heinous murders, the crime is dealt with by the law of the enemy, fixing the *gumaa* payment at one hundred and one cattle. On the other hand, murders that were not intentional but resulted in sudden death fall under the law of *Amba*, applicable to non-clan members, and the *gumaa* payment for such cases was fixed at one hundred cattle.¹⁵²

Apart from accidental killings where remorse is shown, intentional killings of innocent human lives were punished with the death penalty by throwing the perpetrator off a hill. If the person survives with physical injuries, they undergo rehabilitation to be recovered and reintegrated into social life. In the initial Oromo law, the *gumaa* payment was set at one hundred cattle. However, due to changes in the economic system from pastoralism to sedentary agriculture and trade, the Afran Qallo clan (Oborra, Babile, Ala, and Daga) reduced the *gumaa* payment to eighty-one cattle. The Daga clan (Jarso, Noole, and Hume) also reduced it to seventy-one cattle.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Mohamed Hassen Ali, "The Relations between Harar and Surrounding Oromo between 1800 -1887" (BA. thesis, Addis Abeba University, 1973)

¹⁵⁰ Informant: Sabit Garada, Qaadi adame, Abdurahman Hassan.

¹⁵¹ Ibid

¹⁵² Informant: Murad Ahmed, Sabit Garada

¹⁵³ Informant: Qaadii Adame, Murad Ahmed, Abdurahman Hassan

In the Oromo tradition, the payment of one hundred one (101), eighty one (81) or seventy one (71) cattle as *gumaa* for homicide is a customary practice. The additional one cattle (making it a total of 101) or the variations in the number of cattle serve as symbolic gestures. These extra cattle symbolize the recognition that a human life is invaluable and cannot be fully compensated for through material possessions alone. The additional animal represents an acknowledgement of the irreplaceable loss human life. However, it is important to note that variations may exist in different regions and communities within the Oromo culture regarding the exact number of cattle for *gumaa*.¹⁵⁴

4.2.4 Noole Clan

The Noole clan of kombolcha district (Halele, Oromo, and Mucha) further adjusted the *gumaa* payment to fifty-one cattle, based on a law established at "*mana Fadis Qarsa*." resulting in a revised *gumaa* payment of fifty-one cattle. According to this law, the Noole clan initiates the *gumaa* payment with fifteen cattle, referred to as "*imimmatti*," which is given to the victim's family. The remaining thirty-five cattle, known as "*Agajuma*," are then distributed among the members of the victim's clan and must be paid within fifteen days. Historically, *Agajuma* served as a form of economic rehabilitation for those in need within the clan or community. *Imimmatti* symbolizes wiping away the tears of the victim's family and constitutes the initial payment in the Noole area. It is part of the total *gumaa* payment to be given to the families of the deceased.¹⁵⁵

The Oromo community, as a whole, established *gumaa* payments for specific circumstances. If an adult unintentionally causes someone's death or if the responsible party is a woman, mentally ill person, or teenager under the age of 18, *gumaa* is required. In all other cases, Oromo law mandated death as the penalty, reflecting the cultural saying "*dhible heerri fannisadha*" or "*dhiblee harki dhiiga*," signifying that the guilty party should face death for having blood on their hands.¹⁵⁶

During the Derg regime in 1974, significant economic and legal changes occurred, particularly with the transition from cattle-based *gumaa* payments to cash payments by the Noole clan leaders. This transition was closely tied to the government's adoption of a socialist

¹⁵⁴ Informant: Sabit Garada, Qaadi adame

¹⁵⁵ Informant: Abdrahman Hassan Abraham, Qaadii adame

¹⁵⁶ Informant: Ahmed usso mahamade, sarkama kebele, 20/4/2015 E.C.

economic system. The switch from the traditional cattle-based payments to cash was a pivotal turning point in the economic practices of the region. The Noole clan leaders, in order to adapt to the changing economic landscape, decided that one cattle would be equivalent to one hundred birr, the national currency of Ethiopia at the time. This decision was instrumental in standardizing the measurement of *gumaa* payments, allowing for a more streamlined and uniform approach to financial transactions within the clan and beyond.¹⁵⁷

By aligning the value of cattle with the national currency, the Noole clan leaders effectively bridged the gap between the traditional system of payment and the modern economic framework. This shift not only reflected the influence of the socialist economic model endorsed by the government, but also signaled a significant departure from long-standing customs and practices. The move to cash payments represented a broader evolution in the economic system, as it streamlined transactions and provided a more consistent basis for valuing goods and services. This transition, driven by the convergence of traditional and modern economic principles, ultimately reshaped the economic landscape and *gumaa* practices within the Noole clan and the wider community.¹⁵⁸

The traditional *gumaa* payments were divided into two categories: *imimatti* and *Agajuma*. *Imimatti*, representing the initial *gumaa* payment, amounted to three thousand birr, equivalent to fifteen cattle, each valued at two hundred birr. This payment was intended as compensation for the family of the deceased. On the other hand, *Agajuma* was the remaining portion of the *gumaa* payment, set at thirty-five cattle, with each cattle valued at one hundred birr. This amounted to three thousand five hundred birr and was typically distributed among members of the victim's clan within a specific timeframe, usually fifteen days. The transition to cash payments, known as *goranno*, denoted a mutual agreement among the Noole clan leaders. This transition was not only a practical change in the mode of *gumaa* payments but also represented a shift in the customary norms surrounding this traditional practice.

The details shared by the informant, Sabit Garada, the *Damina* (blood father) of the Noole clan, provide valuable understanding into the cultural and economic intricacies of these traditional practices. The establishment of a comprehensive law by the clan leaders; allowed each clan group to negotiate specific payment amounts through the concept of *goranno*,

¹⁵⁷ Informant: Sabit Garada, qadi Adame, Mohamed Umoro

¹⁵⁸ Informant: Sabit Garada, murad ahmed

taking into account the conditions and circumstances specific to their local areas. This flexibility within the framework of *gumaa* payments provided an avenue for nuanced considerations, ensuring that compensation for causing someone's death was both personalized and consistent. By allowing for agreements on payment amounts based on local conditions, the practice of *goranno* underscored the adaptability and context-specific nature of *gumaa* payments. This approach not only recognized the diverse circumstances within different local areas but also preserved the traditional practice of compensation within the evolving legal and economic framework. The following quotation highlights the adaptability and context-specific nature of *gumaa* payments.

Afaan Oromo

*Gabbarri harreedhaa, jennaan
Isaan lamaantu itti wal ta'e jette
Intalti warra haaqilaa
Heerri gubbaan cufaadha,
Jalaan banaadha.*¹⁵⁹

English

is bridal money a donkey?
the daughter of wise said,
it is what both agreed on it.
the law is closed at the top,
Open at the bottom

Source: Sabit Garada, qadi Adame.

This expression suggests a metaphorical question about the nature of *gumaa* payments. The comparison between bridal money and a donkey implies a sense of inquiry about the value or purpose of *gumaa* payments. The response from the daughter of the wise, which we do not have in this context, likely, provides some insight or clarification. This phrase emphasizes the consensus and mutual agreement behind *gumaa* payments. It suggests that the amount of *gumaa* to be paid for causing someone's death is determined through a collective decision or understanding. It highlights the importance of reaching a shared agreement regarding the payment amount. It also signifies the hierarchical nature of the Oromo legal system. The "closed at the top" implies that the law is rigid and unchangeable at its highest level, indicating a fixed set of rules and principles. However, the "open at the bottom" suggests some flexibility and interpretation of the law at the local or community level. It implies that specific circumstances or conditions may influence the application of the law in different contexts. Overall, this expression shed light on the cultural, social, and indigenous law aspects of *gumaa* payments within the Oromo community.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ Informant: Sabit Garada, Qadi Adame, Usso Mummed

¹⁶⁰ Informant: Abdrahman Hassan, Mahammad Umaro, Mahammad Garada

It appears that the *gumaa* system has both upper and lower limits when it comes to the number of cattle involved in the payment. The upper limit, which was fixed at Oda Bultum and Bululoo, was set at one hundred cattle. This means that in certain areas or regions, the maximum *gumaa* payment for causing someone's death was established at one hundred cattle. On the other hand, the lower limit for *gumaa* payments varied at the gosa (clan) level and fixed at either fifty or seventy cattle. This indicates that some clans agreed to set the minimum *gumaa* payment at fifty cattle, while others determined it to be seventy cattle. These variations suggest that different clans within the Oromo community had their own specific agreements or customs when it came to determining the lower limits for *gumaa* payments. It is important to note that the number of cattle mentioned here represents the quantifiable value assigned to *gumaa* payments during the transition from cattle to cash payments. The actual payment in cash would then be calculated based on the agreed-upon value of cattle. ¹⁶¹

4.3 Procedure of the *Gumaa* Deliberation

The *Gumaa* system involves specific procedures that need to be followed. The killer is required to leave their residence and report the case to the elders. The killer's relatives choose respected and accepted elders to mediate and settle the problem with the deceased's family. This process begins after the burial ceremony is completed, and appointments for *Gumaa* payment are made within fifteen days based on the lineage or composition of the elder's blood father (*abbaa dhiigaa*) and the specific cases categorized under the law of appointment known as '*heera beellama*'. Examples of *heera beellama* include wedding days, homicide cases, and the requirement to pay *Gumaa* (blood price) within fifteen days. ¹⁶²

Elders from the clans of the killer and the victim, as well as elders from neutral clans, gather at a designated location called *iddoo*. *Iddoo* refers to a clan where the killer hides or a clan that acts as a mediator between the killer and the victim's clans for the purpose of settling disputes and restoring harmony. It serves as a neutral ground for discussions and resolution. These procedures in the *Gumaa* system highlight the role of elders, the importance of mediation, and the need for restoring peace and harmony within the community. ¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ Informant: Sabit Garada, Qadi Adame, Usso Mummud

¹⁶² *Ibid*

¹⁶³ Informant: Abdurahman Hassan, Qaadi Adame,

At *iddoo*, before discussing homicide cases, one cattle is slaughtered as an offering for the elders, known as '*Sangaa Haasawaa*' or '*Sangaa Araaraa*', a cattle for discussion or reconciliation. This marks the beginning of the *Gumaa* process. Initially, fifteen cattle, known as '*imimmatti*', are handed over or paid to the victim's family within fifteen days. The remaining thirty-five cattle are paid according to an appointment called "*Agajuma*," which is divided among the members of the victim's clan.¹⁶⁴ In the past, *Agajuma* was sometimes given to the needy within the clan or community for economic rehabilitation. Therefore, the Noole Daga clans refer to this process of paying *Gumaa* and reconciling the loss of life as '*sirna dhiiga itichuu*' (Blood clotting system).¹⁶⁵

During the discussion at *iddoo*, the elders first investigate how the murder occurred and whether it was done with intent and anticipation. They discuss and examine the goals and methods of killing among the parties involved in the conflict. The nature of the deceased and the circumstances of the murder determine the course of action. If the deceased is killed while stealing, dies suddenly due to a stray spear thrown at an animal, or is intentionally killed by someone, *Gumaa* or reconciliation is considered. If the murderer was pursued by others and killed, they are referred to as an "enemy" (*mana dinaa*). Similarly, if the murderer invaded the victims' home, killed them in retaliation, and then hid the weapons, they are also considered an enemy. Pursuing and killing a fleeing person demonstrates more cruelty than animosity, even though conflict and fighting are seen as normal behaviors for both humans and animals. However, if the murderer admits to their crime, seeks help, takes the victim to a doctor, and shows genuine regret and tears for their actions, they are considered "*mana ambaa*" (alien).

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4.3.1 *Gumaa* as a Healing System

Gumaa is effective at ending conflicts by facilitating the recovery of participants from any trauma they may have experienced and enabling them to rediscover peaceful coexistence. The conflicts addressed by the *Gumaa* system encompass a range of acts, including homicide, animal killing, and physical injury. Local elders had the authority to maintain social connections and prevent hostility, resentment, social exclusion, trauma, revenge, and other detrimental actions that hinder the reintegration process of conflicting parties during post-

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁶⁵ Informant: Abdalla Durri, Murad Ahmed

¹⁶⁶ Informant: Mahammad Garada, Mahammad Daawwee

conflict management. This is achieved through the utilization of indigenous conflict management institution known as *Gumaa*.¹⁶⁷

A tale from the 1970s involving Adam Wadaayi, the leader of the Heera (Oromo law), is presented as an example. In this instance, one of Wadaayi's gosa members had killed a member of another gosa, but they could not afford the required *Gumaa* or blood money. Wadaayi approached his gosa head to seek assistance in appeasing the deceased's relatives and restoring harmony. As a symbolic gesture in this appeal, he tied a guftaa, a woman's ornament, around his hair. This display was successful in persuading the *gosa* (*clan*) chiefs to provide the necessary compensation to the deceased's clan.¹⁶⁸

Reconciliation is crucial in post-conflict situations to achieve lasting traditional conflict management and forgiveness, which also entails overcoming the urge for retaliation. Averting retribution and other social ills through the *Gumaa* system's integrated principles can help to lessen the sorrow that arises from parties to conflicts suspecting that they will recur during post-conflict management and prevent future conflicts. The elders conclude the cases through the following blessing.

<i>Akka itiittuu walitti haa itinnu</i>	let us stick together like tickly
<i>Aananii fi bishaan walitti dhangala'e taane</i>	Like Milk and water spilled together
<i>Dhiigni nujidduu dhangala'e itite,</i>	the bloodshed between us clotted,
<i>Akka arrabaaf ilkee waldhabne</i>	we clashed like tongues and teeth
<i>Tokko dhabne kuma haa dhallu,</i>	we lost one and let give birth to a
thousand,	
<i>Waliif duulla malee walitti hin duullu,</i>	we will fight for each not against each,
<i>Sirraan horaa, narraa horri kaffaladhu</i>	let we have offspring from each other
<i>Sirraa dhiqee narraa dhiqi.</i> ¹⁶⁹	Wash me off and wash me off

The quotes regarding *gumaa* as a healing method express symbolic and metaphorical meanings that capture the essence of the *Gumaa* system. Each quote conveys a unique message within the context of conflict resolution and reconciliation. For instance, "Let us stick together like tickly" emphasizes unity and cooperation, encouraging all parties involved to come together for the purpose of achieving peace. Similarly, "Like milk and water spilled together" denotes the idea of harmonious integration, suggesting that conflicting parties

¹⁶⁷ Dejene Gemechu, C. Some aspects of conflict and conflict resolution among Waliso Oromo of Eastern Macha: With particular emphasis on the *Gumaa*. 2002

¹⁶⁸ Waldron, Sidney R. "The Political Economy of Harari-Oromo relationships, 1559-1874". *Northeast African Studies* 6, no. 1/2 1984. pp 23–39.

¹⁶⁹ Informant: Murad Ahmed, Mahammad Daawwee

should merge and blend in a harmonious and inclusive manner. "The bloodshed between us clotted" symbolizes the healing of wounds caused by past conflicts, transforming violence into a state of peace. "We clashed like tongues and teeth; we lost one and let give birth to a thousand" highlights the destructive nature of conflicts and the potential for escalation, emphasizing the need to resolve conflicts peacefully. Lastly, "Wash me off and wash me off" signifies the desire for cleansing and letting go of negative emotions associated with conflict, promoting forgiveness and fresh beginnings.

Overall, these quotes collectively illustrate the transformative power of the *Gumaa* system as a means of healing, by promoting unity, reconciliation, non-violence, and the restoration of trust and peace among conflicting parties.¹⁷⁰ These quotes collectively illustrate the transformative nature of the *Gumaa* system as a healing mechanism, emphasizing unity, reconciliation, non-violence, and the restoration of trust and peace among conflicting parties.

4.3.2 Understanding the Interconnection between *Gumaa* and *Diyaa*

The interconnection between *Gumaa* and *Diyaa* in Oromo traditional law has deep historical roots and is an integral part of the cultural and legal framework of the Oromo people. The practice of *Gumaa* and *Diyaa* dates back centuries and are rooted in the principles of justice, accountability, and community cohesion. In Oromo society, the payment of *Gumaa* and *Diyaa* is not only a means of reparation but also a way to maintain social order and harmony within the community.¹⁷¹

Historically, the payment of *Gumaa* and *Diyaa* was essential for resolving conflicts and maintaining peace between different clans and communities. It served as a mechanism to prevent blood feuds and retaliation, as well as to provide compensation for the loss of life or physical injury. The use of cattle as a measure of compensation reflects the traditional economic system of the Oromo people, where cattle held significant cultural and economic value.

The division of physical injuries into full *Diyaa* and half *Diyaa* demonstrates the Oromo people's understanding of the impact of different injuries on an individual's life. This reflects a deep knowledge of human anatomy and the functions of different body parts, as well as

¹⁷⁰ Informant: Murad Ahmed, Mahammad Yaqub, Mahammad Garada,

¹⁷¹ Informant: Qaadi Adame, Sabit Garada, Shek Mohammednur Adam, Abdella Duri

recognition of the long-term consequences of physical disability. For full *diyaa*, this represents more severe injuries, such as: the loss of both eyes, legs, hands, ears, reproductive organs, left testicles (or both), tongue, and left breast. Half *diyaa* includes compensation for the loss of one hand, one eye, one leg, and the right breast. Amputating women's left side breast, for which the left breast produces more milk than the right one and babies frequently feeds it. Based on this, *diyaa* (compensation) is paid for the living person.¹⁷²

In scientific terms, there is no evidence to support the traditional belief that a woman's left breast produces more milk than the right one, or that infants prefer one breast over the other. While it is true that women may have slight differences in milk production between their breasts, these differences are usually insignificant and do not affect breastfeeding success or the nutritional needs of the infant. Furthermore, studies, such as the one conducted by Janet L. Engstrom et al., suggest that differences in milk output between the right and left breasts are common, with milk production often being greater from the right breast. However, these differences do not impact the overall milk output or influence breastfeeding success. The variations in milk output between breasts are usually evident early in lactation and remain relatively consistent throughout the day and over the first few weeks of breastfeeding.¹⁷³

On the other hand, *Fayyisaa* is a form of compensation and treatment provided to individuals who suffer physical injuries as a result of conflicts. Its primary purpose is to promote healing and reconciliation, resolving conflicts within the Oromo culture. It holds offenders accountable by placing the responsibility on them and their social network to provide compensation or treatment. *Fayyisaa* also helps prevent further escalation of conflicts and seeks to bring closure to disputes. However, its effectiveness relies on cultural adherence and may not be universally applicable. Overall, *Fayyisaa* serves as a collective response to conflicts in the Oromo society, aiming for healing, restoration, accountability, and reconciliation.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² Informant: Ahmed Usso Mumade, Qaadi Adame Ahmed

¹⁷³ Janet L. Engstrom, Paula P. Meier, Briana Jegier, Judy E. Motykowski, and Joyce L. Zuleger. Comparison of Milk Output from the Right and Left Breasts During Simultaneous Pumping in Mothers of Very Low Birthweight Infants. *Breastfeeding Medicine*. Volume: 2 Issue 2: 2007, Pp 83-91

¹⁷⁴ Informant: Sabit Garada, Ahmed Usso Mumade, Qaadi Adame

4.4 Types of *Gumaa*

The practice of *gumaa* payments in the Oromo tradition has a long historical and cultural significance. It is deeply rooted in the *gadaa* system, which has been a central aspect of Oromo society for centuries. *Gumaa* payments were established as a way to address conflicts and crimes within the *gadaa* system. They were designed to provide reparation for the loss of life, physical harm, or damage to property, and to restore harmony and peace within the community. The different types of *gumaa* payments, such as *Gumaa Diimaa*, *Gumaa Adii*, and *Gumaa Gurraacha*, were carefully categorized based on the circumstances of the conflict or crime.¹⁷⁵

In ancient times, *gumaa* payments were made with cattle, which held significant economic and cultural value for the Oromo people. However, as Oromo communities have intermingled and their economic systems have evolved, monetary payments have become more common. The specific amount of *gumaa* payment varies based on the economic status of the community, reflecting the changing dynamics of Oromo society. For instance, the Afran Qallo Oromo in Kombolcha district shifted from fifty cattle (50) to fifty thousand (50,000) birr as *gumaa* payment.¹⁷⁶

The most severe type of *gumaa* payment is *Gumaa Diimaa* (red blood price), which applies to cases of intentional and malicious murder. This type of payment is considered the most serious, as it addresses the deliberate and premeditated taking of a life. The gravity of this type of payment is reflected in the potential for revenge killings and cycles of violence between feuding parties, highlighting the importance of prompt intervention by community elders to prevent further bloodshed.¹⁷⁷ However, if both parties die, no *gumaa* payment is required. *Gumaa Adii* referred to conflicts where a neutral third party prevented death or injury, requiring a *gumaa* payment of 25 cattle. The "black blood price" *Gumaa Gurraacha*, covered conflicts over resources that led to physical injury, loss of life, and destruction of property. The specific *gumaa* payment depended on various factors. In certain cases, such as

¹⁷⁵ Informant: Sabit Garada, Abraham Callo

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁷⁷ Informant: Sabit Garada, Ahmed Usso Mumade, Qaadi Adame

youth engaging in sports, offenders were not obliged to pay *gumaa*, except for one cow slaughtered for a final ritual.¹⁷⁸

In ancient times, when prisons and police stations did not exist, the responsibility of apprehending criminals and ensuring justice fell to the *Abbaa Dula*, the war leader or chief in war, under the authority of the *gadaa* Leader. The *gadaa* Leader would then make decisions based on the truth and severity of the crime committed. Punishments could include whippings, throwing the offender into overflowing rivers with heavy stones tied to their backs, severe physical punishments, or even death. However, such severe punishments are no longer practiced in contemporary times.¹⁷⁹

Not all homicidal cases required *gumaa* payment. Thorough investigations were conducted, and if a crime was proven to be intentional and cruel, *Gumaa a Gurraacha* was paid. The *Heera Dhadacha Yakka*, or the elder's criminal court, made these determinations to ensure fairness and justice.¹⁸⁰ To prevent further escalation and consequences, it is crucial for the elders or individuals from uninvolved clans to intervene promptly.¹⁸¹ Different informants hold varying perspectives on the punishments for murderers. Some suggest that the murderer's hands would be bound with chains; they would be whipped, and then thrown into an overflowing river to ensure their separation from all clans due to the grievous nature of their actions. Others argue that no severe punishment by killing was inflicted, but instead, the murderer's family or clan would be required to pay a higher or double blood price through the *seera Gumaa* ritual ceremony, similar to current practices.¹⁸²

In the *gadaa* system, there was no concept of "eye for an eye" as a principle. Instead, the punishment for a crime was determined after careful examination, and the criminal(s) would be required to pay double blood prices according to the severity of the murder case(s). The perpetrator, upon careful scrutiny, is mandated to pay double blood prices, and the severity of this payment is contingent on the gravity of the murder case. For cases involving unintentional deaths caused by adults or deaths caused by women, mentally ill individuals, or teenagers under 18, a *gumaa* payment is required. However, in all other instances, the *afraan*

¹⁷⁸ Ibid

¹⁷⁹ Informant: Usso Mummmed Wade, Sabit Garada

¹⁸⁰ Informant: Murad Ahmed, Sabit Garada

¹⁸¹ Tesema Ta'a, "The Oromo of Wollega: A Historical Survey to 1910." 1980

¹⁸² Informant: Usso Mammad Wadee, Qaadi Adame, Murad Ahmed

galloo law prescribes death as the penalty, underscoring a more severe consequence for offenses falling outside the specified circumstances. This demonstrates the gadaa system's distinction and flexible approach to justice, tailored to the particulars of each case.

4.5 The Law of Homicide (*Heera Gumaa*)

In the study area, a *gumaa* law called *Dhiiga Bashaqessa* is used by elders to settle disputes. If a fight occurs with the intent to kill, but the complainant ends up defending themselves and unintentionally kills the assailant, a *gumaa* known as "*gumaa bashaqessa*" is paid. The elder calculates the payment based on the number of cattle, considering the causes and consequences of the incident. Another type, *Dhiiga Tasaa*, applies to accidental homicides that occur while trying to attack or drive away animals. *Gumaa tasaa*, or accidental blood price, is paid in such cases. This classification encompasses simple, medium, and severe crimes, with distinct systems and approaches designed to address each category.¹⁸³

These systems are effectively managed through negotiation and the *heera gosa*, which represents the federation structure within the Oromo community. For simple offenses such as theft, adultery, insult, and physical assault, the resolution of these cases falls under the purview of village elders, including the *garada* and *damina*, alongside the *qarmame* and *ergannoo*. These respected figures play a pivotal role in mediating and adjudicating disputes within the community. The *qarmame* refers to individuals who hold respected positions within the community and are entrusted with the responsibility of assisting in conflict resolution, particularly in cases involving simple crimes such as theft, adultery, insult, and physical assault. On the other hand, "ergannoo" represents another category of individuals who are tasked with contributing to the resolution of conflicts and disputes. They typically bring unique perspectives, insights, and experience to the table, contributing to the overall process of finding equitable solutions and fostering reconciliation among those involved in the dispute.¹⁸⁴

To address these simple crimes, the systems of *fayyisaa*, *uwwisaa*, *Areera*, and *Shaffee*" are employed. Each of these systems involves the provision of compensation in various forms, such as cloth (*saddeeta*, *maamuudii*, and *maanquxa*), sheep, a jug of milk, and traditional

¹⁸³ Informant: Murad Ahmed, Abdulkadir Abraham

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*

medicine for treating the victim. The choice of items and the specific system utilized depend on the nature of the offense and the cultural norms governing the restitution process. Notably, sheep hold a particular significance within the Shaffee system due to their richness in fat, which allows for better nourishment of the victim. This thoughtful consideration reflects the holistic approach to restitution and emphasizes the importance of not only compensating the victim but also ensuring their well-being and recovery. The emphasis on traditional medicine within these systems also underscores the deeply rooted connection between holistic healing and customary practices within the Oromo community. The utilization of these distinct systems to address simple crimes showcases the Oromo community's nuanced and balanced approach to conflict resolution and restitution. By integrating traditional practices, cultural norms, and practical considerations, the Oromo traditional system underscores the importance of holistic restoration and community harmony.¹⁸⁵

In cases involving medium crimes that result in physical damage to body parts or impairments, a system known as "*diyaa*" is employed. Under this system, the criminals are punished by paying compensation in the form of cattle or sheep. The amount of *Diyaa* (compensation) varies depending on the extent of the damage caused to the body. In some cases, a concept known as *gumaa* or blood price may be utilized, where the offender pays a fixed number of cattle, often up to five, to the *gosa* (clan). These traditional systems reflect the Oromo people's belief in resolving disputes through negotiation and the application of appropriate compensatory measures.¹⁸⁶

In conflicts resulting in human death and property destruction, traditional methods of dispute management or litigation are employed. In cases where revenge is sought, the *gumaa* payment is known as *Gumaa Hija* and is calculated by the elders based on the circumstances. *Gumaa Sumsama* involves the cooperation of the perpetrator's clan and relatives, who contribute livestock and money as blood price. The proverb "*Xiqqaattu kiishaa guddattu gosaa*" reflects the reliance on clan support during difficult times, particularly in feuds. Minor injuries resulting from interpersonal quarrels are compensated by the perpetrator, while the clan contributes to the *gumaa* payment for murder. *Gumaa Hasassi*, also known as "*Gumaa coqorsa*," applies when a murder takes place elsewhere and the body is found in a different

¹⁸⁵ Informant: Mohmmad Yakub, Sabit Gararda, Ussoo Mummmed Wade,

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*

location. The community where the body is found gradually pays the blood price unless the perpetrator is identified within or outside the community or clan.¹⁸⁷

4.6 Examining the Scale of Compensation in *Gumaa* Cases

The scale of compensation or blood price payment among the Oromo people varies in nature and amount over time and space. Different ethnic groups in Ethiopia have their own indigenous mechanisms and scales of compensation. In the past, the Noole clan paid redemption for loss of life in livestock, but there is disagreement among informants regarding the number of cattle. Some say it was fixed at a hundred, while others mention fifty or even ten heads of cattle. Despite the disagreement, some current practices suggest that the customary number is a hundred. According to Tadesse, the Guji Oromo still adhere to compensating homicide with approximately a hundred cattle.¹⁸⁸

In his book "An Ancient People, Great African Nation," Martial De Salviac mentioned that in the late 19th century, the price of blood in Harar and the surrounding areas was set at eighty thalers of Maria Theresa. This detail sheds light on the cultural and legal norms regarding the valuation of blood-related matters in that specific region of Ethiopia during that time period.¹⁸⁹ Mohammed Hassan also noted the same pricing of blood in the late 19th century in Harar and its surrounding areas, using the currency of eighty thalers of Maria Theresa.¹⁹⁰

This information provides insight into the evolution of cultural norms surrounding blood price in the Afran Qallo Oromo and specifically the Noole clan. It shows how economic and social changes have influenced the traditional practices and values of the community. The shift from cattle to cash as a form of payment for blood price reflects the impact of modernization and interaction with other groups. Additionally, the rejection of differentiation based on social status, age, or gender demonstrates the Noole clan's belief in equality and the

¹⁸⁷ Informant: Murad Ahmed, Mohmmad Yakub

¹⁸⁸ Tadesse Berisso. "Deforestation and Environmental Degradation in Ethiopia: The case of Jam Jam province." *In North East African Studies*, Vol.2, No.2., 2000, pp: 52. USA: Michigan State University Press.

¹⁸⁹ Martial, de Salviac, Ayalew Kanno, (Ed), Oromia (Etiopia), *The Oromo Great African Nation: An Ancient People in the Sate of Menelik*. Addis Ababa: Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau. 2013.

¹⁹⁰ Mohammed Hassen. "The Egyptian Occupation of Harer and Its Impact on the Oromo in Harerge". *journal of Oromo study*. Volume. 15, No 2. 2008.

value of human life. This highlights the complexities and significance of cultural practices and their adaptation to changing circumstances.¹⁹¹

When it comes to payment of *gumaa* with other clans, the Oromo law stipulates a payment of one hundred and one (101) cattle. As mentioned by one informant, there was a case where members of the Noole clan were killed by members of the Somali Gadabursi clan. The Noole elders attempted to resolve the case through the *gumaa* process and went to Jijiga. According to the Gadabursi clan's own blood price law, they demanded 170 cattle. However, through negotiation, the Noole elders paid 140 cattle. Subsequently, when members of the Gadabursi clan were responsible for the death of Noole clan members due to car accident, the Noole elders made them pay the same amount they had previously received. Which informant expressed as: “*waanuma sirraa saffaratan irraa saffaratta.*”¹⁹²

It is interesting to see how the traditional practice of blood price has evolved and adapted to interactions with other clans and groups. The negotiation and payment of a different amount for blood price with the Gadabursi clan shows the flexibility and pragmatism of the Noole elders in resolving conflicts. It also highlights the importance of reciprocity and fairness in the blood price process, as the Noole clan ensured that they received the same amount they had paid previously. This case study provides valuable insight into the complexities of inter-clan relations and the role of blood price in maintaining peace and justice within the community.

4.7 The Oromo Custom of Paying *Gumaa* for Killing Animals

The Oromo people have a traditional custom known as *Gumaa* which involves paying compensation for killing animals. This custom is deeply rooted in the Oromo culture and plays a significant role in their relationship with the natural world. In the Oromo belief system, all living beings are interconnected and have a spiritual significance. Animals are seen as valuable members of the community and their lives are respected. When an animal is killed for any reason, whether for food, self-defense, or ritual purposes, it is believed that the balance of nature is disrupted and that the harmony of the community is affected.

¹⁹¹ Informant: Sabid Garada, Mohammed Yakub

¹⁹² Ibid

To restore this balance and maintain harmony, the person responsible for the killing of the animal is required to pay a form of compensation known as *Gumaa* to the owner of the animal or in the form of livestock, money, or other valuable items. When it comes to paying *gumaa* (compensation) for animals that are accidentally or knowingly killed, specific expressions are as follow:

<i>Gumaa kee narraa fudhadhu,</i>	Take your <i>gumaa</i> from me,
<i>Gumaa kee naaf kaffal</i>	Pay me your <i>gumaa</i>
<i>Ani si hin kuffisu</i>	I will not drop you.
<i>Bakkan barbaadetti naga'ii,</i>	Reach me wherever I want,
<i>Ari'ee qabachuuf gaachana naaf ta'i,</i>	be a shield for me to chase and catch,
<i>Diina jalaa miliquuf gaachana naaf ta'i</i> ¹⁹³	be a shield for me to escape from enemy.

The quoted statement reflects the reciprocal relationship between humans and horses in Oromo culture. By paying *gumaa* (compensation) for a horse that has been killed, the person seeks protection and security from the horse. They expect the horse to reach them wherever needed and act as a shield during activities such as chasing, catching, and escaping from enemies. It highlights the importance of trust and reliance on horses as companions and protectors in various aspects of life. The statement emphasizes the value and contributions of horses within the Oromo culture. For example, if a horse is killed, the slayer mixes barley and salt and feeds the remaining horses.

Similarly, *gumaa* is also paid for animals considered important, such as dogs, which play a crucial role in guarding the house. In the case of paying *gumaa* for a dog, the slayer collects her seeds and provides porridge and milk. When it comes to cattle, especially a bull, the *gumaa* is paid by providing twelve breeding sheep and feeding the remaining animals with a mixture of daagussa (wild barley) and salt. In the case of camels, the *gumaa* is paid with twenty-five breeding sheep. According to my informants, special animals like dogs have their own specific *gumaa* rituals, such as slaughtering an ox and building fences for the dog owner. Similarly, for a cat, the *gumaa* involves buying seven brooms for sweeping.¹⁹⁴

However, hens do not have *gumaa* or compensation as per the Oromo culture. According to the information provided by my informants, hens do not have a specific *gumaa* or

193 Informant: Qadi Adame, Ussoo Mummmed Wadee

¹⁹⁴ Ibid

compensation in Oromo culture. The reasons for this could be rooted in cultural beliefs and traditions. One possible explanation for hens not being compensated could be related to the perceived value or significance attached to different animals in Oromo culture. Hens may be considered more common or less valuable compared to other animals like horses, dogs, or cattle. The *gumaa* ritual and compensation might be reserved for animals that hold greater cultural, symbolic, or economic importance.¹⁹⁵

In the case of donkeys, their favorite things mixed with tar, garlic, and salt are provided during the *gumaa* process, and the *gumaa* is paid in the form of the donkey itself. But in cases where animals cause injury, the compensation involves providing treatment and feeding twenty-five kilograms of wheat. Within Oromo philosophy, mules are considered cursed, so if a mule is killed among the animals, the slayer does not pay *gumaa*. Instead, they are expected to pay the price of the mule to its owner. It is believed that sacrificing any life is morally not acceptable in the sight of God. These practices and beliefs reflect the cultural value placed on animals in Oromo society and the specific rituals and expressions associated with compensating for their lives when they are unintentionally or intentionally harmed.¹⁹⁶

Based on the information provided by the informants, it can be argued that in Oromo culture, there is a system of *gumaa* or compensation for certain animals that hold cultural significance. Horses, dogs, cattle, and camels are given *gumaa*, which involves specific rituals and offerings to acknowledge their value and importance. It is important to note that the informants' perspectives reflect their understanding and observations within their specific cultural context. It is possible that there may be variations in beliefs and practices regarding animal compensation in different regions and communities within the Oromo culture.

4.8 Changes and Continuity of *Gumaa* Law

The shift in economic activities from pastoralism to sedentary agriculture undoubtedly played a significant role in the evolution of the *Gumaa* compensation system. As the economy transitioned, the abundance and relative cost of cattle would have changed, impacting the feasibility of using cattle as the primary form of payment for *Gumaa*. The implications of this transition extend beyond the economic sphere, influencing cultural and traditional practices

¹⁹⁵ Informant: usso Mammed Wadee, sabit Garada, Qaadi Adame

¹⁹⁶ Ibid

such as the determination of *Gumaa* payments.¹⁹⁷ The assembly at Man-Bulti, where elders from all clans convened to address social issues, draft laws, and uphold social relationships, underscores the importance of communal decision-making and consensus-building in Oromo society. The establishment of the *Heera mana Bullo Ali* at fifty cattle during these discussions further exemplifies the adaptability and responsiveness of customary practices to changing economic conditions and community needs.¹⁹⁸

It's fascinating to learn about the variations in *Gumaa* payments in different parts of Oromia and the underlying economic and demographic factors influencing these changes. The adjustments in *Gumaa* payments, from one hundred cattle to eighty-one in Afran Qallo and then further reduced to seventy in Fadis, reflect the evolving economic landscape and population dynamics experienced by these communities. The transition from eighty *Qallo Qarsaa law* to *torbatama heera Daga Qallo*, demonstrates the adaptability and negotiation within cultural traditions in response to changing circumstances. These adjustments highlight the significance of community consensus and decision-making in maintaining and evolving customary practices in different regions of Oromia.¹⁹⁹

CHAPTER FIVE

5. THE OROMO CUSTOMARY LEGAL SYSTEM

The traditional legal system of the Oromo people is built upon their unique customs, practices, and cultural values. It includes a range of customary laws, methods for resolving disputes, and social norms that guide various aspects of community life. At its core is the *Gadaa* system, a complex and intricate socio-political structure that influences the social, political, and legal organization of Oromo society.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ Informant: Abarahim Callo, Sabit Garada, Qaadi Adame

¹⁹⁸ Informant: , Sabit Garada, Qaadi Adame

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid*

²⁰⁰ Lammu Baissa, *The Oromo gadaa System of Government: An Indigenous African Democracy*, New York; 2004

5.1 The *Gadaa* System

The *Gadaa* system, based on an eight-year generational cycle, shapes the succession of leadership, the behavior of leaders, and the management of public affairs within the community. It also plays a significant role in conflict resolution, decision-making, and justice administration. Alongside the *Gadaa* system, Oromo customary law features diverse methods for resolving conflicts such as *Gumaa* (compensation). These mechanisms are designed to address disputes, preserve social harmony, and uphold fairness within the community. The Oromo customary legal traditions are often transmitted orally, with elders, referred to as *jaarsa biyyaa* or *Abbaa dhiigaa*, serving as warden of customary practices and repositories of traditional knowledge. These elders are essential in interpreting, implementing, and passing down customary laws from one generation to the next.²⁰¹

Furthermore De Salviac, states that the Oromo “do not know bowing and prostration; this free people do not bend in front of anyone.” Instead they bowed to the supremacy of the law, which shows the profound respect the people had for the rule of law. Unlike the laws of their neighbors, which were issued by a king or a single leader, the Oromo law was the product of collective deliberation.²⁰² Among the Oromo no single individual was the source of the law and no one was above the law. The primary goal of Oromo law was to maintain stability, to restore peace, and to reach a compromise acceptable to disputants on both sides. This was facilitated by the fact that the *caffee* assembly functioned based on meetings among people during which differences were resolved and disputes settled after an open discussion. Officers of the *gadaa* government were elected after an election campaign. Mohammed Hassan, stated that three qualities-oratory, knowledge of history and tradition, and past military achievements-were expected of candidates for office.²⁰³

5.2 Center of Assembly and Law Making

5.2.1 Oda Bultum

Oda Bultum was the center of assembly where the Ittus, Anniyya Afran Qallo come together; to discuss and approve a law every eight years. For these they anointed leader known as

²⁰¹ Blen Mamo Diriba. 2011. *The gadaa System of the Oromo Society: The Dispute Resolution Process* LLB, MSc in International Security & Global Governance.

²⁰² Martial, de Salviac, Ayalew Kanno, (Ed), Oromia (Ethiopia), *The Oromo Great African Nation: An Ancient People in the Sate of Menelik*. Addis Ababa: Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau. 2013.

²⁰³ Mohammed Hassen. “The Egyptian Occupation of Harer and Its Impact on the Oromo in Harerge”, *Journal of Oromo studies* Volume 15, No. 2. 2008, Pp. 43

Bokku. Under *Bokku* there are eight people with hierarchy of power. They arrange and brought eight dishes full of *killaa* for blessing purpose at the center. Blessing those who uphold the law to be high ranked and cursing those who break or denies the law, his status to be downward. This is known as *irbu* (*promise*). They named this *heera Oda Bultum* (the law of *Oda Bultum*).²⁰⁴

This *chafe*, which was used for a long time, it was located in the heart of the *Ittu* land. It seems to have been very famous and tradition claims that it was the "well-spring from where the Afran Qallo and Anniya learned, and took laws to their respective regions every eight years."²⁰⁵ This process of making law at the center of assembly (*man-bulti odaa Bultum*) is conducted through two ways. First *Heera hunde* (basic law) and second one *Heera Hasaassii* (secret law); as told by informants; Heera hunde was made at *Oda Bultum*, where as *heera hasaassii* was made at *Garbii Darrabba*. According to the *caffee* of the *Oda Bultum*, the law is enacted in two forms, at two places. The two laws are the root law and the *sabbaqa* law or the whisper law For this reason on the day of the legislating law at Oda Bultum the elders in the *mirriga* said,

Oromo

English

Hasaassii garbii goobaa
Guutoo Agamsa baaduu
Nama sadii irraa baasan malee
*Heerri himamuu hin tahu.*²⁰⁶

the talk of garbii gobaa,
 At Guutoo Agamsa baduu;
 unless excluding three person"
 The law cannot be told.

These mirriga focuses on the enactment of law in two forms at two different places, known as the root law and the whisper law. During the law-making process at Oda Bultum, the elders in the mirriga state that the law cannot be shared with three individuals who do not conform well physically or mentally. They emphasize the importance of understanding the law and showing respect to elders. On the other hand on the day of the law making at Oda Bultum the elders in the *mirriga* said:

Oromo

English

²⁰⁴ Informant: Shek mohammednur Adam, Abba Amantii

²⁰⁵ Mohammed Hassan. *The Oromo of Ethiopia: A History 1570 - 1860*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 1990. P 218

²⁰⁶ Informant: Murad Ahmed interviewed Friday, July 30, 2021, 12:16:41 Am.

<i>kudhaniin Odaa bulee</i>	I spent ten days at Oda Bultum
<i>Shaniin darrabbaa bulee</i>	Five days at Darraba
<i>Darrabbaa halkan heeraa</i>	Darrabba the night of law making
<i>Hayyuun namaa maal hasaasaa bulee?</i> ²⁰⁷	The wise man talks what about?

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The elders said that one group settled under the Bultum Hill and the other under the Garbii Guraa. “We stayed safe and what about you?” they asked. After the Tanis group made sure no one died from them, they said, “Yes! We stayed safe and what about you began there, as the elders said. Regarding this mirriga, Mohammednur Adam commented on 12/7/2022, “ten days stayed at Odaa and five stayed at Darrabbaa.” Regarding the Ituu *clans*, some elders say that there are nine Ituu, and some say ten; In this regard, the ten ideas of Odaa Bulee, five Darrabbaa Bulee; on this Ituu Oromo are nine without Qaalluu, ten including Qaalluu and Mirriga should continue to say ten day spent at Odaa, five days at Darrabbaa Bulee, Darrabba the night of law making and to continue the mirriga.

Afaan Oromo

English

<i>Afuriin Odaa bulee</i>	I stayed Four day at Odaa
<i>Shaniin Garbii (Darrabbaa) bulee</i>	five day at Garbii (Darrabbaa)
<i>Darrabbaa Guyyaa heeraa</i>	Darrabbaa the day of law making
<i>Hayyuun hasaasaa bulee</i> night	the intellectuals whispering the whole
<i>Hayyuun hin hasaasuu</i>	The Intellectual did not whisper
<i>Maaliif hasaasaa bulee.</i> ²⁰⁹	Why did whispering?

The above *mirrisa* reveal that one group settled under the Bultum Hill, while the other settled under Garbii Guraa. The elders exchanged questions about their safety, and after ensuring the safety of the group, they affirmed their well-being. The discussion also includes comments by Mohammednur Adam and Najjash Umar, stating that some stayed in Odaa while others stayed in Darrabbaa. There is variability in the number of Ituu tribes, with some mentioning nine and others ten. It is suggested that the mirriga should continue stating that they spent ten days at Odaa and five days at Darrabbaa during the night of the law-making process.

Furthermore, the informant, mention the elders who stayed whispering and the question of why they did so. The comments of Najjaash Umar restate the stay of four clans in *Odaa* and

²⁰⁷ Informant: Shek mohammednur Adam, interviewed on 12/7/2022 and Najjaash Umar.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid*

²⁰⁹ Informant: Najjaash Umar, Shek Mohammednur Adam

five in Darrabba and the variation in the number of Ituu tribes. This means that all clan representatives spent ten days at *Oda Bultum* assembly to make the basic law (*heera Hunde*) and five days at Garbii Darrabba to discuss and make a law known as secret law (*Hera Hasaassii*); that serves at clan level to resolve disputes between individuals and groups.

The one hundred five (105) laws made at Oda Bultum are categorized into seven main sections, with each section further divided into fifteen sub-divisions. These sections are the fountain head law (including laws related to agriculture, pasture, and forestry), the water law, the law of husband and wife, the law of the brotherhood, the neighborhood law, the law of the in-laws, and the law of the court of elders. The major components of the laws made at the center were presented in both Oromo and English as follows:

Oromo	English
1. <i>Heera mataa gaaraa (15)</i> - <i>Kan qonnaa, Kan dheedaa, -Bosona</i>	mountain head law (pasture, farming and forestry)
2. <i>Heera malkaa (15)</i>	the law of water flow
3. <i>Heera jarsaa jaartii (15)</i>	law of husband and wife
4. <i>Heera obboleewwanii (15)</i>	law of the brotherhood
5. <i>Heera ollaa (15)</i>	neighborhood law
6. <i>Heera warra soddaa (15)</i>	law of the in-laws
7. <i>Heera dhadachaa (15)</i> ²¹⁰	the law of the elder's court.

These laws reflect the rich cultural and traditional values of the Oromo people, addressing various aspects of community life, resource management, family relationships, and societal harmony. Each *heera* (law) plays a crucial role in maintaining order and fostering a sense of community among the Oromo.

This law expected concerns to the sustainable use and management of resources in mountainous regions. The three components: pasture (grazing land), farming, and forestry suggest a holistic approach to environmental conservation and utilization. It can include guidelines for responsible farming practices, controlled grazing, and sustainable forestry to maintain the ecological balance of the mountain head. Similarly, the law of water flow is expected to govern the management and distribution of water resources. It could involve rules

²¹⁰ Informant: Ahmed usso mahamade, sarkama kebele elders. 20/5/2022

for equitable access to water, prevention of pollution, and sustainable use of water bodies. Protecting water sources and ensuring fair distribution is key aspects of *Heera malkaa*.²¹¹

The Oromo cultural framework includes a set of laws known as "heera," each addressing specific aspects of community life. One such law, *Heera jarsaa jaartii*, focuses on the regulations and norms governing marital relationships, encompassing responsibilities, rights, and obligations of spouses, along with guidelines for resolving conflicts within the family unit. Another law, *Heera obboleewwanii*, is centered on the principles and regulations guiding relationships among brothers, covering issues like inheritance, mutual support, and resolution of conflicts within the brotherhood. *Heera ollaa* outlines guidelines for harmonious living within a community, addressing conflict resolution among neighbors, cooperation in community activities, and the maintenance of peace and order. *Heera warra soddaa* concentrates on the relationships and responsibilities between families connected through marriage, involving customs, obligations, and expectations of in-laws, as well as dispute resolution mechanisms within extended family structures.

Finally, *Heera dhadachaa* pertains to the governance and decision-making processes within the elder's council, encompassing traditional judicial procedures, conflict resolution mechanisms, and the role of elders in maintaining social order and justice. Together, these laws reflect the cultural richness and holistic approach of the Oromo people in managing various aspects of their community life.

5.2.2 Bululoo Center of Assembly and Law Making

The clan representatives of the Afran Qallo Oromo were sent to Oda Bultum to formulate laws. They spent several months there engaging in discussions and eventually produced 105 laws, as these laws were deemed challenging, they returned to their respective clan areas with five simplified laws referred to as "*shanan Amba*" (hand, mouth, leg, tongue, and ear). According to my informant, these laws symbolize the importance of evidence, elders, cases, and the honesty of both plaintiffs and accused individuals in resolving conflicts.²¹² For this elders made blessing as follows:

Oromo

English

²¹¹ *Ibid*

²¹² Informant: Ahmed usso mahamade

Manni mana wadaajaati
Waaqni nuuf haata 'u
Hamaaf nuhin bobbaasin
Waaqni nugubbaadha jira
*Hin dabin hin sobin.*²¹³

the house is the house of the feast
God be with us
don't engage us in evil
God is above us
Do not miss don't lie

This blessing by the elders during the law-making process served to inform and warn against breaking the law. It emphasized the importance of doing what is right, speaking the truth, not causing harm to others, refraining from lying, and not taking what does not belong to us. Going against the principles of "*shanan amba*" would result in the belief that *waaqaa* (God), who is above us, could reward or punish individuals based on their actions during conflict management.

After separation and settlement into a new territory the *Afran Qallo* oromo established their new center of assembly and law making at *Watar; Bululo* in the Gaara Mulata region. This was not different to Odaa Bultum. The term "bululo" derives from the word "*man-bulti*," meaning the place where tribal heads would come together to create laws. Each clan had its own independent elder council or assembly, and the place they gathered was known as bululo. The seat of the *Raba Doorii gadaa*, a governing institution, was established in Fugug Plain at Bululoo. Bululoo is situated in the Qarsaa district near Watar Town. It is worth noting that the land of Afran Qallo may or may not have a unique name, although some people refer to it as "*Goro Fugug*."²¹⁴

The Noole clan consisted of four houses: mana Abbuu, mana Gariri, mana Gutu, and mana Oromo. In the process of law-making, each of these houses was required to send one representative to the Man-Bulti Bululo assembly. These representatives were responsible for bringing forth contemporary issues discussed within their respective clan assemblies, known as "mana gosa," that required the approval of new laws.²¹⁵ The following is an example of law making (*Tuma*) ritual. Before approving the enacted law, he; *abbaa seera* asks the House by saying "is the House agreed" and went in and confirmed the decision" cut the law. That is why to this day our elders say "The House Agreed" when they approve new laws.²¹⁶

²¹³ Informant: Abraham Callo; community elders and oral oromo story narrator

²¹⁴ Mohammed Hassen. "The Egyptian Occupation of Harer and Its Impact on the Oromo in Harerge." *Journal of Oromo study*: (2008) Volume 15, No 2. P 36-41

²¹⁵ Informant: Shek mohammednur Adam, sabit Garada,

²¹⁶ Informant: Murad Ahmed, Shek mohammednur Adam, sabit Garada,

Mana Gosa

Manni irratti waligalee?
Ee gale muri
Heera mure
*Manni irratti waligalee”?*²¹⁷

Assembly

Is the assembly agreed on it?
yes agree declare it),
the law is declared).
Is the house agreed on it?

The phrase "*Manni irratti waligalee*" translates to "Is the house assembly agreed on it?" while "*ee gale muri*" means "yes agree declare it" and "*heera mure*" translates to "the law is declared." According to the provided information by informant, the conversation between the *abbaa seera* and the members of the assembly indicates a process of analyzing and approving laws brought by the heads of clan assemblies. The members of the assembly, known as the *man-bulti Bululo*, would declare and approve the law by repeating the words of the *abbaa seera*. This approach to law-making emphasizes the importance of collective decision-making and consensus within the Oromo society. By involving representatives from each clan assembly and seeking agreement from all members, the process ensures that the enacted laws represent the collective will of the community.

Additionally, the informant states that the Noole and Jarso clans based on the law of *Odaa Bultum* and *Bululoo* had made their own respective area laws, known as "*Heera mana Bullo Ali*" and "*heera mana badhasoo Mixe*" respectively, were developed based on previous laws such as *Gulanta mana Fadis Qarsaa* and *gulanta mana garad Adam*. This suggests that the Oromo people had a legal system that allowed for the updating and adaptation of laws over time.²¹⁸ At the clan level, the Oromo legal system operates through a rich system of customary laws and practices. Clan leaders, elders, and customary authorities are entrusted with upholding and enforcing these laws. They act as mediators, arbitrators, and custodians of justice, ensuring that disputes are settled in accordance with traditional norms and customs.

5.3 Type of Customary Laws

5.3.1 The Three Suspended Laws (*Heera Saden Fannoo*)

The first suspended law pertains to cases where children or mentally ill individuals commit acts of violence. In such instances, the case is temporarily halted until their families arrive. This highlights the significance of family involvement and the belief that the community should collectively address and resolve conflicts. The involvement of families allows for

²¹⁷ Informant: Murad Ahmed, Researcher and ethnographer

²¹⁸ Ibid

support, understanding, and potential interventions in cases where the individuals involved may not fully comprehend the consequences of their actions due to their age or mental health.²¹⁹

The second suspended law, known as "*Heera Sadeen Fannoo*," focuses on specific measures applied to individuals based on their circumstances. One segment of these laws addresses "folly," referring to individuals who exhibit foolish behavior and are unaware of the consequences of their actions. As a form of punishment, they are required to pay compensation in the form of 12 cattle. Additionally, they receive guidance from the elders, who advise them to marry into a family known for their wisdom in order to compensate for their own lack of it. This practice aims to encourage personal growth and development by associating with individuals who possess attributes the person lacks.²²⁰

The third suspended law discusses the role of women within the Oromo customary laws. In instances where the law is in their favor, women would declare their victory by stating, "For being a woman, I beat him or men." However, if the law ruled against them, they would attribute the decision to their gender, claiming, "Due to being a woman, you decided against me." These observations led the elders to advice against basing judgments solely on what a woman says, cautioning against potential biases or misconceptions. The phrase "*dubbii dhalaa jala deemtaa?*" translates to "Don't pass judgment on what a woman says," urging a fair and impartial evaluation of cases involving women. These three suspended laws reveal the particulars and degree of the traditional Oromo legal system, demonstrating that the approach to justice took into account the specific circumstances and needs of different individuals within the community. It is important to view these laws within their historical and cultural context, recognizing the evolving perspectives on justice and equality in contemporary society.²²¹

5.3.2 The secret law (*Heera Daboollii*)

The informants provide information about the secret law known as "*Heera Daboollii*," which is used to resolve conflicts among individuals or groups, particularly within family dynamics such as husband and wife or between families. This law emphasizes the use of indigenous

²¹⁹ Informant: Ussoo Mummé Wade, Sabit Garada, Abdulkadir Abraham

²²⁰ Ibid

²²¹ Informant: Abdulkadir Abraham, Abdi Mohamed

conflict management mechanisms while protecting the privacy and secrecy of the parties involved. According to the informants, the secret law prohibits individuals or groups of elders who handle crime cases and resolve them through traditional means from exposing the details of those cases. This is because disclosing the secret breaches the societal norms and values. If the participants reveal the secret, it is considered a repetition of the initial crime, leading to double punishment.

The secret law mentioned emphasizes the use of indigenous conflict management mechanisms while prioritizing privacy and confidentiality. It prohibits those involved in resolving cases through traditional means from disclosing any details of the cases, as doing so would breach societal norms. Violating the secrecy is considered a repetition of the initial crime, leading to double punishment. This underscores the significance given to preserving the integrity and confidentiality of the traditional conflict resolution processes in the Oromo customary system.²²²

One example provided is conflicts between the youngest and eldest brothers, or between wives of brothers and crimes against children, which can be resolved through the *Heera Daboollii*.²²³

The informants further mention three family laws that are kept secret. The first is *Heera Haadhaa*, (the mother's law). According to prior Oromo laws, when conflicts arise between mothers and their offspring, if the fault lies with the mother or her son, the law decides against the son. When the elders decide against the mother, they do not consider the future life of the son or daughter. As a form of reconciliation, the offenders have to admit their mistakes and buy new clothes for their mother. The second law discussed is *Heera Abbaa*, or the father's law. In cases where conflicts occur between fathers and their offspring, if the mistake lies with the father or his son, the law decides against the son. Similar to the previous law, if the elders decide against the fathers, they do not consider the son's future as the inheritor of the father's property. In this case, the son must admit his mistake and restore peace by purchasing new clothes for his father, known as "*fayyisaa*".²²⁴

Afaan Oromo	English
<i>Wal dhabni ilmoo-abbaa</i>	Son-father conflict,

²²² Informant: Usso Mummmed Wade, Sabit Garada

²²³ Informant: Abdulkadir Abraham, Abdi Mohamed, Usso Mummmed Wade, Sabit Garada

²²⁴ Informant: Sabid Garada, Qaadi Adame

Wal dhabni ilmoo-haadha
Yakka hin qabu
*Fayyisaa qaba malee.*²²⁵
(heal)

Son-mother conflict
has no crime
But compensated

The informants suggest that disputes or conflicts between family members, such as father and son, husband and wife, or between siblings, should be resolved immediately without delay. The immediacy of conflict resolution aims to prevent disruptions in the family and household economy. For instance, if conflicts between husband and wife escalate and the wife leaves to stay with her family, it can negatively impact the children's well-being and potentially lead to property damage.²²⁶

5.3.3 Law of Family In-Laws (*Heera Warra soddaa*)

The law of family in-laws is instrumental in maintaining harmonious relationships between spouses and their respective families. In cases where insults or attacks occur against the other spouse's family, the severity of the offense determines the appropriate punishment. This legal framework aims to regulate relationships between husbands and their in-laws. Notably, if a husband offends his wife's family, it is expected that peace be restored through a process known as "*fayyisaa*," involving restitution in the form of goods or monetary compensation. Importantly, this law does not permit shifting blame or assigning mistakes or offenses solely to the wife's family. Rather, it places the responsibility on the husband to initiate the healing process by providing male sheep, referred to as *kormaa goromsaa*, thereby restoring peace.²²⁷ A person who offended the *Soddas* (the in laws); the law decides to pay compensation; known as *Soddaa heerri fayyisaadha*. Offending the family of your wife, including (father, mothers, uncle, ant, sisters, brothers and all relatives and villagers are *soddaa* (in-laws). Even the dog of in-laws must be considered as in-laws and if the dog of in-laws is attacked it deserves to be compensated.²²⁸

1. Punishments for Offenses (*Balleessaa Heerri Yakka*)

According to the informants, the Oromo legal system harshly penalizes offenders through the imposition of punishments for various crimes. Crimes such as theft, insulting others, failing to respond to a call, and causing physical harm to others are explicitly categorized as offenses

²²⁵ Informant: Ahmed Usso Mahamade, sarkama kebele community elders. 20/5/2023

²²⁶ Informant: Abdulkadir Abraham, Abdi Mohamed

²²⁷ Informants: Ahmed usso mahamade, sarkama kebele elders. 20/5/2023

²²⁸ Informants: Qadi Adame, Abdulkadir Abraham, Sabid Garada

within the Oromo legal framework. Offenders found guilty of such crimes are criminalized and subjected to punishment in line with the severity of their actions. This emphasis on punishment reflects the Oromo society's commitment to upholding justice and maintaining social order.

The intentional killing of other individual warranted severe consequences, with the Oromo legal system decreeing the ultimate punishment of hanging for such offenders, described as *dhiblee heerri fannisaadha*. Additionally, individuals causing death through the use of weapons were subject to equal retribution. Furthermore, the law recognized offenses committed by individuals, criminalizing actions such as theft, insults, failure to respond to calls, and causing harm to others, with appropriate punishment assigned for these crimes.²²⁹ According to informants for the Guilty one; the law decided to pay for the crime (*Balleessaa heerri yakka*). This implies, the offender is criminalized and punished by the law for causing offenses or crimes. Such as: stealing others property, insulting, not responding to a calling, and causing injury on others is a crime.²³⁰

2. Compensation for Offenses against In-Laws

In the context of wrongdoings against the in-laws, the Oromo legal system follows a distinctive practice of compensation. Offending the family of one's wife, including parents, uncles, aunts, siblings, and all extended relatives and villagers, is considered a violation. Notably, even the household preference such as a dog belonging to the in-laws, is regarded as part of the family and deserving of protection. To restore harmony and compensate for the offense, the law stipulates the payment of compensation, known as *Soddaa heerri fayyisaadha*. This practice reflects the Oromo culture's value of maintaining strong relationships and seeking reconciliation, even in cases where non-family members are involved.²³¹

5.3.4 The Three Governing Laws (*Saden Itti Bulaa Jirru*)

The Three Governing Laws (*Saden Itti Bulaa Jirru*) within the Oromo legal system encompass irbuu (oath), *haqa* (truth), and *dada* (peace and compromise). This research reveals that, in the face of unknown or challenging cases, the Oromo people historically

²²⁹ Informant: Qadi Adame, Usso Mammed Wade, Sabid Garada

²³⁰ *Ibid*

²³¹ Informants: Qadi Adame, Ussoo Mammed Wade, Abdalla Duri, community elders

entrusted matters to *waaqa* (God). Cases involving secret crimes were resolved through the *irbuu* process, involving a sacred oath. The study particularly highlights the application of these laws in conflicts causing harm to pregnant women, where compensation included the ritual slaughter of a fat male sheep for the mother and a fat male goat (*tumalessa*) for the father, emphasizing cultural restitution and support for couples in difficult circumstances. Overall, these laws reflect a holistic approach to justice deeply rooted in Oromo cultural values.²³²

In instances of broken teeth within the Oromo legal framework, compensation, known as *diyaa* (blood money), displayed a gender-based discrepancy. The amount varied depending on factors such as the type and value of the teeth, with women's broken teeth being compensated with twenty-five cattle, whereas men received seven cattle. This distinction suggests a gender-based valuation of physical harm within the Oromo tradition, possibly influenced by cultural beliefs, aesthetic norms, or perceptions regarding the impact on women's overall well-being and social standing.²³³ Additionally, the research revealed that cases involving damage or death caused by natural or manmade factors were settled at the clan or family level. For example, responsibility for compensation differed based on whether a tree or rock caused harm during cutting or fell on its own. In the former scenario, the tree owner would individually pay the *gumaa* (restitution), while in the latter case, clan members collectively contributed to the restitution process.²³⁴

Regarding rape, it was found that the traditional Oromo law specified punishment in the form of cattle payments. Making unmarried girls lose their virginity resulted in a punishment of five cattle. However, if the perpetrator admitted guilt and married the victim, the case was resolved. The research also revealed that if an adult person raped a ten-year-old girl, they were punished by slaughtering one ox and paying nine cattle. This demonstrates a varying scale of punishment based on the severity of the crime and the age of the victim. Furthermore, the research explored cases where a virgin girl was taken without consent for marriage. If the person who took her repulsed their marriage proposal and returned the girl to her family, they were expected to bring her back accompanied by a breeding cow or cattle.²³⁵ This indicates

²³² Informants: Qadi Adame, Ussoo Mummmed Wade, Abdalla Duri, community elders

²³³ Informant: Qadi Adame, usso mummmed wade, jibril umar

²³⁴ Informant: sabit Garada Damina of Noole clan

²³⁵ Informant:

the importance of restitution and compensation for the harm caused and affirms the value placed on marriage and family integrity in the Oromo tradition.

Lastly, the concept of "*Deeroo*," which refers to the practice of proposing for marriage, incurring financial and labor expenses for the future partner, and then rejecting the proposal. If the person later establishes a marriage with another partner, they are expected to cover or pay back all the expenses incurred by the former partner. This showcases the significance of trust, honesty, and financial accountability in the Oromo traditional values surrounding marriage.²³⁶ However, it is important to note that cultural practices evolve over time, and the contemporary application of these traditional laws may vary. For example the following proverbs provides sanctity of marriage.

Afaan Oromo	English
<i>Ija gatiitiin Kan jartii namaa (kajeele)</i>	whoever looks at man's Wife?
<i>Hamartii tan qabdu yoo kajeelee</i>	With the eye of value
<i>Adabbiin isaa diboota Shan.</i> ²³⁷	covets a woman with ring
	His punishment is five cattle.

This proverb serves as a cultural guideline that emphasizes the importance of respecting the sanctity of marriage and honoring the boundaries of relationships within the community. This proverb warns against looking at another man's wife with admiration or desire, as it is seen as coveting a married woman. The punishment for such an offense is specified as five cattle, highlighting the seriousness with which the Oromo community views these actions.

5.4 The Impact of Various Regimes on Customary Conflict Resolution

During the late 19th century, Harar and its area experienced significant disruption in its indigenous conflict management institution due to the Egyptian occupation. The Egyptians implemented a centralized administration and imposed their own system of governance, which deviated from the established indigenous practices of the local population. As a result, the influence and authority of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in the region declined. After the Egyptians were expelled, Hararge regained some autonomy under Ethiopian governance. However, the consolidation of imperial rule brought about further

²³⁶ Informant: Abdalla durrii,

²³⁷ Informant: Abdalla durrii

erosion of the indigenous conflict management institutions. Centralization of power and the introduction of imperial legal systems marginalized the role of customary practices in resolving conflicts. Indigenous norms and practices were subjected to the supremacy of imperial law, increasingly marginalizing traditional methods of conflict resolution.²³⁸

The Italian occupation of Harar introduced another wave of disruption to the indigenous conflict management institution. Under Italian rule, a system of governance was established that undermined the existing indigenous institutions. The Italians imposed a centralized administration that suppressed local governance structures and customary conflict resolution mechanisms. Moreover, they replaced indigenous laws and practices with their own legal system, disregarding local customs and norms. This shift in framework weakened the influence of indigenous conflict resolution methods and further eroded their effectiveness. In addition to disrupting the indigenous conflict management institution, the Italian occupation reinforced societal power imbalances. Policies were implemented that favored Italian settlers at the expense of the local population, creating social and economic disparities. These disparities exacerbated conflicts and hindered the effectiveness of traditional conflict resolution processes.²³⁹

During Emperor Haile Selassie's reign from 1930 to 1974, the indigenous conflict management institution in Hararge underwent changes influenced by the emperor's policy of centralization and modernization. This period saw a shift in the dynamics of conflict resolution in the region. As the emperor aimed to establish a more uniform legal system throughout the country, the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms lost prominence. The focus was shifted towards a more formal legal system, influenced by European models.²⁴⁰

As noted by Bahata, indigenous conflict management mechanisms have been marginalized since the 1950s and 1960s; when the imperial regime was engaged in the extensive codification and overhaul of the existing laws with the aim of unifying and modernizing the

²³⁸ Kia, Tsegaye. Contemporary local governance and indigenous institutions: the case of the Sidaama, Southern Ethiopia. *Africa Review*. 11. 2018, 1-18.

²³⁹ Bitew, Birhanu, Sewenet, Asabu et Fentahun, Getachew "Indigenous Governance Systems and Democracy in Ethiopia: Yejoka Qicha System of the Gurage People". *The International Indigenous Policy Journal* 12, no. 3 202: 1–20

²⁴⁰ *Ibid*

laws.²⁴¹ The courts took up cases that were handled through traditional agreeable settlements, with more emphasis on reconciliation and the restoration of social harmony than on punishment of the conflicting parties, with this new legal system. However, according to Alemie and Mandefro, indigenous conflict management systems are still used as the best method of conflict management in a society where the majority of the populace is poor with widespread illiteracy culminating in lack of access to justice, the high cost and scarcity of lawyers.²⁴²

During the Derg regime, which lasted from 1974 to 1991, the indigenous conflict management institution in Hararge faced significant challenges and changes. The Derg, led by Mengistu Haile Mariam, pursued a policy of Marxist-Leninist ideology and centralized control over the country. Under the Derg regime, traditional conflict resolution mechanisms were largely suppressed and replaced with a more centralized and militarized approach to governance. The regime sought to control and regulates all aspects of society, including conflict resolution. This led to the marginalization and erosion of indigenous practices. The Derg regime established People's Courts, which were used as a means of political control and repression. These courts were often biased and lacked independence, leading to a lack of trust and legitimacy among the population. Indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms, such as mediation and arbitration, were overshadowed by the dominance of the People's Court.²⁴³

The arrival of the EPRDF in 1991 brought about a shift in the approach towards indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms. The EPRDF recognized the importance of cultural diversity and sought to incorporate traditional practices into the formal legal system. This was done through the establishment of Peoples' Courts, which aimed to give jurisdiction over certain types of disputes to individuals familiar with local customs and traditions. The integration of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms into the legal framework was an important step towards recognizing and valuing Ethiopia's diverse cultural heritage. It provided an

²⁴¹ Bahta, G.T. Popular dispute resolution mechanisms in Ethiopia: trends, opportunities, challenges and prospects. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 14(1), 2014; Pp 99-123.

²⁴² Alemie & Mandefro, *Indigenous Conflict Resolution Mechanisms: Journal of Indigenous Social Development* Volume 7, Issue 2 (2018) 3

²⁴³ Bahiru, Z. (2002). Systems of local governance among the Gurage: The Yajoka Qicha and the Gordana Sera. In Z. Bahiru & S. Afrikainstitutet

opportunity for communities to have a greater say in the resolution of their disputes and contributed to the promotion of social cohesion and reconciliation at the local level.²⁴⁴

5.5 The Enactment of Law in Ethiopia

The historical evolution and impact of externally induced changes on the Oromo legal system reveals a complex dynamic of integration and suppression of indigenous practices within the broader legal framework. The conquest of Menelik II and the consolidation of power by Haile Selassie introduced an alien system of justice that significantly shaped Oromo legal institutions. The enactment of the criminal code in 1930 and the proclamation of the Administration of Justice in 1942 established government courts, marking a profound shift in legal administration and codification of laws.²⁴⁵

Ethiopia's adoption of a foreign system of justice borrowed numerous elements from Western legal systems, disregarding indigenous laws of the conquered territories, including the Oromo. As a result, indigenous laws were removed from major offenses, and institutions were established without recognizing native law and customs. The Civil Code explicitly replaced all rules previously in force, both written and customary, with the new Code, thereby repealing indigenous laws in the process.²⁴⁶

Despite the initial intervention of a foreign legal structure and the minimal recognition of justice among the Afran Qallo area, the Oromo judiciary persisted with its fundamental framework for centuries. The grassroots level continued to be the primary arena for addressing conflicts within the Oromo community, with unofficial arbitrators resolving offenses such as murder, even as the government authorized courts adjudicated specified offenses against the public.

In this context, the impact of externally induced legal changes and the persistence of indigenous legal frameworks within the Oromo community highlight the enduring resilience of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. Despite the introduction of foreign legal systems, the grassroots-level Oromo judiciary has continued to play a significant role in

²⁴⁴ Federal Negarit Gazeta of the Federal Democratic Republic Of Ethiopia: 1st Year No.1 Addis Ababa - August, 1995. Pp

²⁴⁵ Aberra Jambare. *Legal History of Ethiopia 1434-1974: Some Aspects of Substantive and Procedural laws*. Rotterdam: Erasmus Universitiet. 1998, pp 378 - 379

²⁴⁶ Ibid

addressing conflicts, reaffirming the enduring influence of indigenous legal customs and reaffirming the resilience of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms within Oromo society.

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6. CONCLUSION

The historical and socio-political analysis of the Afran Qallo Oromo provides a comprehensive understanding of the community. The assessment gives insight into the

²⁴⁷ Stolte BH. Aberra Jembere: Legal history of Ethiopia 1434-1974. Some aspects of substantive and procedural laws (diss. EU Rotterdam), Rotterdam: Erasmus Universiteit, Leiden: Afrika Studiecentrum 1998. Rechtsgeleerd Magazijn Themis. 1998;159:378 - 379

settlement pattern, genealogy, socio-political organization, and internal as well as external interactions. The study delves into the traditional systems of governance, such as the *Gadaa* system and *Raaba Dorii* administrative structure, shedding light on the indigenous religion and cultural practices, lineage, and kinship.

Moreover, it explores the interaction of Afran Qallo with the Harar City, the influence of Islamic religion, and the significant impact of the Egyptian occupation period. Additionally, the study examines the repercussions of Menelik II's occupation of Harar in 1887 on the Afran Qallo Oromo. Overall, the analysis not only offers a detailed examination of the historical and socio-political facets of the Afran Qallo Oromo but also provides valuable insights into their interactions with external forces, shaping a holistic understanding of their community and heritage.

The exploration of indigenous conflict management in the context of the Oromo community offers valuable insights into traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. The concept is thoroughly examined, with a focus on key indigenous institutions for managing conflict. These include the family unit, *Jaarsummaa* as an arbitration mechanism by elders, and the neighborhood (*Ollummaa*) as an avenue for indigenous conflict management. Additionally, the study delves into the *Gumaa* institution, providing a comprehensive understanding of its historical development and the procedure of *Gumaa* deliberation, shedding light on its significance as a healing system and its interconnection with *Diyaa*.

Furthermore, the examination thoroughly analyzes the types of *Gumaa*, including the law of homicide (*Heera Gumaa*), the scale of compensation in *Gumaa* cases, and the Oromo custom of paying *Gumaa* for killing animals. The study also delves into the changes and continuity of *Gumaa* law, providing a holistic understanding of the Oromo custom of blood price and its implications on conflict management within the community. Overall, the comprehensive analysis of indigenous conflict management and the *Gumaa* institution in particular contributes to a deep understanding of traditional Oromo conflict resolution mechanisms and their continued relevance in the modern context.

Furthermore, the study examines indigenous mechanisms of conflict management, including negotiation, mediation, and arbitration, shedding light on the traditional methods employed for resolving disputes. Additionally, the examination delves into the decline of indigenous

institutions, providing insight into historical and contemporary challenges faced by these traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. Understanding the complexities and shifts within these institutions is crucial for comprehending the evolution of conflict management practices within the Oromo community.

Overall, the thorough exploration of indigenous conflict management and associated institutions offers a comprehensive understanding of the traditional methods employed by the Oromo community to address and resolve disputes, and sheds light on their continued relevance and potential challenges in the modern context.

The study of the *Gumaa* institution, representing the Oromo custom of blood price, offers a deep analysis of its historical development, definition, and significance at different levels within Oromo society. The historical development of the law of *Gumaa* is explored, shedding light on its evolution and impact on the Oromo community, highlighting its relevance at various levels, including Odaa Bultum, Afran Qallo, and the clan level. The in-depth examination further explores the procedure of the *Gumaa* deliberation, emphasizing its role as a healing system and the interconnectedness between *Gumaa* and *Diyaa*, providing a comprehensive understanding of its functions. Additionally, the study delves into the various types of *Gumaa*, including the law of homicide (*Heera Gumaa*) and the scale of compensation in *Gumaa* cases, offering a detailed analysis of its application and implications within Oromo society.

Further, the Oromo custom of paying *Gumaa* for killing animals is explored, providing insights into the traditional practices associated with the *Gumaa* institution. Moreover, the changes and continuity of *Gumaa* law are thoroughly examined, shedding light on the evolution and adaptation of this traditional Oromo custom over time. The comprehensive analysis of the *Gumaa* institution deepens our understanding of the rich cultural heritage and traditional conflict resolution mechanisms within the Oromo community, highlighting its significance and relevance in the contemporary context.

Oda Bultum and Bululoo as a Center of Assembly and Law Makingd serve as integral components of the traditional legal and governance structure within the Oromo community. Understanding this system is fundamental to comprehending the traditional governance structure and its mechanisms for law-making and conflict resolution. Furthermore, the

various types of customary laws, including the Three Suspended Laws (*Heera Saden Fannoo*), the secret law (*Heera Daboollii*), the Law of Family In-Laws (*Heera Warra soddaa*), and the Three Governing Laws (*Saden Itti Bulaa Jirru*), encompass the diverse legal principles and norms that guide social, political, and familial interactions within the Oromo community. Understanding these laws sheds light on the complicated legal and governance structures that have historically shaped Oromo society. Taken together, these aspects form the rich tapestry of traditional governance, legal systems, and customary laws within the Oromo community, showcasing the complexity and depth of indigenous legal and governance practices.

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Figure 7 List of informants

No	Name of informant	Age	Sex	Place and Date of Interview	Remarks
1	Sabit <i>Garada</i> (Damina of all Noole clan)	62	M	Kombolcha March 2023/10	He was <i>Damina</i> of all Noole clan and a good informant on the <i>gumaa</i> system among Afran Qallo Oromo and Kombolcha district. He inherited the position of <i>Garada</i> from his father.
2	Abdusamad mohammed (Abbaa caffee - secretary of the Gadaa committee)	54	M	March 13/2023	<i>Abbaa caffee</i> (secretary of the <i>gadaa</i> committee). He was a good informant on the <i>gumaa</i> payment as he was assigned to collecting <i>gumaa</i> contribution from clan members.
3	Shekh Mohamednur Adam (Religious leader)	71	M	Kombolcha ,August 12/ 2022	He was religious leader and he narrates oromo history orally and also from his own Arabic written that he gathered from predecessor sheiks and elders he came across. He was a good informant at discussing <i>gadaa</i> system of Ittuu and oromo genealogy.
4	Abdalla Duri (Expert in Oromo genealogy and traditional medicine)	55	M	Kombolcha August 14/2021	He has a good knowledge on the oromo genealogy, tradition medicine, conflict resolution, and change and continuity of <i>gumaa</i> system, food, farming and marriage.
5	Yasin Mumed Umar	44	M	Kombolcha 18/11/2021	He was Peasant and he duscusses about Raab Doori system and the arrival and

	(Knowledgeable about the Raab Doorii system)				impact of Egyptian rule. He lived in Djibouti with jaarra abbaa <i>gadaa</i> and shared with us what he heard about oromo history.
6	Abdulqadir Abraham (Experienced in Oromo genealogy and indigenous law)	41	M	Kombolcha 04/11/2021	He was peasant and he was well informed and learned from his father about oromo genealogy and center of assembly and types of indigenous law, and center of assembly from odaa bultum to heera mana bulloo Ali.
7	Murad Ahmed (researcher and ethnographer)	39	M	Phone call July 30/ 2021 12:14:13 AM	Archaeologist and Ethnographer. Went to King Abdulaziz University. He was a well informed researcher and ethnographer. He discusses; about written and oral history of oromo people; such as: settlement, <i>gadaa</i> system, law of <i>gumaa</i> payments.
8	Qaadi Adame Ahmed (Community elder)	62	M	Kombolcha 20/6/2022	Community elders, he was well informed and discusses about laws made center of assembly, Raaba-Doorii and genealogy of oromo, particularly afran qallo oromo moieties; as ilma gudedda and ilma barcuma.
9	Uusso Mumad Wadee (Expert in <i>gumaa</i> laws)	58	M	Kombolcha 29/6/2022	He knows well about <i>gumaa</i> laws. That fixed <i>Gumaa</i> to 100 cattle and also flexibility of <i>gumaa</i> at clan level. He discusses well about <i>gumaa</i> , and <i>diyaa</i> .
10	Abdurahman Hassan Abraham (Knowledgeable about Oromo genealogy and traditional law)	60	M	Kombolcha 15/7/2022	He is well informed oromo genealogy and Noole clan lineage, traditional law and discusses types of crime and punishment, the way of crime committed like homicide, attack and offences and the law of <i>diyaa</i>
11	Abraham callo (Well-informed)	> 100	M	Kombolcha March	A well informed oral historian on the oromo genealogy in general and he discuss the

	oral Oromo historian)			26/2021	Afran Qallo in particular. He also explains about law of <i>gumaa</i> with clan and non-clan members.
12	Mahammad Abdurahman (<i>Damina</i>)	57	M	Kombolcha	A well known <i>Damina</i> (blood father) in resolving conflict through <i>gumaa</i>
13	Jundii Mummed (Damina of the Jarso clan)	51	M	Jaarso	<i>He was well experienced Damina</i> of jarsoo clan by resolving conflict among clan and non-clan members (Daga clan)
14	Mahammad Daawwee (Experienced in marital and inheritance conflict resolution)	61	M	Kombolcha May 05/11/2021	He discusses well about oromo-Harari relation in trade. He is Member of traditional court of elders and experienced in resolving marital and inheritance conflict among neighbors and families.
15	Mahammad Umuro (Well known informant about <i>gumaa</i>)	61	M	Kombolcha	He was well known informant about <i>gumaa</i> , entitled as <i>abbaa dhigaa</i> (wise and fathers of Blood). He dicusses cases of <i>gumaa</i> they resolved within clan and non-clan members.
16	Mohammed Garada (Well informed about <i>jaarsummaa</i> and <i>gumaa</i>)	56	M	Kombolcha	He is a well informed and discusses about <i>jaarsummaa</i> and <i>gumaa</i> . He was born from the family of <i>Garada</i> .
17	Mahammad Yaqub (Elder at traditional court of elders)	55	M	Kombolcha	Elder at traditional court (<i>Mana murti Aadaa</i>) in konolcha district. He discsses well the way conflict of <i>gumaa</i> is resolved and elction criteria of elders.
18	Jibril Umar (Expert at Kombolcha District Culture	37	M	Kombolcha	Expert at Kombolcha District Culture and Tourizim Bureau. He attempted to collect pieces of information from elders, mainly about indigenous institution of conflict

	and Tourism Bureau)				management. He provided me with recorded and written interviewed data of elders
19	Abbaas Jafar (Damina of Salallaa clan)	63	M	Kombolcha	<i>Damina iddoo gosa Salallaa</i>
20	Mahammad Umaro (Damina of mana jarte clan)	57	M	Kombolcha	<i>Damina mana jaarteefi Abbaa dhiigaa</i>
21	Turee Abdi (Damina of warra muchaa clan)	49	M	Kombolcha	<i>Damina warra muchaa</i>
22	Abdalla Hassan (Damina of warraa Mahammad clan)	47	M	Kombolcha	<i>Damina warraa Mahammad</i>
23	Aliyyii Abibeker (blood father or abbaa dhiigaa)	52	M	Kombolcha	He discusses the way reconciliation is made and compensation through guma and diyaa mechanism.
24	Mahammad usman (Damina of warraa Usman clan)	40	M	Kombolcha	<i>He was head of sub clan of Nole and he resolves disputes among relatives, family, sub-clan members and other clan groups</i>
25	Shamshii Ammarroo	59		Kombolcha	She is well informed about types of marriage, traditional dance during farming, and the role of women during conflict resolution.
26	Mardiyaa Ammarroo	57		Kombolcha	She is well informed about types of marriage, traditional dance during farming, and the role of women during conflict resolution

APPENDICES

Table 1: The table outlines a system of compensation for various types of physical injuries or losses, denoting the amount of cattle that would be given for each specific injury.

NO	Physical injury or lost	Amount of compensation in cattle (past)
1	Both Hand	50
	One hand	27
2	Both Eye	50
	Left or right Eye	25
3	Both Leg	50
	One leg	25
4	Left breast or both	50
	Right side breast	25
5	left side or Both testicles	50
	right side testicles	25
6	Both ear	50
7	Reproductive organ	50
8	Tongue	50
9	Broken back bone	25
10	Index finger	5
11	Middle finger	5
12	Ring finger	10
13	Thumb	15
14	One teeth	5
11	Nose	12

Sources: Saabid *Garada*, *Damina* of Noole clan.

Table 2: Compensation for domestic Animals (*Gumaa Beeyiladaa*)

No	Names of Domestic Animals	Amount of Compensation
1	Camel	25 breeding sheep
2	Cow	12 breeding sheep
3	Donkey	Donkey
4	Goat	Adult male goat
5	Dog	Slaughtering an ox and building fences of victim family
6	Cat	Seven broom
7	Hen	Nothing

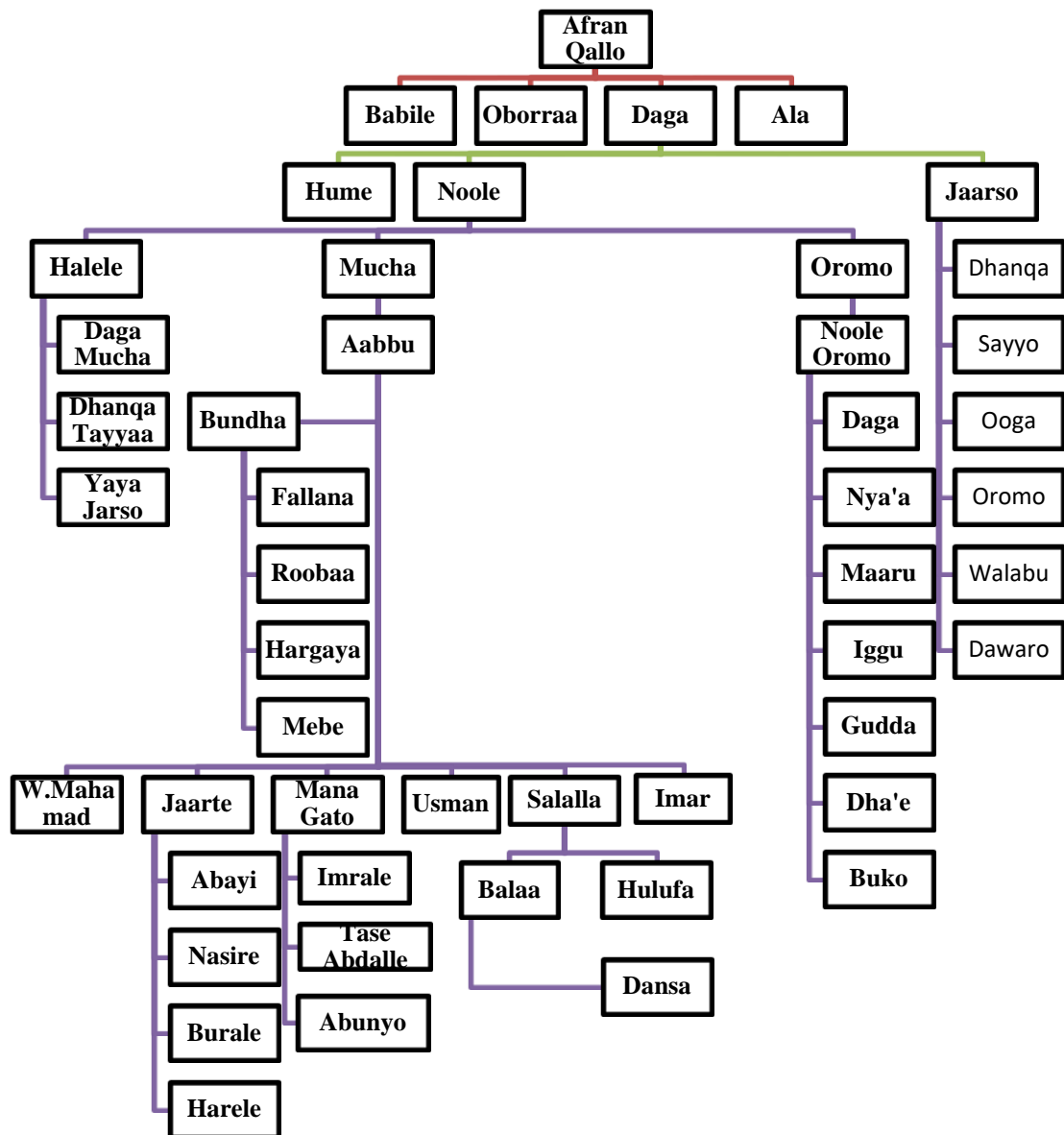


Figure 8 Noole Daga Qallo clan structure of Kombolcha district

Sources: shek mohammednur Adam *Hayyuu abbaa Amantii*, E/Hararge Kombolcha, Friday, August 12, ,2022AM 12:48:13

GLOSSARY

<i>Afaan Oromo</i>	English
<i>Abbaa Burqaa:</i>	head of water wheel
<i>Abbaa Bokkuu</i>	father of the scepter or <i>Abbaa gadaas</i>
<i>Abbaa Dinagde:</i>	Head of economy in the past during nomadic way of life,
<i>Abba Lafaa:</i>	head of cultivable and arable land
<i>Abbaa Dhiigaa:</i>	Father of homicidal blood finding
<i>Abbaa Duulaa</i>	war leader
<i>Amba</i>	community
<i>Angafa</i>	Elder
<i>Abbaa Seeraa</i>	father of Law
<i>Agaajuma</i>	sudden and expensive blood price
<i>Araara</i>	reconciliation
<i>Biyyoo</i>	town
<i>Chaffee</i>	Assembly
<i>Damina</i>	head of clan
<i>Danuu</i>	accident
<i>Dhaddacha</i>	Court of elders
<i>Diina</i>	Enemy
<i>Diyaa</i>	Compensation paid to the living person in case of physical
injury/loses	
<i>Ergannoo</i>	a person assigned to to collect <i>gumaa</i> contribution from clan
members	
<i>Fafa</i>	Impairment
<i>Fayyisaa</i>	heal your father and mother or in-laws; for disappointing them
<i>Fira</i>	relative
<i>Fannoo</i>	Suspended
<i>Garada</i>	chief of village who manage fair allocation of for water irrigation
<i>Gosa</i>	Clan
<i>Gorannoo</i>	agreement
<i>Gumaa</i>	blood price or feud for lost life or ritual of purification after
homicide	

<i>Heera ciibsaa</i>	is the law that a society agrees to be.
<i>Heera Oromoo</i>	Oromo Traditional law
<i>Hirphuu</i>	rehabilitation
<i>Imimmatti</i>	initial blood price 15 cattle given to dry up tear from the Victim's Families and relatives
<i>Irbuu</i>	oath
<i>Jaarsummaa</i>	the process of reconciliation through elders
<i>Labikafan</i>	at funeral ceremony a piece of cloth used to cover the dead body
<i>Lammii</i>	clan members
<i>Maamudii</i>	a cloth presented or given to the family in-laws
<i>Manguddummaa</i>	Elderness
<i>Man-Bulti</i>	center of assembly
<i>Mana</i>	house, family
<i>Mirriyissaa</i>	Traditional song for guma purpose
<i>Olla</i>	neighbor
<i>Raaba Doorii</i>	Afran Qallo <i>gadaa</i> administrative system
<i>Sangaa araaraa</i>	an ox for death ritual and reconciliation
<i>Shaffee</i>	a sheep provided to the victim due to injury
<i>Shimgilina</i>	reconciliation through elders
<i>Soddaa</i>	in-laws
<i>Tiksatee</i>	guard
<i>Uwwisaa</i>	a cloth given as compensation to ones own father and mothers
<i>Waaqeffanna</i>	indigenous Oromo religion
<i>Warra</i>	homestead, patrilineal descent group
<i>Woreda</i>	an administrative unit equivalent to district
<i>Yakka baasuu</i>	crime revealing