

**THE DYNAMICS OF TULAMA OROMO IN THE HISTORY OF  
CONTINUITY AND CHANGE, CA. 1700-1880S**

**By**

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## DECLARATION

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### **The Dynamics of Tulama Oromo in the History of Continuity and Change, ca. 1700-1880s**

I declare that the above thesis is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.



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SIGNATURE

January 2021

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DATE

## SUMMARY

*The thesis examines the dynamic and perplexing relations between the Kingdom of Shawa and the Tulama, aka the Shawan Oromo, in central Ethiopia from ca. 1700 to the 1880s. A history of the kingdom of Shawa and the Tulama has been inextricably intertwined and punctuated by warfare, resistance, collaboration, economic and cultural intercourses, or in a nutshell dominated by the twin processes of homogenization and hegemonization. Unlike other parts of Oromo inhabited territories as well as the southern half of Ethiopia, which were conquered by the kingdom of Shawa within a short period, the conquest and incorporation of the Tulama, took at least more than a century and a half. This perhaps facilitated a remarkable process of cultural exchange between the Oromo and the Amhara on the Shawan plateau.*

*Yet it is enigmatic that the Shawan kingdom encountered the most protracted and stiff resistance from the Tulama on the one hand and the notables of Oromo extraction like Matakoo Borjaa, Abbaa Maallee, and Gobana Dachi played a pivotal role in the incorporation of the Shawan Oromo into the Kingdom on the other. The kingdom's headquarters from the outset was not based in the renowned Shawan sub-province of Manz as usually perceived by scholars but was based in the territories from where the Oromo had been either evicted or integrated into the kingdom. Hence, it is again enigmatic that by using the Oromo territory as their hotbeds the sovereigns of the kingdom of Shawa made campaigns against the Shawan Oromo starting from the time of Nagasi Krestos up to the time of the last but one of the most prominent and illustrious kings of Shawa, Meniek (1865-1889), who managed to incorporate the whole Tulama into the kingdom. Therefore, following centuries of conflicts and negotiations between the Shawan kingdom and the Tulama, central Shawa / the abode of the latter has been steadily transformed from the fringes of the kingdom to the hub of modern Ethiopia, and this development, in turn, has made the Oromo territory the most important base on which the whole edifice of modern Ethiopia has been constructed..*

Key Terms: Ethiopia                      Tulama/Shawan Oromo                      Kingdom of Shawa  
                    Shawan Amhara      Shawan Plateau                      territorial expansion  
                    Conquest/ incorporation      resistance/collaboration      Finfinnee/Addis Ababa



# INTRODUCTION

## Ethiopia: 'A Museum Peoples' or 'A Prison House of Nations'?

Building an empire is a monumental feat of construction, justly celebrated in history. It is also a deed of enormous destruction for those who are swept aside in its path, a part of the story imperial histories mostly ignore.<sup>1</sup>

The Horn of Africa is the site for a clash of nationalist struggles that offer competing narratives of the past and of contemporary forms of identity, imaging Ethiopia in sharply contrasting ways.<sup>2</sup>

The thesis examines how the kingdom of Shawa often perceived as the 'dynamic core state' of modern Ethiopia<sup>3</sup> had steadily encroached onto the territory of the Tulama, aka Shawan Oromo, who were found on its peripheries for most of the time under review. In doing so, we shall shed some light on how the Tulama reacted to the virtually incessant territorial campaigns made by the kingdom on the one hand and the enigmatic relations between the Tulama notables and the sovereigns of Shawa on the other. However, at the outset, it is imperative to briefly highlight how scholars portray the Ethiopian Empire itself because this helps us to comprehend the issue under discussion.

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<sup>1</sup> John Markakis, *Ethiopia: The Last Two Frontiers* (Suffolk and New York: James Currey, 2011), p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> John Sorenson, *Imagining Ethiopia: Struggles for History and Identity in the Horn of Africa* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1993), p.5.

<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, Markakis, *Ethiopia*, p.89, who characterizes it as the dynamic core State of the modern Ethiopian empire 'whose energy spills over its borders to conquer neighboring lands, from which it draws resources and additional strength for further conquests abroad'.

According to Conti Rossini, an eminent Ethiopianist of Italian origin often saluted for contributing virtually to every aspect of Ethiopian Studies with great distinction<sup>4</sup>, Ethiopia was ‘un museo di popoli,’ a museum of peoples.<sup>5</sup> Likewise for Teshale Tibebu, “Ethiopia is a museum of cultures, religions, and modes of production or a microcosm of Africa”.<sup>6</sup> Tadesse Tamrat’s work is also in line with these aphorisms. “Ever since its emergence into the annals of history,” Tadesse writes, “Ethiopian society has been a rich conglomeration of different ethnic and linguistic communities.”<sup>7</sup> More than any other scholars, Donald Levine thoroughly unravels the images of Ethiopia dividing it into two as the “Conventional and Scholarly images’. Under the first image he argues, Ethiopia was imagined as a “far off place, pious polity, magnificent kingdom, savage Abyssinia and bastion of independence,” whereas under what he calls the scholarly image of Ethiopia, he claims scholars characterize Ethiopia as “an outpost of Semitic civilization, Ethnic Museum and underdeveloped country.” He argues that all of them did not portray the true image of Ethiopia and come up with another proposition and posits it as a “Complex socio-cultural system that has evolved through determinate stages” or

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<sup>4</sup> See for instance Edward Ullendorff, *The Ethiopians: An Introduction to Country and People* (London, Oxford University Press, 1960), p.33.

<sup>5</sup> This Phraseology is said to have been initially coined by Carlo Conti Rossini, *L’ Abissinia*, Rome, 1929, p.20 cited in Ibid. The actual phrase used by Conti Rossini is ‘l’Abissinia é un museo di popoli’; see also Merera Gudina, “The Elite and the Quest for Peace, Democracy, and Development in Ethiopia: Lessons to be Learnt,” *Northeast African Studies*, Vol., 10, No., 2, 2003, P.141.

<sup>6</sup> *Teshale Tibebu, The Making of Modern Ethiopia 1896-1974* (Lawrenceville, NJ: The Red Sea Press, 1995), P. XI.

<sup>7</sup> Tadesse Tamrat, “Process of Ethnic Interaction and Integration in Ethiopian History: The Case of the Agaw”, *Journal of African History*, Vol. XXIX, No. 1, Special Issue in Honour of Roland Oliver (1988), p. 5.



as “a complex evolving system”.<sup>8</sup> Apparently the central idea espoused by these scholars is that Ethiopia has always been a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious empire state, which is essentially a pluralist notion.

On the other hand, some other scholars use other phraseology and characterize the empire state as “a prison house of nations”. The pioneer in this regard is Ernest Gellner, a Jewish Czech scholar, who is often dubbed as one of the most impeccable scholars in the study of nationalism. He writes, “The Amhara [Ethiopian] empire was a prison-house of nations if ever there was one”<sup>9</sup> According to this dictum, therefore, Ethiopia was not a nation rather it embodied many nations and nationalities who had been kept together by brute force. In connection with this, Walleligne Mekonnen, one of the leaders of Hayla Sellase I (the present-day Addis Ababa) University student movement on the eve of the 1974 revolution posits:

[Ethiopia] is made up of a dozen nationalities with their own languages, ways of dressing, history, social organization and territorial entity. And what else is a nation? It is not made of a people with a particular tongue, particular ways of dressing, particular history, and particular social and economic organization? Then may I conclude that in Ethiopia there is the Oromo Nation, the Tigray Nation, the Amhara Nation, the Gurage Nation, the Sidama Nation, the [Wolayta] Nation, the [Harari] Nation, and...the Somali Nation.

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<sup>8</sup>Donald Levine, *Greater Ethiopia: The Evolution of a Multiethnic Society* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), pp.1-25.

<sup>9</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell Publisher Ltd, 1983), p. 85; see also Bertus Praeg, *Ethiopia and Political Renaissance in Africa* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2006), p. 69; Abbas H Gnamo, *Conquest and Resistance in the Ethiopian Empire, 1880-1974: The case of the Arsi Oromo* (Koninklijke Brill NY Leiden, The Netherlands, 2014), p.108.

This is the true picture of Ethiopia. There is of course the fake Ethiopian Nationalism advanced by the ruling class and unwillingly accepted and even propagated by innocent fellow travellers.<sup>10</sup>

Although the way modern Ethiopia and other African states were created and the prevailing political economy might be different, one may compare Walleign's assertion with Chief Obafemi Awolowo's assertion, a veteran Nigerian politician, who in 1947 stated that Nigeria is not a nation. It is a mere geographical expression. There are no 'Nigerians' in the same sense as there are 'English' or 'Welsh,' or 'French,' writes Awololo, "The word 'Nigerian' is merely a distinctive appellation to distinguish those who live within the boundaries of Nigeria and those who do not."<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile, Abbas Haji contends that nowadays the age-old view which postulates Ethiopia as a "unique" empire state is laid to rest, rather some scholars started to compare it within the African context whereas others look for non-African examples.<sup>12</sup>In line with Abbas's argument Markakis highlights that, "...in its ethnic and socio-cultural composition, the Ethiopian state is typically African."<sup>13</sup> Contrary to this perspective, other scholars like Brietzke maintain that comparing

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<sup>10</sup> Walleigne Mekonnen, "On the Question of the Nationalities in Ethiopia", *Struggle Arts* IV, HSIU Nov. 17, 1969, pp.1-2; <https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/ethiopia/nationalities.pdf>. He was one of the leaders of the student movements and credited for raising the vexed question of nationalities in Ethiopia for the first time.

<sup>11</sup>Obafemi Awolowo, *Path to Nigerian Freedom* (London, 1947), pp. 47-8 cited in Chukwuemeka Onwubu, "Ethnic Identity, Political Integration, and National Development: the Igbo Diaspora in Nigeria," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 13, 3 (1975), p. 399.

<sup>12</sup> Abbas, *Conquest and Resistance*,p.104.

<sup>13</sup> John Markakis, "Nationalities and State in Ethiopia: An Interpretation," *Institute of Social Studies, The University of Crete Working Papers Series*, no. 63 (1989), P., 1 , cited in Abbas, *Conquest and Resistance*, p.104.

Ethiopia with other African states is incongruous since the former had not been under the rule of European colonial powers. He argues that a comparison between Ethiopia and Czarist Russia and European countries before the Industrial Revolution or modern Latin American states would be more helpful.<sup>14</sup>

Be that as it may, some Ethiopianist scholars often associate the latter dictum with the so-called ethno-nationalist scholars. For instance, one of the passionate diatribes against the latter dictum has been launched by Messay Kebede who claims that ethno-nationalists see nothing in Ethiopia but “a prison house of nations”. Such is the danger of a mind obsessed with ethno-nationalist ideology” writes Messay,” it never sees what unites people; it sees only what separates them”.<sup>15</sup>

Sarah Vaughan complicates this issue and comes up with an argument that is the antithesis of the aforementioned view of Messay Kebede. She maintains that there were elites in Ethiopia who believed that in the Ethiopian Empire, there was the prejudiced categorization of the Ethiopian people “under an ‘ethnocratic’

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<sup>14</sup> Paul H. Brietzke, *Law, Development and the Ethiopian Revolution* (London and Toronto: Associated University Press, 1982), pp. 13-14. See also Allan Hoben, "Family, Land, and Class in North Western Europe and Northern Highland Ethiopia" in *Proceeding of the First United States Conference on Ethiopian Studies*, 1973, edited by Harold Marcus (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University, African Studies Center, 1975), pp. 157-170 Cited in Abbas H. Gnamo, *Conquest and Resistance*, P. 104.

<sup>15</sup> <http://ethioforum.org/> “Jawar’s Ploy: Hijacking Amhara Resistance” by Messay Kebede, December 10, 2016.

empire state, intolerant and contemptuous of divergence from its core culture, and intent upon 'nation-building' centralization"<sup>16</sup>.

Similarly, one of the towering figures among the Ethiopianist scholars, Donald Levine, in one of his canonical works argues against the latter dictum. Unlike other African countries that were colonized by the Europeans, "in Ethiopia the Amhara hegemony has long provided a minimal basis for national unity. While this rule has been secured by coercive means," writes Levine, "it has accustomed the various tribes [sic] in Ethiopia to live under a common sovereignty and to some extent has enabled their leaders to communicate with one another by means of a common native tongue".<sup>17</sup> He further argues that the uninterrupted Amhara hegemony for about seven hundred years could be a contrast to the rather anguished struggle for 'nationality' within the newly independent African states. As a result, he contends, 'elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa no indigenous cultural tradition exists at the national level'.<sup>18</sup>

On the other hand, Donald Levine is cautious and argues by raising two basic questions concerning the process of nation-state formation in Ethiopia. To use his words,

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<sup>16</sup> Sarah Vaughan, " Ethnicity and Power in Ethiopia" ( PhD Dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 2003 ), p.36; See also <https://www.ju.edu.et/gj> ( Mulualem Daba, "The Politics of Representation: Anoole and Menelik II Statues in Focus" in *Gadaa Journal/ Barruulee Gadaa* Vol.1 No.1 (January 2018 ), p.55.

<sup>17</sup> Donald N Levine, *Wax and Gold : Tradition and Innovation in Ethiopian culture* ( Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1972), P. 3

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

*One concerns the relations between the Amhara and the non- Amhara peoples of the empire: is it possible for the latter to be integrated more effectively and justly into the texture of a common national life? If not, the present state of tribal[sic] calm may prove to be but a long prelude to a wasteful storm.*<sup>19</sup>

Yet we should also be cautious that the above selective metaphors and/or narratives which characterize Ethiopia either as a 'museum' or a 'prison house' of peoples may not often help us to discern the harsh realities of the diverse, fluid, and transformative nature of identities. Rather here, we should bear in mind that different peoples who lived side by side often interacted be it peacefully or belligerently and the interaction may result in fusion and fission of identities. The typical examples in this regard from the Ethiopia past were the integration of Gafat and Agaw into the Amhara culture during the medieval period and even starting before that in the case of the latter.<sup>20</sup> Similarly the assimilation of the Oromo in areas like Wallo, Gojjam and northern part of Shawa into the Amhara culture is comparable to the above instances.<sup>21</sup> The same can be said about the

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> Tadesse Tamrat, "Ethnic Interaction and Integration in Ethiopian History: The Case of Gafat. *Journal of Ethiopian Studies XXI*, II (1988); \_\_\_\_\_ "Process of Ethnic Interaction and Integration in Ethiopian History: The Case of the Agaw" pp. 5-18. The issue of ethnic interaction and integration in Ethiopian history has been dealt in detail by Tadesse Tamrat in which he meticulously maintains how the Agaw and the Gafat who had separate language and hence identity gradually integrated into the Amharic speakers.

<sup>21</sup> See Volker Stitz , "The Amhara Resettlement of Northern Shawa During the Eighteenth and the Nineteenth Centuries" *Rural African* a No.11, Michigan State University, 1970; Brian James Yates. "Invisible actors: The Oromo and the creation of modern Ethiopia (1855--1913)" (PhD. Dissertation, the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, 2009); Zergaw Asfera, "Some Aspects of Historical Development in Amhara/ Wallo", ca.1700-1815" ( BA Thesis , Haile Sellassie I University, 1973); Anteneh Aragie "A Political History of South Wallo, 1620s-1916 (MA Thesis , Jimma University, 2017) ; Charles Mc Clellan, "Reaction to Ethiopian Expansionism: The Case of Darasa, 1895-1935", (PhD Dissertation, Michigan State University, 1978), p. 2 who states that peoples did interact; they did intermarry and trade, but they also fought and defined themselves often in contrast to their neighbours; See also Levine, Greater Ethiopia, Chapter four.

dozens of ethno-linguistic groups who were assimilated by the Oromo following the sixteenth-century population movements.

The most pertinent study for the region under study is made by Arnesen who conducted ethnographic studies among the Darra Oromo, the northern part of the area under investigation. He used a place-based approach to understand ethnicity in Shawa. He argues that ethnicity is persistently restructured since the sixteenth century on the Shawan plateau<sup>22</sup>. In other words, ethnic boundaries and identities have been compromised and renegotiated on the Shawan plateau based on the balance of power since the sixteenth century or even before. However, Arnesen's proposition needs qualification as it may not apply to the whole part of the area inhabited by the Oromo. In other words, his assertions might be credible for the sixteenth century or to the areas where the Amharic and Afaan Oromo language speakers converge, for instance in areas between the Mofar and Chacha rivers, Darra and Borana among others where the interaction between the two groups is dynamic. To understand the place of the Tulama Oromo within the modern Ethiopian Empire, it is, therefore, imperative to elucidate briefly the theoretical and conceptual frameworks in which the remaining chapters of the thesis are examined.

## **Terms and Theoretical Framework**

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<sup>22</sup> Odd Erik Arnesen, "The Becoming of Place: A Tulama Oromo Region in North Shoa," in Baxter, P.T.W., J. Hultin and A. Triulzi (Eds), *Being and Becoming Oromo, Historical and Anthropological Enquiries* (Uppsala, 1996), pp. 223-232.

Since the dawn of history, Ethiopia and its environs have been the home of various ethnolinguistic groups and perhaps the cradle of humanity. One of the ethnolinguistic groups and the single largest one in the modern Ethiopian Empire has been the Oromo. The relations between the Oromo in general and the Tulama in particular with the Kingdom of Shawa and the Ethiopian Empire State had been dominated by warfare, resistance, collaboration, modus vivendi, economic and cultural intercourse. In this regard, Fleras and Elliot, maintain,

*A Collective definition approach ... provides a window of understanding into the interactional components of dominant – subdominant relations. A collective definition approach emphasizes the process by which intra-and inter-group relations are formulated and reformulated because of opposing tendencies (dualisms) that coexist within all groups. Both the dominant and subdominant groups may be internally divided into competing factions known as dualisms. To one side are the dualisms associated with inclusion versus exclusion as opposing tendencies; to the other side are the dualisms of assimilation versus separation as optional choices.<sup>23</sup>*

Again we have to be cautious that some Oromo elites were assimilated into the dominant Amhara culture and even were intermarried with the ruling family and were able to climb the political ladder and assume the “Solomonic” throne at best.<sup>24</sup> There were also Oromo notables who made temporary alliances with the Christian rulers either to consolidate their position or to avoid the harsh punishments of the Shawan rulers when they felt that the balance of power tilted

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<sup>23</sup> Augie Fleras and Jean Leonard Elliott, *Unequal Relations: An introduction to Race, Ethnic and Aboriginal Dynamics in Canada* (Scarborough, Canada: Prentice Hall Allyn and Bacon Canada, 1999), pp. 26-27.

<sup>24</sup> The Dynasty in power in Ethiopia from 1270 to 1974 was known as the Solomonic Dynasty. For details about its foundation and early history see, for instance, Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State*, pp.66-68.

in favor of the latter. Then can we call these developments collaboration or *Modus Vivendi*?

I think one may analyze the relations between the Tulama and the kingdom of Shawa using concepts like resistance, collaboration, *modus vivendi*, and ethnic identity.<sup>25</sup> Concerning the latter, scholars claim that ethnic identity has been a buzzword since the 1960s and a force to be reckoned with following the end of the cold war.<sup>26</sup> Almost major parts of the world have been affected either by inter-ethnic conflicts or by ethnic nationalism which resulted in some cases even in the emergence of new nations or states. Therefore, we have to begin our discussion by explaining the term ethnicity.

Tarimo warns us vehemently terms like ethnicity and ethnic identity are very much fluid, we have to examine them taking into account the social, cultural, economic, and political dynamics and how these, in turn, have affected ethnic identities and loyalties. In the

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<sup>25</sup> See, for instance, Peter Garretson, *A History of Addis Ababa from Its Foundation in 1886 to 1910* (Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, 2000), p.75.

<sup>26</sup> Christoph Antweiler, "Ethnicity from an Anthropological Perspective", in Michaela Pelican, et al, *Ethnicity as a Political Resource Conceptualizations across Disciplines, Regions, and Periods* (Verlag: Bielefeld, 2015), p.25; Charles W. McClellan, *State Formation and National Integration, Gedeo and the Ethiopian Empire, 1895-1935* (East Lansing, Michigan: African Studies Center, Michigan State University, 1988), p. 1, maintains that ethnic problem or the question of nationality was the favourite topic for social scientists in Africa during the first three decades of the post-colonial era; see also Fouad Makki, "Eritrea Between Empires: Nationalism And The Anti-Colonial Imagination, 1890-1991" (Binghamton University, Ph.D. Dissertation, 2006), pp. 1-2.; John Rex, "The Fundamentals of the Theory of Ethnicity", in Sinisa Malesević and Mark Haugaard, (eds), *Making Sense of Collectivity: Ethnicity, Nationalism and Globalisation* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), p. 88 indicates "The study of ethnic relations has in recent years come to play a central role in the social sciences, to a large extent replacing class structure and class conflict as a central focus of attention."



case of Africa, ethnic identities have had a triple-layer: pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial. For instance, during the pre-colonial times, most African ethnolinguistic communities had lived in the rural areas and were homogenous. As a result, by that time, there was less competition and rivalry among them for scarce resources than it is today.<sup>27</sup> Meanwhile, James Bryan Yates indicates that "...views of African ethnicity vary from unchangeable remnants of the past to inventions of colonial officials to the inventions of African elites".<sup>28</sup>

Let's begin our discussion with the candid words of Eric Hobsbawm, allegedly one of the eminent British historians of all times. He indicates that ethnicity is associated with common origin and descent. Hence, kinship and blood have had dual roles, that is, they might unite certain groups and exclude others and have played crucial roles in the 'ethnic nationalism.' However, Hobsbawm warns us, the genetic approach to ethnicity is utterly inappropriate and posits that culture is one of the most important components of an ethnic group as a form of social organization.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Aquiline Tarimo, S.J., *Ethnicity, Citizenship, and State in East Africa* (Mankon, Bamenda: Langaa Research and Publishing CIG, 2011).

<sup>28</sup> Yates, "Invisible Actors", p. 21.

<sup>29</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 63 ; see also Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), p. 306 also agrees with the views of Hobsbawm and concludes that this is an era in which people globally define themselves in cultural terms although there are exceptions like the USA which is without a cultural core and united only by a political creed.

Meanwhile, according to Becker, anthropologists who dealt with ethnicity starting from the around 1950s came up with three different approaches. The first was the primordialist approach which had a large number of proponents until the 1960s. The proponents of this school of thought posit that ethnic identity is the result of deep-rooted attachments to a given ethnic group and culture. The second one is the instrumentalist approach which claims that ethnicity is used as a political strategy to materialize pragmatic interests. The last one was a situational approach which highlights the dynamics and contingency of ethnic identity which is fashioned in specific historical and social milieus. He claims the third approach remains the foremost model in anthropological theory hitherto.<sup>30</sup>

Be that as it may, the two leading theoretical frameworks employed by social scientists to comprehend and elucidate ethnicity are: primordialism and constructivism. Hence, the thesis is disposed towards the latter approach, although there are facets of the former approach which will be envisaged. Yet, we have to bear in mind that neither of the two theories is infallible and "...that they have great potential for cross-fertilization".<sup>31</sup> Hence, both approaches will be employed in the thesis as they suit our discussion by taking a synthetic outlook.

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<sup>30</sup> Anja Katharina Becker, "Introduction: Ethnicity as a political resource viewed by scholars from different academic disciplines," In Michaela Pelican, et al, *Ethnicity as a Political Resource Conceptualizations across Disciplines, Regions, and Periods* ( Verlag: Bielefeld, 2015), p.12

<sup>31</sup> Jimmy Spire Ssentongo, "Spaces for Pluralism in 'Ethnically Sensitive' Communities in Uganda: The Case of Kibaale District" ( Doctoral dissertation, Utrecht: University for Humanistic Studies, 2015 ), p.13.

## The Tulama Oromo in the Oromo-centric and Ethiopianist Discourses

*We have not found an accurately recorded history, and whatever has been written is full of material that is not pertinent to the laws and customs of the Oromo.*<sup>32</sup>

Meanwhile, notwithstanding the pitfalls indicated earlier, I argue that the above metaphors succinctly encapsulate the discordant narrative by the Ethiopianists and what the Ethiopianists dubbed ethnonationalist historiography about the area under the study, Ethiopianists vis-à-vis Oromo-centric discourses. Therefore, the historiography of Ethiopia in one way or another has been influenced by the above metaphors. Apparently debates about ethnicity have dominated Ethiopian historiography in recent decades, as Tim Carmichael rightly argues it "often reduced the study of Ethiopian history to simplistic binary analyses of nation-building versus domination and repression."<sup>33</sup>

The Oromocentric scholars have devoted their time and energy to unearth a history of Ethiopia's single largest and perhaps most extensive ethnic group, the Oromo, which constitutes about thirty-five to forty percent of the population of Ethiopia.<sup>34</sup> Based on this

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<sup>32</sup>Bairu Tafla, ed, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works: History of the Galla and the Kingdom of Šawā* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden GmbH, 1987), p. 79. This perplexing issue has been clearly stipulated by Asma Gyorgis more than a century ago, which is not fully rectified by scholars to date.

<sup>33</sup> Tim Carmichael, "Approaching Ethiopian History: Addis Ababa and Local Governance in Harar, c. 1900-1950" (PhD Dissertation; Michigan State University, 2001), p. 2.

<sup>34</sup> According to the 2007 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia the total population of the country was about 73,750,932 and the number of the Oromo region's inhabitants was 26,993,933. As per the census, the Oromo constitute roughly about 35 percent of the population of the country; See <http://www.csa.gov.et/>; on the other hand Asafa Jalata, one of the foremost Oromocentric Scholars argues that although the Oromo comprise about 50 percent of the population of the country, "because of political reasons, the Ethiopian rulers do not want that the actual number of the Oromo populations is known to the world"; Asafa Jalata, *Oromia and Ethiopia: State Formation and Ethno-National Conflict, 1868-1992* (Trenton and Asmara, 2005), pp. 1, 13; according to

estimate the Oromo language is one of the top five if not three indigenous African languages along with the Kiswahili, Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo languages.<sup>35</sup> Like their Cushitic counterparts the Oromo have been indigenous to the region since antiquity. According to Lionel Bender, it is not misleading to construe modern-day Ethiopia as the 'core area' of Cushitic languages.<sup>36</sup> Oromo have settled in considerable parts of modern-day Ethiopia starting from southern Tigray in the north up to the Ethio-Sudanese border in the southwest, beyond the Harar town in the east and Moyale in the south. Moreover, outside Ethiopia, they have inhabited northern and eastern Kenya as far as the Indian Ocean coast, an area roughly the size of the State of Texas in the United States.<sup>37</sup>

The Oromo are now the most populous ethnonational group in Ethiopia. They speak *Afaan Oromo*, one of the languages categorized under the Lowland East Cushitic by linguists. The majority of inhabitants of the Horn of Africa which comprises, among others, countries like Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, and Somalia speak Cushitic languages. Perhaps the Oromo constitute more than half of the Cushitic speaking population of the

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Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia 1300-1700* ( New York, 2015), p., VIII, the Oromo constitute about 40 percent of the population of Ethiopia.

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.africaranking.com/> according to African Ranking in 2016 Swahili is the number one indigenous African language with more than a hundred million speakers, the Hausa language is the second with more than fifty million speakers whereas Afaan Oromo is the third with more than thirty million speakers.

<sup>36</sup> Lionel M Bender, *The Non-Semitic Language in Ethiopia* (Michigan: Michigan State University, 1976), p.1.

<sup>37</sup> Tsega Etefa, *Integration and Peace in East Africa: A History of the Oromo Nation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p.1

Horn of Africa nowadays.<sup>38</sup> Cushitic language family is one of the six families (sub-branches) of the Afro-Asiatic superfamily.<sup>39</sup>

The thesis explores the relations between the Kingdom of Shawa and one of the major Oromo subgroups known as the Tulama or the Shawan Oromo.<sup>40</sup> The Tulama with Macha, Gujji, and Borana constitute the Borana confederacy, one of the two confederacies of the Oromo. The second confederacy was the Barentu. The Borana inhabited the western, whereas the Barentu are said to have inhabited the eastern part of the Oromo land.<sup>41</sup> Similarly, tradition indicates that the Tulama also constitutes one of the five paired subgroups that made up the Oromo. These paired moieties are the Raayyaa-Azaboo, Macha-Tulama,

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<sup>38</sup> Mekuria Bulcha, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation: Dilemmas in the Ethiopian Politics of State and Nation Building* (Cape Town: 2011), pp. 28-29.

<sup>39</sup> B. M. Lynch and L. H. Robbins, "Cushitic and Nilotic Prehistory: New Archaeological Evidence from North-West Kenya", *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (1979), P. 320; Tesema Ta'a, "The Oromo of Wollega: A Historical Survey to 1910" (M.A. Thesis, Addis Ababa University, 1980); Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo of Ethiopia, A History 1570-1860* (Cambridge, 1991); Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia, 1855-1974* (Addis Ababa, 2002), p. 5.

<sup>40</sup> The terms Tulama and Shawan Oromo are often used interchangeably though the latter one is broader and also includes non-Tulama Oromo, the Macha, who are found in the west and southwest part of the former province of Shawa, west of the upper course of the Awash river.

<sup>41</sup> C.F. Beckingham and G.W.B. Huntigford, eds and trans, *Some Records of Ethiopia 1593-1646*, Being Extracts from Almeida's History of *High Ethiopia or Abbasia* and Bahrey's History of the Galla (London: Printed for Hakluyt Society, 1954), P.112; Bairu Tafla, ed, *Asma Gyorgis, and His works*, p. 137; Tesema Ta'a, "The Oromo of Wollega" PP.1-2; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, P.18; Merid Wolde Aregay, "Southern Ethiopia and the Christian Kingdom 1508-1708, With Special Reference to the Galla Migrations and Their Consequences" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies, 1971), pp. 157-158; Negaso Gidada, *History of the Sayyoo Oromo of Southwestern Wallaga, Ethiopia from about 1730-1886* (Addis Ababa, 2001).p. IX. In Afaan Oromo, Borana is Borooa'naa, and Barentu is Beriianaa, western and eastern respectively.

Sabboo-Goonaa, Siikkoo-Mandoo, and Ituu-Humbaana.<sup>42</sup> However, after the sixteenth-century Oromo expansion, one may identify six major subgroups of the Oromo based on their pattern of settlement, namely, the northern Oromo (consisting of the Rayyaa, Yajjuu, and Assaboo), the western and south-western Oromo (the Macha), the central Oromo (the Tulama), the south-eastern Oromo (the Arsii and Karrayyuu), the eastern Oromo (the Ittuu, Humbannaa, and African Qalloo), and the southern Oromo (the Gujii and Borana)

The Tulama, in turn, have been divided into three sub-groups (namely, Jiillee, Bachoo, and Dachi). The Jiillee occupied the regions to the south around Lake Zway, the Maqi River<sup>43</sup>, and Wanji area and in the northern parts of Yefat province.<sup>44</sup> They mainly inhabited the eastern section of Tulama abode that stretched from Lake Zway in the south-east to Yefat in the north-east, ostensibly with some discontinuities.<sup>45</sup>

The second subgroup of the Tulama is known as Bachoo, who settled in the western parts of the Tulama territory, including the eponymous district in the southwestern Shawa, Meettaa in the centre, and the Borana province in the extreme north. To be precise, the Bachoo settled in the modern districts of Bachoo, Iluu, Dawoo, Dandii,

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<sup>42</sup> Desta Dessalegn, "Tulama Oromo Prose Narratives: Study in Functions" *Proceedings of the First International Conference on Oromo studies* (Jimma, 21-22 May 2016), p.175; Dessalegn Negeri, "Guddifacha Practice as Child Problem Intervention in Oromo society: The case of Ada'a Liban District" (Addis Ababa University, MA Thesis, 2006), p. 10.

<sup>43</sup> Bizuwork Zewde, "The Jiillee Community and the Wonji Sugar Factory"(B.A. Thesis in History, Addis Ababa University, 1985), pp. iii, 1-2; Informants: Dumeecha Tulluu, Dame Gudata, Gadaa Tola, and Mabrie Gofie.

<sup>44</sup> Ahmed Hassen Omer, "Aspects of the History of Efrata Jiillee Warada (Shoa Region) with Particular Reference to Twentieth-century" (B. A. Thesis, Addis Ababa University, 1987), pp. 6-7.

<sup>45</sup> Tsegaye "The Oromo of Salaalee", p.14.

Sabbataa Hawaas, Meettaa, Ada'aa Bargaa, Jalduu, Gendabarat, Kuyyuu, Hidhabuu Abootee, Darra, and the Borana sub-province of Waloo, which in turn subdivided into Borana, Waggiddi, and Kalala.<sup>46</sup> However, we have to bear in mind that often it is difficult, if not impossible, to demarcate the boundaries of Tulama (mainly the Bachoo group) and the Macha as they have been settled intermingling in the districts like Dandi, Dawoo, Jalduu, and Gendabrat, among others. Yet it is traditionally believed that the source of the Awash river which is near the modern small town of Ginchi is considered as the place which divides the Tulama abode from their Macha brethren, who inhabited the area that stretched in the west up to the modern republic of South Sudan.<sup>47</sup>

The third Tulama major group is the Dachi, traditionally considered the *angafa*, firstborn. They inhabit the territory that extends from Soddo in the south to Daraa and Boraana in the north, where they have lived mingling with the Bachoo. The Dachi borders with the Bachoo in the west, the Jiillee, Arsii, and Karrayyuu in the east. Demarcating the boundary between the Shawan Amhara and the Tulama is cumbersome and perhaps one of the conundrums that students of the history of medieval and modern Ethiopia should grapple with. As we shall see throughout the thesis, the Oromo and the Amhara lived side by side in northern Shawa, including the

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<sup>46</sup> Odd Erik Arnesen, "The Becoming of Place," pp. 2232-23; Wakene Frew, "The Family of Ras Darge and the Church in Salale 1870-1941" ( B.A.Thesis, Haile Selassie I University, 1973), pp.23-24; Teferi Abate, "Land, Capital, and Labour in the Social Organization of Peasants: A Study of Village Level Dynamics in South-Western Wallo, 1974-1993" ( M.A. Thesis, Addis Ababa University, 1993) pp.21-22; Tsegaye "The Oromo of Salaalee," p.14; Yemiamrew Jorgi, "Historical Ethnography of Wallo-Borena: Identity, Changes, and Continuities" (Ph.D. Dissertation in Social Anthropology, AAU, 2017), p. 3.

<sup>47</sup> Tsegaye "The Oromo of Salaalee", p.14.

formidable Shawan sub-province of Manz, not to mention areas like Yifat, Tagulat, Bulga, Menjar, and Ensarro, among others.<sup>48</sup>

Concerning the etymological origin of the term Tulama, Abba Bahrey corroborates that it was given to this Oromo subgroup because it has numerous subgroups.<sup>49</sup> Likewise, oral tradition indicates, it is derived from the Oromo root word *tuulaa*, which is almost equivalent to 'heap', which in turn corroborates the presence of numerous subgroups under Tulama.<sup>50</sup> Perhaps this makes arguably the Tulama one of the most diverse subgroups of the Oromo nation. We shall see this issue and the pattern of the settlement of the Tulama a little bit in detail in chapter two.

After the sixteenth-century population movement, most parts of the Shawan plateau have settled by the Tulama. Although some Amhara petty chiefdoms survived in the inaccessible river valleys and mountain regions of the northern part of Shawa encircled by the Tulama and Wallo. Hence, one of the rulers of these chiefdoms started to expand starting from the last decades of the seventeenth century<sup>51</sup> and nearly a hundred years

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., P. 15

<sup>49</sup> Beckingham and Huntingford, p. 112.

<sup>50</sup> Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee, p.9.

<sup>51</sup> W. C. Harris, *The Highland of Ethiopia*, Vol. III. (London, 1844), PP. 7-8; Kofi Darkwah, *Shewa, Meniiek and the Ethiopian Empire 1813-1889* (London, 1975), pp. 6-55.



later had subjugated all its immediate rivals. Moreover, one of its rulers adopted the title of king, and his realm started to be identified as the kingdom of Shawa as of the second decade of the nineteenth century.

Henceforth, most of the Tulama Oromo found themselves on the fringes of the Shawan kingdom up until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. But in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the whole Tulama territory was subjugated and incorporated into the kingdom of Shawa –cum-modern Ethiopia after Menilek of Shawa became Emperor of Ethiopia. Addis Ababa, formerly known as Finfinnee, established in the heartland of Tulama, served initially as the capital of King Menilek, after the transformation of his status to the emperor of Ethiopia, it has been the capital of Modern Ethiopia.

Much of Ethiopia's written history has been cast at the national and imperial scale with little description of the-local level, where the social effect of historical change takes place.<sup>52</sup> One of the pitfalls of the official version of history is the fact that it neglects "...collective history and memory from which a people find their stories and voices to tell who they are".<sup>53</sup> Thus regional histories should be the building blocks of that master narrative. "The state's history as a meta-narrative

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<sup>52</sup> See, for instance, James McCann, *From Poverty to Famine in Northeast Ethiopia: A Rural History 1900-1935* Philadelphia, 1987; McClellan, "Reaction to Ethiopian Expansionism" who are among the pioneers to redress the imbalance by focusing on regional history.

<sup>53</sup> Mai Palmberg, *National Identity and Democracy in Africa* (Uppsala: Nordic African Institute and South Africa: Capture Press, 1999), p. 30.

claims totality; and everything else is silently subsumed under its totalized discourse. It excludes marginalized populations, ethnic, and religious polities,” writes Pietro Toggia. “As much as the state attempts to centralize every outlying domain around its power core, it simultaneously exteriorizes them through state discourses.”<sup>54</sup>

Moreover, one of the acclaimed scholars of Ethiopian history and politics, Christopher Clapham, corroborates that the conventional Ethiopian history is by far more than the history of a state, it is splendidly privileged by being also the history of a ‘great tradition ‘ comparable with that of other ancient civilizations like Persia and China.<sup>55</sup>

Ethiopian history also suffers from another imbalance. Sorenson, for instance, indicates:

*Until recently, the majority of European and North American historians, linguists, and anthropologists who have studied Ethiopian Society have focused on the highland regions, , especially on the culture of the Amharas and the Tigrayans, and in doing so have relied on the available written sources produced by literate Ethiopians while neglecting the oral traditions of groups such as the Oromo. This approach to Ethiopian history and culture has meant that Western Scholarship accepted and embellished particular versions of the past and neglected others. Many western scholars uncritically adopted the discursive constructions of local hegemonic forces, reproducing (and strengthening) a narrative that valorizes an ancient, centralized state that formed the basis of a Greater Ethiopia, under the leadership of the elites of northern highlands of Abyssinia, particularly those identified with the Amhara and the Tigrayan ethnic groups.*<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Pietro Toggia, “History writing as a state ideological project in Ethiopia”, *African Identities*, Vol. 6, Issues 4, 2008, PP. 319-343.

<sup>55</sup> Christopher Clapham, *Rewriting Ethiopian History*,” *Annales d’Ethiopie*, Vol. 18, annee 2002, p.39.

<sup>56</sup> John Sorenson, “Ethiopian Discourse and Oromo Nationalism” in Asafa Jalata (ed) *Oromo Nationalism and the Ethiopian Discourse: The Search for Freedom and Democracy* (Lawrenceville, NJ, Red Sea Press, 1998) p, 230.

Christopher Clapham maintains that “Amharas and Tigrayans have a history, whereas other peoples have only anthropology, at best a kind of sub-national sub- history that eventually gets subsumed within the national epic.”<sup>57</sup> Similarly, Mekuria Bulcha substantiates that one of the mistakes that the rulers of multinational states frequently make is espousing the history of the dominant group as the history of the nation and demeaning the subdued groups into history-less peoples.<sup>58</sup>

Similarly, Bahru Zewde states that formerly the non-literate societies of the southern half of the country were characterized as societies that did not have a history due to the shortage of written sources. But scholars have used oral information critically to reconstruct the history of these communities, this liberated Ethiopian historiography from skewing towards northern Ethiopia.<sup>59</sup> Yet Clapham complicates this issue by stating that the most alternative line of attack to what he dubbed a ‘Great Tradition’ unfolded as ‘Oromo Studies’ which commenced by the publication of Mohammed Hassen’s *The Oromo of Ethiopia* in 1990 and which was followed by a *Journal of Oromo Studies* ‘dedicated to the idea of Oromo as something distinct from Ethiopia’. Yet he further argues that these works focused on some Oromo subgroups and ignored others<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Clapham, “ Rewriting Ethiopian History”, p.40

<sup>58</sup> Mekuria, 2011, P. 40.

<sup>59</sup> Bahru Zewde, “A Century of Ethiopian Historiography”, *Society, State, and History: Selected Essays* (Addis Ababa University Press, 2008), p. 26.

<sup>60</sup> He indicates that Mohammed Hassen Silenced the Shawan, Harar, Wollega, and Wallo Oromo, among others. He further reiterates that Baxter et al’s *Being and Becoming Oromo*, on the other hand, gave much emphasis to the Borana Oromo and silenced others.

and also epitomizes the project of national construction through the selective use of history.<sup>61</sup>

Unlike Clapham, Yates indicates that both the Semitists and Oromo-centric scholarship embellished the difference between the Semitic speaking Amhara and the Cushitic speaking Oromo of Ethiopia and the Horn. He further argues both camps agree on the fact that speakers of the Ethio-Semitic languages of the Horn derived from the Middle Eastern stock, and secondly, the Amhara and the Oromo were perpetual rivals.<sup>62</sup>

Ezekiel claims that the Oromo-centric scholars persistently devoted their time and energy to uncover the condition of the Oromo in the Ethiopian Empire and paved the way for the beginning of a new Oromo narrative and studies. It led to the birth of what he calls "the intellectual break", which became the hallmark of their erudition which states that "Menilek's conquests of Oromo land as a process by which Ethiopia's colonial order had been imposed on independent Oromo states and communities"<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Clapham, "Rewriting Ethiopian History", pp. 43-44.

<sup>62</sup> Yates, "Invisible Actors": p.8.

<sup>63</sup> Ezekiel Gebissa, *Contested Terrain: Essays on Oromo Studies, Ethiopianist Discourse, and Politically Engaged Scholarship* (Trenton, NJ and Asmara: The Red Sea Press, 2009), pp. 7-8.

Yet Yates states both the foremost Semitist and Oromo-centric scholarship historiographies silenced the north Oromo groups to which the Tulama Oromo belong.<sup>64</sup> Tesema Ta'a is also in agreement with Yates and suggests that though historians and anthropologists have attempted to reconstruct the history of the Tulama Oromo, there are aspects of the history of the Tulama not addressed yet.<sup>65</sup> Hence, one of the regions in modern Ethiopia whose history is silenced or only been referred to tangentially is the area inhabited by the Tulama Oromo which is the concern of the thesis.<sup>66</sup>

The Semitists, also known Ethiopianists as well as church and State tradition<sup>67</sup> meta-narratives historiography<sup>68</sup> are blind to the roles or contributions of Oromo to the Ethiopian state and exclusively devoted to the history/ies of the Amhara, Tigre, and Agaw.<sup>69</sup> No one is more articulate than Mohammed Hassen, one of

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid, pp. II, 8.

<sup>65</sup> Tesema Ta'a, "The Place of the Oromo in Ethiopian History: 2003 OSA Conference Keynote Address," *Journal of Oromo Studies*, vol. 11, No. 1 and 2, p. 4.

<sup>66</sup> See Yates, pp. 2-14. Bryan James Yates classifies these scholars as Semitist (Ethiopianist), Oromo-centered and Oromo-centric scholarship.

<sup>67</sup> See, for instance, Teshale Tibebu, *The Making of Modern Ethiopia: 1896-1974* (The Red Sea Press, 1995), p. xvii who also dubbed them as 'Orientalist Semitists paradigm'

<sup>68</sup> See, among others, the works of Semitists like (M. Abir, *Ethiopia: The Era of Princes* (London, 1968); Harold Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994) ; Richard Pankhurst, *The Ethiopians, The peoples of Africa* (Oxford, 1998) ; Edward Ullendorff, *The Ethiopians: an Introduction to Country and People* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973). This group by itself is far from being uniform both from the point of view of their academic background as well as their notions about the history of Ethiopia as will be indicated below. Some Semitists like Ullendorff openly express their prejudice about the history of Oromo and anything Oromo.

<sup>69</sup> Brian J. Yates, *The Other Abyssinian: The Northern Oromo and the Creation of Modern Ethiopia, 1855-1913* (New York: University of Rochester Press, 2020), p. 3.

the doyens of Oromo historians, to elucidate this issue. “The history, way of life, political and religious institutions, and even the name of the Oromo is in large part ignored in Ethiopian historiography,”<sup>70</sup> writes Mohammed. The causes of such disregard for Oromo history in part can be attributed to the scarcity of written sources on the Oromo since they were oral society like most sub-Saharan African Societies. As a result, scholars often heavily relied on the existing records produced by the Christian monks and court chroniclers which lack objectivity in most cases.<sup>71</sup>

Meanwhile, Bairu Tafla pinpoints that the fundamental reason for the Ethiopian writers to remain silent about the history of the Oromo was not a shortage of materials or ignorance of the events. He claims that the problem lay in “...intense prejudice deeply rooted in Amhara and Tigray society, a prejudice which to the disadvantage of science and art, undermined the objective recording of the history of the antagonist whoever he might be.”<sup>72</sup>

Some of the well known Ethiopianist scholars like Richard Pankhurst, whose knowledge of the written sources on Ethiopia is ‘sans pareil’, to use Shell's phraseology, and whose works remain vital for the study of Ethiopian history evaded the Oromo.<sup>73</sup> Even more,

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<sup>70</sup> Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia 1300-1700* (James Currey, 2015), p. 1.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid

<sup>72</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 48

<sup>73</sup> Sandra Carolyn Teresa Rowoldt Shell, “From slavery to freedom: the Oromo slave children of Lovedale, Prosopography and profiles” (Ph.D. Thesis in Historical Studies, University of Cape Town, 2013), p.5.

some diehard semitist scholars like Edward Ullendorff portrayed the Oromo negatively.<sup>74</sup> Mekuria Bulcha also contends that the salient feature of the Ethiopianists historical thesis about the Oromo is that they had overrun a civilized state and had wrecked and virtually destroyed it.<sup>75</sup> Similarly Markakis also indicates, in what is known as the “Great tradition’ presumably the sixteenth-century Oromo expansion is depicted ‘as a cataclysmic event that blighted Abyssinian society and darkened its cultural horizon.’<sup>76</sup>

Similarly, Mohammed Hassen indicates that this perspective displayed the Oromo as adversaries of the Amhara and the Christian Kingdom. The embellished antipathy between the Amhara and the Oromo has been bedeviled partly by religious and cultural variations, thus underlining the negative image of the Oromo in Ethiopian historiography. He argues “...since the sixteenth century, a fundamental theme in the literature of the Christian kingdom of Ethiopia was the confrontation between the Amhara and the Oromo”.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, “There can be few peoples in African history who have been as misunderstood, and indeed as misrepresented, as the Oromo,” Richard Reid writes, “They have been, arguably, even more, demonized by Ethiopian chroniclers of various hues and over a longer time frame than the Somali, historically the other great rival ‘bloc’ confronting the Amhara in northeast Africa.”<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Ullendorff, *The Ethiopians*, p.31 who denigrates the Oromo avowing that they “had little to contribute to the Semitized civilization of Ethiopia”; See Harris vol. III, pp. 72-73, who portrayed the Oromo as the people who ‘brought darkness and ignorance in their train’.

<sup>75</sup> Bulcha, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation*, pp.67-68.

<sup>76</sup> Markakis, *The last Two Frontiers*, P. 39

<sup>77</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo & the Christian Kingdom*, p. 2

<sup>78</sup> Reid, *Frontiers Of Violence In North-East Africa: Genealogies of Conflict Since C.1800* (New York , Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 30.

What we have seen thus far is analogous to Samuel Huntington's famous phraseology: "Two Worlds: Us and Them". Huntington further corroborates that:

*.... The tendency to think in terms of two worlds recurs throughout human history. People are always tempted to divide people into us and them, the in-group and the other, our civilization and those barbarians. Scholars have analyzed the world in terms of the Orient and the Occident, North and South, center and periphery.*<sup>79</sup>

Perhaps, the beginning of the identification of the Oromo as "uncivilized barbarians" by Ethiopian and European writers for understandable reasons dated back to the time of the dramatic Oromo population movement. This view has been pronounced first by the illustrious sixteenth-century Ethiopian monk, Abba Bahrey, who justifies why he wrote a history of the Oromo: "I have begun to write the history of the Galla<sup>80</sup> [Oromo] to make known the number of their tribes, their readiness to kill people, and the brutality of their manners."<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Huntington, p.32.

<sup>80</sup> The Oromo were designated by the pejorative appellation 'Galla' in earlier literature, which has been out of use after the 1974 Ethiopian Revolution. Even by then, this appellation was used by outsiders, for instance, John Ludwig Krapf, *Travels, Researches, and Missionaries Labors During An Eighteen Yeas Residence in Eastern Africa: Together with Journeys to Jaggā, Usambara, Ukambani, Shoa, Abessinia and Khartum, and a Coasting Voyage from Mombaz to Cape Delgado* (London: Forgotten Books and Company Limited, 2014),p. 61, unequivocally indicated about 180 years ago, "They call themselves " Orma," or Oroma, "strong, or brave men; and their language they call" Afan Orma"; Asma Gyorgis also stipulates this issue when he writes perhaps at the end of 19th century or the beginning of twentieth century, እነሱ ግን እኛ ኦሮሞ ነን ይላሉ። አማራ ግን ጋላ ይላቸዋል። ( They call themselves Oromo while the Amhara call them Galla ) , Bairu Tafla, *Asma Gyorgis and His works*, p. 154. The term perhaps came to be associated and/or be assumed pejorative connotations due to the power struggle made between the Oromo and the Amhara starting perhaps from the sixteenth century when the latter were defeated by the former. In other words, it seems that the term was vehemently denounced not only because of its origin but also the meanings attached to it were biased, degrading, and partial. See Yates, "The



There is no shadow of reasonable doubt that Bahrey encapsulates the number of the Oromo subgroups and their ferocity using hyperbolic terms and also dwelt on exposing the weakness of the Christian kingdom vis-à-vis the Oromo, but according to Richard Reid, “created images that endured.”<sup>82</sup> Europeans who were the contemporaries of Abba Bahrey and came later characterized the Oromo alike.<sup>83</sup> Among the European writers, no one echoed the views of traditional Ethiopian writers or chroniclers more than W.C. Harris, who was the head of the British Diplomatic Mission to Shawa in the first half of the nineteenth century. Harris compared the Oromo with the so-called ‘Barbaric Germanic tribes’ who destroyed the Roman Empire. He writes, “Like the barbarous nations who were made the weapons of Divine chastizement upon the corrupted empire of Rome,

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Invincible Actors”, p.29 who claims the term Galla was used in three ways: “one, to describe uncivilized barbaric people, two, innocent victims of Habasha Oppression and, three, as eternal enemies of Habasaha”; see also, Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo, and the Christian Kingdom*, pp. 2-4 who meticulously argues, “the Oromo did not and do not call themselves ‘Galla’ and resist being so-called.” We have used the appellation Oromo throughout the thesis, except in the titles of the scholarly works and when it has been imperative to use it. Hence, we have replaced the defunct term with [Oromo] in the direct quotations.

<sup>81</sup> Abba Bahrey, “History of the Galla” in C.F. Beckingham and G.W.B. Huntigford (trans and eds), *Some Records of Ethiopia*, P. 111,; See also Getachew Haile, *Ya Abba Bahrey Dersetoch: Oromon kememeleketu Leloch Senedoch Gara (Abba Bahrey’s Essays with other Documents Related to the Oromo)* (Minnesota, 2002, p. 195; Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p.234.

<sup>82</sup> Reid, p. 31.

<sup>83</sup> See M. de Almeida, “The History of High Ethiopia or Abbasia”, in C. F. Beckingham and G.W.B. Huntigford (trans & eds), *Some Records of Ethiopia* (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1954); James Bruce, *Travels to discover the source of the Nile, in the years 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772, and 1773* (Edinburgh: G.G.J and J. Robinson, 1790) Vol. II, p.19; vol.III (1805), p. 54 who describes the Oromo as “a barbarous and stranger nation hostile to the Abyssinians”; Yates, “Invisible Actors”, pp. 40-41.

they [the Oromo] also brought darkness and ignorance in their train.”<sup>84</sup> However, the contemporary British traveller, C. T. Beke, contrary to Harris’s partial understanding of the Oromo history, indicates,

*A nation which is... found to occupy , even if not exclusively , regions extending sixteen degrees ( about 1000 miles), must naturally be deserving of the consideration of scholars in numerous points of view. Yet little is known of the [Oromos] except their language, and even with this we have become acquainted only during the last few years through the labours of Dr. Krapf and Dr. Tutschek, of their origin and history we know really nothing positive. And unfortunately the only sources whence we may hope to derive information on these subjects are the native and Abessinian traditions.*<sup>85</sup>

The coming of age of Oromo studies<sup>86</sup> made the Oromo subject of history, even though it encountered challenges not only from the die-hard semitists but also from well-educated and moderate Ethiopianist scholarship.<sup>87</sup> Ezekiel reiterates, according to the Ethiopianists scholarship, researching the history of the Oromo was tolerable only if it is in line with the Ethiopian studies, otherwise it “was dismissed as intellectually deficient and scholars who dared to produce such a

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<sup>84</sup> W.C. Harris , *The Highland of Ethiopia: Described During Eighteen Months of Residence A British Embassy at a Christian Court Of Shoa* ( London: Longman , Brown , Green and Longmans, 1844), vol.III, pp.72-73 ; See also Teshale, pp. 16-17 who writes, the Oromo were the most important single group characterized as ‘ Pagan barbarian par excellence’, Yates, “Invisible Actors”, p. 1.

<sup>85</sup> Charles .T. Beke, “ On the Origins of the Origins of the Gallas” From the Report of the British Association for the Advancement of Science and for 1847, *Miscellanea I* (ADD 30255 Order 11123 British Museum Manuscript ), p. 4.

<sup>86</sup> See Reid, p. 18 where he maintains that the Oromo began to be studied after the coming to power of the EPRDF (Ethiopian People’s Revolution Democratic Front) in 1991 which ushered in what he calls the ‘Era of Ethnic Federalism’. Some of the Well-known works that were published soon in the 1990s are: Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*; Asafa, *Oromia and Ethiopia*; P. T. W. Baxter, J. Hultin, and A. Triulzi (eds.), *Being and Becoming Oromo: Historical and Anthropological Enquiries* (Uppsala, 1996).

<sup>87</sup> See Ezekiel, “Contested Terrain”, p.6.

study were derided, besmirched, and ostracized.”<sup>88</sup> Similarly Triulzi maintains that:

*As the modern writing of the country’s history was conducted at a time of intense state-building and nationalist convictions throughout the African continent, the Ethiopian history which surfaced then was on the whole state-centered and institutional in character. It tended to extol the centralizing and unitary role of Ethiopian monarchs, and concentrated on their innovative and modernizing role within Ethiopian Society.*<sup>89</sup>

Like the above historians, the first-generation Oromo professional historians overlooked the history of the Tulama. But what makes them different from the former group was that as one expects from the naming itself, they did not entirely overlook the reconstruction of the history of the entire Oromo. Most of them dedicated their time studying the history of some Oromo sub-groups, above all that of the Macha. It is mesmerizing that almost all of them produced their terminal degrees on the history of the Macha.<sup>90</sup> In this regard, Tesema indicates the history of Macha is relatively well studied compared with other Oromo subgroups.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid, p.5.

<sup>89</sup> Alessandro Triulzi “Battling with the Past: New Frameworks for Ethiopian Historiography” in Wendy James et al (eds), *Remapping Ethiopia: Socialism and After* (Oxford, James Currey, 2002), p. 277. The best examples for such kinds of works are Merid, “Southern Ethiopia and the Christian Kingdom”; Sergrew Hable Sellassie, *Ancient and Medieval Ethiopian History to 1270* (Addis Ababa 1972); Tadesse, *Church and State*; Zewde Gebre Sellassie, *Yohannes IV of Ethiopia: A Political Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975). ; Bairu Tafia, *A Chronicle of Emperor Yohannes IV, 1872-1889*(Wiesbaden: Steiner. 1977).

<sup>90</sup> Tesema Ta’a, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia: From the Mid-Sixteenth to Early Twentieth Century” (Ph. D. Dissertation, Michigan State University, 1986) ; Mohammed , *The Oromo of Ethiopia* ; Negasso Gidada, “History of the Sayyoo Oromo of South-Western Wallaga, Ethiopia from about 1730-1886,” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universitat, 1984).

<sup>91</sup> Tesema, “The Place of the Oromo in Ethiopian History”, p.4.

The history of the Tulama Oromo is not a popular subject among the Oromo-centric scholars due to the following reasons. First, some of the foremost Oromo historians have commenced researching the history of Macha Oromo subgroups starting from their BA theses and continued conducting research in the same geographical focus up to their terminal degrees and even after for understandable reasons.<sup>92</sup> Most of these works are unpublished theses, and also they “share a common methodology of oral history which they deploy to the enrichment of Ethiopian historiography by extending it far beyond the Abyssinian core.”<sup>93</sup> Secondly, some Oromo scholars might have distanced themselves from reconstructing a history of the Tulama or the Shawan Oromo because they might have considered the Tulama the cronies of the Shawan Kingdom. For instance, individuals like *Ras Gobana Dachi*, the foremost general of Emperor Menilek II (1889-1913), *Fitawrari Habte Gyoris Dinagdee*, minister of war (1907- 1926) and the leader of the conservative camp, and *Dajjazach Baalchaa Saafoo* (Abbaa Nafsoo), a veteran of the first and second Italo- Ethiopian wars, among others, who belonged to this Oromo subgroup played a pivotal role in the creation modern Ethiopia. Since some of them argue that as the result of the Shawan kingdom’s territorial expansion ‘dependent colonial state’ was created in Northeast Africa and treating the history of the people whose elites participated in the process may not justify their point of argument and that is

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<sup>92</sup>. The best examples are Tesema Ta’a , Negaso Gidada and Daniel Ayana , who extensively conducted their research on the history of the Macha Oromo in general and Wallaga area in particular; Abbas H Gnamo on the history of the Arsi Oromo, Mohammed Hassen ,Guluma Gameda and Tekalign Woldemariam on the Gibe region. See the bibliography.

<sup>93</sup> Crummey, “Society, State,” p.115.

why they opted to give little attention to the reconstruction of their history.<sup>94</sup> In this regard, one of the foremost Oromo-centric scholars, Mekuria Bulcha, maintains, “Ironically, the Tulama are often seen by others as collaborators who helped Menilek in his conquest of the South.”<sup>95</sup>

Yet we do have scholarly works on the history of the Tulama Oromo, and one may classify them as the noticeable exceptions, as we shall briefly discuss below. The first to be mentioned is the recently completed Ph.D. dissertation of Bryan James Yates. He claims that he attempts to redress the imbalance and the dissertation is a comprehensive study of the role of key Oromo actors in the creation of modern Ethiopia.<sup>96</sup> His dissertation mainly focuses on some Oromo notables or what he calls, ‘key Oromo actors’ or ‘invisible actors’ in the creation of modern Ethiopia and may not help us to have a whole picture of the dynamic relations between the northern Oromo (Tulama and Wallo) and the Kingdom of Shawa cum Modern Ethiopia. Moreover, he did not properly exploit the rich corpus of Tulama oral traditions.

Another exception is Svein Ege's book, which focuses on the sociopolitical history of the Kingdom of Shawa and agrarian class relations around 1840. In the book, he devoted a

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<sup>94</sup> Yates, p.8, similarly argues that Oromo-centric scholars silenced northern Oromo because the role they played in the creation of Modern Ethiopia erases the immutable differences between Oromo and Amhara.

<sup>95</sup> Mekuria , *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation*, p. 327.

<sup>96</sup> Yates, “Invisible Actors.”

chapter to the socio-cultural history of the Oromo<sup>97</sup> and treats the interaction between the Shawan Kingdom and the Tulama extensively. It is the most important comprehensive material that we have on the history of the kingdom of Shawa and the Tulama Oromo. However, this excellent monograph has been very much limited temporally.

We do have very few Ph.D. dissertations on Tulama. The first dissertation which deserves mention is the one that meticulously uncovers a history of land tenure, agriculture, and food supply to Addis Ababa by the Bachoo Oromo,<sup>98</sup> who inhabited the hinterlands of Addis Ababa.<sup>99</sup> But it silences most parts of the Tulama and focuses on agricultural history. The most recently completed Ph.D. thesis on the region under study explores how the peasants of north Shawa have steadily impoverished and transformed from the political power base of the Nagasi dynasty to the backwaters of modern Ethiopia.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Svien Ege, *Class, State and Power in Africa: A Case of the Kingdom of Shawa (Ethiopia) about 1840* (Wiesbaden, 1996). Ege, for instance, corroborates that there was no extensive study of the Oromo during the period under consideration, p. 66.

<sup>98</sup> As indicated hereinabove, the Bachoo is one of the three subgroups of the Tulama Oromo but the dissertation is on the Bachoo Oromo who inhabited the eponymous district found in what is now called Southwest Shawa Zone. Hence, most of the Bachoo Oromo were not included in the study.

<sup>99</sup> Tekalign Wolde Mariam, "A City and its Hinterlands: The Political Economy of Land Tenure, Agriculture and Food Supply for Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 1887-1974" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Boston University, 1995).

<sup>100</sup> Dechasa Abebe, "A Socio-Economic History of North Shäwa, Ethiopia (the 1880s-1935)" (DLET Philosophy thesis, UNISA, 2015).

Similarly, we have very few but immensely helpful MA theses on the history of some subgroups of the Tulama. One of the MA theses is the one produced on the history of the Salale Oromo. But the thesis is very much limited spatially and also temporally, and most of the Tulama are left out.<sup>101</sup> Another thesis worth mentioning,<sup>102</sup> examines the socio-economic and cultural interaction of the Amhara and Oromo in Salale from 1941 to 2000. Similarly, it is also very much limited spatially and temporally. Moreover, its central thesis is ethnic interaction. The third MA thesis is produced by Biratu Kenei.<sup>103</sup> In the thesis, Biratu attempts to unravel the history of Oromo in and around Finfinnee (Addis Ababa). But the thesis lacks clarity regarding the fact that which Tulama subgroups were included and/ or left out as he limited his spatial coverage arbitrarily. Moreover, his attempt to reconstruct a history of the Oromo in Finfinnee/ Addis Ababa is vague as we also have vibrant non-Tulama Oromos in the city.

Apart from scholarly works listed above, we have a considerable number of sources, among others, reports, diaries, journals, letters, articles, and books produced by European travelers, which in one way or another, touched upon certain aspects of the history of the Tulama.<sup>104</sup> These are the most helpful sources, since there is a shortage of

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<sup>101</sup> Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salale".

<sup>102</sup> Sisay Megersa, *Amhara-Oromo Ethnic Interaction in Salale, Ethiopia from 1941-2000* (VDM Verlag Dr. Muller Aktiengesellschaft & co, 2009). The material is originally an MA thesis published by the aforementioned company.

<sup>103</sup> Biratu Kenei, "A History of Oromo in and around Finfinnee (Addis Ababa) from Ca. 1860s - 1974" (MA.Thesis, Addis Ababa University, 2010).

<sup>104</sup> C.W. Isenberg, and J.L Krapf, *Journal of the Rev. Messrs. Isenberg and Krapf ; J.L. Krapf, Travels, Researches and Missionary Labour During the Eighteenth years Residence in Eastern Africa* (London, 1968); W.C. Harris, *The Highland of Ethiopia*, Vol. II and III (London, 1844) ;

written materials during the period they have covered, especially regarding the Tulama. Simultaneously, these are the most difficult sources to use unless one critically evaluates them as they contain both facts and interpretations.<sup>105</sup> Moreover, some of these materials fall in the category of sources rather than literature.

There are also materials produced by traditional Ethiopian writers. The first visible attempt to reconstruct a history of the Oromo in general and Tulama and Macha subgroups, in particular, was made by Abba Bahrey.<sup>106</sup> Abba Bahrey's otherwise invaluable work published in 1593 set the stage for the subsequent traditional Ethiopian historiography which magnified and embroidered the purported brutality of the Oromo and also depicted the Oromo as barbarians who contributed immensely to the decline and backwardness of Ethiopia.

After Abba Bahrey, almost several centuries elapsed until the emergence of sources written by Ethiopian writers. Some of the key sources were written in the early decades of the twentieth century by individuals closely associated with the Shawan Kingdom. These are useful sources but marred by obvious methodological problems. The writers

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Plowden, *Travels in Abyssinia and the Galla Country, With an Account of a Mission to Ras Ali* in 1848 (London, 1868)

<sup>105</sup> Ege, pp. 9-17. Ege discusses these sources in detail. Most of these writings gave more emphasis to things around the court of Sahla Sellase or to the topography of their journey or something else which happens to be highly appealing to their interests.

<sup>106</sup> . C.F. Beckingham and G.W.B. Huntigford, eds and trans, *Some Records of Ethiopia 1593-1646*, Being Extracts from Almeida's *History of High Ethiopia or Abbasia* and Bahrey's *History of the Galla* ( London: Printed for Hakluyt Society , 1954); Getachew Haile, *Ya Abba Bahrey Dersetoch: Oromon kememeleketu Leloch Senedoch Gara / Abba Bahrey's Essays with other Documents Related to the Oromo*( Minnesota, 2002).



were also either high officials in the central government or functionaries of the provincial government like Asma Gyorgis, who was an official of the Harar government.<sup>107</sup> Their histories have an official character, and the purpose was mainly to enhance the legitimacy of the Shawan kingdom.<sup>108</sup>

Unlike the traditional Ethiopian writers, Asma Gyorgis's book completed in the second decade of the twentieth century was pioneering since it considers the Oromo a central force in Ethiopian history, rather than a disruptive group of outside raiders. In the words of Bairu Tafla, "Asma Gyorgis ventured into quite a different and untraditional field of history; namely the Oromo as a fully-fledged historical phenomenon.... [He considered] the Oromo not as invaders, but as a society with its own social and political institutions, and not as marauders and murderers as they were usually viewed".<sup>109</sup>

In addition to establishing the Oromo as a people with history, Asma Gyorgis is unique among the traditional writers in his consideration of the Oromo and Amhara as groups experiencing constant change and mutual influence. For instance, he indicates the Oromo who settled in central Ethiopia influenced by the Amharic language, culture, and religion on the one hand and the counter-influence of Oromo upon the Shawan political

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<sup>107</sup> See, for Instance, Bairu (ed and trans), *Asma Gyorgis; Gabra Sellase Walda Aragay (Tsehafe Tazaz) Tarika Zaman Ze Daymawi Meniiek Nigusa Nagast Ze Ityophiya* (Addis Ababa, 1959 E.C); Taye Gabra Maryam, *Yaltyophiya Hizb Tark* (Addis Ababa, 1958 E.C).

<sup>108</sup> Ege, p. 10

<sup>109</sup> Bairu (Ed and Trans), *Asma Gyorgis* p. 61; See also Sidney R. Waldron, "Asma Gyorgis and His Works: History of the Galla and the Kingdom of Sawa by Bairu Tafla", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (1989), p.363 (Review).

and military establishment for centuries on the other. He further explains Amhara and Oromo have intermingled through *mogassa*<sup>110</sup> and marriage.<sup>111</sup>

So far, we have attempted to explore how the Tulama have been overlooked by the Semitists, Ethiopianists, and Oromo-centric narratives. The thesis challenges the Oromo-centric, Ethiopianists, or Semitist scholarship because a modern Ethiopian metanarrative that silences the Tulama is incomplete since the Tulama territory has been the hub of modern Ethiopia, especially from the point of view of administration as well as economy. After all, the capital of the kingdom of Shawa initially and modern Ethiopia later, Finfinnee aka Addis Ababa, was established in the heartland of Tulama territory. Its hinterlands inhabited by the Tulama are the breadbaskets of the inhabitants of Addis Ababa and other major towns like Adama, Jimma, Harar, Dire Dawa, and others. Hence, we have tried to dig out there is a glaring gap in our knowledge about the issue under review, and a comprehensive study of the history of Tulama is yet a significant field of research for scholars. The thesis, therefore, explores the perplexing and dynamic relations between the Tulama and the kingdom of Shawa, which steadily encroached upon the abode of the former during the time under study.

It is imperative that if the Agaw, as argued by Tadesse Tamrat, were the “very basis on which the whole edifice of Aksumite Civilization was constructed,”<sup>112</sup> the Oromo in

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<sup>110</sup> Mogassa is Afaan Oromo term for adoption and how this helped the Oromo to assimilate non-Oromos will be dealt in detail in the thesis.

<sup>111</sup> . Bairu, Asma Gyorgis, p. 429

general, and the Tulama in particular are the basis of modern Ethiopia likewise. Moreover, as McCann argues, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the center of power had shifted from the north to the 'more vibrant frontier society of Shawa."<sup>113</sup> Moreover, the Tulama have been the bridge between southern Oromo and Southern Nations and Nationalities on the one hand and northern Ethiopia on the other hand. The interaction between the Tulama and the Kingdom of Shawa also foreshadowed the interaction between the people of the south and the modern Ethiopian Empire.

### **Organization of the study**

The thesis has an introductory part and nine full-fledged chapters. The introduction part explores the place of the Tulama Oromo in the Ethiopianists and the Oromo-centric historiography. Moreover, the theoretical framework and the major canonical works on the history of Tulama have also been identified and briefly surveyed here.

If the introductory part is devoted to conceptual and historiographical issues, the first chapter should be devoted to the substantive issues. Accordingly, attempts have been made to delineate the geographical setting of Shawa and its etymological origin. Most scholars, hitherto, presume that the Shawan plateau

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<sup>112</sup> Tadesse, "Ethnic Interaction and Integration in Ethiopian History: The Case of Gafat," p. 7.

<sup>113</sup> McCann, *From Poverty to Famine*, p. 19.

served as the geopolitical center of the highland Christian kingdom and was dominated by the Amharic speakers for centuries up to the sixteenth century, and the Oromo were assumed as 'newcomers'. Nonetheless, recently a new counter-narrative emerged, which claims the presence of the Oromo within the medieval Christian kingdom, at least in and south of the modern province of Shawa. Therefore, the chapter attempts to make a critical reappraisal of the population of the Shawan Plateau up to the sixteenth-century eventful population movement.

The second chapter analyses the settlement of the predominantly pastoralist Oromo on the Shawa plateau and its immediate aftermath. The chapter also sheds light on the patterns of settlement and interaction among the population of the Shawan plateau in general and the Oromo and the Amhara in particular. The third chapter deals with the genesis of the Shawan kingdom, and how the fusion and fission between the notables which belonged to the Amhara and the Oromo communities led to the foundation of the Kingdom.

Chapter four examines the step by step encroachments of the Shawan kingdom on the Karrayyuu and the Tulama Oromo territories from ca. 1700 to 1813 that is from its inception during the time of Nagasi Krestos (d. 1703) up to the end of a brief but eventful reign of Wassan Sagad (1808-1913). The fifth chapter explores the most sporadic territorial expansion made by the Shawan Kingdom against the Tulama under Sahla Sellase for about thirty years. Chapter six dissects the

dynamic relations between King Sahla Sellase and the Tulama notables by about 1840.

The seventh chapter explains the uprising of the Tulama Oromo against the kingdom of Shawa after the death of Sahla Sellase on the one hand and how Hayla Malakot (1847-1855), Sahla Sellase's son and successor, tried to pacify the Tulama using both warfare and diplomacy on the other. Here, we have also shed some light on the relations between Bazzu Abbaa Dekker and Gobana Dachi during the period usually known as interregnum (1855-1865) and how their rapprochement impacted the relations between the Kingdom and the Tulama.

Last but not least, the final two chapters, eight and nine, examine the final conquest of Tulama by Menilek II and the foundation of his capital, Addis Ababa aka Finfinnee/ Shagar in the Tulama heartland.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

# **GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING AND THE PRE-SIXTEENTH CENTURY POPULATION OF THE SHAWAN PLATEAU**

### **The Geographical Setting and the Etymological Origin of the Term Shawa**

Physical and human agencies have played crucial roles in shaping historical processes. This is even more noticeable in countries like Ethiopia, often dubbed as a 'museum of peoples', and where there is a conspicuous altitudinal variation within a distance of a few kilometres. Cognizant of this fact, therefore, in the chapter, we shall make a concise recapitulation of the geographical setting and the etymology of the province known as Shawa and the peopling of the Shawan plateau.

The physical and cultural landscape of the Shawan region has been highly varied and complex. Likewise, the political status of Shawa has varied from time to time. The term Shawa emerged in conjunction with the Muslim Sultanate that flourished from the end of the ninth century until its conquest by another Muslim Sultanate, Ifat, by about 1285. After the occupation of the plateau by the Christian Kingdom, it became one of the provinces and the heartland of the Medieval Christian kingdom. After the wars of Imam Ahmad and the Oromo expansion of the sixteenth century, most parts of the Shawan plateau were settled by the Oromo, the Amhara remained in inaccessible parts of the north and northeast corners of

the plateau. The descendants of this Amhara group who founded the autonomous kingdom whose last ruler, Meniek II, also became the founder of the modern Ethiopian Empire.

From a physical point of view, the Shawan plateau is marked by the Cenozoic volcanic plateaus and mountains. In the north, it extends up to the confluence of the Abbay River and its tributary, the Bashelo. In the east, the edges of the plateau cut by horsts and grabens descend to the course of the middle-Awash river. In the west, the highlands are carved by the canyons of the Abbay tributaries (Wanchet, Jäma), while it is cumbersome to delineate the southern frontier explicitly.<sup>114</sup> However, no one gave us a more accurate and detailed geographical setting of the Shawan plateau than the first half of the nineteenth century European traveller and missionary, Ludwig Krapf who was in Shawa. Krapf writes,

*Shoa, in its widest sense, includes the whole of the Ethiopian highlands, which are bounded on the east by the Adal [Afar] desert, on the south by Hawash, on the west by Abai (Blue River), and on the north by ... [Muslim Oromo, i.e. Wallo Oromo]. In a more limited sense, it comprises the western portion of the highlands, which eastwards in the direction of Adal desert has received the name of Efat. This eastern section of the mountain-land comprises the provinces of Bulga, Fatigar [Fatagar], Menchar [Menjar] in the South, Argobba in the east, and Geddem and Efra [Efrata] in the north. Argobba includes the lowlands, which spread themselves towards the Adal desert and are inhabited by the [Muslims], partly under Shawan rule, partly as in the north, under that of the Wallo [Oromo].*

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<sup>114</sup> Encyclopedia Aethiopica, Vol, 4, (2010), P.552; Ege, p.35; Tekalign, "A city and Its Hinterlands," p. 7. The Awash River in some directions, especially in the Southeast, forms its boundary. See also, G.W.B Huntingford (trans, and ed), "The History of King Sarsa Dengel (Wanag Sagad) 1563-1597", (1976), pp. 283-284, who indicates that the Muger River marked the SW boundary of Shawa and Jama and Adabay Rivers marked its northern boundary.

Shoa (or the western highlands), in its narrower sense, comprise the provinces and districts of Tegulet, Shoa Meda, Morabietie, Mans, and Gesh.....<sup>115</sup>



Map 1. Medieval Ethiopia: Climate Zones and Regions adopted from [https://brill.com/view/book/edcoll/9789004419582/9789004419582\\_webready\\_content\\_m000\\_07.jpg](https://brill.com/view/book/edcoll/9789004419582/9789004419582_webready_content_m000_07.jpg)

<sup>115</sup> J.L. Krapf, *Travels, Researches, and Missionary Labour during the Eighteenth years Residence in Eastern Africa: Together with Journeys to Jagga, Usambara, Ukambani, Shoa, Abessinia and Khartum and a Coasting Voyage From Mombaz to Cape Delgado*(London: Forgotten Books, 2013( Originally published in 1860), p. 30.



The name Shawa first appeared in the annals of history as the name of the Muslim sultanate that came into being around the present-day eponymous plateau. The genesis of the Sultanate of Shawa is traditionally traced back to the end of the ninth century (896/7 AD) and was ruled by the dynasty called Makhzumi.<sup>116</sup> The origin and meaning of the term Shawa as applied to the sultanate is unclear, and was employed later to identify the entire highland south of the Wanchit- Addabay Valley stretching up to the Awash. Taddesse claims it is baffling to depict whether the Sultanate of Shawa had ever included any of the areas in the highland part west of the escarpment of the plateau rather must be sought to the east of it.<sup>117</sup>

Taddesse further claims, by citing al- Umari, Shawa was one of the principal 'cities' of Ifat along with Biquzlar, Sime, and Adal around 1340s and did not refer to the plateau, which was by that time controlled by Amda Seyon and Sayfa Ara'd.<sup>118</sup> Be this as it may, the chronicler of Imam Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi<sup>119</sup> indicates that among the contingents that joined the Imam at a place called

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<sup>116</sup> The Arabic tradition dated back to the thirteenth century was discovered by Enrico Cerulli and translated into Italian as Enrico Cerulli, "Il Sultanato dello Scioa nel secolo XIII secondo un nuovo documento storico", *RSE* 1, 1941, pp. 5-42; Taddesse Tamrat, *Church and state*, pp. 124-25; J Spenser Trimingham, *Islam in Ethiopia* (London, New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 58. The Makhzumi were the well-known Meccan tribe to which Khalid b. al Walid, a militarily strategist and a companion of Prophet Muhammad and who played a pivotal role in the Muslim Arabs territorial expansion, belonged.

<sup>117</sup> Taddesse Tamrat, *Church and state*, pp.124-25.

<sup>118</sup> Al-Umari, IBN FADL ALLAH, *Masalik al-Absar fi Mamalik El Amsar; l'Afrique moins l'Egypte*, tr. By Gaudefroy-Demombynes, Paris, 1927, pp.8-9 cited in Taddesse Tamrat, *Church and state*, pp. 125 ff. 1.

<sup>119</sup> A leader of the Emirate of Adal, which conquered the Ethiopian Christian kingdom from 1529-1543. See his chronicle cited in the following note.

Baqal-zar were the 'tribes' of Shawa.<sup>120</sup> From the above discussion one may discern that for Taddesse both Biquizar and Shawa were the place names but for Arab Faqih, Biquizar was the place name whereas Shawa was the name of the 'tribe'. Biquizar is estimated to be located in the area north of the Kassam river, one of the tributaries of the Awash which originates from the Shawan plateau.<sup>121</sup>

Based on what we have seen so far, one may discern that the Sultanate of Shawa flourished around the eastern escarpment of the plateau. By citing Cerulli, which was also the major source used by Taddesse and Huntingford, Alessandro Gori, however, indicates that the sultanate can be located both in the eastern part of modern Shawa and in the "central core" of historical Shawa. In other words, the Sultanate flourished in the highland located south of the mountain chain of Tarma Bär and stretched up to Entoto, delimited westwards by the Mugär valley and eastwards by Ifat and Fätägar. Gori further maintains Walalah, the capital of the Sultanate, was tentatively identified by Cerulli as Wäläle, located south of Shano (in the valley of the Énkway River, in Sälale), although it is difficult to trace the ancient Muslim culture in this specific region.<sup>122</sup>

Despite Gori's claims, the toponyms and the genealogy of some of the families found in the area under study compel us to construe the Sultanate of Shawa's

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<sup>120</sup> Sihab ad-Din Ahmad bin Abd al-Qader bin Salem bin Utman also known as Arab Faqih. *Futuh Al-Habasha: The Conquest of Abyssinia by [16th Century]*, trans. Paul Lester Stenhouse with annotations by Richard Pankhurst. Hollywood, CA:Tsehai, 2003, pp.49-51.

<sup>121</sup> G.W.B Huntingford, *The Glorious Victories of Amda Seyon*( Oxford, 1965), pp. 20, 31, 37, 56-57, 106. \_\_\_\_\_ . *The Historical Geography of Ethiopia* ( London, 1989), pp. 89-90, 121.

<sup>122</sup> Alessandro Gori, "Sultanate of Shawa "in *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* , Vol, 4 ( 2010), pp. 553-54.

domain might have also encompassed parts of the central plateau inhabited by the Tulama. Even though it is difficult to verify with other sources, some of our informants in the locality claim that “durii Oromoon Islaama ture” which literary meant in the past the Oromo were Muslims.<sup>123</sup>

During the early centuries of its existence, arguably, the Sultanate of Shawa flourished on the mainland of the Shawan plateau, the areas currently inhabited by the Tulama. It is, however, plausible that later it was restricted to the eastern section or the hot lowlands east of the plateau as indicated by Taddesse Tamrat. This even seemed to have occurred when the Amharic speakers controlled the central part of the plateau; otherwise, Taddesse’s view may not help us for the early centuries. Apparently, during King Amda Seyon (1314-1344), the Christian kingdom controlled the central Shawan plateau and pushed the sultanate towards the escarpment. Even Taddesse himself thoroughly pinpoints that some of the ruling family of the Sultanate of Ifat, the sultanate that conquered and succeeded the Sultanate of Shawa in 1285, left the area near the then heartland of the Christian kingdom, the Shawan plateau, and moved southeastward over several hundred kilometers and founded a new sultanate that came to be known as the Sultanate of Adal.<sup>124</sup> Therefore, the Muslim Sultanates of Shawa also might have

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<sup>123</sup> Informants: Waaqshumee Badhaanee, Tufaa Washaaree and Mamo Kebede. Place names like Alii Doro, Alii Dheeraa, Abdalaa, are common in areas like Salale, one of the areas inhabited by the Tulama Oromo.

<sup>124</sup> Taddesse Tamrat, *Church and State*, pp.150-51.

been pushed towards the eastern escarpment of the plateau when the Amharic speakers came to control it gradually.

So far we have tried to identify the geographical setting of the Sultanate of Shawa, however, equally if not more important questions like the etymological origin of the term Shawa and the population who inhabited the area where the Sultanate came flourish awaits thorough investigation. To date, these issues have been shrouded in mystery and scholars have made a little effort to unpack them. For instance, Garry Salole, one of the scholars who attempted to deal with this issue, indicated that our knowledge of both the history of Shawa and its people is conjectura.<sup>125</sup>

One of the pieces of evidence that we have in this regard is a sixteenth-century document often known as the chronicle of Imam Ahmad Gragh initially written in Arabic and later translated into different languages, including the English version that we have used here. It indicates when Imam Ahmad was fighting with the Christian kingdom, the 'tribes of Shoa and Hargaya rallied to him [Imam Ahamd]<sup>126</sup> But it does not help us discern the identity of these so-called' tribes' and the languages they spoke.

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<sup>125</sup> Garry Salole, "Who are the Shoans?" *Horn of Africa* Vol. II, No. III (New Jersey, 1979), p. 20; Sisay Megersa , *Amhara-Oromo Ethnic Interaction in Salale, Ethiopia from 1941-200* ( Saarbrucken, Germany: VDM Verlag Dr. Muller Aktiengesellschaft & Co.KG, 2009), p.13.

<sup>126</sup> Arab Faqih, pp.50-51.

However, Mekuia Bulcha recently came up with a fascinating story and indicates there are three relevant sources of information for our present purpose of establishing the origin of the name Shawa both as the name of the sultanate and the plateau. His first hypothesis claims the term Shawa might have been the corrupt form of Shuwa, an Arabic-speaking nomadic group who lived in northeast Africa and were moving in the Sahel corridor in the western direction in the sixteenth century. It was not taken seriously by Mekuria himself.<sup>127</sup> The second and third hypotheses are fascinating. For his second hypothesis, he relied on the chronicle of Imam Ahmad. He argues that it is imperative to note that the term Shawa is mentioned alongside the *Gidayah*, “who were and still are inhabitants of the Shawan Plateau”.<sup>128</sup> Mekuria further maintains that the geographical settings of both the sultanate of Shawa and *Gidayah*<sup>129</sup> were on the eastern section of the present-day Shawan Plateau.<sup>130</sup> He concludes that it is highly likely that a group of people known as Shawa settled on the plateau at the time.<sup>131</sup>

Mekuria also argues it is highly likely that a community called Shawa lived in *Shawa Meda* and is sound to consider the locality *together* with “*Laalo-Meder* (land of the Laalo), *Mama-Meder* (land of the Mamma), and *Geera-*

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<sup>127</sup> Mekuria, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation*, PP. 147-150.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid. Similarly Tadesse also indicates that the Gidaya and Haddimora were the allies of the Sultanate of Shawa.

<sup>129</sup> Mekuria, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation*, p. 148, indicates that the latter was also spelt or corrupted as *Geda*, *Gadaawi*, or *Jedaya*.

<sup>130</sup> However, Merid Wolde Aregay, p. 42, pushes its location further to the east, i.e., to the Charchar plateau in Harar. Since Merid’s research deals with the turn of the sixteenth century, it was highly likely that they might have been pushed to the east by both the Christian kingdom and the Sultanate of Ifat.

<sup>131</sup> Mekuria, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation*, p.148.

*Meder* (land of the Geera) all of which are in the same area” as the abodes of the Oromo.<sup>132</sup> He further maintains a suffix *meder* is an Amharic term for land while Laalo, Maama, and Geera are Oromo toponyms and ethnonyms. Hence, he concludes, the combination of the Amharic term *meder* and the names of the Oromo *gosa* Laalo, Geera, and Maama were used to witness that the localities in the northern part of the Shawan Plateau were once upon a time populated by the Oromo.<sup>133</sup>

As one can discern from Mekuria’s conjecture, the term Shawa was either the name of the Oromo *gosa* or the place name like Laalo, Geera, and Mamma, which are indisputably Afaan Oromo terms. However, he speculates that we do not have the Oromo subgroup named Shawa, they might have been either annihilated, sold into slavery, or migrated southward during the punitive raids carried out by Emperor Galawdewos (r. 1540-59) against groups who supported the force of Imam Ahmad, when the latter dominated the Christian kingdom for almost a decade and a half.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid. , p.149

<sup>133</sup> Ibid. He also indicates the terms *meder* and *meda* might have been used interchangeably.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid; See also Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State*, p. 99; Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and The Christian Kingdom*, P. 71, who argue that during the reign of another Christian Kingdom, more than two centuries before the reign of Gelawedewos, namely during the reign of Amda Seyon (1314-1344) the warfare and slaving raids appear to have led to more displacement of people, which seem to have altered the pattern of ethnic distribution.

For his third hypothesis, he used a monograph of Braukamper<sup>135</sup> and the oral tradition collected by the Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau (OCTB).<sup>136</sup> Using the latter document, he maintains that Shawa was one of the minute lineage groups in the Oromo kinship arrangement. On the other hand, he warns us, the fact that Shawa was an Oromo lineage name might not necessarily signify that they had been Oromo from the outset. He further writes:

The Oromo *mogaasaa* system mentioned earlier should be taken into account. By and large, it is possible to interpret the origin of the name of the existing Shawa descent group in two ways; first, it is plausible to argue that the present Shawa descent group might have been established by families who migrated from the Shawan Plateau to Arsi and had adapted the name in memory of their place of origin. Second, it is also possible to construe that they could be descendants of those ancient Shawans who might have survived the *post-jihad* persecution mentioned above and fled to the southern highlands.<sup>137</sup>

However, eminent Ethiopian scholars who specialized in the medieval period of the history of Ethiopia disagree with Mekuria's conjecture. Scholars like Taddesse, Merid, and Braukamper, among others, pushed the geographical location of the Sultanate of Shawa either to the east of the escarpment of the Shawan plateau or further east to the Haraghe plateau. However, they were

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<sup>135</sup> Ulrich Braukamper, *Islamic History and Culture in Southern Ethiopia: Collected Essays* (Munster, Hamburg, and London: Lit Verlag, 2004), p.4, although Mekuria disagreed with the Braukamper, who indicates that the people known as Shawa did not survive the Oromo expansion. Braukamper on the other hand maintains, "the name Shawa existed "as a denomination of an ethnic group in western Charchar, but did not survive the Oromo invasion of the sixteenth century." Braukaper does not tell us the source of his information and the identity of the "ethnic" group he mentions.

<sup>136</sup> Alemayehu Haile *et al*, *History of the Oromo to the Sixteenth Century*. Mekuria claims that since the oral tradition was collected by actual fieldwork in which over 300 knowledgeable Oromo elders were involved, its ethnographic information on the Oromo lineage designation should be quite credible.

<sup>137</sup> Mekuria, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation*, P.150.

silent when, how, and why Shawa started to identify the plateau in the central part of the present-day Ethiopian Empire State.

In line with Mekuria's argument, Bairu Tafla also claims a plain located to the northwest of the town of Dabra Berhan inhabited by the Galan and Oborii, the Tulama subgroups, is called *Shawa Meda*.<sup>138</sup> He further notes that Shawa Meda "...is probably a descriptive phrase-making distinction between the flat and mountainous areas of Shawa rather than a proper name of the area."<sup>139</sup> Similarly, the nineteenth-century European travelers and missionaries, Isenberg and Krapf indicated that Shawa Meda was an extensive plain or level country inhabited by a non-Christian Oromo.<sup>140</sup>

Similar to Mekuria Bulcha's conjecture, Alemayehu Haile came up with an equally fascinating hypothesis concerning the derivation of the term Shawa. He explains the origin of the name Shawa is associated with the coming of the Muslim Arabs to the area.<sup>141</sup> When the Muslim Arabs came to proselytize the local people or for

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<sup>138</sup> The Amharic term meda refers to an open plain.

<sup>139</sup> Bayru, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 967. Inhabited by Galan (the term Galan and Jidda are used interchangeably as Jidda were the elders of Galan and Galan, in turn, the elders of Tulama) and Oborii. We have to note here that it must not be by coincidence that Gedda or Jidda was located by both the sixteenth century and nineteenth-century sources at almost similar locality.

<sup>140</sup> C.W. Isenberg, and J.L Krapf, *Journal of the Rev. Messrs. Isenberg and Krapf: Detailing Their Proceeding in the Kingdom of Shoa and Journey in Other Parts of Abyssinia in the years 1839, 1840, 1841 and 1842 London, 1843* (London, 1843), p. 290.

<sup>141</sup> Alemayehu Haile, *Sirna Gadaa Oromoo Tuulamaa (The Tulama Oromo Gada System)* Vol. 1 (Finfinnee, 2014), p.37. Alemayehu argues before the coming of the Arabs, Tulama had inhabited the locality, and hence the Arabs settled on the Tulama Oromo territory.



trade, they were identified as Araba Gubbaa<sup>142</sup> and Warrra Shee<sup>143</sup> by the local people. As a result, the term Shee gradually changed to ‘Shayee’ and the latter, in turn, to Shawa. He further indicates the area where the Muslim Arabs settled initially was a small locality around the northern part of the Tulama territory,<sup>144</sup> later encompassed the southern part of the Tulama territory and some areas inhabited by the Macha Oromo.<sup>145</sup>

Based on what we have seen so far, our erudition on the origin of the term Shawa is a conjecture. It is, therefore, difficult to pinpoint with absolute certainty, the origin of the term and the identities of some of its inhabitants up to the sixteenth century.<sup>146</sup> Yet, there is no shadow of doubt; it initially appears in conjunction with the Muslim Sultanate that came into being on the mainland of the Horn of Africa, as we shall see. The extent and ethnoreligious composition of Shawa changed several times. For instance, it was the name of the province of the Christian Ethiopian Empire (“Old Shawa”) during the medieval period. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it indicated the Kingdom of Shawa (“Greater Shawa.”),

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<sup>142</sup> If the tradition collected by Alemayehu is trustworthy, the term Araba Gubbaa is Afaan Oromo in origin which means ‘Arabs who inhabit the highland area’ or ‘Highland Arabs’. Some people are known as Argobba in Ethiopia and if there is any relation between the two, Alemayehu is silent.

<sup>143</sup> The term Shee must have been the contract form of Sheikh. Warra is again Afaan Oromo word meant family, hence the family of Shee or Sheiks.

<sup>144</sup> It is not clear whether he is assuming that the Tulama Oromo were there when the Arabs came or he was referring to the area that was later occupied by the Tulama, following the sixteenth-century population movement.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> See Geatchew Haile, *Ya Abba Bahrey Dersetoch*, p. 97, who indicates, we do not know the origin and meaning of the term Shawa.

which again, later on, became the name of an administrative unit within the unified Empire after Menilek II came to power.<sup>147</sup>



Map 2 The Province of Shawa in the modern Map of Ethiopia,<sup>148</sup> adopted from [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/96/Ethiopia\\_%281991-1995%29.svg/800px-Ethiopia\\_%281991-1995%29.svg.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/96/Ethiopia_%281991-1995%29.svg/800px-Ethiopia_%281991-1995%29.svg.png)

## **The population of the Shawan Plateau before the sixteenth century: a Critical Review of the Presence of the Oromo on the Plateau**

<sup>147</sup> Alessandro Gori, "History of Shawa", *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, Vol, 4 (2010), pp. 552-554; Ege, p.35.

<sup>148</sup> Tulama settled in considerable parts of north, central, and Eastern parts of the modern province of Shawa, we do also have Tulama gosa in the Borana sub-province of Wallo, which bordered Shawa in the northwest.

So far, we have attempted to shed some light on the geographical setting of the Shawan plateau and the etymological origin of the term Shawa. But equally, if not more, a question about the population of the Shawan plateau before the sixteenth century which remains open to polemical debates, thus far, also needs further investigation in the thesis. The dominant narrative in Ethiopian history purports that the Oromo settled on the Shawan plateau in the second half of the sixteenth century. Recently, however, this view has been seriously challenged by scholars. Although we may run the risk of going too far deep into the medieval period, it is not farfetched to assume that the thesis will be incomplete if it fails to address such kinds of scholarly puzzles. Therefore, we found it imperative to devote a few parts of the thesis to this issue. On the other hand, since the traces of the presence of the Oromo within the boundaries of the Christian Kingdom are much larger than the Shawan plateau, we shall mainly focus on the Shawan plateau unless we find it very much important to further explain this issue.

Our knowledge about the early history of the Shawan plateau in general and its peopling in particular is incomplete. Moreover, the scanty literature that we have is burdened with polarized debates. Hence, it was for this reason that Garry Salole rightly argues, “our Knowledge of [Shawan] history, like our knowledge of past and present [Shawan] society, is largely conjectural.”<sup>149</sup> According to Tadesse, it was said to have been occupied by the Cushitic language speaking

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<sup>149</sup> Garry Salole, “Who are the Shoans” *Horn of Africa* vol II, No. III ( New Jersey, 1979), P. 20

people called the Sidama, who ostensibly occupied the vast area south of the Blue Nile.<sup>150</sup>

Tadesse further indicates the South Arabian settlers began to exert pressure and, in due course, came to dominate politically and culturally the Cushitic language speakers of the Ethiopian highland. However, it was after the foundation of the new dynasty by Yikunno Amlak that Amhara subjugated the northern part of the Shawan plateau, especially following the rise of King Amda Seyon (1314-1344).<sup>151</sup> Tadesse does not help us to distinguish the ethnic composition of this locality; he branded them simply as Sidama. Since we do have dozens of Cushitic language speakers in the Ethiopian region, we may not exclude Oromo, as they are the most populous and an integral part of the Cushitic language speakers. As will be elaborated in this section, we do have toponyms and ethnonyms, albeit very few, related to the Oromo, and tempt us to suspect the presence of the Oromo in some of the areas considered as the abode of the Sidama.

Apparently, the dominant narrative in Ethiopian historiography limits the presence of the Oromo on the Shawan plateau to the period after the second half sixteenth century.<sup>152</sup> Nonetheless, some scholars nowadays come to question this view.

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<sup>150</sup> Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State*, p.6.; See also Abir, *Era of the Princes*, p. 73 who indicates that the Sidama were people of Cushitic origin who inhabited southern Ethiopia.

<sup>151</sup> Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State*, pp.6-7, 119-21.

<sup>152</sup> See, among others, Donald Levine, *Grater Ethiopia*, p. 78 ; Darkwah, p.5; Abir, p. XXII; Ege, p.1; Yates "Invisible Actors", Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State*, pp. 298, 302.

The leading scholar in this regard is Mohammed Hassen, who argues that as the Amhara people moved from their original homeland dubbed as Beta Amhara, which was later named Wallo, to the South, the Oromo, on the other hand, moved from the area around Bale to the north presumably before the sixteenth century. Although both groups might not have moved simultaneously, Mohammed claims, the two groups perhaps met in the present-day region of Shawa.<sup>153</sup> Mekuria Bulcha agrees with Mohammed Hassen and even made a bold gesture regarding this issue. Hence Mekuria writes:

*....the Shawan Plateau was the location of Oromo political centres in the earlier part of the medieval period. I will also argue that the Shawan Plateau constitutes a perennial frontier where Abyssinian expansion and Oromo resistance have been colliding over the centuries. It was in this region that the Amhara seem, in the first place, to have encountered the Oromo and that it was through their constant contacts with the Galan, the largest sub-branch of the Tulama Oromo, that.... the Amhara start to use [a] word Galla<sup>154</sup> to mean Oromo.<sup>155</sup>*

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<sup>153</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p.5.

<sup>154</sup> Mekuria, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation*, pp. 134, 170. Mekuria came up with thought provoking view pertaining to the etymological origin of the term "Galla". He claims that the neighbours of the Oromo perhaps, the Amharic speakers, 'mistook the term Galan for Galla'. He claims that term "Galla" arguably derived from a locality or a community called Galan. He further indicates that the Amhara had been referring to the Oromo both as the "Gallans" and the "Gallas". "It seems that the phonemic discrepancy occurred because the letter 'n' in Galan is silent and it could be inaudible to ears unused to the Oromo language. Phonemic discrepancies in denominations occur frequently when and where groups belonging to different languages and language families meet. The divergence between the autonym Galan and its pronunciation by the Amhara as Galla is minor. I believe this to be *the* explanation for why the Galan were called Galla by the Amhara. It also seems that the pejorative meanings which it came to connote were added to the term later. This suggests a long history of contact and conflict between the Amhara and Galan. Although Galla was a result of a phonemic distortion, it was generalized to all those who spoke the Oromo language, who were non-Christians and were considered enemies of the Amhara"; See also Job Ludolph, *A New History of Ethiopia: Being A Full and Accurate*

In addition to the above two scholars, who challenged the view which limits the earliest possible arrival of the Oromo within the boundaries of the Christian Kingdom to the first half of the sixteenth century, we do have other highly enlightening works which discuss in-depth the presence of the Oromo within the boundaries of the Christian Kingdom.<sup>156</sup> All of them have heavily relied on Christian sources and sources principally produced by the Portuguese and Arab writers. It is fascinating that the same source has been used by these scholars, who specialized in the medieval period, but Mohammed claims there are two main reasons why the latter did not suspect the presence of the Oromo within the Christian Kingdom's frontiers. The first reason was the high regard these scholars have for Abba Bahrey's *Zenahu le Galla*,<sup>157</sup> which indicated that the Oromo arrived in the Southern province of the Christian Kingdom in the 1520s. Secondly, the long-held view among scholars that placed the cradle of the Oromo either in the northern part of the present-day republic of Somalia or in the southern part of the present-day Ethiopia or northern Kenya which was presumed to be far away from the Southern limits of the Christian Kingdom.<sup>158</sup> Consequently, they failed to

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*Description of the Kingdom of Abessinia Vulgary, though Erroneously called the Empire of the Prester John* (London: Samuel Smith, 1682), p. 203 where the term 'Gallans' not Galla is used.

<sup>155</sup> Mekuria, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation*, p. 134, 170.

<sup>156</sup> See, for instance, Negaso Gidada, *History of the Sayyoo Oromoo of Southwestern Wallaga, Ethiopia from about 1730 to 1886* (Addis Ababa: Mega Printing Press, 2001), Chapter 2; Alemayehu et al, *History of the Oromo to the Sixteenth Century*, 2nd edition (Finfinne: Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau, 2006), pp. 42-76.

<sup>157</sup> It was written in 1593 and is the useful written material we have on the sixteenth-century Oromo population movement. It was written in Geez and translated into several languages including English and Amharic, see, for instance, C.F. Beckingham and G.W.B. Huntigford, eds and trans, *Some Records of Ethiopia 1593-1646*, Being Extracts from Almeida's History of *High Ethiopia or Abbasia* and Bahrey's History of the Galla (London: Printed for Hakluyt Society, 1954); Getachew Haile, *Ya Abba Bahrey Dersetoch* (Minnesota, 2002).

<sup>158</sup> Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, pp. 62-63.

envisage the presence of the Oromo in the Medieval Christian Kingdom in general and around the area under study in particular.

Contrary to the dominant narrative in Ethiopian historiography, we have sources that witness the presence of the Oromo in the Christian Kingdom in general and the area under study in particular. The most important and the earliest of these sources is the chronicle of the most expansionist sovereign of the Christian Kingdom, Emperor Amda Seyon (1313-1314), during the medieval period. A reference to the nowadays pejorative and defunct term Galla <sup>159</sup> is made in the Chronicle. It specifies, “The king continued his march [from Dawaro] and came to Gala [Galla] on the 28th day of Miyazia [1329]; here he celebrated the feast of Easter... with joy and happiness. Here he left his camp.... and set out to attack the district of Samarya ... the king set out from the place Gala [Galla] with his army on the 7th day of Sane[ June]”<sup>160</sup>

From the above quotation one can discern that there was apparently either a territory or the people or both named “Galla” within the boundaries of the Christian Kingdom by the fourteenth century A.D. In relation to this, Mohammed Hassen argues by citing the French translation of the same document that there were a people known as ‘Galla’ and the region known as *Hagara Galla* (the country of

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<sup>159</sup> AS we have seen above, the term Galla was used to identify the Oromo up to the outbreak of the 1974 Ethiopian Revolution,

<sup>160</sup> G.W.B. Huntingford (trans and ed.), *The Glorious Victories of Amda Seyon, King of Ethiopia* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1965) , pp. 62, 67.

the Galla)”<sup>161</sup>, ostensibly in the original Geez version of the chronicle. He further maintained that the information contained in the chronicle is vital concerning the early history of the Oromo for the following major reasons:

*First, it confirms the presence of sedentary Oromo groups around the Awash River during the 1330s. Second, it implies that Amda-Siyon may have conducted war against some rebellious Oromo groups. Third, as the result of Christian and Muslim conflicts and drought and famine that appear to have engulfed the region during the reign of Amda-Siyon, a number of Oromo groups were probably displaced and forced to move further to the south beyond the control of the Christian kingdom. Finally, it appears that the establishment and expansion of the Amhara Kingdom of Shawa since 1270 may have precipitated the process of the displacement of some of the Oromo-speaking groups in the region and probably halted the northward flow of Oromo penetration from the south, especially during the reign of Amda-Siyon that, during its southward expansion, organized regular garrisons along the frontiers. Nevertheless, some Oromo groups who were already living in the region of Shawa before the formation of the Shawan Amhara Empire during the first half of the fourteenth century remained an integral part of that empire during and after the fourteenth century.*<sup>162</sup>

Meanwhile, Alaqa Taye claims that the Oromo came to Ethiopia not in the sixteenth century, during the reign of Lebna Dingil (1508-1540), rather they came during the reign of Marra Takla Haymanot, one of the rulers of the Zagwe dynasty. He further maintains that his version of history is different, especially from what the expatriate scholars wrote. To borrow his actual words: ፈረንጅኝ ስለ [ኦሮሞ] የፃፉት በራስ ምርምርና እውቀት ነዉ። እኛ ግን ካገሩ ዉስጥ የሚገኘዉን አዛዥ ጢኖ የፃፈዉን አይተን ነዉ። “What the Europeans have written on the [Oromo] is from research and their own insight. But we have seen what one who is of the country,

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<sup>161</sup> Jules M. Perruchon, ‘Histoire des guerres d’Amda Seyon, roi d’ethiopie’ *Journal of Asiatique* 8v (1889), PP. 294, 305 cited in Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p.63.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*



Azazh Tino, has written from what is found within the country”<sup>163</sup> Alaqa Taye has used the material produced on the history of the Oromo by a chronicler of Emperor Susenyos (1607-1632), Azazh Tino. Unfortunately, it is difficult to locate the whereabouts of the material used by Alaqa Taye in the first quarter of the twentieth century.<sup>164</sup>

Nagasso Gidada claims there were Oromos in the area under study as early as the Zagwe period. To use his own words, “Oromoo groups were living in North and central Shawaa at least from the Gibe up to the lower Awaash during the Zagwe period (1137-1270) and during the reign of the Ethiopian kings such as Yekuno Amlaak (r.1270-1285), Amda Tsiyon (r.1314-1344), Zar'a Yaaqob (r. 1434-1468) and Lebna Dengel(r.1508-1540).”<sup>165</sup> How he came to identify the years is vague, although as he has stated on the same pages, one may construe how the Oromo came to settle in different areas starting from MaddaaWalaabuu (the homeland of the Oromo) based on genealogy, that is, how many generations it took to reach a locality and for how many generations they stayed at a locality and so on.

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<sup>163</sup> Alaqa Tayye Gabra Maryam, *Ya Itiyophiyaa Hizb Tarik* ( Addis Ababa: Central Printing Press, 1964 EC), p. 62; See also the Amharic and the translated English version by Grover Hudson and Tekeste Negash (trans.), *History of the People of Ethiopia by Alaqa Tayye Gabra Maryam( Asmara , 1922), p.63*; Bairu Tafla, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works* , p. 137.

<sup>164</sup> See also Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 77.

<sup>165</sup> Negaso Gidada, *History of the Sayyoo Oromoo of Southwestern Wallaga, Ethiopia from about 1730 to 188* (Addis Ababa: Mega Printing Press, 2001), pp.29-30.

The earliest relevant information which gives us a clue about the presence of the Oromo within the area under study before the sixteenth century is the hagiography of Abba Libanos, who possibly lived around AD 1015 in the area, locally known as Zegamel, Dabra Asbo, or Dabra Libanos. Abba Libanos was banished to the remote Monastery of Dabra Damo when the local ruler named Hora killed about twelve of his students.<sup>166</sup> It is interesting to note here that Hora is a popular Oromo proper name to date. If this hagiography is credible, Oromo had settled in the Salale area, one of the integral parts of Tulama territory, as early as the eleventh century. Hence, this compels us to critically evaluate the available scanty sources carefully since they might have huge repercussions on the history of the interaction between the Oromo and other peoples of the medieval Christian Kingdom in general and between the Amhara and the Oromo on the Shawan plateau in particular

Another important material in this regard is titled, *The Book of the Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*<sup>167</sup> which mentions the names of thirty people and countries among which Shawa, Libi or Liba are pertinent. Mohammed indicates Libi or Liba was said to have been identified as Libaan by the translators of the material (Perruchon, Basset, and Budge). Libaan is one of the well-known Oromo

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<sup>166</sup> Alemayehu Haile et al., *History of the Oromo to the Sixteenth Century*, p. 62. See also E.A.W. Budge, *the Life of Takla Haymdnot in the version of Dabra Libanos and the Miracles of Takla Haymanot in the version of Dabra Libanos* (London, 1906),pp. 187-89 ; Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 77.

<sup>167</sup> The author of this material is believed to be Bahayla Mikael. See Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 77 for comments on the material and E. A. W. Budge (trans. and ed), *The Book of the Mysteries of Heaven and the Earth* (London: Oxford University Press, 1935) for full information about the material; see also <https://ancientsacredtextblog.wordpress.com> (translated from the French version of the text published by J. Perruchon)

subgroups names scattered across a large area inhabited by the Oromo including the current Tulama territory. For instance, one of the six sons of Galan often known as Jahan Galan (which is traditionally assumed to be the eldest son of Tulama was Libaan).<sup>168</sup> Mohammed further explains that the Oromo term Galan also epitomizes the Oromo individual name.<sup>169</sup>

We also have another clue about the presence of the Oromo within the boundaries of the early medieval Christian kingdom. It is fascinating that this story is related to the origins of Yikunno Amlak (1270-85), the first king of the Christian kingdom after the so-called restoration of the “Solomonic” Dynasty by overthrowing the Zagwe Dynasty. Taddesse, for instance, indicates that the family history and childhood life of Yikunno Amlak are shrouded in mystery. Tradition has it that on his father’s side, he was the descendant of Dilna’od, the last king of the Aksumite dynasty toppled by the Zagwe. “His mother is nevertheless said to have been ‘one of the slaves of a rich Amhara chief in Sagarat.”<sup>170</sup> Meanwhile, by citing Conti Rossini, Mohammed Hassen indicates, “the mother of Yekunno Amlak was a slave of Commander Challa.”<sup>171</sup> Apparently, again it is difficult to decipher the origins of the mother of Yekunno Amalk. However, if Conti Rossini is correct, Challa, her master was/is the personal name of an Oromo. From this, we may

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<sup>168</sup> Informants: *Abbaa Gadaa* Bayyanaa Sanbatoo (Biishooftuu, July 7, 2017) and *Abbaa Gadaa* Nagasaa Nagawoo (Adulaalaa, July 10, 2017); Tsegaye, 2002, p.11; Alemayehu et al, P.118. Similarly the Macha OrOmo who are found on the Shawan Plateau are said to be the Sons of Libaan , namely Woliso, Ammaayyaa and Kutaye.

<sup>169</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 78.

<sup>170</sup> Taddesse Tamrat, *Church and State*, p. 66. Sagarat is located in the present-day South Wallo, on the way from Lake Hayq to Bagemdir.

<sup>171</sup> Mohammed, *the Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 78.

discern that there were Oromo settlers in the heartland of the Christian Kingdom, Bete Amhara, at least in the thirteenth century which helps us to extend our historical wisdom about the history of Ethiopia, in general, the Oromo- Amhara interaction, in particular.

Moreover, we have bits and pieces of information, which indicate the presence of the Oromo within the boundaries of the Christian Kingdom before the sixteenth century. Tradition has it that Yikunno Amlak established a church of Saint Gabriel at a locality known as “Galla” Gurr, in Manz. The term Gurr is a derivative of an *Afaan* Oromo word which means a “pile of rocks” in English.<sup>172</sup> In this regard, Mohammed raised the following thought-provoking question: “How could a village be called Galla, if that name was not already familiar even before the reign of Yekunno Amlak?”<sup>173</sup> It is interesting that in the area not far from Manz, there is a river named the Gurr river, a tributary of the Jamaa river in Salale, on which a bridge was said to have been constructed by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. One can also observe piles of rocks, especially where the bridge was constructed. The bridge is located at a distance of about five hundred metres from the highway that runs from Addis to Gojjam and the famous Dabra Libanos Monastery bifurcate. Therefore, the presence of ‘a village named after Oromo at this juncture compels us to suspect the presence of the Oromo on the Shawan plateau during the time under discussion.

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<sup>172</sup> Alemayehu Haile et al., *History of the Oromo to the Sixteenth Century*, P. 47.

<sup>173</sup> Mohammed, *the Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 79.

Our informants from Manz also indicate that there is a spring in Mama Meder, part of Manz, which is known as “Galla wuha”, which meant, “Water of the Galla”.<sup>174</sup> These are among the testimonies concerning the presence of the Oromo in this historically significant part of Shawa, Manz. In other words, this kind of information is an alarm bell for historians and our Knowledge about the History of the peopling of the Shawan plateau in general and Amhara –Oromo interaction in the area, in particular, is at an infant stage. It is indicated elsewhere that Manz is considered one of the few areas where the Oromos did not reach, but this kind of information casts a shadow of doubt on this conventionally held view. Perhaps, it could be one of the few parts of the Christian kingdom where the Oromo penetration seems to have been at its weakest; otherwise, it is inappropriate to consider the locality was entirely uninhabited by the Oromo.

According to the hagiography of Abuna Zena Markos of Morat district,<sup>175</sup> who was contemporary of Yikunno Amlak, the Oromo disturbed his disciples when they were preparing the feast for the abun's death memorial service (ተዝካራቸዉን ሲያወጡ). In this relation, Professor Getachew Haile, an eminent Ethiopian philologist, argues although it is

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<sup>174</sup> Informants: Tekle Ferede (Jimma, July 23, 2017). I am deeply indebted to Dr Tekle Ferede for this information. He was born and grew up in Manz and indicates that such kind of naming places or things after Oromo is common in the area. Moreover, he argues that the Oromo traditional or customary practices like *ateetee* and *boraantichaa* are also rampant in the area. This is another testimony of cultural exchange between the Amhara and the Oromo in the Manz area. Tradition has it that there is also a locality known as Warqee Meder (land of Warqee) in Gera. Warqee is also an Oromo term for gold. It is fascinating it is not called Ya *Warqii Meder* (Warqii is an Amharic term for gold) rather Warqee meder.

<sup>175</sup> See Stitz, p. 72. Morat is a district located very much closer to the area under study and the aforementioned district of Manz, where the so Called Galla Guur is located. In the early days, Moret extended towards Insarro as well as Zegamal, Lowland areas near Dabra Libanos

difficult to claim all the Oromo entered the boundaries of the Ethiopian Empire by this time, these kinds of sources compel us to suspect the presence of the Oromo in the heartland of the empire and under its jurisdiction for a long period.<sup>176</sup>

The story is related to the medieval Kingdom of Damot, ruled by a king whose title was spelt in different ways like, for instance, Motalami<sup>177</sup>, Motolomi<sup>178</sup>, and Motilami<sup>179</sup> is also pertinent to the issue under investigation. Tadesse claims until the sixteenth century, Damot denoted the area that extended from the Abbay River in the north up to Enraya in the south, from sources of the Awash river in the east up to the Dhidhessaa River in the west. Its eastern part also included the land of Hadya and Wolayta.<sup>180</sup> Merid also corroborates that Damot's territory extended northwards up to the Blue Nile and eastwards into western Shawa and Hadya.<sup>181</sup> Similarly, Asma Gyorgis substantiates Damot was the capital city of Hadya, and its territory stretched from Zayla (apparently from the coastal areas of the Indian Ocean) up to the White Nile in the east and west respectively, and up to the Chacha river in the north.<sup>182</sup> This means that considerable, if not all, part of the territory inhabited by the Tulama was once upon a time part of Damot. However, Asma Gyorgis's assertion is hyperbolic. Asma Gyorgis also posits that

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<sup>176</sup> Getachew Haile, *Ya Abba Bahrey Dersetoch*, p. 27 ;

<sup>177</sup> Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State* , pp. 121, 122, 161 , 166; Bairu Tafla , *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, P. 951

<sup>178</sup> Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855-1991*(Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press, 2002), p. 16.

<sup>179</sup> Merid, p. 73.

<sup>180</sup> Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State*, p. 121, foot note 1.

<sup>181</sup> Merid, p. 73

<sup>182</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 215.

its principal inhabitants were the Hadya. Meanwhile, Takla Tsadik Mekuria further complicated this issue as follows:

እናታቸውን ማርከ የወሰደውን ሞተላሚን ግን የወለሞ ንጉሥ ግማሹ የዳሞት ንጉሥ እያለ ዱሑፍ ሁሉ የአንባቢያን አሳብ ሲያደናግር ይኖራል። ደንበኛውንና እውነተኛውን ታሪክ የተከተልን እንደሆነ የዳሞት ንጉሥ ብለን ልንጻፍ ልናነብ ይገባል። --- ግዛቱም በሸዋ ምዕራብ ከጎጃም ደቡብ ጀምሮ የዛሬውን የሊሙን የወለጋን የኖኖን የጨበን የጉራጌን የሶዶን የወለሞን --- አገር ሁሉ ሲገዛ ቆይቶ በሙጫረሽ በተጉለት ቡልጋ አልፎ የታወቀውን የይፋትን ባላባት ሳይቀር አሸንፎ ይገዛ ነበር።<sup>183</sup>

Motolomi, who once upon a time took hostage the mother of Abuna Takla Haymanot, was identified by some writers as King of Wolamo and by others as King of Damot. If we follow the regular and authentic history, he was the king of Damot, not Wolamo. His empire stretched from areas West of Shawa and South of Gojjam to the present-day Limmu, Wallagga, Nonnoo, Caboo, Gurage, Soddo, and Wolamoo...Later on, its domain encompassed Tagulat and Bulga, and even beyond, including the famous Sultanate of Ifat.

Francisco Alvarez, who was in Ethiopia in the 1520s, recorded detailed information about the territorial extent of Damot. He indicated it was located on the western peripheries of the empire, immediately south of the Abbay along the upper course of Gibe river, bordered by Gurage, Waj, and Fatagar in the southeast, and Gafat in the north.<sup>184</sup>

Based on what we have seen so far, one may conclude that Damot was one of the most powerful kingdoms, if any, which flourished in the southwestern part of present-day Ethiopia during the medieval period. Notwithstanding the above Takla Tsadik Mekuria's proposition, some writers associate the kingdom with Wolayta.

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<sup>183</sup>Takla Tsadik Mekuria , *Ya Itiyophia Tarik ka Atse Yekunno Amlak eska Atse Lebna Dengel*( Addis Ababa, 1966 E.C. ), P.13

<sup>184</sup> Francisco Alvarez, *The Prester John of the Indies: : A True Relation of the Lands of the Prester John being the Narrative of the Portuguese Embassy to Ethiopia in 1520*, ed. & tr. Lord Stanley , Beckingham & Huntingford, vol. II(Cambridge: The Hakluyt Society / Cambridge University Press, 1961) , Pp. 454-55 cited in Tsehail, p.39.

Some even claim that Motolomi founded a Wolayta Malla dynasty, which existed until the fifteenth century.<sup>185</sup> However, why they associate the kingdom with Wolayta is not well illustrated in these works except stating there are localities named after the famous medieval kingdom in Wolayta. Apparently, what those who associated Damot exclusively with Wolayta failed to recognize is that designating territories after Damot is not confined to the present-day Wolayta locality, for instance, we do have a similar name in Gojjam province. It seems that after the sixteenth-century population movement, the inhabitants of the Medieval Damot were dispersed in various directions and named localities in which they settled after their former kingdom.<sup>186</sup>

Like Takla Tsadik Mekuria, as we have seen above, other writers are skeptical about the association between Damot and Wlalayta. For instance, Tsehαι Berhane Sellassie and Mekuria Bulcha are among the scholars who doubt the association.<sup>187</sup> For instance, the latter claimed that there are pieces of evidence which testify the connection between the terms Motalami or Mooti Lammi and the Oromo as follows:

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<sup>185</sup> Bahru , *A History of Modern Ethiopia*, PP. 17-18; Abesha Shirko, “ A Study of Reconstructing the Historical Link between Wolaitta and Damot Kingdom of Wolaitta in Ethiopia”, *International Journal of English Language, literature and Humanities* vol. IV, Issue IV, April 2016.

<sup>186</sup> See Tsehαι Berhane-Sellassie, “*The Question of Wolamo and Damot,*” *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol.III, No. 1 (1975), p.39, who unravels that as a result of the Oromo population movement the people of Gafat and Damot were pushed to the area north of the Abbay river and the latter gave their name to a locality near the town of Dabra Markos; Bairu Tafla, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 902-903; Arab Faqih, p. 170, ff 432. The problem with Damot is that unlike Gafat for which we have conclusive evidence, we do not know who the people of Damot were, which Tsehαι refers to.

<sup>187</sup> See Tsehαι, p. 37; Mekuria, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation*, pp. 151-155



... Mooti Lammi" is an Oromo term meaning "king of the nation or posterity". Even the name of the place where his "palace" was located was called "Malbarede" ... "Malbarede" is also an Oromo term meaning "beautiful, the beautiful, or how beautiful it is!" However, notwithstanding the sociolinguistic evidence that suggests his Oromo identity, Mooti Lammi was described as the first king of Walaita who ruled "in the time of Yekuno Amlak (1268) [sic] a title and name which must have crept into tradition after the [Oromo] invasion of Ethiopia, for both these words are [Oromo], and mean 'king's posterity'.... How and why an Oromo term could creep into the title of a thirteenth century Walaita ruler is a mystery and was not explained by the two authors who actually claim that the Oromo arrived in Ethiopia in the sixteenth century. Thus, the proposition is not only logically implausible but also chronologically incorrect. It is questionable for geographical reasons as well: according to the sources, the person who bore this title burnt churches and took Christian captives in [the present-day] Salaale. This happened not in the kingdom of Walaita but about five hundred kilometers north of it on the Shawan Plateau. What was it that brought the king of Walaita to the Shawan Plateau? No explanation is given by those who have proposed that Mooti Lammi was a king of the Walaita.<sup>188</sup>

The unprecedented and contentious proposition by Mekuria is an alarm for medieval Ethiopian history students. It urges them to suspect terms which have meanings in *Afaan Oromo*, Mooti Laami, and Malbarede, might not be by coincidence come to be identified as the title of the king and the capital city of the kingdom, respectively. It seems that it was taken as the name of the king erroneously. Eminent Ethiopian historians like Merid<sup>189</sup> and Pankhurst<sup>190</sup> for instance, indicate that it was the title of the king. Similarly, one of the informants from Walaita reiterates that the term Motolomi has no meaning in the Walaita

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<sup>188</sup> Mekuria, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation*, pp. 152.

<sup>189</sup> Merid, p.73.

<sup>190</sup> Richard Pankhurst, *The Ethiopian Borderlands: Essays in Regional History from Ancient Times to The End of the 18th Century* (Lawrenceville and Asmara: The Red Sea Press, 1997), p.81.

language. He rather claims it was the title of a monarch who ruled Walaita and was later replaced by Kawo.<sup>191</sup>

Moreover, the hagiography of Abuna Qawesstos, written during the reign of Emperor Dawit (1380-1412), sheds some light on this issue. The hagiography refers to a locality known as ሀገረ ለጦጢ (which means a country known as Lammii), located on the Shawan plateau.<sup>192</sup> Apparently, Lammii is an Afaan Oromo term which means citizen. Moreover, the sixteenth-century document composed by the Yemeni writer further consolidates the above Mekuria's proposition. The writer identifies Jimma as a name of a particular person<sup>193</sup>, and place<sup>194</sup> Similarly, Merid mentions Jimma along with Gafat and Shinasha as the inhabitants of the area that lies between the Gibe River and the Blue Nile<sup>195</sup>, which exactly corresponds with

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<sup>191</sup> Informant: Yigezu Dana (Jimma, December 2016). He has an MA in history and wrote his thesis on the political history of Walayta. He got the information from the informants he interviewed in Wolayta. He further told me that traditionally it is claimed that the palace of Motolomi was on Damot Mountain, which is found near the present town of Wolayta Soddo. He also told me that the precipice named Gerar in the hagiography of Abuna Takla Haymanot known as Grara precipice is found in the Soddo Zuria district of the current Wolayta zone, near a small town known as Dalbo. See Budge, *The Life of Takla Haymanot*, p. 30. But the geographical location of Damot as indicated in the hagiography is much larger, "Takla Haymanot dwelt in the country of Damot for a period of twelve years, and he filled with a doctrine all the province thereof, even as far as the land of Barya, and as far as the river GEYON ( Nile), and as far as the land of Humal and all the cities in the neighbourhood of Damot believed in Christ..." p. 142.

<sup>192</sup> Gadla Qawestos, p. 121 cited in <http://www.danielkibret.com> (Daniel Kibret, "Daniel Kibret's Views: Reflections on Ethiopia's history, Culture, Religion, Politics and Tradition", October 2, 2018, / accessed on 12/12/2018.

<sup>193</sup> Arab Faqih, p. 56.

<sup>194</sup> Arab Faqih, pp. 169-170, indicates that the army of King Lebna Dingil comprised of Gurage, Gafat, and Damot people from Enarya, Zait, and Jimma; See also Mohammed Hassen, *the Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 73, who argues that Jimma is an Oromo personal name, the name of a *gosa* as well as the name of a place.

<sup>195</sup> Merid, pp.55,77, on the map Merid locates Jimma in two areas, the first one is around the present-day Jimma, where he mentions it as Gibe Jimma, apparently around the Gilgel Gibe area. The second one is between West Shawa (the Guder river) and East Wallagga (Choman Swamp).

the locality most sources indicate to be the heartland of the Kingdom of Damot. Alemayehu Haile also posits that Jimma that Jimma is the most popular place name in the Western part of Ethiopia. For instance, he argues that we have several places named after Jimma in Wallagga province itself, namely Jimma Arjoo, Jimma Raaree, and Jimma Gannatii, among others. On the other hand, he also indicates Jimma is the major Oromo *gosa* who founded their *Gada* center at Odaa Hullee.<sup>196</sup>

Meanwhile, according to Mohammed Hassen the Ethiopian Orthodox Church literature “provides us with bits and pieces of evidence that, when taken together, prove the presence of some Oromo groups in the region of Katata<sup>197</sup> and Grarya,”<sup>198</sup> two localities which were perhaps found on the Shawan plateau.<sup>199</sup> The most important documents in this regard is the hagiography of *Abuna Takla*

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<sup>196</sup> Alemayehu Haile, *Seenaa Oromoo Hanga Jaarraa 20ffaa (A History of the Oromo up to the 20th century)* (Finfinne, 2016), pp. 214 -215. On top of that there is formerly a sub-province and currently a zone and a town named Jimma in the Southwest part of Ethiopia, One of the areas where the Oromo monarchs known as the Jimma Kingdom aka Jimma Abba Jifar came into being.

<sup>197</sup> Katata is perhaps located in northern part of Shawa either in Tagulat or Bulga, See Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State*, pp. 167-168, foot note 4 where he mentions a route: Hayq-Manz-Tagulat- Kattata – Silalish. We know very well the location of Hayq, Manz and Tagulat and to some extent Silalish. Tadesse Tamrat associates Silalish with the area known as Bulga. Bairu Tafla, *Asma Gyorgis and His works* pp., 85, 933 indicates Katata was one of the administrative units of Southern Ethiopia in the fourteen century. Its exact location is unknown. In the presumably Amhara legend about the origin of the Oromo Katata was mentioned along with Dawaro and Fatagar; both of them were neighbours of Shawa; Andre Caquot, “Histoire Amharique de Gran et des Gallas,” in *Annales d’Ethiopie* Volume 2, annee 1957, p. 125; Eric Knutsson, *Authority and Change: A Study of the Kallu Institution among the Macha Galla Of Ethiopia*(Goteborg: Etnografiska Museet,1965), p.37.

<sup>198</sup> Asma Gyorgis clearly describes that Grarya was an area in the present day Salale where the famous monastery of Dabra Libanos was founded. See Bairu Tafla, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 163, 557; Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State in Ethiopia*, p. 169.

<sup>199</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 80.

Haymanot, which indicates that the saint was born in the village known as Itisa,<sup>200</sup> where there is a monastery named after him, Itisa Takal Haymanot. Moreover, it is said that the saint used Ella to baptise the new converts.<sup>201</sup> It is again fascinating that words that have meaning in *Afaan* Oromo or derived from *Afaan* Oromo terms Itisa and Ella are used to indicate the birthplace of the saint and the water used by the saint to baptise respectively. In this regard, Mohammed Hassen maintains, “could names of place be given Oromo names, if Oromo speakers were not in the area? [Abuna Takla] Haymanot is said to have used ‘Ella’ water for baptism. ‘Ella’ means ‘water’, as well as a well in the Oromo language”<sup>202</sup> Similarly, Isenberg in the early 1840s reports, “There is a tree here [at Dabra Libanos monastery] which is split, through which they say [saint] Tecla Haimanot saved himself on the inroad of the [ Oromos] but I told them that at the time of Tecla Haimanot the [ Oromos] were not known in Abyssinia”.<sup>203</sup> This is fascinating that we do have tradition which indicates the presence of the Oromo around the monastery of Dabra Libanos although Krapf tried to correct them stating that the Oromo arrived in Shawa later on ostensibly in the sixteenth century and were not in Shawa during the time of Abuna Takla Haymanot.

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<sup>200</sup>Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State In Ethiopia*, P. 169; Bairu Tafla, P.911; See also Genet Abera Nigatu , “ [A]History of Itisa Tekle Haimanot Monastery from It Foundation up to Present”, *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, Vol. 3 , Issue 6, 2014, pp.1343-50. The monastery is found in the present-day Aleltu district of the North Shawa zone of Oromia regional state, which is very much closer to the Amhara region. Formerly, it is said that the monastery was found in the locality commonly known as Bulga. Tadesse Tamrat and Alemayehu Haile; Asma Gyorgis also indicates that Itisa is located in Bulga, Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 243.

<sup>201</sup> Alemayehu et al, p.63; Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 81.

<sup>202</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 80.

<sup>203</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 247.

We do have another story written in the hagiography of Saint Qawstos, one of the disciples of *Abuna* Takla Haymanot of Shawa, who is said to have founded a monastery around a locality known as Nibge. It indicates that the saint conducted widespread proselytization among the people 'Galan and Yay', who worshipped the God Qorke.

*He [Saint Qawistos] found the inhabitants of the country worshipping the devils at the foot of a kobal [?] tree. They were sitting there eating, drinking and amusing themselves in the fashion of the Muslims. They fanned the fire with their hands and held hot flames in their mouths and chanted saying 'O people of Galan and Yay, see what your god Qorke (can) do!'... And they brought for [Qorke a daily present of] two fat cows, five sheep, five goats, and twenty-one baskets of white [wheat?] bread. All these were eaten by the functionaries of the gods.<sup>204</sup>*

Although Taddesse was silent and did not give us additional information about the people known as "Galan" and "Yay" from the passage, we may discern that they were perhaps among the Oromo subgroups that inhabited the Shawan plateau by the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Galan and Yaayyaa are the well known Tulama subgroups.<sup>205</sup> The appellation Galan is spelt properly while Yay seems a corrupt form of Yaayyaa. Second, the Oromo often used to meet under the Odaa tree. There is no need to doubt this was a quintessential pre-Islam and pre-Christian traditional worship of the Oromo. It, therefore, compels us to suspect the

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<sup>204</sup> "Gadla Qawstos" cited in Taddesse Tamrat, *Church and State in Ethiopia*, P. 184. Taddesse indicates that Qawistos, an early fourteenth-century descendant of *Abuna* Takla Haymanot, was the founder of Nigbe Maryam in Bulga. Taddesse also indicates Itisa, the birthplace of *Abuna* Takla Haymanot, is also located in Bulga.

<sup>205</sup> Galan is often considered the angafa of Dachi, one of the three sons of Tulama whereas Yaayyaa is one of the seven sons of Oboo, the second son of Tulama. The third Son of Tulama is Jiillee. See the chart which depicts the genealogical tree of the Tulama. See also Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 80 who pinpoints that Yaayyaa gosa are found in different parts of the Oromo inhabited territories.

people identified in the hagiography were Oromo. Thirdly, as we have seen above, the names of the birthplace of *Abuna* Takala Haymanot and the water he used to baptise the new converts were *Afaan* Oromo in origin, Itisa, and Ella, respectively. Hence, the identification of the people who bore the Oromo *gosa* names, Galan and Yayyaa, who inhabited the area in or near the birthplace of the *Abuna* Takla Haymanot, gives us further clues about the presence of the Oromo in the area. Fourthly, the Oromo use the term *Waaqa* for God and Qorke might have been the corrupt form of *Waaqa*.<sup>206</sup> Moreover, the area not far from this locality, near the present-day Dabra Berhan town was also known as Bollo Warqee, and in this regard, Sergwe indicates ትዉፊት እንዳቆየን ቦሎ ወርቁ የተባለበት በአከባቢው በሚገኘው ዋሻ ከግራኝ በፊት በሸዋ የነገሡ ነገሥታት ብዙ ወርቅ ደብቀዉበት ስለነበረ ነዉ ይባላል<sup>207</sup>:: ( According to oral tradition it was called Bollo Warqee because the kings crowned in Shawa hid a large amount of gold in the cave found in the nearby locality). Although it is difficult to decipher when the name Bollo Warqee started to be used, the use of *Afaan* Oromo term in the otherwise the then core region of the kingdom gives us additional clues concerning the presence of *Afaan* Oromo speakers in this locality also.

Meanwhile, professor Merid seems to have been the first Professional Ethiopian historian who suspected the presence of the Oromo within the boundaries of the

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<sup>206</sup> See Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 80 and Mekuria, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation*, p. 152, who unanimously agree that the people identified as Galan and Yaayyaa were the Oromo *gosa* who inhabited the Shawan plateau by that time; Hussein, *Islam in Nineteenth-Century Wallo*, p.144.

<sup>207</sup> Sergew Hable Sellase, *Dagmawi Menilek, Ya Addisu Seltane Mesrach* (Munich, 1992), p. 116.

Ethiopian empire, although he confined them to the area Southeast or East of Shawa, Dawaro. He writes,

*What Bahrey and the missionaries have forgotten to tell is that infiltration by some [Oromo] tribes into Ethiopia had been going on for a long period before Ahmad's conquest. The general impression of a sudden and overwhelming irruption by a totally unknown people which they have created is unrealistic and legendary .The entry of the first [Oromo] tribes into Bali and the penetration by some into Dawaro does not appear to have always been in the form of raids and incursions, as it is quite improbable that Chihab ed-Din's Wara Qalo could have settled by force in the highly garrisoned province of Dawaro and at that so very near the stronghold of Jan Amba. Peaceful settlement of migrating peoples was a tried policy. Such an arrangement with the Wara Qalo and perhaps other [Oromo] tribes as well would not only have freed the regiments to deal with the Muslims who were then a more serious threat, but would have also given allies to the Ethiopian regiments, since these tribes would if necessary defend their newly acquired lands against any enemy.<sup>208</sup>*

Perhaps s Merid was convinced by the presence of the Oromo groups known as Warra Qallo (the family or descent group of the Qallo) as mentioned by Chihab ed-Din, the chronicler of the Wars of Ahmad Gagn. Although Merid did not mention it, other clues indicate the presence of the Oromo in or near the area he has in the document written by Chihab ed-Din. For instance, he mentioned a commander of the army of King Lebna Dingil known as Wanag Jarra.<sup>209</sup> Jaarraa is an Oromo person's name. He also pinpoints the notables who had a title of Afaan Oromo origin, Goita (*Gooftaa*, which means lord) Ibrahim who was conceded as Lord of Gedyaa.<sup>210</sup> Similarly, Takla Tsadik Mekuria argues that the

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<sup>208</sup> Merid, PP. 151-52.

<sup>209</sup> Arab Faqih, pp. 211, 215.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid, p. 51. Our oral informants indicate that the title Gofta was used by the Oromo notables in the nineteenth century. One of the Oromo notables to be renowned by this title was Abbaa Maallee of the Salale. See Tsegaye, *The Oromo Salale*, p. 126, endnote 29. Goita seems to have been a corrupt form of Gofta which means lord in Afaan Oromo. Mekuria Bulcha *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation*, pp. 142-43 indicates that Gedyaa is a corrupt form of Jidda,

view which limits the arrival of the Oromo within the boundaries of the Christian Kingdom is not convincing. He challenges this view by stating that one of the commanders of the forces of Emperor Lebna Dingil was Tulluu, who bore an Oromo name, then if the Oromo were not within the boundaries of the Kingdom he inquired "...is Tullu an Amhara name?"<sup>211</sup> In another book, Takla Tsadik reiterates that the Oromo did not enter the boundary of Ethiopia during the time of Lebne Dengel. Rather, he argues, it was during the reign of Lebna Dingil and his successors like Gelawdewos and Susenyos, the Oromo 'invaded the Amhara country' from their base located in Southern Ethiopia.<sup>212</sup>

Arab Faqih gave us a more precise reference to the Oromo personal names when he mentioned the inhabitants of a district known as Qawat, which is located in Shawa when the forces of Imam Ahmad invaded it by about 1531. He indicated its inhabitants were the Yejju, whose patricians, Haizu, Dalu, and Dabala, were converted to Islam.<sup>213</sup> It is profoundly exciting that Dabala and Dallu are the most common names of persons among the Oromo.

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the name of an Oromo *gosa*. Hence, if Mekuria's proposition is correct, the Coming together of Jidda and Gofta can't be a coincidence.

<sup>211</sup> Takla Tsaqdiq Mekuria, *Ya Itiyophlya Tarik Ka Atse Yikunno Amlak eska Atse Lebna Dengel (A History of Ethiopia From Emperor Yikunno Amlak up to Emperor Lebna Dengel)* (Addis Ababa, 1966 EC), p. 94.

<sup>212</sup> Takla Tsaqdiq Mekuria, *Yaltiyophlya Tarik Ka Atse Lebna Dengel Dingil Eska Atse Tewodros* (Addis Ababa: Tensae Zaguba'e Printing Press, 1953 E.C.), p. 433.

<sup>213</sup> Arab Faqih, P.207 ; Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 89



Last but not least, one of the medieval Christian kingdom's provinces was Waj, perhaps named after the eponymous Oromo *gosa*.<sup>214</sup> sources attest that there was an Arsi Oromo *gosa* known as Waji, who settled in or around the medieval province of Waj.<sup>215</sup> Waji is said to have been a *gosa* which belonged to one of the two submoieties of the Arsi, Siikko (while another one is Mando). Waji,<sup>216</sup> in turn, has seven sub-groups known as Jarsu, Warsu, Liban, Ali, Bodha, Halchaya, and Folqaa.<sup>217</sup> From this one may discern that Waji was one of the major clans of the Arsi Oromo, who have currently inhabited around the eponymous medieval province.

On the other hand, the oral information that we got from the Jiillee Oromo subgroups indicate that we do have a *gosa* known as Waata, who are presumed *Ilma Oromticha angafa* (the eldest son of the Oromo).<sup>218</sup> It is fascinating that more than one hundred and seventy five years ago Isenberg also reported in a similar way about the waata. To borrow his words,

*This morning two Watos [Waata] came to see me. The Watos are [Oromo], dwelling on the mountain Wato-Dalatsha, which I saw on our expedition to Maitsha [Macha], in the neighbourhood of the Hawash [Awash]. The Watos say that they alone are pure [Oromo], and therefore they do not marry the others. When I asked about their business, they replied, that it was to bless and to curse.*

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<sup>214</sup> Alemayehu et al, pp. 205, 217; Mohammed, *The Oromo, and The Christian Kingdom*, p. 93; Mekuria, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo*, p. 175; Tadesse, *Church and State*, p.84, note 4, Tadesse mentions some of the provinces of the Christian kingdom by 1332 like Damot, Indagabtan, Wage which he associates with Waj but he is not sure and put the question mark after Waj," Wage (=Waj?)

<sup>215</sup> Ibid, Braukamper, pp. 46-47.

<sup>216</sup> Other subgroups of Siikko are Bullala, Wachale, Jawwii and Ilani

<sup>217</sup> Alemayehu et al, p. 271.

<sup>218</sup> Naol Getachew, "A History of Jahaan Jiillee, 1850s-1974 (MA Thesis, Jimma University, 2017), p.7.

*With this view, they go from tribe to tribe, and neither [Oromo] nor Christians will touch them ; being convinced, they say, that whom the Watos bless are blessed, and whom they curse are cursed; and they are not wanting on their parts to relate a number of instances to show the success of their blessings. When the Watos enter the houses of the [Oromo], they are directly prevented by them, who are in great fear of their cursing. However, they let them eat and drink as much as they like, because if they did not, the Watos would curse them.<sup>219</sup>*

Therefore even if we suspect the connection between Wagi and Wata but simultaneously the information we have about the Waata compels us to suspect the presence of the Oromo in a much wider area than the area around Lake Zeway. In this regard Isenberg reported about the Awash River closer to its sources perhaps in the direction of today's Ginchii, as well as about Mountain Watoo Dallachaa which is closer to the Subbaa Mountain. This indicates that the Waata were not confined to areas around the lake and found on much wider area on the Shawan plateau. Even if we suspect the connection between Wagi and Wata, the information we have about the Waata compels us not to overlook the presence of the Oromo in a much wider area than the area around Lake Zeway. In this regard, Isenberg reported they had inhabited around the source of Awash river and Watoo Dallachaa mountain, located near the Subbaa Mountain. This indicates the Waata were not confined to areas around the lakes, they rather settled in a much wider area on the Shawan plateau. Moreover, the Waata are not only considered the angafa of the Oromo but also of the Galan, who in turn are

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<sup>219</sup> Karl Wilhelm Isenberg, J. L. Krapf, and James Mac Queen, *The Journals of C W Isenberg and J. L. Krapf: Detailing their Proceedings in the Kingdom of Shoa, and Journeys in Other Parts of Abyssinia*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 236-37. (This edition first published 1843 and the digitally printed version we have used is in 2011, Downloaded from Cambridge Library Collection on Thursday Feb 12 13:41:31 GMT 2015, <http://ebooks.cambridge.org/ebook.jsf?bi=CBO9781139062169>

the *angafa* of Tulama.<sup>220</sup> Perhaps they were among the sedentary Oromo who inhabited different parts of the kingdom during the medieval times before the sixteenth century predominantly pastoralist Oromo expansion.

Alemayehu et al claim they have collected tradition that indicates the presence of sedentary Oromo, “Orom-duroo” in East and West Wallaga.<sup>221</sup> Similarly, Boshi and Dirribi Demissie claim there were Oromo groups known as Berbabo, who settled in the districts of Gendabarat and Jaldu.<sup>222</sup> According to Tadesse Tamrat, however, the Berbabo were one of the “clans “of Gafat.”<sup>223</sup> Then how and why Boshi and Dirribi associate the alleged Gafat clan of Berbabo with the Orom-duroo is unclear and seems a mere conjecture.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Informant: *Abbaa Gadaa* Naggasaa Nagawoo (Aduulaalaa, July 10, 2017). He belongs to the Galan gosa who have inhabited the area not far from the Tulama *Gada* centre located at Odaa Nabee. He is very much respected among the Tulama for his thorough knowledge of the Oromo culture and history.

<sup>221</sup> Alemayehu et al, p. 63; Our oral informants among whom *Abbaa Gadaa* Nagasa Nagawoo and Wolde Mariam Ararsa are the eminent ones who reiterated what Alemayehu et al have reported. I suspected the authenticity of this tradition and asked whether they have read the book written by Alemayehu et al. They told me that they have read the book but got the information from their forefathers. This tradition is diffused among the Tulama Oromo elders. They even claim, as also reported by Alemayehu et al, the cradle of the Oromo is around the present-day Tulama Oromo territory where we find Hora *Jahan Waaqayyo* (the six minerals lakes of God), namely and *Tulluu Saddeettaan Waaqayyo* (the eight Gods Mountains), namely namely *Tulluu Cuqqaalaa* (Zeqwala), *Tulluu Erer*, *Tulluu Furi*, *Tulluu Galaan*(Muxee Galaan), *Tulluu Waatoo Daalachaa*, *Tulluu Fooyataa*, *Tulluu Hococaa* and *Tulluu Eegduu*.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid, p. 67; Dirribii Damisee Bokkuu, *Ilaalcha Oromoo: Barroo Aadaa, Seena fi Amantaa Oromoo/ The Oromo World View: Culture, History, and Religion ( Finfinnee, 2012), p. 392; Boshi Gonfa, “ The Macha Oromo of Ginda Barat District in the 19th Century”, ( B.Ed. Thesis, Kotebe College of Teachers Education, 1997), p.7; See also Abebe Urgaha, “ A History of Gindeberet District, West Shewa, c. 1870s-1991” ( MA Thesis, Jimma University, 2017), pp.15-16.*

<sup>223</sup> Tadesse “Ethnic Interaction and Integration In Ethiopian History: The Case of the Gafat”, p. 139.

<sup>224</sup> The meaning of the term Oromoo duroo itself seems ambiguous, it may refer either to the pre-Oromo population (to the Gafat gosa of Berbabo) in the area as Tadesse indicates but later on assimilated by the Oromo or they may erroneously identify the sedentary Oromo as Berbabo who

As we have tried to unravel in this section, we do have sources that give us clues, albeit very few, about the presence of the Oromo in the area under study at least since the twelfth century AD. They were one of the inhabitants of some parts of the area under study, if not all, along with the Gafat, Amhara, Gurage, and other peoples whose identities we may not yet be able to unveil. Hence, a history of the peopling of the Shawan plateau was so complex and intricate that it needs further rigorous research by critically evaluating and assessing the chronicles and hagiographies that we have at our disposal. Be that as it may, the Oromo have been the single largest community on the Shawan plateau, at least, since the last quarter of the sixteenth century. In the next chapter, we shall now explore when and how the pastoral Oromo settled on the Shawan Plateau and the general pattern of settlement of the population of the plateau.

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possibly existed side by side with the Gafat before the coming of the predominantly pastoralist group.

## CHAPTER TWO

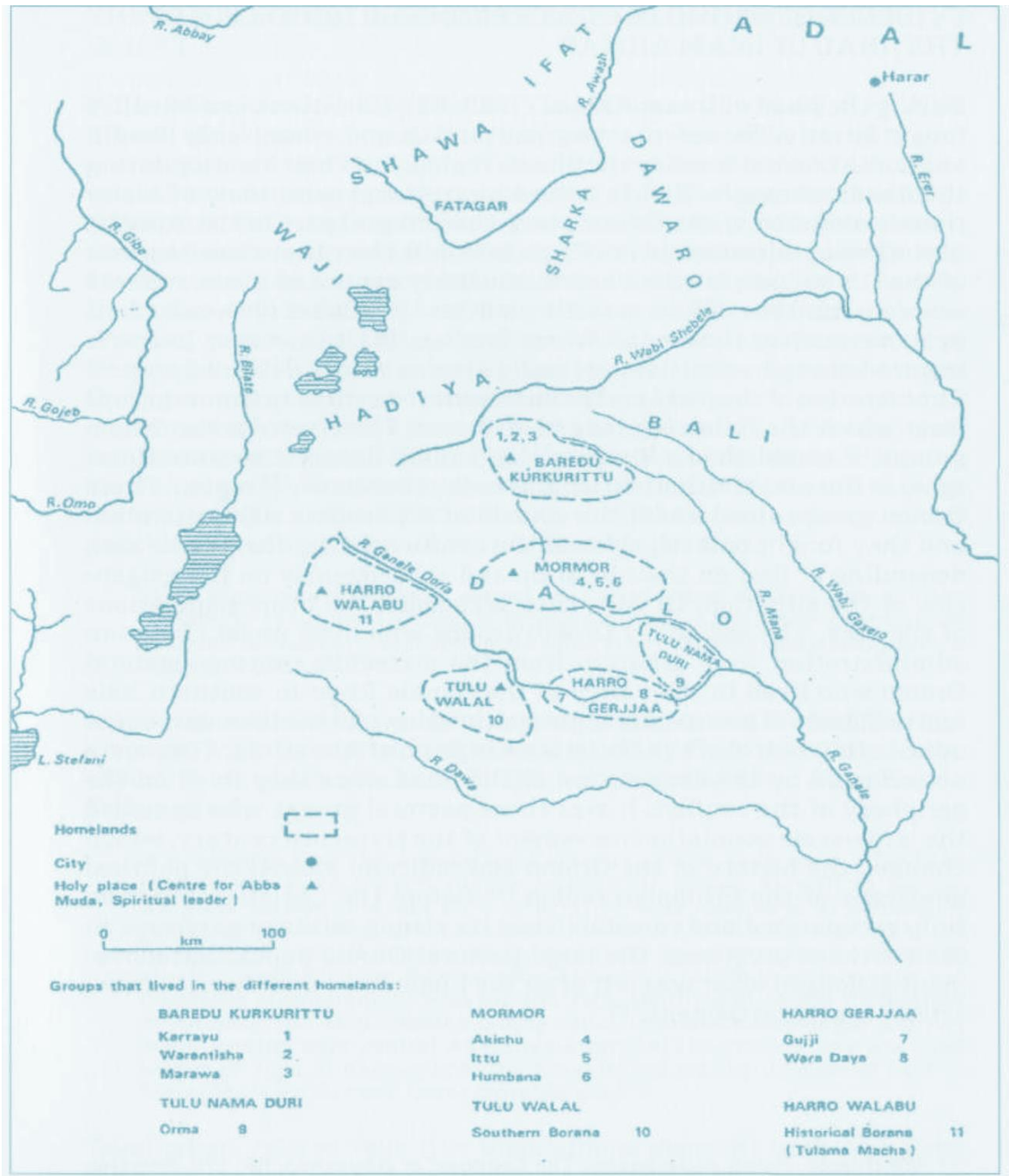
# THE OROMO EXPANSION AND THE PATTERN OF SETTLEMENT OF THE POPULATION OF THE SHAWAN PLATEAU

Before dealing with the patterns of settlement of the people of the Shawan plateau, it is imperative to make a brief look at when and how the pastoral Oromo settled there. Concerning the area from where the pastoral Oromo began their expansion, we have had divergent views.<sup>225</sup> Most of the impeccable scholars who dealt with this issue indicate that the Oromo inhabited the south-central parts of modern Ethiopia, specifically the region to the east of Lake Abbayyaa and the upper courses of Ganale and Wabi Shebele rivers.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> See the works of the scholars who tried to touch upon this issue. Beckingham and Huntingford, pp.111-112; Haberiand, p.772; H.S. Lewis, "The Origin of the Galla and the Somali", *Journal of African History* VII, I (1966), pp.27-26; Yilma Deressa, *Ya Ityophiya Tarik Ba Asra Siddistanyaw Kifla Zaman* (Addis Ababa, 1959 E.C), pp. 214-15; *Alaqa Taye* pp.38-9; Takla Tsadiq, *Ya Ityophiya Tarik Ka Atse Lebna Dengel Eska Atse Tewodros* (Addis Ababa. 1965 E.C), pp. 94-95; U. Braukamper, "Oromo Country of Origin: A Reconsideration of Hypothesis", *Proceedings of the Six International Conference of Ethiopian Studies* (Tel Aviv, ' 980), pp.25-40; Tesema "The Oromo of Wollega), pp. 1-2; Negaso, "History of the Sayyoo Oromo of South-western Wallaga". pp. 32-34. Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p.4-5; \_\_\_\_\_, "The Pre-sixteenth Century Oromo Presence within the Medieval Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia," David Bronkesha (ed), *A River of Blessings: Essays in Honour of Paul Baxter* (New York, 1994), pp.43-65; Merid, PP. 143-153.

<sup>226</sup> Haberiand, p.772; Lewis, "The Origin of the Galla", pp.27-26; Braukamper, "Oromo Country of Origin" pp. 25-40; Tesema "The Oromo of Wallaga", pp.1-2; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp.4-5; Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian kingdom*, pp.136-137; Merid, "Southern Ethiopia and the Christian kingdom", P. 146 agrees that the Oromo traditions place their homeland in southern Ethiopia, in the highlands between the Ganale Doria river and the Abaya and Chamo lakes.



Map 3 Home land of the pastoral Oromo C.1500 (adapted from Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*. p. 8)

The six homelands where the different Oromo subgroups lived are indicated on map 3. Haroo Walaabuu, which is considered a homeland of the historical Borana (Tulama and Macha), is a few tens of kilometers east of Lake Abbaayyaa, the largest rift valley Lake in the Ethiopian region. Meanwhile, most of the informants we have interviewed reiterate that their forefathers had lived at a place known as Walaabuu immediately before their expansion. They express it through the following couplet:

Oromo	Gloss
Kan maanguddoo biyyii Walaabuu, Hinteenyu rnaalumatti teenyaa, Walaabummatti achii gadii deemna <sup>227</sup>	Our forefathers country was Walaabuu, We shall not reside here We shall go down to Walaabuu.

Even informants of the northernmost branch of the Tulama, the Borana of Wallo, indicate that their forefathers came from the south led by “Borena Borenticha.”<sup>228</sup> It is fascinating that the British envoy, who was in Shawa almost 180 years ago, recorded a similar tradition. He indicates, their forefathers came from ‘Wollaboo... and that his children were nine—Aroosi, Karaiyo, Jille”, Abidchu, Gillan, Woberi, Metta, Gumbidchu, and Becho- Fugook — from whose loins have sprung the innumerable clans or houses which now people the greater portion of intra-tropical

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<sup>227</sup> Informants: Dinqee Jamamaa, Fayyee Dabalee (Dagam, 17-18 June 2001) and Beqele Simee (Saggoo 6 June 2001). This couplet was composed when the Tulama Oromo were dispossessed of their lands and reduced to the status of tenancy. We shall discuss this issue in detail later on in this thesis. See also Harris, Vol. III, p. 45 who recorded a similar tradition around 1840.

<sup>228</sup> Yemiamrewp. 64. In his enlightening dissertation Yemiamrew indicates that they rather trace their homeland to be around the present-day Negelle Borana, “. They trace their homeland to, what they call “*tiqur afer*”, literally translated as “black soil”.

Africa'..<sup>229</sup> Apparently except the Arsi and Karrayyuu, all the above mentioned Oromo *gosa* belong to the Tulama, and there is no doubt, Harris got the information from the Tulama informants.

However, Assefa Tefera indicates one of his informants told him, "...the Salale always occupied the present plains and valleys since time immemorial or, as he said, as long as *Tulluu Salale* (Salale Mountain) has been there."<sup>230</sup> Similarly Greenfield also come up with almost analogous conjecture and indicates in his monograph written more than half a century ago that he was at a time cautioned by an old Shawan Oromo informant: "The Only *new blood*, he said, was *slave blood* and that was to be found around the former slave-marketing towns. He laughed and displayed a typical rural Ethiopian prejudice and inquired, 'Have you not seen the thick lipped people of Ankober?'"<sup>231</sup>

Yemiyamrew also indicates few of his Borana informants witnessed variations regarding their "homeland". He argues, "for instance, an elder from Kelala narrates that their ancestors came from Eteya, Arsi area and hence to him, the Arsi area is the homelands of their ancestors".<sup>232</sup> Similarly, by the 1840s, Isenberg indicates that

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<sup>229</sup> Harris, Vol.III, p. 45.

<sup>230</sup> Assefa Tefera Dibaba, "Ethnography of Resistance Poetics: Power and Authority in Salale Oromo Folklore and Resistance Culture (Ethiopia, North East Africa)" (PhD Dissertation, Indiana University, 2015), p. 150.

<sup>231</sup> Greenfield, p. 57.

<sup>232</sup> Yemiyamrew, p. 64, Arsi province in general and Iteya, in particular, is very close to the Shawan plateau, is one of the areas where the sedentary Oromo were believed to have existed during the early part of the medieval period as we have discussed earlier in the thesis.



the Oromo of Metta Robi told him that their ancestors' initial residence was on the Awash River, whose source is very close to Metta Robi.<sup>233</sup> These pieces of evidence from different parts of the Tulama territory, although seems thin, should be scrutinized since as we have seen above, scholars started to question the conventional narrative about the homeland of the Oromo and came up with a counter-narrative.<sup>234</sup>

Be that as it may, however, what caused the movement of the Oromo is enigmatic and open to debates. According to Asma Gyorgis, there were four major causes for the commencement of the predominantly pastoralist Oromo expansion in the early sixteenth century. First, the wars of Imam Ahmed which weakened the power of the Christian Kingdom, second, the then custom of the Oromo which induced them to plunder and loot so as to prove their bravery and to gain material benefit, thirdly, the *Gada* system which also obligated the future Gada leaders to conquer new territories and finally, the Oromo expansion or invasion was divinely predestined because of the sins that the Ethiopians committed when they rejected

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<sup>233</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, 203.

<sup>234</sup> One of those scholars is Mekuria, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation*, p. 209, who argued that the Shawan plateau was the 'cradle of Oromo civilization. Contrary to the views of the scholars we have seen a while ago, "the available data does not specify any compelling need which made them move from south to north before or after the sixteenth century...movement in the opposite direction seems to have been a fact," Mekuria posits, "beginning with the conquests of Amda- Siyon, the history of the Abyssinian expansion was also a history of Oromo displacement to the south and east, and, perhaps, also to the west of the Shawan Plateau."; see also Alemayehu et al, pp. 50-56 who even further claim Mormor ( Abbay ) River valley and Odaa Nabee served as headquarters of the Oromo *Abbaa Muudaa* ( Father of anointment) and *Gada* centres respectively, during the first millennium AD until discontinued for several centuries and later renewal commenced and completed in 1314 at Odaa Robaa, near the present-day Ginnir town of Bale.

Catholicism.<sup>235</sup> On the other hand, Mohammed Hassen speculates, the following three developments facilitated the expansion of the Oromo, namely, "...population growth, the development of a possible mechanism for population control, and the militarization of the *Gada* system."<sup>236</sup> Moreover, "the effects of population growth ...limited space or the tightening geographic skirt," Daniel writes, "pushed the pastoral Oromo into a geographic drift towards the roof's environmentally endowed areas, occasioning the historical drama known as the Oromo population movement."<sup>237</sup>

According to the oral information we got from the Borana of Wallo, there were two major causes for the movement of the Oromo. The first one is in line with what we have seen above and is related to the dramatic increment of the number of the Oromo pastoralists (both human and cattle populations) which compelled them to move in search of pasture (ጠፍ መሬት ፍለጋ ነዉ የመጡት). Secondly, the Borana were said to have been obliged to move and settle in Wallo because of discrimination and envy of other people in their neighborhood (አሲድ እና ምቀኛ በዝቶ ነዉ የመጣ). That

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<sup>235</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His works*, p. 52. The second and the third factors are related whereas the fourth one is apparently influenced by his religious leaning.

<sup>236</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 131; Asmarom, *Gada*, p.8 who vehemently argued that population explosion was the most important causes of the Oromo movement.

<sup>237</sup> Daniel Ayana, 'From Geographic Skirt to Geographic Drift: The Oromo Population Movement of the Sixteenth Century', *Journal of Oromo Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (January 2011, pp. 1-38) for an excellent discussion on the causes of the sixteenth century population movement in general and how their geographical location led to the population explosion in particular which in turn was the main cause for the Oromo population movement.

means when attacks from the unnamed adversary became impending, the Borana were obliged to leave their homelands.<sup>238</sup>

There is also a popular and widespread tradition among the Tulama which indicates that a cursed beast known as *amma Wayyii* (the giant) or Liqimsa (the swallower) was one of the causes for the beginning of the Oromo expansion from Haroo Wallaabuu.<sup>239</sup> According to Mohammed Hassen, liqimsa was a metaphor either for devastating famine or the pressure exerted on the Oromo by then expanding Christian kingdom mainly starting from the time of the famous Emperor Amda Siyon (1314-1344).<sup>240</sup>

We do not also have conclusive evidence about the exact time of the beginning of the expansion of the Oromo. Mohammed posits the beginning of the movement of the Oromo could at least be dated back to the fifteenth century.<sup>241</sup> However, the popular narrative which associates the movement of the Oromo with the first half of the sixteenth century is perhaps influenced by the chronology of the Oromo

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<sup>238</sup> Yemiyamrew, pp. 61-62. We are very much indebted to Yemiyamrew for his meticulous professionalism. He collected a lively oral tradition from the area often erroneously presumed the Oromo culture is on the verge of extinction as a result of their integration to and/ or influence by the dominant Amhara culture in that part of Wallo.

<sup>239</sup> Informants: Dubee Buttaa and Birbirsa Hey'ii (Sabbataa, June 28 - 29, 2017), Waaqshum Badhanee (Dagam, June 16, 2001) Tufaa Washaree (July 2016) and Abbaa *Gadaa* Babsaa Badhaasoo (Adama, July 6, 2017). This tradition about the beast known as Liqimsa is said to have been gathered by Cerulli when he visited western part of Shawa in the 1920s. E. Cerulli, *Ethiopia Occidentale*, Vol 2, 1932-33, pp. 169-73 cited in Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, P. 201.

<sup>240</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, pp. 146-49. He indicates that the term 'liqimssa[sic] is derived from the verb *liqimssu[sic]* meaning to swallow, to finish, or to destroy, in the sense of wiping out everything'.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid, pp. 153-54. It is generally believed among academia and the general population the movement of the Oromo started in the sixteenth century.

population movement recorded by Abba Bahrey, who indicated that the Macha and Tulama attacked the historical Bali during the Melbah *Gada* (1522-1530).<sup>242</sup> Merid further complicates this issue and argues that *Abba* Bahrey and the catholic missionaries, who were in Ethiopia in the sixteenth century, had unnoticed the infiltration of some Oromo groups into the Christian Kingdom for a long period before the conquest of Imam Ahmad. The general held view about the sudden appearance of entirely strange people' is unrealistic and legendary. The entry of the first Oromo subgroups into Bali and some parts of Dawaro might not have always been in the form of 'raids and incursions'.<sup>243</sup>

Be that as it may, the Tulama and Macha Oromo founded their headquarters at Odaa Nabee, in the environs of the present-day town of Dukam, about 30 kilometers southeast of Addis Ababa, under Michille *Gada* (1554-1562).<sup>244</sup> According to Abba Bahrey, the Michille *Gada* defeated the Christian kingdom regiments termed as Jan Amora in Fatagar and also battled with Hamalmal, a governor of the province, at a place known as Dago.<sup>245</sup> This *Gada* besieged all

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<sup>242</sup>Beckingham and Huntingford, pp.115-16; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 18-22. According to the rules and regulations of the Oromo *Gada* system, officials stay in power for eight years only.

<sup>243</sup> Merid, "Southern Ethiopia and the Christian kingdom", pp. 151-52.

<sup>244</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 24-25. This area can be considered part of or closer to the heartland of the Tulama Oromo.

<sup>245</sup> Merid, "Southern Ethiopia and the Christian kingdom", p. 204 indicates that it was located at the edge of the plateau overlooking the lowlands of Gedem and Ifat and defending a pass leading to Dabra Berhan.

the towns and ruined them, settling there with his squadrons, while formerly they returned to Wabi after each war.<sup>246</sup>

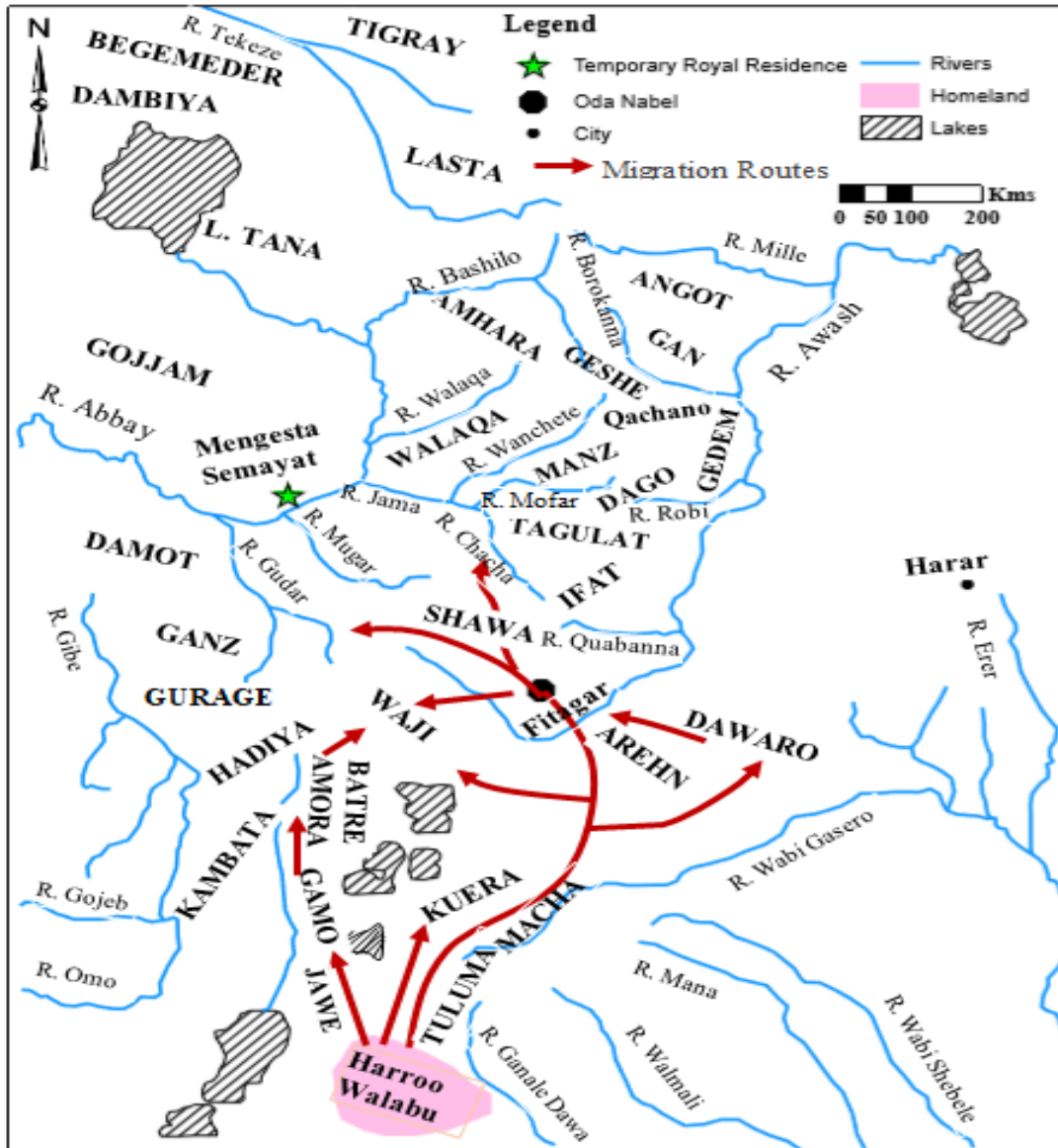
Up to Michille Gada, the expansion of the Oromo cannot be considered as migration *en masse*. It was a gradual expansion of the people with the process of launching raids and then immediately withdrawing.<sup>247</sup> The invasion of new territories took place every eight years as the new *Gada* took power, which had the responsibility of occupying new territories not overrun by their predecessors. This process is known as *buttaa*. The contemporary writer, Bahrey, did not mention the term *buttaa* by name, but he discusses *dulaguto* and indicates that it signifies a war of *guteya* (a style of a hair cut).<sup>248</sup> According to Mohammed

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<sup>246</sup> Beckingham and Huntingford. pp.116-17; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 142-43, indicates how the fifth *Gada*, since the beginning of the Oromo movement in 1522, defeated the Christian Kingdom regiment Known as Jan Amora led by Hamalmal at a place known as Dago and permanently settled within the boundaries of the Christian kingdom with his paraphernalia “5ኛ ሉባ ምንችሌ ተሾመ እርሱም በደጎ ኩሙልማል ጋር ተዋጋ ጥነ አሞራን ፈጀ ብዙ ሀገሮችን አጠፋ። በኛ ላይ ሰለጠነ ከጓዙ ከመንጋዉ ጋራ ወደ ሀገራችን ገባ። ከርሱ በፊት የነበሩት ከዋቤ ተነሥተዉ ይዘምቱብን ነበር።”

<sup>247</sup> This seems in line with what is dubbed Chibbra by Mohammed, *The Oromo and The Christian Kingdom*, pp. 191, 272. According to Mohammed, Chibbra was an age-old method of conducting warfare by the Oromo and had three features. Firstly, collecting information about the adversary's territory employing scouts. Secondly, deploying fighters in a line of six to a dozen deep so that those who were maimed and killed in warfare would be replaced immediately by other combatants who would continue the offensive. Thirdly, it was a combination of choice of space and time, and rapidity in strike and retreat. Meanwhile, “Chiffra was the Amharic version. It was the adventurous prince Susenyos who lived among the Oromo and adopted their method of fighting. By adopting the *chiffra* system, Susenyos improved the speed, coordination and the capacity of his army to attack rapidly, or retreat expediently”.

<sup>248</sup> Beckingham and Huntingford, *Some Records of Ethiopia*, p.122; Bairu Tafla *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. . 162,163. Asma Gyorgis also discusses *dulagutu* and indicates Mulata *Gada* (1586-1594) who succeeded the *Birmaji Gada* made *dulagutu* on Gojjam. He also maintains that *dulagutu* is known as Sab'a *Guteya* in Gojjam, which is a combination of the Ethiopic term Sab'a meaning war, and the Amharic term *guteya* which meant a type of hair cut common among the youngsters. However, Asma Gyorgis failed to understand the exact meaning of the Oromo term *dulagutu*, which meant total war as elaborated by Mohammed Hassen. Yet from Asma Gyorgis's explanation, we may discern how the war or conflict with Oromo came to be remembered in Gojjam.



**Map 4** The Macha and Tulama Movement to Fatagar and other Provinces (adapted from Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia 1300-1700* (New York, 2015), P.200.

*dulagutu* is a compound term made up of two Afaan Oromo terms, that is *dula* meaning ‘war’ and *gutu* ‘complete’ or ‘full’. Hence, *dulagutu* designates complete

or full war. Therefore, *buttaa* was a full war waged once in eight years by the newly promoted *Gada* class.<sup>249</sup>

The period of Michille *Gada* also saw the death of Emperor Gelwdewos (1540-1559) as a result of the war with the Adal sultanate in 1559 which created turmoil throughout the Christian kingdom and left the political landscape and the Christian defence in utter ruin. According to Merid, the death of the emperor "...was the greatest opportunity which the [Oromo] were to have throughout the history of their [movement] into the north."<sup>250</sup> As a result, Minas (1559-63), a successor and brother of the deceased emperor, miscalculated and expected that the Adal sultanate's forces would again follow up their success by penetrating deep into the heart of the Christian kingdom. Subsequently, he moved the seat of his government across the Abbay River. In doing so, he implicitly left the region south of the Abbay River to the Macha and Tulama.<sup>251</sup>

Meanwhile, the rout of the Jan Amora Corps by the force of Amir Nur in Fatagar in March 1559 was followed by the Oromo invasion of the locality known as Dago. This indicates the Christian Kingdom's defence system in Fatagar was irreparably shattered. The Oromo attacked Fatagar from two directions. First, the Macha and

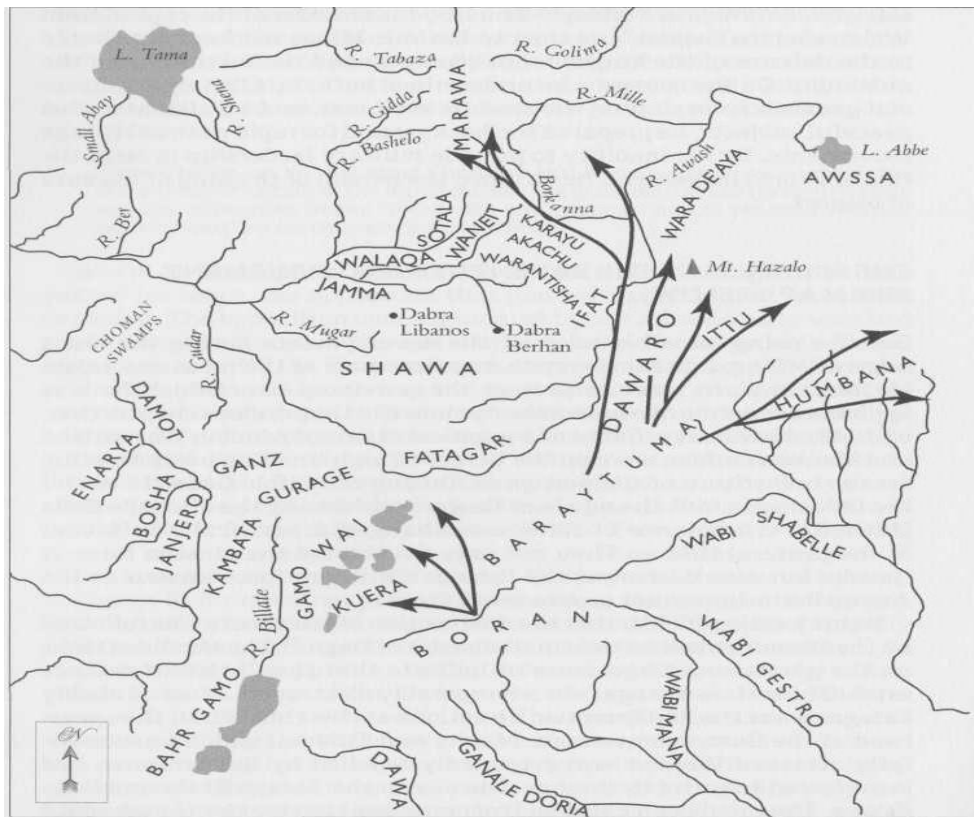
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<sup>249</sup> E. Cerulli, "Folk Literature of the Galla of Southern Ethiopia," *Harvard African Studies Vol. III* (Cambridge, 1922), P. 68; Tesema Ta'a "The Oromo of Wollega", P. 10; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 12.

<sup>250</sup> Merid, "Southern Ethiopia and the Christian kingdom", p.173.

<sup>251</sup> See *Ibid*, pp.176-77 for the detailed illustration of the impact of the 1559 Muslim force led by Amir Nur on the Christian kingdom force under Emperor Gelawdewos. Asma Gyorgis also indicates that during his short reign, Minas did not fight against the Oromo, Bairu Tafla, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, P. 153; 76 Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp.24-26, 33-4

Tulama attacked it from the south. Simultaneously the more numerous and hard-line Barentu warriors, namely the Akichu and Warantisha or Arsi, attacked it from Dawaro, east of the Awash River. As a result, Hamalmal, the commander in chief of the Christian regiment in the province, had no option but to move his command centre to Shawa, evacuating Fatagar. Hamalma's relocation of the strongholds from Fatagar to Shawa implies that the Christian warriors were unenthusiastic to



Map 5 The progress of the Barentu Oromo population movement, 1559-1563 (adapted from Merid Wolde Aregay, 'Southern Ethiopia and the Christian Kingdom, 1508-1708', PhD diss. University of London, 1971 by Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia 1300-1700* (New York, 2015), P.184



battle with the Oromo on the open plains. Moreover, it seems that to boost the morale of his force and to neutralize Oromo cavalry; Hamalmal evacuated the plains of Fatagar, where the Oromo fighters and cavalymen had had a substantial advantage, and retreated to the impenetrable mountains of Manz.<sup>252</sup>

Sarsa Dengel (r 1563-1597, who succeeded Minas, attempted to regain the lost territory by repulsing the wave of the expanding Oromo and was able to defeat them several times although he failed to contain their advance. For instance, in one of the showdowns, the contemporary writer, Abba Bahrey, encapsulates that Sarsa Dengel fought against the Oromo around Lake Zeway and killed many of them, and captured a large number of their cattle. He further maintains. "...thanks to this booty many people became rich."<sup>253</sup> However, the Christian kingdom was not able to contain the Oromo advance and the same author tells us that the

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<sup>252</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, pp. 183, 185. Manz was an integral part of historical Shawa and a suitable sanctuary for various reasons. First of all, it was unsuitable for the pastoralists and their large herds of cattle, secondly, the mountain chains in the region reduced the efficiency of the Oromo cavalry, and finally, the unbearable cold weather of the region might have compelled them to look for more suitable territory. Moreover, it was the remote region located between Fatagar, which had been evacuated, and other localities like Gudem, Geshe, Angot, and Amhara, which were not overwhelmed. It became a stronghold for the Christian Amhara when a considerable part of the Shawan plateau was overrun by the Oromo. It served as a base for the Shawan Kingdom when it waged war against the Tulama as we shall see in the thesis.

<sup>253</sup> Beekingham and Huntingford, *Some Records of Ethiopia*, p. 119; According to Asma Gyorgis, Sarsa Dengel made a campaign against the Borana Oromo in the tenth year of his reign. To use his actual words, አጸ ሠርጸ ድንግል ሙላክ ሰገድ የተባሉ በክተት ዘመቱበት በነገሱ በ 10 አመት በረንጎ በዝዋይ አገኙት ወጉት .... ፈጁት ለሙንም ነዱት ብዙ ምርኮ አገኙበት ወታደሩ ሁሉ ከዘረፋዉ ጠገበ። see Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His works*, pp. 154, 155, 156; Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 205.

Macha -Tulama made Fatagar their safe haven from where they radiated their attack on Shawa, Damot and beyond.<sup>254</sup>

Initially, the Macha and Tulama or the Borana were less successful in expanding their territory, unlike their Barentu counterparts. One may cite two possible reasons for their less success and slow movement. The first rationale was their comparatively smaller size.<sup>255</sup> As a result, they moved very slowly across the Rift Valley. The second factor behind their sluggish movement was the encampment of strong Christian forces at different strategic locations in the direction of the Borana's expansion. Nonetheless, after the Christian –Muslim showdowns and frequent Barentu assaults, the defense system of the Christian kingdom in the eastern provinces crumbled. It, therefore, spurred the rapid expansion of Borana during the period of the Robale Gada (1570-1578).<sup>256</sup>

It seems that after the occupation of Fatagar by the Borana Oromo, Shawa was under attack. The withdrawal of Hamalmal from Shawa to Angot in 1560-61 entailed Shawa itself was no longer secure. On the other hand, some Barentu sub-moieties like Karrayyuu, Wallo, Marawa, and Warantisha stormed and

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<sup>254</sup> Beckingham and Huntingford, *Some Records of Ethiopia*, p. 119; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 155; Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 198

<sup>255</sup> On the eve of the Oromo expansion, the Barentu moiety had more than thirty full-fledged sub-moieties who fought in their names whereas the Borana moiety had three sub-moieties. Yet, only the Macha-Tulama embarked on their movement to the north, while the Gujji and the southern Borana sub moieties were stationed in the southern region or rather expanded in the opposite direction towards present-day northern Kenya and south-western Somalia. See, for instance, Mohammed, *The Oromo, and the Christian Kingdom*, p.199.

<sup>256</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*,pp. 199, 201.

traversed Manz to overwhelm Geshe, Ganh, southern Amhara, and Angot and beyond starting from the time of Michelle Gada (1554-62). This unmistakably indicated that even before the time of Robale Gada, the frontier defence system of Shawa itself was in shambles on the eastern front. This might be one of the principal reasons why Hamalmal settled in western Shawa in 1563. By the 1570s, when the Borana Robale Gada (1570-1578) moved to Shawa and overtook it, they did not encounter huge resistance.<sup>257</sup>

Mohammed pinpoints that all the wars Sarsa Dengel fought against the Oromo were characterised either as 'defensive' or 'a nervous reaction' to their take-over of some of his valuable provinces. In other words, when the Robale Gada of Borana Oromo took over Shawa, the emperor did not come to protect and defend this province. However, when they attacked Gojjam and Waj, he reacted resolutely to punish them. During this campaign, he became successful, his forces devastated Borana and raided herds of Borana cattle, and those who could not escape, especially women and children, were enslaved. Moreover, the emperor captured Oromo warriors and enlisted them into his army at least as of 1572. Above all, Sarsa Dengel adopted a new pragmatic policy, integrating the Oromo into the Christian Society.<sup>258</sup> This has been substantiated by the following

candid words of Asma Gyorgis: አጸገም ከብልሃትና ከማስተዋል ጋር ጎበዝ ነበሩ።ዳሩ ግን አሮሞን በዕርቅ እየሰቡ በጎዣምና በደምብያ መሬት ያልታረሰውን ዉድማ እያዩ

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<sup>257</sup> Ibid, p. 202; see also Beckingham and Huntingford, *Some Records of Ethiopia*, p. 119.

<sup>258</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, pp. 204-205, 207.

መሩት፡፡ከክርስቲያን ጋር ቀለቀሉት፡፡<sup>259</sup> ( The emperor was astute , understanding and intelligent. He attracted the Oromo by reconciliation and settled them in sparsely populated areas in Gojjam and Dambya. In doing so, he mingled them with the Christians). The emperor came to realise at this early stage, it was impossible to contain the Oromo by warfare alone, hence opted for a more pragmatic and successful policy of integrating them into the Christian society. By *the 1570s*, Sarsa Dengel realised, albeit slowly, the Oromo were not enemies to be expelled. They were rebellious people to be forced into submission. It is fascinating that when he invaded Falasha, he came to justify that it was better to fight against the Falasha, who were adversaries of the blood of Jesus Christ than to fight against the Oromo.<sup>260</sup> However, this does not mean that the Christian Kingdom's attempt to regain the lost provinces or protect the Christian communities left behind came to a halt. For instance, almost a century after the Oromo came to dominate a considerable part of the Shawan Plateau, by 1689 Emperor Iyasu, a grandson of Fasiladas marched south to Dara, where he took many of the Tulama Oromos prisoners and liberated about 100,000 Kordidas.<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and his works*, pp.162- 163.

<sup>260</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, pp. 205, 211, 213.

<sup>261</sup> Pankhurst, *Ethiopian Borderlands*, pp. 309-310. The Kordidas were said to have been formerly the subjects of the Christian kingdom who joined the Oromos voluntarily and had abandoned Christianity. See also Merid, "Southern Ethiopia and the Christian kingdom", p. 583 who discusses Iyyasu's alleged campaign against the Tulama of Shawa, Walaqa, and Amhara in particular by 1688. This campaign was made allegedly to liberate the Christian subjects of the Oromo. Perhaps he promised to liberate them when he took refuge among the Tulama during his rebellion against his father.

The Borana Mulata *Gada's* (1586-1594) impressive victories in Waj, Shawa, and Damot manifested the beginning of the end of Christian administration in these provinces. However, Emperor Sarsa Dengel ultimately made a vigorous campaign against the Borana Oromo by about late 1587 or early 1588. His musketeers and cavalry equipped with iron helmets made the Borana shields and spears ineffective and outmoded. As a result, the Borana warriors, who attacked Gojjam annihilated.<sup>262</sup> It is said that the emperor himself was personally involved in the campaign against the Macha and the Tulama in Gojjam.<sup>263</sup>

The above resounding victory restored the lost prestige of the emperor. The emperor also sought to replicate the victory that he scored over the Borana in Gojjam in the areas found south and east of the Abbay River. However, it failed in vain since the Borana opted not to confront the force of the emperor face to face and fled to far-off places before the arrival of the imperial army. The Borana's tactic seriously sapped the energy and eroded the morale of the imperial soldiers on the one hand and exposed them to hunger on the other, which compelled them not to fight against the Borana.<sup>264</sup> Nevertheless, Merid Wolde Aregay claims that Sarsa Dengel's ill-advised decision of moving the regiments stationed in the areas

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<sup>262</sup> Pankhurst, *Ethiopian Borderlands*, pp. 215-16; See also Beckingham and Huntingford, *Some Records of Ethiopia*, p.123.

<sup>263</sup> Beckingham and Huntingford, *Some Records of Ethiopia*, p.123.

<sup>264</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 219

east of the Abbay river, including Shawa, to Tigre in 1578 made the loss of the western parts of Bali, Arenh, Sharka, Waj, Shawa, and Damot a *fait accompli*.<sup>265</sup>

From the above discussion, one may garner the fact that despite the relentless efforts made by Sarsa Dengel to contain the Oromo expansion, the Christian kingdom lost all the provinces south and east of the Abbay River at the time of the death of the emperor in 1597 including the area under study. After the aforementioned grueling showdowns, the pastoralist Borana in general and the Tulama, in particular, came to occupy and settle on the Shawan plateau. Henceforth, the Oromo came into contact with various earlier inhabitants of the area under study. At this juncture, therefore, it is plausible to disentangle the history and pattern of the settlement of the people of the Shawan plateau after the eventful population movement of the sixteenth century.

## **The Population of the Shawan Plateau and the Pattern of their Settlement**

As we have seen in the previous section, our wisdom about the identity of the communities who inhabited the Shawan plateau before the sixteenth century is conjectural, let alone delineating the patterns of their settlements. Yet, whatever their identity might be, various communities lived side by side on the Shawan plateau, by displacing one another or by being assimilated into the culture of the

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<sup>265</sup> Merid, "Southern Ethiopia and the Christian kingdom", p.333. The emperor made campaign to Tigre in order to punish Bahr Negash Yeshaq, the governor of the Tigre Province.

dominant group. However, after the pastoral Oromo expansion, we came to have relatively clear pictures.

Since then, the demographic setup and the pattern of population settlements on the Shawan Plateau have been altered and these, in turn, impacted its geopolitical significance. In other words, the region which had been the headquarters of the Christian Kingdom arguably from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries came to be the geopolitical center of one of the Oromo confederacies, the Tulama and Macha, following the foundation of their *Gada* center at Odaa Nabee ( in Fatagar) around the mid-sixteenth century. Following the rise and expansion of the kingdom of Shawa, it has yet again become the geopolitical center of the modern Ethiopian Empire state after the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Since this involved the process of population integration, domination, displacement, and subordination, we have to depict the history of the communities of the Shawan plateau with their pattern of settlement.

Merid claims the population of the Shawan plateau was categorized into three at the beginning of the sixteenth century<sup>266</sup>, namely Christian Amhara, in the northern and central part of the Plateau, Christian and Muslim Amhara, in the eastern districts, and the 'pagan' Gafat, in the western part of the plateau. "The

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<sup>266</sup>Merid did not suspect the presence of the Oromo on the Shawan plateau before and during this time as indicated above

Christian Amhara lived in the northern and central districts of Marabete, Manz, Gesh, Gerarya, Wagda, and Selalesh and in the southern plains bordering on the province of Fatagar”, writes Merid, “The eastern districts of Tagulat and Sarmat had a mixed population of Christian and Muslim Amhara. The predominantly pagan Gafat tribes lived in the western districts of Mugar, Endagebtan and Gendabarat.”<sup>267</sup>

Some of the contemporary sources seem to have agreed with Merid’s account. For instance, the seventeenth century map of Ethiopia indicates that the area immediately west of the then Shawa which also included partially the region under the study was occupied by the Gafat.<sup>268</sup> In the same way, Alvarez corroborates that till they were pushed across Abbay by the Oromo, the Gafat country borders Shawa and Gojjam.<sup>269</sup> The nineteenth century Ethiopian writer, Asma Gyorgis also indicates that part of the Shawan plateau where in recent times the Abichu and the Galan, the two major subgroups of the Tulama, lived was formerly Gafat country.<sup>270</sup> Similarly, *Alaqa Taye* indicates, before the Oromo expansion, the Gafat people had lived in Shawa and even between Dabra Libanos and Jirruu there was a place known as Bal Gafat.<sup>271</sup> This seems to be similar with what Taddesse Tamrat, called Bar Gafat (Gafat Pass)-a parish in the Ensaro district

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<sup>267</sup> Merid, p.38.

<sup>268</sup> Beckingham and Huntingford, p. XCVII.

<sup>269</sup> Alvarez, p.458.

<sup>270</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p.673.

<sup>271</sup> *Alaqa Taye*, p.37.



near the Monastery Dabra Libanos.<sup>272</sup> In spite of the availability of ample evidence pertaining to the presence of the Gafat in the northwest part of Shawa, scholars like Ege and Haberland indicate for unknown reasons, areas like Salale and Jarso contained considerable number of the former Amhara who were apparently assimilated by the Oromo and were silent about the Gafat.<sup>273</sup>

Merid's explanation does not help us to show when and how these areas were settled by the people he has mentioned. Volker Stitz, on the other hand, indicates that Shawa and parts of present-day Southern Ethiopia were conquered and Christianized by the highland Ethiopians from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries. According to Volker Stitz, supposedly, a considerable part of Shawa had Amharic language speakers up to the sixteenth century. He also maintains that tradition related to Zena Markos testify that the birthplace of both saints, the locality known as Bulga was said to have been Christianized by about the twelfth century.<sup>274</sup>

Nevertheless, how the Amharic speakers settled and what happened to the earlier settlers on the Shawan plateau is still shrouded in mystery, unlike some neighbouring provinces like Gojjam where we have a living

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<sup>272</sup> Tadesse Tamrat, "Ethnic Interaction and Integration in Ethiopian History: The case of Gafat", *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, XXI, No.2, (1988), p.124.

<sup>273</sup> See Ege, p. 71; Haberland, pp. 525-26. Ege indicates that when the Tulama Oromo settled in their present locality, they assimilated a large number of Amhara and Gurage, who even perhaps surpassed their number.

<sup>274</sup> Volker Stitz, "The Amhara Resettlement of Northern Shoa during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries", in *Rural Africana, Current Research in the Social Sciences* ( East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University , 1970) , p. 71.

tradition concerning the effects of the process of Christian Amhara settlement. In Gojjam, the oral tradition illustrates how the Amharic speakers gradually dominated the province by replacing the earlier settlers, the Agaw, an integral part of Cushitic language speakers. In this regard, Abebaw Ayalew writes there was a popular aphorism in Gojjam which echo this distant development, “አገጢ ሲነቀል ጩዋ ሲተከል, “When the Agäw were expropriated from their land, the Amhara were given land permanently.” Similarly, “አገጢ ሲሰደድ አማራ ሲለምድ” which means ‘[when the] Agäw migrated and the Amhara settled down’ indicates the same development. Informants say that *çäwa* referred to the Amhara and the term ‘ሲሰደድ’ literally ‘migration’ implies forced migration.<sup>275</sup> Therefore, to understand the nitty-gritty of the peopling of the Shawan plateau and their pattern of settlement, we have to briefly discuss the major communities found on the Shawan plateau one by one.

Gafat were among the inhabitants of the eastern side of the Abbay river at the beginning of the sixteenth century. When and how they settled in this part of Ethiopia and the Horn is not yet clearly known. However, they were one of the ancient Semitic-speaking peoples of Ethiopia whose language has been extinct, ostensibly due to their integration mainly into the present-day two predominant

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<sup>275</sup> Abebaw Ayalew, “ A History Of Painting in East Gojjam in the Eighteenth And Nineteenth Centuries: A Study of the ‘Second Gondärine’ Style of Painting” ( AAU, MA Thesis, 2002), pp.6-7. he also indicates there is another popular saying in East Gojjam: “ታቦት በራሱ ቃጭል በጥርሱ ይዞ ማጣ, which means “the one who came with a *tabot* on his head and a bell on his teeth” is always cited by informants when they discuss the origin of many early Christian settlements and the founding of churches”.

ethnolinguistic groups, the Amhara and Oromo. Meanwhile, sources indicate that the well-known churches, including the famous monastery of Dabra Libanos, were founded in their heartlands. However, the Christian Kingdom did not fully control and even Christianize them up to the first half of the sixteenth century. The topography of their habitation was one of the factors for the inability of the Kingdom to pacify them. In this connection, Alvarez reports that, during the time of Lebna Dengel ( 1508-1540), "These Gafates gave [Lebnä-Dengel's followers] much to do, chiefly at night when they came to kill and plunder, and by day they took refuge in the mountains and the jungles, and the mountains are depths rather than heights."<sup>276</sup>

However, later on, the vast majority of Gafat evacuated the region and crossed the Abbay River towards Gojjam.<sup>277</sup> As to the causes of their evacuation, the chronicle of Susenyos vividly indicates, when Emperor Susenyos made a campaign in the area, his forces annihilated "...the Den (clan) and all the Gafat who lived on the crossings of the Abbay until they left their country and entered the land of Gojjam. And this (their country) has become a wilderness and a waste until today."<sup>278</sup> Taddesse also characterises this development as a massive

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<sup>276</sup> Alvarez, p. 458.

<sup>277</sup> Taddesse, "Ethnic Interaction", pp. 122, 139, 141-42; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis*, pp.197-99, 209; Alaqa Taye, p.37; Tsegaye, "The Oromo Of Salaalee", p.4

<sup>278</sup> Chronica de Susenyos, pp. 28-9 cited in Taddesse, "Ethnic Interaction", p.140; see also Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis*, p. 199, who indicates that Abetohun Abranyos , a relative of Emperor Susenyos, ሞላ ገፋትን አጠፋቸዋል። On the other hand, Asma Gyorgis in another place indicates ሀገራቱ ግን ጥንት ለም የነበረች በኦሮሞ ጠፍታ ውድሞ ሆናለች( the area was destroyed by the Oromo), pp. 190-91. Again on another page (209) he contradicts this statement and indicates that Emperor

“migration’ of the Gafat from Shawa to Gojjam. This event could be seen, according to Taddesse, within the context of the Oromo expansion, which Emperor Susenyos exploited remarkably during the dynastic conflict with his kinsmen.<sup>279</sup>

Informants claim, most areas settled by the pastoralist Tulama in the sixteenth century were no man's land and covered with jungles. Forests were said to have been cleared by the pioneers, *dagal saqii*, who tied *meedhicha* to demarcate their abode.<sup>280</sup> However, it is unlikely that the area was not devoid of people rather the turbulent political condition might have forced the earlier inhabitants to evacuate the area as we have seen in the chronicle of Suseyons cited a while ago. We also have clues that indicate some of them remained at least in the river valleys after the pastoralist Oromo occupied the plain and grasslands areas. Informants indicate in the districts like Warraa Jaarsoo, a non - Oromo people remained in the Abbay Gorge below the present-day town of Gohatsion. They were perhaps not forced to leave the area because they supplied the Oromo, especially the notables, with clothes.<sup>281</sup> Apparently, informants refer to the Gafat since one of

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Susenyos drove the Gafat out of Shawa using the Christian regiments known as Afro'aygaba and Wanbade.

<sup>279</sup> Taddesse, "Ethnic Interaction", p. 141 On the other hand, he warns us the Gafat people's crossing of the Abbay River to Gojjam might not be unprecedented since we have a source that traces it back at least to the thirteenth century; See also Merid, "Southern Ethiopia and the Christian kingdom," p.428. Merid indicates both flanks of the Awash River were depopulated and sedentary life was disrupted.

<sup>280</sup> Informants: Humne Lataa ( Jiddaa, May 1-2, 2017) and Birbirsa Hey'ii ( Sabbataa, June 28, 2017)

<sup>281</sup> Informants: Alemayehu Zegeye, Marso Hiruy, Imiruu Mekonnin and Tirunesh Badhaanee (Gohatsyon, June 27- 30, 2001); see also *Alaqa* Tayye, 1922, pp. 58-59, who indicates that some

their occupations was weaving.<sup>282</sup> Perhaps the Oromo of Slalale learned the skill of weaving from the Gafat who remained behind. Similarly, one of our knowledgeable informants points out that there were weavers in the Jamaa valley, who provided clothes to the nearby dignitaries.<sup>283</sup> In this regard, Svein Ege also indicates that weaving was a common household industry in Salale and Mulo Falda but not among the Galan.<sup>284</sup> Tadesse Tamrat also refers to the same locality when he stated that the area which is located to the north-western edge of Fiche town, "...overlooking the Segä-Wädäm and Jäma valleys, residents point to a lowland plain in an NW direction which they call E-Dino which may be a survival of the name of this important Gafat clan Den."<sup>285</sup> Furthermore, if Tadesse's assertion about the clan of Gafat named "Dino" or "Den" is correct, we do have the name Dino in the genealogy of one of our oral informants.<sup>286</sup> These pieces of evidence further strengthens the fact that some of the Gafat families or

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of the Gafat remained in Shawa. According to Asma Gyorgis , Bairu, Asma Gyorgis, p. 327 Goha Tsyon was located in the country of Gafat, later renamed Jarso.

<sup>282</sup> See also Alaqa Taye, p.38.

<sup>283</sup> Informant : Beqele Sime ( Saggoo, June 8, 2001) Tsegaye, " The Oromo of Salaalee", P. 119 endnote, 19

<sup>284</sup> The influence of the Gafat on the Galan Oromo might be minimal due to its geographical location, while Salale and Mulo fell in the area formerly predominantly inhabited by the Gafat.

<sup>285</sup> Tadesse, "Ethnic Interaction", p. 152, endnote, no., 91.

<sup>286</sup> Informant: Fayisaa Birruu, age 78, Dagam (May 8, 2017). The genealogy of one of my informants goes as follows: Fayisaa- Birruu-Gordee-Tifaa- Absaa- Qaaqii- Qilxuu- Hिलामु- Haroo – Saddiin- Diinoo- and our informant stop here saying Warraa Saddiin Diinoo *didaa galee burqaa dayyassu* (which meant the family of Saddiin Diinoo who came from somewhere else and made the stream sprung). Our Informant is now a septuagenarian; he might have been the eleventh generation descendant of a person with allegedly a Gafat *gosa* name known as "Dino". If we multiply this by twenty-five, it is 275 years, if we add fifty years to 275 since he was a septuagenarian, it is 325. Dino existed roughly 325 years ago. If we subtract 325 from 2018, it is equal to 1693. Hence, most probably, the Gafat people who remained in Shawa continued to use their *gosa* name at least up to the last quarter of the seventeenth century, almost for a century after most of their kins evacuated the eastern side of the Abbay River; see also Pankhurst, *Ethiopian Borderlands*, p. 75.

communities had remained in the area east of the Abbay River and integrated either into the Oromo or the Amhara through time.

Although Merid refrained from mentioning them,<sup>287</sup> it is unfair to overlook the Gurage, who speak a language closely related to the Gafat, Argobba, and Adare languages. It is believed they came from northern Ethiopia and settled in their present settlement starting from the fourteenth century. By about the beginning of the sixteenth century, they occupied a much larger area in the southwestern part of Shawa.<sup>288</sup> A letter supposedly written by Ras Se'ela Kristos, brother of Emperor Susenyos (1607-1632) cited by Asma Gyorgis, portrayed the early encounter between the Oromo and the Gurage and the area they inhabited as follows:

These patriotic people [the Gurage and the Hadya<sup>289</sup>] remained cut off in Gra Meder; until this very day, the feet of the [Oromo] and the hooves of their horses have never penetrated their land, nor have they ever set eyes on it .But ... the Gurage used to harry and plunder the [Oromo]. They sold their women and children. In fact, the sale of the [Oromo] children became their chief trade. They have dispersed the children of the [Oromo] all over Africa and Asia and reduced

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<sup>287</sup> Most probably he thought they were not found on the mainland of the Shawan plateau but rather further to the southwest of the plateau.

<sup>288</sup> Merid, p. 51; see also Bahru Zewde, "The Aymalal Gurage in the Nineteenth Century: A Political History", in *Society, State and History: Selected Essays* (Addis Ababa, Addis Ababa University Press, 2008), pp.44, 55 endnote 1. It is believed that they came from northern Ethiopia and settled in their present settlement starting from the fourteenth century. Although this tradition seems very much widespread, but we have to be cautious since there were also peoples like the Gafat who spoke languages related to the Gurage in the same geographic region during the period under discussion and it is erroneous to conclude that all of them arrived in the region in the fourteenth century. By about the beginning of the sixteenth century they perhaps had occupied much larger area in Southwestern part of Shawa which could have encompassed the territories between Buntu Liban, Walisso, Walqite, Endeber and Gogeti; Isenberg and Krapf, P. 212, where it is stated that the Gurage were separated from Shawa when the Oromo settled there.

<sup>289</sup> The Hadya were one the most important groups in the Southern part of Ethiopia but they did not share a boundary with the Tulama Oromo, hence there is no need to discuss them in such a kind thesis. They rather Share boundaries with Arsi Oromo with whom they have had enduring relations.

their numbers by capturing and stealing them.... Hence, there are traces of the [Oromo] language throughout Africa, Asia, and in all the Muslim countries....<sup>290</sup>

Although there is a kernel of truth in the supposed report of *Ras Se'ela Kristos* to Emperor *Susenyos*, it seems that *Asma Gyorgis* paraphrased the letter with the benefit of hindsight. Otherwise, it is unlikely at this particular time, the brother of the emperor might not have known with such precision places where the slaves were sold. Similarly, he might also not be able to assess how the event came to reduce the number of the Oromo and how the enslaving resulted in the spread of the Oromo language across Africa.

On the other hand, we have a different appeal that contradicts the above letter sent by the same *Se'ela Kristos* to Emperor *Susenyos*. In this appeal, *Se'ela Kristos* urged his brother to come to the areas south of the *Abbay River* so that they would preempt *Macha's* invasion of *Gojjam* and *Enarya*. The appeal goes as follows: “*Macha*, after having won their battle against *Hadiya*, *Gurage*...had turned towards *Bizamo*, where [they] stayed and wanted to fight *Gojjam* and *Enanarya*.”<sup>291</sup> Similarly, *Richard Pankhurst* enlightens us, the Oromo and the *Gurage* probably came into contact for the first time during the reign of Emperor *Susenyos*, “...whose favourite brother *Ras Se'ela Krestos* reported that the

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<sup>290</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 355

<sup>291</sup> F.M.E. Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos, rei de Ethiopia* (Lisbon: Impresa National 1892. P. 271 cited in Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 301.

Ma'cha Oromos had defeated the Gurages as well as several neighbouring peoples.”<sup>292</sup>

Apparently, in his appeal, Se'ela Kristos vividly indicated how the Macha Oromo won a battle against the Gurage and proceeded westward to Bizamo, even threatening to invade Gojjam and Ennarya. The supposed Se'ela Kristos's report concerning the Oromo enslavement by the Gurage and their ability to defend their country from Oromo invasion cited in Asma Gyorgis seems untenable.

Moreover, the so-called long-lasting warfare between the Oromo and the Gurage is partial on the one hand and hyperbole on the other. It is said that the Gurage had the upper hand in the warfare with the Oromo and were able to keep them at bay until the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>293</sup> Tradition we have in southwest Shawa, however, purports to the contrary. Interaction between the Gurage and the Oromo from the outset has been highly complex and deserves more careful study. The oral tradition collected from the area around Lake Wanchi, located between the present-day Waliso and Ambo towns, indicates that the Kistane Gurage dominated the region before the coming of the Macha Oromo. According to the oral tradition, three individuals of Soddo Kistane origin were considered the

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<sup>292</sup>Pankhurst, *The Ethiopian Borderlands*, p.327

<sup>293</sup>Bahru Zewde, “ The Aymalal Gurage in the Nineteenth Century: A Political History” , in *Society, State and History: Selected Essays* ( Addis Ababa, Addis Ababa University Press< 2008), Pp. 44-46.



fathers of Chabo. Then the three fathers gave birth to nine children who jointly constitute the twelve “clans” of Chabo.<sup>294</sup>

From the tradition, one may discern the interaction and integration between the Oromo and the Gurage dates back to the time of the settlement of the predominantly pastoralist Oromo in the region. Moreover, the same can be said about the area known as Soddo, where the interaction between the Oromo and the Gurage is more vibrant. The Soddo is one of the subgroups of the Tulama. However, both the Oromo and the Gurage have been identified as Soddo. In other words, in public parlance, the Aymallal or Kistane Gurage are identified more as a Soddo Gurage than Kistane or Aymalal Gurage. This, therefore, cannot be a coincidence. It is conceivably a result of long-lasting peaceful interaction between the Saddeen Soddo and the Gurage.<sup>295</sup> There is no doubt the Soddo Oromo were mixed with the Gurage and even adopted their practices, especially the cultivation of *ensat* or false banana. The cultivation of *ensat* was also adopted by other Tulama *gosa* like Bachoo and Liban, not to speak of the Chabo and

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<sup>294</sup> Teka Gogni, “A History of Chebo Oromo, 1870s-1974 (MA Thesis, Jimma University, 2017), pp. 2-3; Misganew Belachew, *Ya Chebo Hudad Yesus Achir Tarik* (A Short History of Chebo Hudad Jesus (Bole printing press, 1985) pp.36-41. In this part of Shawa, we do have a Gurage substratum, in other words a large number of Gurage were integrated into the Oromo and they continued to immensely influence the socio-economic life of the inhabitants.

<sup>295</sup> See, for instance, Isenberg and Krapf, p. 212 who wrote about mountains of Soddo Gurage in the first half of nineteenth century nearly close to two hundred years. This clearly indicates that the interaction and integration between Soddo Oromo and Gurage predates this time.

Waliso of the Macha of southwest Shawa.<sup>296</sup> A popular Afaan Oromo is saying purports,

Afaan Oromoo

Gloss

*Namnii zarii Guragee hin qabnee* A man who does not have the blood of Gurage

*Moyee huuduu hin qabne*<sup>297</sup> is like a mortar that does not have a base

The saying indicates there was peaceful interaction and intermingling among these two communities. Informants claim, the Oromo men married Gurage women and not vice versa. Since the Gurage women were hard workers, Oromo men badly needed them for marriage.

The Tulama, especially the Jiillee, also came into contact with another Semitic language-speaking group known as Zay<sup>298</sup> around Lake Zeway. As to the origins of the Zay and when they came to the area, we do have conflicting information. It is claimed that they took refuge in the area to escape the persecution during the time of Imam Ahmad Gragn on the one hand and it is stated that they have been living there since the medieval period on the other.<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> Ege, pp. 67-68; Haberland, pp. 368, 526.

<sup>297</sup> Informants : Warquu Mettaa, Takkaa Begnaa and Hirphaa Aradaa ( Sabbataa, June 30, 2017)

<sup>298</sup> They are also known by the name "Laaqii" (Paddler) among the neighbouring Oromo. Laqii is a derivative of an Afaan Oromoo term laaquu which means to paddle. This term is no more in use since it is considered a pejorative term. Naol, p. 15.

<sup>299</sup> *bid.*, p.14; Paul Bernard Henze, "Lake Zway-Southern Christian Outpost and Repository of Medieval Ethiopian Art" *In Proceeding of the First International Conference on the History of Ethiopian Art* (London, 1989), p. 30; Paul. B. Henze, *Ethiopian Journeys: Travel in Ethiopia 1969-72* (London, 1977), first edition, p.109; Buruk Wolde-Michael, "The Lake Zeway Churches and Monastery 1941 to the Present" (MA thesis, AAU, History, 2009), pp.1-3; Tagay Ejeta. "A History of Dugda *Wäräda*, East Shewa 1941-1991" (MA thesis, Bahir Dar University, History, 2015), p.9; Tuma Nadamo, "A History of the Zay in the 19th and Early 29th Century" (BA thesis, AAU, History, 1982), pp.1-4.

Apparently, based on oral information he has collected, Naol claims that the Jiillee and the Zay have been living together peacefully for twenty two successive generations.<sup>300</sup> In other words, they have been living together for more than half a millennium. That means, if the oral information is trustworthy, the two groups inhabited the area at least since the mid fifteenth century and this again cast a huge shadow on the view which confines the presence of the Oromo in the area to the period after the sixteenth century population movement.

Meanwhile, the relations between the Zay and the Jiillee are said to have been very much amicable for the past twenty generations according to oral tradition as indicated in the preceding paragraph. There were strong marriage relations both among the notables and grassroots. Moreover, *guddifacha* (adoption) and *harma hodhaa* (which means “sucking the breast” materialised by 'symbolic sucking ' of the right thumb of the presumed 'breast father' by the prospective 'breast son') played important roles in the relations between the communities. It was a ceremony that sanctioned parent-childhood relationships.

This process is recited by oral informants through the following *Afaan* Oromo couplets:

Afaan Oromo	Gloss
Dhalchaan ilma dhalchuudha Dhaban Laaqii Dambal dhaqanii Guddifachudha. <sup>301</sup>	If you give birth, give birth to a baby boy, if not, go to Dambal [Zeway] and adopt a son of Laaqii [Zay].

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<sup>300</sup> Naol., p. 16 ; See also Tagay,p. 13 who collected a tradition which reveals that the Zäy had never fought any war against their Jiillee Oromo neighbours in their history.

<sup>301</sup> Naol, p.18

The couplet unequivocally depicts that the Jiillee community used to adopt the children of the Zay. This became possible thanks to amicable relations between the two communities for centuries.

The most important and historically the dominant pre-pastoralist Oromo community on the Shawan plateau were the Amhara. The origins and identity of this community are often open to polemical debates to date. “The term ‘Amhara’ has a variety of confusing definitions and descriptions,” writes Mackonen Michael. “Although Amhara exists as an identity; it represents multiple ethnicities with a varied national consciousness. However, some reject this concept and argue that Amhara exists as a distinctive ethnic group with a specific located boundary.”<sup>302</sup>

Taddesse Tamrat associates the introduction and expansion of the Ethio-Semitic languages with the foundation of the military colonies in the newly incorporated territories. Initially, this took place on the Ethiopian plateau north of the Jama River, where the native inhabitants were the Kushitic Agaw.<sup>303</sup> The newcomers,

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<sup>302</sup> Mackonen Michael, *Who is Amhara? African Identities*, 6:4 (2008), p. 395, DOI: 10.1080/14725840802417943, p. 395.; See also Yemiyamrew

Jorgi, “Historical Ethnography of Wallo-Borena: Identity, Changes, and Continuities” (Ph.D. Dissertation in Social Anthropology, AAU, 2017) argues based on the empirical data he got from Southern Wallo (Northcentral part of Ethiopia) the term Amhara is a generic name given to Orthodox Christians. It is fascinating that in the area in which we claim that the Oromo were well integrated into Amhara, the folk believe that Amhara were only Christians, whereas non-Christians were Muslims or according to their rendering, 'Islam'. Hence, the dichotomy in Borana was Amhara versus Islam; Isenberg and Krapf, p. 242 states the Chacha River separates Christians and [Gallas] not Amhara and Oromo.

<sup>303</sup> Taddesse, *Church and State*, p. 37; Trimmingham, p. 7 who explicates, from about 1000 and 400 BC ‘a series of transmarine migrations’ brought Semitic speakers which entirely transformed the

according to Tadesse, lived among the Agaw population, on whom gradually the settlers superimposed their language. Concerning the origin of Amhara, Tadesse was cautious as usual and writes:

*...Traditional material on the Amhara is lacking and it is impossible here to give any specific dates for the origin. It is most likely; however, that it belongs to the pre-Christian period of Aksumite history...the expansion of the kingdom in this direction was already in full swing during the intensive military activity of king Ezana. The earliest recorded tradition of Christian settlement in the region indicates that there was already a distinct Amhara population occupying the upper basin of the river Bashillo. The tradition seems to belong to the first half of the ninth century, eighteen generations before the days of Saint Takla Haymanot. This later Christian immigration further enhanced the semitization of the area between the Bashillo and the Jama rivers.*<sup>304</sup>

From the above quotation, one may discern that a distinct population who identified themselves as Amhara came into being at least by the ninth century AD in the area that came to be known as Beta Amhara (the abode of Amhara). From this part of Ethiopia, the Christian Amhara communities steadily moved south and settled in different parts of the Shawan plateau in three different stages. To use again his words,,

*The ancestors of Takla Haymanot [1215-1313] are said to have moved to Shawa in three different stages, Hizba- Barik, a Tigre Cleric, first settled in Dawint (Amhara), 18 generations before. His grandson, Asqa-Lewi , is said to have moved further south and 'baptized' the people of Walaqa, Amhara, Marhabite, and Manzih', one of his descendants, Yidla ten generations before Takla Haymanot, migrated still further south to Silalish in Shawa.*<sup>305</sup>

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entire cultural life of the highlands; Levine, *Greater Ethiopia*, p. 72, also indicates "during the first millennium A.D. the inhabitants of Amhara were Agew peoples who developed a distinct South-Ethio-Semitic tongue, *amarinna* or Amharic, quite possibly through a process of pidginization and creolization."

<sup>304</sup> Tadesse, *Church and State*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120, footnote number 4; Budge, *the Life of Takla Haymanot*, pp. XL, 9 where it is indicated that Yidla was sent to Shawa along with one hundred and fifty notables by King Degnazan, who was based at Amhara.

From the quotation, it is plausible to deduce that presumably the first Christian cleric of either Tigre origin or from Tigre, who lived eighteen generations before Abuna Takla Haymanot settled at Dawint, Amhara.

To put it in perspective, if we take the year of the birth of Abuna Takla Haymanot and subtract eighteen generations (each generation being 25 years) from it, it is around the second half of the eighth century. Hence, the first Christian cleric of Tigre origin started to settle in the area that later came to be known as Beta Amhara among its earlier inhabitants, the Cushitic Agaw, about 450 years before the birth of Abuna Takla Haymanot. The second stage of baptism of the inhabitants of the areas known as Walaqa, Amhara, Marhabete, and Manz took place after three generations by about the mid-ninth century. In other words, it was by about the mid-ninth century AD that the earliest clerics settled amid the Agaw in these areas. The third and final stage of clerical settlement to the area relatively further south, Silalish, which according to Taddesse was the area around the present-day Bulga in north Shawa, took place ten generations before Takla Haymanot which is in the second half of the tenth century AD.

Taddesse further explains, unevenly scattered Christian communities were found in the "...pagan dominated districts of Silalish and Mugar on the Shawan plateau by about the thirteenth century." But he warns us, despite the clerical claim of the process of proselytisation; the beginning of the evangelization of the people of the Shawan plateau in earnest is associated with the foundation of the new dynasty

by Yikunno Amlak in 1270.<sup>306</sup> In other words, although different detachments of the Christian clerical communities have existed in northern Shawa as far back as tenth century AD, the proselytization and extensive settlement of Christian Amhara took place only after the rise of Yikunno Amlak, when the political power was transferred from the Zagwe (Agaw) dynasty<sup>307</sup> to the Amhara Kings, who founded the Solomonic dynasty. To be precise, most parts of the Shawan plateau, including its historically important part, nicknamed the 'fractious province of Menz'<sup>308</sup>, according to Levine, were incorporated into the Christian Kingdom during the time of Emperor Amda Seyon (1313-1314). Shawa started to become the geopolitical centre of the kingdom for the coming two centuries until the sixteenth-century population movement which brought the predominantly pastoralist Oromo to the Shawan plateau.

The Christian Amhara were among the principal communities in a considerable part of the Shawan plateau before the settlement of the pastoralists Oromo. The Oromo and Amhara have been dominant groups in the area under study following the sixteenth-century population movement.<sup>309</sup> Arnesen claims, the settlement of the pastoralist Oromo paved the way for the "...contact between groups of Semitic and Cushitic speakers, groups with different ways of life, i.e., pastoralists versus

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<sup>306</sup> Ibid., p.119-120

<sup>307</sup> Ibid. p. 55, note 1. It is said that we have two contradictory traditions about the duration of the dynasty, the first tradition indicates that it existed for 333 years and the second version posits it lasted for 133 years until the coming to power of Yikunno Amlak in 1270. According to Tadesse, the second version is preferred by the eminent Ethiopianist scholar, Conti Rossini.

<sup>308</sup> Levine, *Greater Ethiopia*, p.73,

<sup>309</sup> Even at national level the Oromo and the Amhara arguably constitute more than two third of the population of modern Ethiopia.

agriculturalists, and Christians versus non-Christians,” initially construed as “devastating and locust-like”. However, later it was replaced by the complex process of “interaction, domination, subordination, adaptation, and assimilation.”<sup>310</sup>

Indeed a history of the relations between the Oromo and the Amhara in the locality is too complex. Scholars and writers who dealt with this issue failed to understand these complex processes, and their works exhibit the following two constraints, among others. First, they focused on the conflicts and rivalries between the two communities by putting aside peaceful interactions and intermingling. Secondly, their writings were mainly skewed in favour of the Christian Amhara and mentioned the Oromo only in passing remarks or mentioned them when doing so helped them to further explicate the former. For instance, the nineteenth-century Ethiopian writer, Asma Gyorgis, reiterates, የኦሮሞ ታሪክ በጣም ተገልጦ የሚታየው ከሸዋ ነገሥታት ታሪክ ጋራ ነዉ። (A history of the [Oromo] can be seen clearly with the history of the kings of Shawa).<sup>311</sup> Consequently, any attempt to reconstruct an objective history of the people of the Shawan plateau is an uphill struggle since most sources at our disposal are reconstructed selectively. We shall continue discussing the Amhara and the Oromo and their

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<sup>310</sup> Arnesen, pp. 210-11. Arnesen's argument needs some qualification since it was not by this time that the Semitic and Cushitic speakers' came into contact in the Ethiopian region for the first time, or even on the Shawan plateau, yet it may not be true for the Oromo and Amhara contact.

<sup>311</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 489; See the canonical works on the history of the Kingdom of Shawa, Abir, pp. 144-182; Darkwah and Ege, among others. Compared to these three works the latter gave relatively much space to the Oromo and even devoted a full-fledged chapter.



pattern of settlement in detail later after shedding some light on the genealogy and the pattern of settlement of the Tulama since the Oromo settlement affected the pattern of settlement of the Amhara and vice versa.

### **The pattern of Settlement of The Tulama Oromo**

The last and the most predominant community on most parts of the Shawan plateau after the sixteenth-century population expansion have been the Tulama, who were traditionally believed like other confederacies descended from a mythological common ancestor known as Oromo or Orma. However, it is difficult to verify with certainty "...whether this mythical father, Oromo, existed or not, if he was a biological father of all these branches claiming direct descent", writes Abbas, "or if being Oromo is rather a linguistic and socio-cultural reality which progressively emerged from an amalgamation of distinct or related communities."<sup>312</sup> On the contrary, the same author vehemently argues, what is significant in this regard is not only what happened in the past but what the society believed to have happened, the way they perceive themselves and how others perceive them. He further indicates, the peoplehood or nationhood of the Oromo is manifested by common traditional institutions like the *Gada* system and *Qaalluu* institutions, by kinship relations and by having a mutually intelligible common language (Afaan Oromo), and by the same cosmology and thought despite their conversion either to Christianity in the case of the area under study

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<sup>312</sup> Abbas H Gnamo, *Conquest and Resistance in the Ethiopian Empire*, P.55

and to Islam in the areas like Arsi among others.<sup>313</sup> Having said this about the common ancestor and peoplehood of the Oromo, let us now briefly highlight how the Oromo perceive their kinship relations.

As indicated elsewhere, the Oromo were divided into two confederacies, namely Borana and Barentu. It is also said that one of the subgroups of the Borana, the Macha, and Tulama, had lived together around Haroo Walaabuu. Other subgroups of the Borana, the Southern Borana or the Sabbo and Gona and Guji had also lived separately at Tulluu Walal and Haroo-Girja, respectively, on both sides of the Gannale River.<sup>314</sup>

After the sixteenth-century Oromo population expansion, it is believed that various Oromo confederacies came to occupy different territories, as has been discussed elsewhere, the Barentu occupied the eastern half and Borana the western half. However, the view which characterizes the various Oromo subgroups as discrete "tribes"<sup>315</sup> that went to discrete territories and became discrete self-governing entities has been questioned by academia. For instance, the eminent Harvard University-based scholar on the Oromo culture in general and *Gada* in particular,

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<sup>313</sup> Ibid

<sup>314</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 18.

<sup>315</sup> See, for instance, Bairu Tafla, *Asma Gyorgis, and His Works*, pp.136- 137, where it is indicated [ኦሮሞዎች] ሁለት ነገድ ናቸዉ።( which meant the Oromo were of two tribes); See also Isenberg and Krapf, *Travels, Researches and Missionary*, p. 60 who complicates it and indicate that the Oromo were divided into many "tribes independent of each other".

Professor Asmerom Legesse, came up with a new analysis that challenges the conventional view concerning the separation of the Oromo people into Borana and Barentu based on the territory they have occupied.<sup>316</sup> Asmerom unravels that both confederacies moved into many of the areas occupied by the Oromo although gradually, one confederacy predominated over the other in some regions and, as a result, the region and all the people who moved to it accepted a common regional designation deriving from the name of the predominant confederacy. He further concedes that we did not know why the name of one or the other confederacy predominated in different regions. However, we know that the Borana and the Barentu identities predominate today in the western and eastern provinces of present-day Ethiopia respectively.<sup>317</sup>

Meanwhile, we do not have an equivalent term in Oromo for the term confederacy. Often the term *gosa* is used to distinguish one Oromo subgroup from another. However, the term *gosa* is very elusive and students of the history of Ethiopia and the Horn are often baffled to grasp the meaning of this term.<sup>318</sup> For instance, in modern parlance, ethnic groups like Oromo, Sidama, etc. have

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<sup>316</sup>Asmarom Legesse, *Oromo Democracy: An Indigenous African Political System* (Lawrenceville, N.J., 2000). pp. 148-49.

<sup>317</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 149-150; Negaso, *History of the Sayyoo Oromoo*, .pp. 201-202, 257-259.

<sup>318</sup> See, for instance. Berhanu Lameso, "A History of the Guji Oromo (1850s-1974)" (PhD dissertation, Addis Ababa University, 2012), pp.13-15, since the term *gosa* has been laden with negative connotation like the English term 'tribe', he was compelled instead to use the term clan. Contrary to Berhanu, Abbas H Gnamo, *Conquest and Resistance in the Ethiopian Empire, pp.57-58* argues that we have to use an Afaan Oromo term *gosa* when we discuss the Oromo kinship identity instead of either tribe or *gosa*. Abbas further claims that the term *gosa* has often been used erroneously by many peoples in Ethiopia without having adequate knowledge about the essence of the term *gosa* and its significance in the Oromo culture.

been often identified as *gosa*, on the other hand, the Oromo subgroups like Arsi, Ittu, Macha, Tulama have also been identified as *gosa*, and the English term “clan” is equivalent to the Oromo term “*gosa*”. For instance, one of the scholars who attempt to shed light on this issue, Mohammed Hassen, pinpointed that although we do not have an equivalent *Afaan Oromo* term for the term ‘clan’, *gosa* can be its closer term. He defines the term *gosa* as “a lineage or a clan, or sub-clan, or a tribe, species or people or a nation..... [*G*]osa ...is not just a clan, but 'a large category of descent groups which includes all peoples descended from a mythical or common ancestor.”<sup>319</sup> Abbas Haji, on the other hand, indicated that the English terms, “lineage”, “clan” and “tribe” are not good depictions of the Oromo term “*gosa*”. Rather he argues:

*Gosa is a collection of patrilineal descent groups and lineages of an unlimited number of generations. This implies that the genealogical depth of a Gosa is extremely variable. Many Gosa claim that their ancestral line goes back to 15-20 generations or so, whereas for many genealogy stops at less than 10. The variation in genealogy could be explained by the chronology of segmentation/fission process: the more ancient the segmentation, the deeper or longer the genealogy. The most commonly evoked ancestral line among the Arsi varies, however, between 10 and 12.*<sup>320</sup>

The most common term used in the area under study to identify the Oromo subgroups is *gosa*. In most parts of Tulama inhabited areas, when they come across a stranger, they ask a stranger to which *gosa* s/he belongs. Therefore, when we discuss the genealogy and the pattern of the Oromo settlement in the area under study, we use the term *gosa* in an overarching manner, that is in areas like Darroo, in the Kuyyuu district of Salale, those who inhabited the opposite side

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<sup>319</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p.35.

<sup>320</sup> Abbas, *Conquest and Resistance in the Ethiopian Empire*, p. 59

of the Muger River belong to the Macha *gosa* and those who are found on this side of the river belong to the Tulama, whereas among the Tulama themselves the subgroups like Bachoo, Jiillee, Dachi were also considered as *gosa* and the list goes on for the subgroups listed under these three major subgroups also (see the chart which indicates the genealogy of the Tulama).

However, Asmerom complicates this issue and warns historians not to employ terms like 'tribes', "clans", and confederacies rather he advised them to use terms like "moiety"<sup>321</sup> or "dual organization" in the analysis of the Oromo kinship system, otherwise, he argued, there would be serious misunderstanding between historians and anthropologists. In his own words,

Moiety is a fundamentally different concept from tribe. Tribe is a territorial entity whereas moiety need not be and often is not. Tribes are self-governing, moieties are not. Moiety is often a structural feature that cuts across territorial groupings such as tribes. In the case of the Oromo, the moiety is a totally non territorial concept. That, most assuredly, is the case in Borana.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> According to Asmarom, moiety is a technical term employed by anthropologists to refer to two halves of a society that are related to each other and mutually dependent in their 'structure' and 'activity', see Asmarom, *Oromo Democracy*, P. 134.

<sup>322</sup> Asmerom, *Oromo Democracy*, P. 150. According to Asmarom, the most convincing and most astonishing evidence comes from the southern Boorana, where he undertook intensive research. The contemporary Boorana is divided into two moieties called Sabbo and Gona. The people as a whole and their constituent moieties have been alleged to be descendants of the ancient Boorana moiety mainly because the society as a whole bears the same name as the moiety. And the most important and most surprising fact that Asmarom discovered is that a remarkable concordance between Bahrey's Boorana/Baarentu and the southern Boorana's Sabbo/Gona; See Beckingham and Huntingford, pp.111-12

<b>Pan Oromo</b>	<b>Bahrey</b>	<b>Borana South</b>	
16th Century Moieties	Clans & Lineages	Today's Moieties	Clans &
Borana		Gona	
	Macch'a Jidda Dacch Galan Konno Bacho		Macch'itu Warra Jidda Dacch'itu Galantu Konnitu Bacchitu
Barrenttuma		Sabbo	
	Karraayyuu Obo Suba Liban Digalu Nole-Ilu ... ?		Karrayyuu Obbole Sibu Libano Digalu Llu ... Mat'arri

Concordance of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Oromo moieties and today's Borana moieties (adopted from Asmarom Legesse, *Oromo Democracy: An Indigenous African Political System* (Lawrenceville, N.J., 2000). p.165).

From what we have seen above, one may discern that we should not take at face value the often discussed and so-called separation of the Borana and Barentu and the Macha and Tulama starting from the time of Robale *Gada* (1570-1578). Asmerom persuasively invalidates the view which considers the southern Borana as pure Borana. He argues, there are Barentu sub moieties in Borana. In line with Asmerom's explanation, we may also extrapolate, Macha were not pure Macha since there are Tulama sub moieties in the Macha land and vice versa.<sup>323</sup> Negaso Gidada also came up with similar conjectures concerning the northern Borana, the Macha and Tulama sub-moieties. He indicates, the population of the Sayyoo

<sup>323</sup> See Yilma, pp. 236, 238-39; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p.42; Tesema, "The Oromo of Wollega," pp.20-24, among others, where the causes for the separation of the Tulama and Macha have been discussed thoroughly. Since the causes and the process of the so-called separation of Macha and Tulama have been discussed in different sources, there is no need to repeat them here.

area of West Wallagga was heterogeneous where different *gosa* claimed a *Borana* origin of both the Tulama and Macha segments of the Oromo live side by side.<sup>324</sup>

For the sake of space, let's see only one of the most striking cases, the Obo *gosa*, who were and are the dominant group in West Wallagga, and also on the Shawan plateau, in the hinterlands of the modern Ethiopian capital City, Finfinnee (Addis Ababa) to which the Sayyoo Oromo belong. It is fascinating that Sayyoo are among the subgroups of Oboo both in West Wallagga and on the Shawan Plateau. For the detail, see the following two charts, which indicate the genealogy of the Oboo *gosa* of Macha and Tulama, respectively.

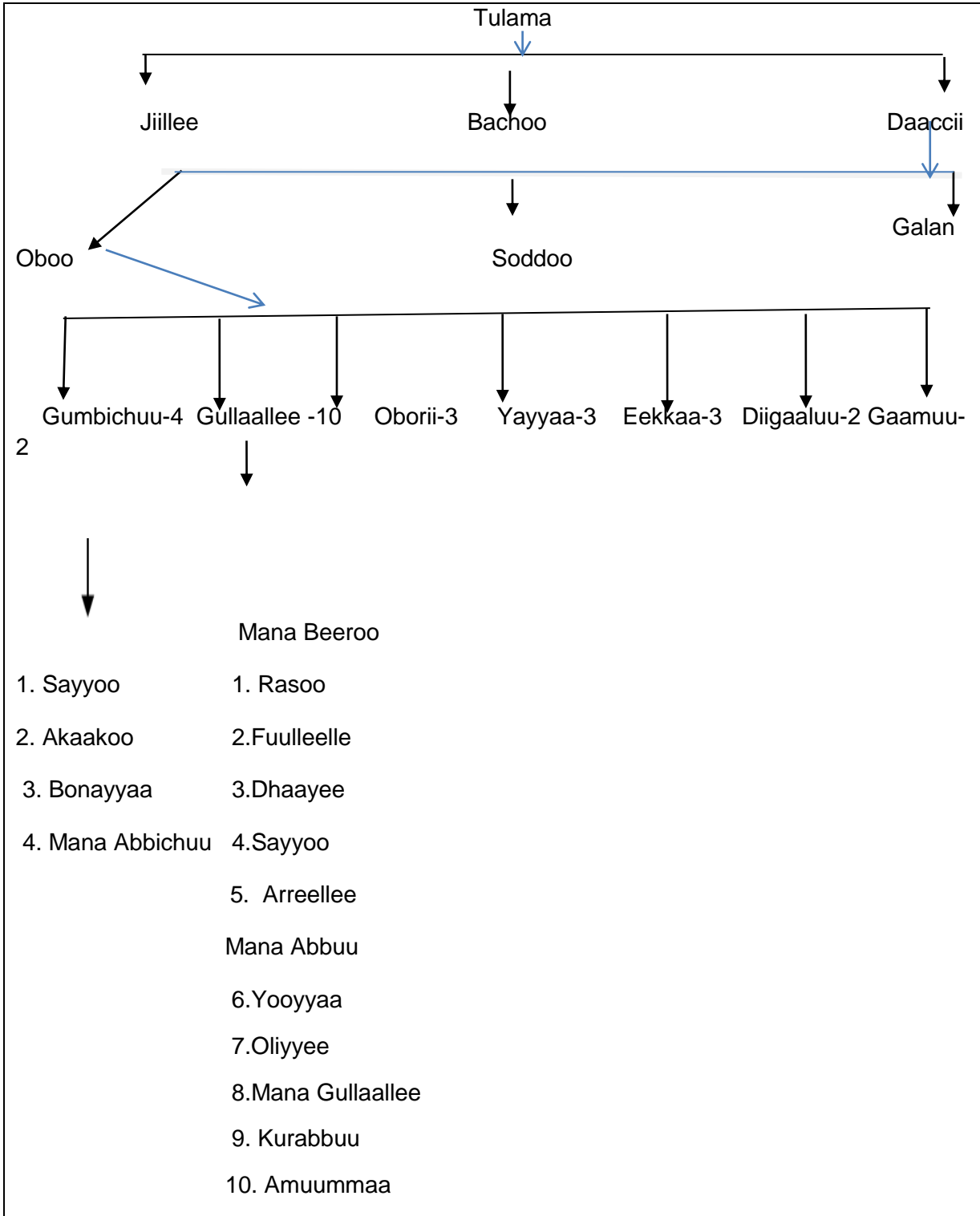
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<sup>324</sup> Negaso Gidada, *History of the Sayyoo Oromo*, pp.201-202



The Genealogy of Oboo gosa of Macha adopted from Negaso Gidada, *History of the Sayyoo Oromoo of Southwestern Wallaga, Ethiopia from about 1730 to 1886* (Addis Ababa : Mega Printing Press, 2001), p. 256





The Genealogy of Oboo gosa of Tulama adopted from Alemayehu Haile, *Sirna Gada Oromoo Tuulamaa* (Finfinnee, 2014), p. 30

Be that as it may, it is also indicated elsewhere, that the Tulama and Macha were one of the three submoieties/confederacies of the Borana. After the so-called separation of the Tulama-Macha Oromo groups, the Tulama<sup>325</sup> became predominant on a considerable part of the Shawan plateau retaining Odaa Nabee as their *Chaffee (Gada centre)* while the Macha founded their separate chaffee Odaa Bisil ( also known as Tute Bisil Osole), located between the present-day towns of Gedeo and Ijaajjii.<sup>326</sup> However, this did not lead to the cessation of the relations between the Borana and the Barentu confederacies let alone between the Macha and Tulama who were very much close to each other. It is said that they were in communication and often conducted simultaneous expansion in the northern and northwestern parts of Ethiopia. By about 1585, for instance, when the Boorana crossed the Abbay into Gojjam, the Barentu conducted expansions into the province of Bagemededer.<sup>327</sup>

Meanwhile, as to the etymological origin of the term Tulama, the sixteenth-century writer, *Abba Bahrey*, reported that since the groups that were subdivided under it were so numerous that it was termed Tulama.<sup>328</sup> Similarly oral traditions confirm that the name Tulama is derived from the Oromo root word *tuulaa* which literally

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<sup>325</sup> Since in such kind of thesis we cannot deal with all of them simultaneously, we shall see the genealogy and pattern of Settlement of the Tulama a little bit in detail hereunder.

<sup>326</sup> *Gedeo is located at a distance of about 180 km to the West of Addis Ababa, Tesema, "The Oromo of Wollega," pp.21-24, Yilma, p.238; Oljira Tujuba, "Oromo-Amhara Relations in Horroo Guduru Awraja (Northeastern Wallagga), c 1840s - 1941" (M. A. Thesis, History, Addis Ababa University, 1994), p.28; Tsega, Integration and Peace in East Africa, p. 17.*

<sup>327</sup> Beckingham and Huntingford, *Some Records of Ethiopia*, p.120; Tsega , *Integration and Peace in East Africa*, P. 17.

<sup>328</sup> Beckingham and Huntingford, p. 112.

means 'heap' designed to indicate the presence of numerous Oromo sub-groups under the Tulama.<sup>329</sup> The Tulama confederacy, according to Abba Bahrey, was segmented into four major sub-groups, i.e. Dachi, Konno, Bachoo, and Jiillee. Moreover, the same source indicates that these by themselves gave birth to too many 'tribes' whose names are as follows: "...the Children of Baco are Uru and Ilu; the Children of Dae are Soddo, Abo, Gallan; the sons of Kono are Saqsaq, Liban; the sons of Jele are Ela, Abo, and Leis; all these are called Tuulama..."<sup>330</sup> Nonetheless, these days our informants are silent about the Konno and also about the Jiillee subgroups as mentioned by Abba Bahrey.

The traditions that we have gathered across most parts of the area under study indicate that the Tulama are divided into three sub-groups commonly known as *sadeen Tulama* (literally the three sons of Tulama), namely the Dachi, the Bacho, and the Jiillee. These, in turn, are categorized into *Sadeen Dachi*, *Jahan Jiillee*, and *Jahan Bachoo* (which literally meant the three sons of Dachi, the six sons of Jiillee, and the six sons of Bachoo respectively)<sup>331</sup>

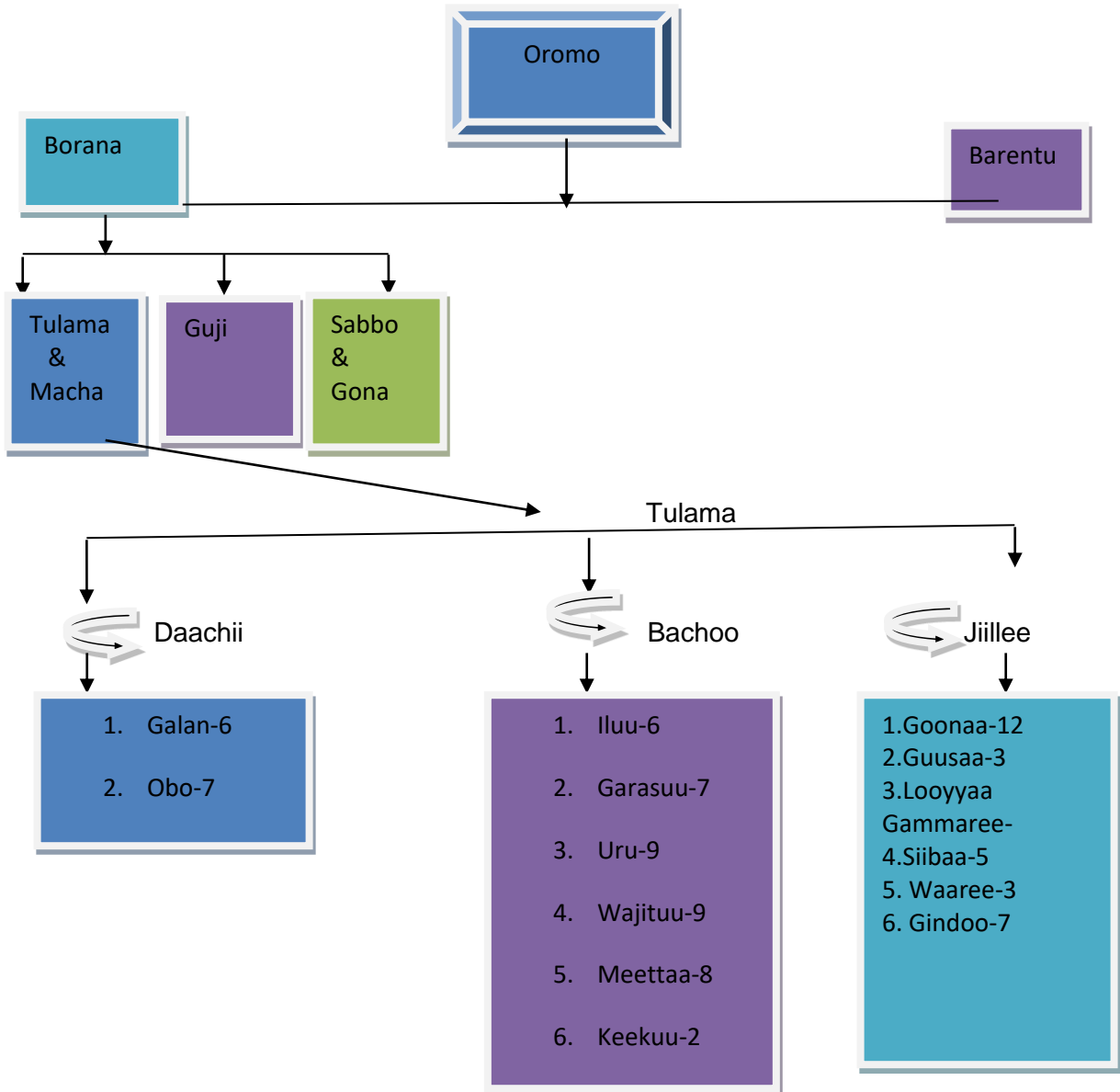
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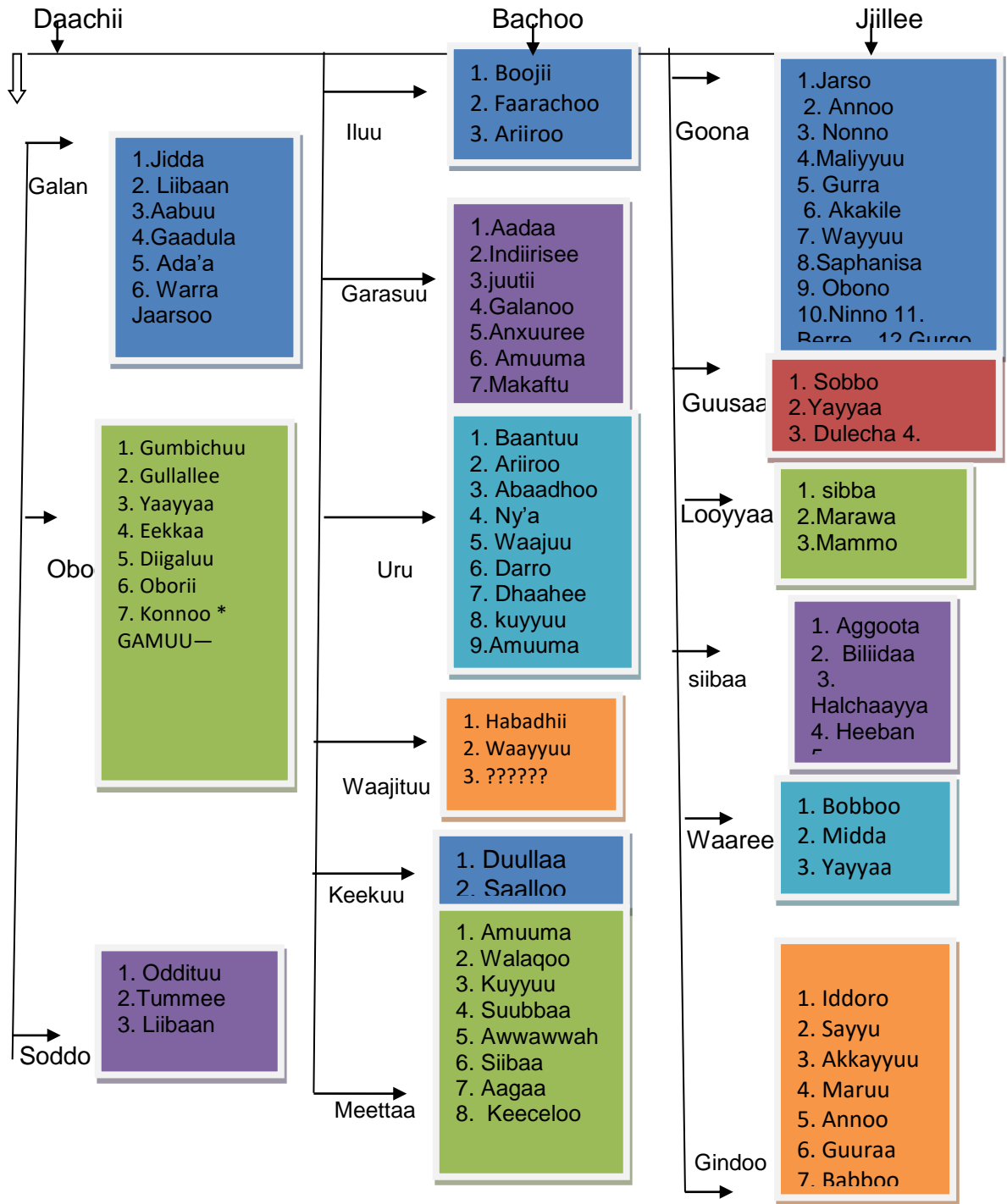
<sup>329</sup> *Informants:* Waaqshumee Badhaanee (16/6/ 2001, Dagam) and Birbirsa Heyyii (Sabbataa, June 28, 2017).

<sup>330</sup> Beckingham and Huntingford, p. 112

<sup>331</sup> *Informants:* Humnee Lataa ( Jiddaa, May 1-2, 2017) , Birbirsa Heyyii( Sabbataa, June 28, 2017), Wolde Mariam Ararase ( Sabbatta, July 1, 2017), Gadaa Tolaa (Wuccaaalee, June 7, 2001).

## Major Sub-moieties (gosa) of the Tulama Oromo





\* Konno is presented under Eekkaa by Alemayehu et al

To understand when and how the predominantly pastoralist Oromo settled in the

area under study, we have to make a brief survey of the traditions of the Oromo about the process of their settlements in the new territories during the population movement. According to the Macha tradition collected by an eminent scholar on Oromo history, Tesema Ta'a, the qabiyyee system or land rights between the Tulama and the Macha was established based on what is known as hobo (elder families) and chora (younger families). To borrow Tesema's words,

*According to the Oromo custom the eldest sons in their family (the hangafa) remained at the place of their father's residence by inheriting the qabiye land of their fathers while the younger sons had to move into a fresh land. In the process of Oromo expansion this was why the Tulama (elder family) remained in Shawa and the Macha (younger family) moved westwards and occupied their present location.<sup>332</sup>*

The same principle has been applied in the dispersal and settlement of the Tulama. The Dachi, who is the *angafa* of the Tulama, retained the areas around Odaa Nabee as a nucleus and expanded in various directions while the two remaining Tulama sub-groups (Bachoo and Jiillee) settled in areas relatively far away from the *chaffee* at Odaa Nabee, the former occupying the western and the latter the eastern peripheries of the Tulama territory.

We have popular traditions diffused among the Macha and Tulama concerning the direction of their movements. For instance, Tesema Ta'a has recorded how

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<sup>332</sup> Tesema Ta'a, "The Political Economy of Western central Ethiopia; from the mid Sixteenth to Early Twentieth Centuries" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Michigan State University, 1986),pp.45-46.

the Tulama, Macha, and Wallo Oromo occupied the land in the direction where their respective *Kormma* (bull) went and then rested.<sup>333</sup> We have comparable traditions forwarded by our informants concerning the settlement of the Tulama sub-groups. For instance, our informants tell us how the Saggoo Oromo<sup>334</sup> settled in the current Graar Jaarsoo district of North West Shawa or Salale,

*Our forefathers came from Walaabuu through Barrakii, guided by a Kormma known as Gombol. The Kormma went from Barrakii<sup>335</sup> to Ateetee Waarka.<sup>336</sup> Then the Kormma turned towards Jama River and rested at a place now known as Malkaa Odaa. The angafa then said Gombol rested here and starting from this locality, we should tie meedhicha. On the morrow, they continued their journey and rested at Saggoo Bosiichaa. On the third day, they continued the journey, and the bull reached as far as Jijjiigaa leaving Waayyuu (Oborii) to the east, in the south as far as Gullaallee. After the arduous journey, the Kormma rested at Saggoo Ujubaa, where Odaa Abbaayyii tied meedhicha. The Kormma was finally slaughtered under the Odaa.<sup>337</sup>*

The Saggoo gosa belong to the Saglaan Igguu Abbuu, who, in turn, belong to Jiddaa, who is said to have been one of the six sons of Galan, the *angafa* of Tulama. It is fascinating that the Saggoo Oromo who settled at Saggoo Ujubaa were led by a pioneer, Odaa Abbaayyii, who was the great great... grandfather of Abbaa Maallee (Badhaasaa Guddaa) of the first half of the nineteenth century as we shall see in the next chapter.

Our oral informants around Odaa Nabee recite a famous story about the

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<sup>333</sup> Tesema, "The Oromo of Wollega," pp.22-23.

<sup>334</sup> Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee", p. 12. The Saggoo gosa belongs to the saglaan Igguu, literally meant to the nine sons of Igguu, one of the subgroups of Jiddaa.

<sup>335</sup> Barakkii is found in the midst of Galan territory in North Shawa.

<sup>336</sup> It is located in Merhabete.

<sup>337</sup> Informants: Beqele Simee ( Saggoo, June 8, 2001) Chare Za Walda Mariam ( Fiche, June 13, 2001) and Beqele Dammuu ( Fiche, June 9, 2001). The first informant himself was one of the the descendents of the pioneer of Saggoo Odaa Abbaayyii alike the famous Abbaa Maallee of 1840s; see also Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee", p. 13.

settlement of the Tulama and Macha on the Shawan plateau. They indicate that they left the Walabuu area following a bull and heifer. The heifer became pregnant when they started a journey from Haroo Walabuu. After nine months of continuous journey, they reached Odaa Nabee, where the pregnant heifers' water broke. The pregnant heifer and the bull continued their journey, at Chaffee Tumaa, around the present-day Galan town, located on the outskirts of Addis Ababa; the cow gave birth to a calf. However, the bull and cow separated henceforth. The cow remained there, while the bull went to Hora Finfinnee, drank the mineral water, embarked on a reverse journey on another route, and went to the mounts Yarar and Bosat, respectively. From Mount Bosat the bull went to Odaa Robaa and finally returned to Haroo Walabuu.<sup>338</sup>

Teferi Abate, who conducted fieldwork among the northernmost branch of Tulama, the Borana of Wallo, almost a quarter of a century ago, documented the same tradition. He indicated the Tulama had completed the long journey up to Borana over a long period. The journey up to Borana (and within the Borana itself) was guided by signs of *meedhicha* (he calls it *miticha*). The main signs for tying *meedhicha*, according to Teferi, were the urine of the 'beloved cow,' the roaring of the chief bull, the existence of a big tree (odaa), and a permanent water supply and other conditions essential for living. The *angafa* of the group would then formally express the boundaries of his group's territories by saying "Kuni

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<sup>338</sup> Informant: *Abbaa Gadaa* Nagasaa Nagawoo (Adulala, July 10, 2017) *Abbaa Gadaa* Babsa (Adaamaa, July 6, 2017).



Keenya (this is ours). If they felt discomfort, the settlers would wake the bull and cow up to look for another place and the journey would continue “until they got similar signs of another *meedhichaa*.<sup>339</sup>

We have another exciting tale narrated among the northern Tulama, aka the Borana of Wallo, concerning the arduous journey, they made during the Oromo expansion. According to the oral tradition recently collected by Yemiamrew, they vividly recall an incident they encountered in north Shawa while they crossed the Shabal River. When they crossed the river, an unexpected flood separated their flock of cattle into two groups, and some of the cattle crossed the river to the opposite side while others were unable to cross. As a result, the owners were bewildered and distressed by this incident and sang a spiritual song to invoke their ancestral spirit to protect their cattle saying ayyana [an] *waama* (I call our forefathers spirit)

**Oromo**

*Ayyana [an] waama,  
Ayyana warratiin wamaho,  
Ayyana Waama,  
Caaccuu Kallachaaftiin wamahoo,  
Shabal Guutee, maalin waraba,  
Surraa muhee, gofaan adema  
Ayyana waama,  
Ayyana warratiin wamaho.*<sup>340</sup>

**Gloss**

Let me call Ayyana (angel of God).  
I call my tribes' [forefathers'] Ayyana.  
Let me call Ayyana.  
I call Caaccuu Kallachaa.  
As river Shabal overflow,  
I shall rather take the route of Surra Muhee.  
Let me call Ayyana.  
I call my tribes' Ayyana.

When the Tulama of Borana settled in Wallo, it seems they encountered the

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<sup>339</sup> Teferi Abate, "Land, Capital, and Labour in the Social Organization of peasants: A Study of Village Level Dynamics in South-western Wallo, 1974-1993" (M.A. Thesis, Social Anthropology, Addis Ababa University. 1993), p.22. According to Teferi '*miticha*' is leather rope tied to a tall tree to pronounce a settlement in a given area after quite a long journey.

<sup>340</sup> Yemiamrew, P. 66.

Amhara settlers, whom they pushed northwards to the present-day district of Amhara Saynt. Perhaps the Tulama encountered stiff resistance from the Amhara in this locality and were even forced to build stone walls to protect their cattle, children, and women from assaults. The process of the displacement of the Amhara by the Oromo has been recounted by oral tradition: [Oromo] sigosh Amhara sishehs (When the [Oromo] have become a buffalo [and triumphed] the Amhara run away). It is said that the Amhara were able to defend Amhara Saynt from the Oromo onslaught, and this, in turn, is said to have been remembered as: “Amhara sigosh [Oromo] sishesh...” (When the Amhara became powerful as buffalo, the [Oromo] fled. It seems the Denkoro river and Gallo kab (wall) served as a boundary between the Amhara and the Oromo in this locality, as indicated in the following figure.<sup>341</sup>



Fig. 1: Piles of stones used as barricade, around Woglo area, Borena (picture taken by

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<sup>341</sup> Yemiamrew, pp. 80-90; Anteneh Aragie, “A Political History of South Wallo, 1620s-1916 (MA Thesis , Jimma University, 2017), pp. 57-58. It is said that there were also remnants of Amhara in Borana and they were known as “ Washa qer” ( those who remained in the cave) according to Yemiamrew and qurach Amhara ( isolated Amhara)according to Anteneh.

Yemiamrew in 2015)<sup>342</sup>



Figure 2, the Denkoro River in the present Borena-Saynt National Park, North of Abbay River, and picture taken in 2014 by Yemiamrew)<sup>343</sup>



Figure 3, Gallo" kab (Wall) indicating physical boundary between the Oromo and Amhara (Photo taken by Yemiamreew)

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<sup>342</sup> Yemiamrew, p. 84

<sup>343</sup> Yemiamrew, pp. 87-88. It is fascinating that the boundary between the two communities still remained intact despite their existence side by side at least for more than three centuries. It is said that the reason why the river has forest on the Borana side and deforested on the Saynt side was that the latter still do not cross the river in order cut trees as a result of the oath made between two communities when they were reconciled after the aforementioned conflict during the Oromo expansion.

It seems that the area around the present-day Borana was initially conquered by the united force of the Itu (Warantisa) and the Tulama Oromo subgroups. But later on, a conflict came into being between these two Oromo subgroups, and the Warantisha were expelled from Walaqa, and Itu were also forced to cross into Gojjam by “the more numerous and, hence expansionist Tulama,” who came to dominate “the whole of Walaqa and most of the territories of the Amhara which lay between the Walaqa and Bashelo rivers.”<sup>344</sup>

What makes this tradition more interesting is that it was reiterated in the area where the interaction and integration between the Oromo and the Amhara have been intense. For instance, almost one hundred eight years ago, Isenberg wrote,

*Most of the inhabitants [ of Wallo] speak the Amharic better than the [Oromo], and I have reason to suppose, that the [ Oromo] language will be entirely forgotten by the rising generation, as has been the case in the tribe of Tehooladere, where a few persons only understand the [ Oromo]-language.*<sup>345</sup>

Therefore, the predominantly pastoralist Oromo in general and the Tulama, in particular, were settled in their new territories after the sixteenth-century eventful population movement. However, delimiting where each Oromo *gosa settled* is difficult, if not impossible. It is even more difficult to delimit the north and northeast boundaries that the Amhara and Oromo communities share. For instance, after the rise of the Shawan kingdom, the Tulama were either displaced or

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<sup>344</sup> Merid, pp. 545-46.

<sup>345</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, P.346

assimilated.<sup>346</sup> Moreover, a sporadic movement of different Tulama subgroups displacing one another makes describing the patterns of their settlement monotonous. Under normal circumstances, it is not uncommon to come across members of one gosa scattering here and there occupying disconnected territories. For instance, a locality around the Oromo village of Finfinnee, later Addis Ababa, was said to have been formerly occupied by the Galan, who were later displaced by the Gullaallee.<sup>347</sup> The Gullaallee were, in turn, evicted when the capital of the modern Empire State, Finfinnee/ Addis Ababa, was established on their territory, as we shall see in the last chapter.

The constant movement and displacing of one another of the different Tulama gosa was encapsulated by the popular story of the settlement of the three Ada'aa brothers<sup>348</sup> in the present-day Ada'aa district of east Shawa (the hinterlands of Biishoftu, aka Dabra Zeit town). It is said that before their settlement in the locality, their forefathers lived in Ada'a Barga (West Shawa, around Mugar River). The three Ada'aa brothers<sup>349</sup> set out from Ada'a Barga with their cattle in search

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<sup>346</sup> As we have seen some scholars came up with the narrative which considers the Shawan plateau the cradle of Oromo civilization and ofcourse the origin of the Oromo. See Mekuria, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation*, p. 209. As per this argument, therefore, the boundaries of these two modern Ethiopia's predominant communities changed time and again principally based on the political power balance since perhaps the medieval period.

<sup>347</sup> Haberland, PP. 523-26, Berhanu Lameso , " The Amhara- Oromo Relations in Northern Shawa 1813-1847" ( Manuscript at IES MSS, 1992), p. 6.

<sup>348</sup> The eldest of the three Ada'aa brothers was 'Boorii'; the second was called 'Adii', and the third 'Walato'.

<sup>349</sup> James McCann mistook the three brothers for three gosa of Ada'aa (*sadden Ada'aa*) which are quite different, See McCann, *People of the Plow*, p. 198. The three gosa of Ada'aa are Handha, Dakkuu, and Iluu according to our informant, Birbirsaa Heyii ( Sabbataa, June 28, 2017), who himself belongs to the Ada'aa gosa and Alemayehu et al, p. 118

of pasture and *hora* (mineral water).<sup>350</sup> Then they initially settled at a place known as Nacho, near the present-day Dukam town. Their cattle were said to have smelled the *hora* and the Ada'a brothers followed the footsteps of their cattle and found the *hora* close to the present-day Bishooftu town, one of which was Hora Arsadii. After the cattle drank the *hora* they returned to Nacho. This process continued until the Ada'a brothers finally moved to the area close to Hora Arsadi. <sup>351</sup> Informants further indicate the three brothers settled five generations before Bullo Jiloo,<sup>352</sup> who was one of the Oromo notables during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Therefore, roughly the three brothers settled in Ada'a at the beginning of the eighteenth century, almost a century after the pastoralist Oromo settled on the Shawan plateau.

However, Ada'a settlement by the three brothers was not an occupation of vacant land. It is said that the sons of Adii (Bitora and Bunnie) waged war against the Liibaan Oromo who had been there and chased them away. The Liibaan Oromo then retreated to the area around mountain Zequwala. It is also possible, as

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<sup>350</sup> However, one of our key informants ( Wolde Mariam Ararse , Sabataa, July 1, 2017) indicates that the Ada'aa brothers left Ada'aa Barga in searching grazing land for their cattle since Ada'aa Barga was closer to the Mugar valley and has also dense forests where wild animals like lion lived which devoured their cattle.

<sup>351</sup> Informants: Badhaadha kiloolee (Hiddi/Ada'aa, May 20, 2000), Hayla Masqal Wondimu (Qajjima/ Biishooftuu, May 18, 2000), Birbirsu Heyyii (Sabbataa, June 28, 2017). The latter informant who is from the Sabataa area indicates that the Ada'aa splinter groups which are found in Sabataa came from Ada'aa Barga. He further indicates that the Ada'aa splinter group also settled around Kolobo in Mangasha. See also James McCann, *People of the Plow: An Agricultural History of Ethiopia, 1800-1990* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), p. 197.

<sup>352</sup> Informants: Abbaa Gaddaa Naggasaa Nagawoo (Adulaalaa, July 10, 2017) and Abbaa Gadaa Tashooma Kabtimar (Biishooftuu, July 8, 2017). However, one of the descendants of Bulloo Jiloo (Biishooftu, July 10, 2017), an octogenarian, Mrs. Akililee Teklu Bulloo Jiiloo, indicates that the Ada'aa brothers came from Wallo. It is fascinating that we have also Ad'aa subgroups in Borana and Dara, the northernmost Tulama Oromo abode.

informants claim, all the Liibaan Oromo were not evicted from the area but they continued living there side by side with the Ada'a. In addition to Liibaan and Ada'a, there were/ are also other Oromo *gosa* in Ada'a, namely Galan, Jidda, Abbuu, Abbichuu, and others.<sup>353</sup>

Likewise, the locality around parts of today's Sabbataa town was initially settled by the Galan and Ada'aa Oromo subgroups. However, in due course, the Mettaa and Subbaa (the Bachoo Oromo subgroups, Subbaa is a sub *gosa* of Mettaa ) came and settled in some parts of the present town of Sabbataa and the hinterlands west of the town. Even some of the landmarks like the renowned Mettaa Abboo are named after the later settlers.<sup>354</sup>

The encroachment of an Oromo subgroup into the territory of their neighboring Oromo counterparts, including non -Tulama, the resultant displacement continued until their incorporation into the kingdom of Shawa. The best epitome in this regard is the tradition we have got from the Gindeberet district. It indicates how the Mettaa led by a certain Kallacha Qursew settled in the Gindeberet district, an exclusively Macha Oromo territory hitherto.<sup>355</sup> The Meettaa initially encamped at

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<sup>353</sup> Informants: *Abbaa Gadaa* Naggasaa Nagawoo( Adulaalaa, July 10 , 2017), and *Abbaa Gadaa* Bayyanaa Sanbatoo( Bishhoftuu, July 7,2017) ; see also Samuel Negash, " The History of Dabra Zeit Town up to 1974"( BA Thesis, Addis Ababa University, 1985), pp.3-4.

<sup>354</sup> Informants: Birbirsä Hey'ii (Sabbataa, June 28, 2017), Wolde Mariam Ararasa (Sabbataa, July 1, 2017).

<sup>355</sup> See, among others, Isenberg and Krapf, p. 211, the territory located to the Southwest of Mettaa was known as Macha, and tradition indicates the encroachment of the Tulama towards the Macha must have been after that. On the contrary, despite the existence of the Tulama Oromo subgroups in the Gindeberet district nowadays, the folk who live on the Salale side of the Mugar River, which divides Gindeberet from Kuyyuu, reiterate that the opposite bank of the Muger river is Macha land.

Gaajoo, in the eastern part of Gindeberet bordering Mettaa Roobii. When they sought to expand their domain, they encountered opposition from Galayee Badaasaa, a chief of Abuna part of Gindeberet, on the eve of Gindebert's incorporation into the Shawan kingdom in the late 1870s or early 1880s. To demarcate the boundaries of the Macha and Tulama in Gindeberet and to use it as a fort, Kaabii Gajoo (the wall of Gajoo) was built by Kallacha Qurse.<sup>356</sup> The reason why the people of Meettaa left their territory is not clear. Perhaps it was the time when chiefs mushroomed in different parts on the Shawan plateau among the Oromo this could be the result of territorial aggrandizement. The following couplet further consolidates this speculation:

Oromo	Gloss
Yaa coqorsa loo'i, loo'aa Marga keessaa Yaa Kallacha mo'ii, moo'aa Maccaa kessaa	Creep Coqorsaa , a creeper grass Be victorious [Mr] Kallacha, subjugator of the Macha land.

Similarly, on the eastern side, the areas around, south, and east of the present-day Adama (aka Nazareth) town up to the Awash river were formerly settled by the Arsi Oromo (one of the major subgroups of the Barentu, which is one of the two Oromo confederacies along with the Borana). However, informants claim, after the gruesome conflict between the Tulama and the Arsi, the Torban Oboo subgroups like Gullaallee, Gumbichu, and Diigaluu, who moved from the area

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<sup>356</sup> Abebe Urgeha, "A History of Gindeberet district, West Shewa, C. 1870s-1991" (MA Thesis, Jimma University, 2017), pp. 39-41. The wall has been serving as a centre of the Oromo *Chaffee* assembly in the district.



around Finfinnee, displaced the Arsi.<sup>357</sup>

Boset district was initially a wilderness roamed by elephants and lions until the Torban Oboo settled there. Our informants indicate that the pioneer who settled in the Boset district was Hayee Malmalee of Oborii. He came to this locality from north Shawa. Informants meticulously narrate how he settled here by overcoming the dangers posed by elephants. It is said that he made iron-tipped wooden spears, Haatu Arbaa (Elephant killer) in Afaan Oromo, and sit on the top of a big tree near the road of elephant (Known as Karraa Arba) and stabbed the back of the elephant with that spear and the iron would remain in its body and gradually the elephant would die from the wound.<sup>358</sup>

Another tradition indicates that when a elephant drank water its anus opened wide and he entered through anus to the stomach of an elephant having blade in his hands and then cut the intestine of the elephant and when it fell down he came out through anus. Hence, it was in this manner that the Torban Oboo Oromo managed to settle in the districts of Boset and Adaamaa.<sup>359</sup>

In addition to the Arsi, the Warjih, Hadya, and Watathe inhabited the area around

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<sup>357</sup> Informants: *Abbaa Gadaa* Babsaa Badhaasoo, Roobaa Bunee, Shuraa Badhaadhaa, and Ifaa Taaliiaa ( Adaamaa, July 6, 2017).

<sup>358</sup> Informants: *Abbaa Gadaa* Babsaa Badhaasoo, Roobaa Bunee and Shuraa Badhaadhaa( Adaamaa, July 6, 2017).

<sup>359</sup> *Abbaa Gadaa* Babsaa Badhaasoo , Roobaa Bunee, Shuraa Badhaadhaa, Beqele Hawaas , Lammaa Tumsaa, Bokonaa Cuqaalaa, and Ifaa Taaliiaa ( Adaamaa, July 6, 2017).

the present-day Adaamaa and Booset districts. As to the time when the Torban Oboo Oromo started a settlement in these localities, we do not have conclusive evidence. But Shimelis claims it commenced during the period of King Sahla Sellase of Shawa.<sup>360</sup> However, Shimelis's conjecture is unlikely, for instance, one of the European travelers, who was in Shawa during the period Sahla Sellase, indicates the presence of at least one of the splinter group of the Torban Oboo, the Gamuu in this locality, and did not mention about their movement from the north to this area. Rather he indicates that they started to pay tribute to the king of Shawa.<sup>361</sup> Therefore, the settlement of the Torban Oboo, especially the Gamuu, took place at least a generation before the time of Sahla Sellase. Perhaps other Torban Oboo subgroups must have come later, even some of them moved to this locality in the second half of the nineteenth century, as we shall see.

Another issue that makes delineating the patterns of the Tulama settlement an uneasy endeavour is that some oral sources, as well as literature, mistook toponyms for appellations of population groups. For instance, Salale is identified as a *gosa* of the Tulama.<sup>362</sup> In fact, it is a geographical region where different

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<sup>360</sup>Shimelis Abebe, "A History of Booset District: East Shäwa Ca. 1870's – 1991" ( Jimma University, MA Thesis, 2019), p.11; see also Niguse Metaferia, „Yä Adaamaa Kätäma Misräta Ina Idegät Tarik", (The Historical Foundation and Development of Adaamaa Town) (Adaamaa, 2012), p.5; Solomon Debebe, "The Political and Religious Significance Of "Odaa Tree" and "Odaa Nabe" Among Tulama Oromo in Akakki Wereda, Oromia Special Zone Surrounding Finfinnee", MA thesis. Department of Social Anthropology, (Addis Ababa, 2017), p.29.

<sup>361</sup> Harris, Vol. III, pp. 264-63.

<sup>362</sup> See, for instance, Ege, p. 91, who uses the term 'Salale tribe', Mekuria, *Contours of the Ancient and Emergent Oromo Nations*, p. 151, where he claims the term Salale refers not only to toponym but also to an Oromo *gosa*.

Tulama subgroups like the Yayyaa, Gullaallee, Gumbichuu, Oborii, Jarsoo, Uru of Bachoo, and Jiddaa, among others, are found.<sup>363</sup> Harris also mentions the so-called “Sertie –tribe”,<sup>364</sup> which he mistook for an area inhabited by the Jidda Oromo.<sup>365</sup> Those who inhabited the mouth of Garmama river<sup>366</sup> and mountain Bokan were often referred to as the Bokan Oromo.<sup>367</sup> We do not have Bokan in the genealogy of the Oromo in general and the Tulama in particular. Harris again mentions the ‘rebel’ Loomi (Lumee) Oromo subgroups.<sup>368</sup> It is the name of an area around Mojo town of east Shawa, where we have the Oromo *gosa* that belong to the Torban Oboo, where the Gumbichu and Gullaallee are the dominant ones.

Another factor that deters us from clearly delineating the patterns of the settlements of various Tulama *gosa* is that sometimes we find different *gosa* within a small area, for instance, in the rural neighbourhood known as Gullaallee Beroo of Dagam district of North Shawa, we have two *gosa* which belong to Shanaan Beroo of Gullaallee and Galayyii, who are categorized under

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<sup>363</sup> Tsegaye, “The Oromo of Salaalee “, pp.16-17.

<sup>364</sup> Harris, vol., II, pp. 188.

<sup>365</sup> One of our informants around the present-day Sirti town in Jidda woreda argues that Sirti was not the name of *gosa* rather it was the name of his great great great great grandfather. Sirtii market, renowned for its high-quality horses, he claims, was founded by his forefather, known as Sirti. Informant: Humne-Lata-Wataru-Ayanu-Taklu-Bune-Migru-Sirti-Abdala-Siibaa-Coorqi-Walab (Jiddaa, May 1-2, 2017); See also Berhanu Lameso, p. 8.

<sup>366</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, P. 216 writes about the so called the” tribes of Germama “which is nonexistent.

<sup>367</sup> Ege, pp., 45- 46, is unusually inconsistent in this regard, on 45 he indicates that the area was perhaps occupied by the Gumbichu Oromo, whereas on the map on page 46, he identifies them as an Oromo *gosa*. Similarly, the Lelisa and Selmi, whom Ege located right south of the Jama River were not the Oromo *gosa* names, rather these two are place names; see also Berhanu Lameso, p. 8.

<sup>368</sup> Harris, Vol. III, P. 263; Ege, p. 47.

Oboo and Jidda subgroup Galan respectively.<sup>369</sup> The same can be said about Sabbataa area, which is located on the outskirts of Addis Ababa, where we find the Gullaallee, Ada'aa, Galan, Meettaa and Subbaa Oromo subgroups.<sup>370</sup> As we have already seen, the Ada'aa district is the typical instance where the Liibaan, Ada'aa, Galan, Jidda, Abbuu, Abbichuu, and others live side by side.<sup>371</sup> On the other hand, some groups like Galan/Jiddaa occupy separate territories, for instance, one section lived in the south and east of Addis Ababa, while the other settled far to the north bordering the Amharic speakers and are found in Jirruu, Abichu, and Jiddaa districts as well as in Graar Jarsoo and Dagam districts of Salale. Similarly, the Ada'aa, another subgroup of Galan, are found east and south of Addis Ababa, west of Addis Ababa in Ada'aa Bargaa, and in the northernmost territory of Tulama, Daraa and Borana.<sup>372</sup>

As we have seen above, albeit it is difficult to delimit, if not impossible, the territory occupied by the Tulama. At the beginning of the twenty century (1901), Martial de Salviac indicates a locality between the Abbay and Awash rivers was claimed by “JaGada [Jidda], the Dachi, the Obbo, the Loume and Meta, the Galan and their sub-tribes”.<sup>373</sup> The Tulama Oromo's abode stretches from Lake Zeway

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<sup>369</sup> Informants: Fayisaa Biruu, Wadajoo Badanee and Waaqshum Badhane (Dagam, June 16-19, 2001).

<sup>370</sup> Informants: Wolde Mariam Ararsaa, Birbirsaa Heyii, and Dubee Buttaa (Sabbataa, June 27-July 1, 2017).

<sup>371</sup> It is sometimes perplexing that all of these subgroups are classified under the Galan, but the Ada'a and the Liibaan identify themselves as Ad'aa and Liiban, respectively, not as Galan.

<sup>372</sup> Haberland, pp. 523-26; Berhanu, p. 6.

<sup>373</sup> Martial. De Salviac, *Un peuple antique au pays de Menelik: Les Galla* (Paris: Oudin, 190) translated by .Ayalew Kanno, *An Ancient People in the State of Menelik* (Great African Nation): The Oromo (2005), p. 14.

in the south to Borana, in Wallo in the north., in central Ethiopia, The area around the present-day West Shawa zone, which is believed to be the source of the Awash River, also known as Macha highland marks its western boundary while its eastern boundary marked by the Awash River (which divides the Tulama and Arsi Oromo habitation) and the Karrayyuu territory.<sup>374</sup>



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<sup>374</sup> Informants: Nagasaa Nagawoo (Adulala, July 10, 2017), Woldemariam Ararse, Wolde Mariam Ararasa ( Sabbataa , July 1, 2017). See also, Alemayehu et al, P. 137; Knutsson, P. 33; Biratu, p. 9 and Birhanu Lameso, p.6. One of my informants, Woldemariam, indicates that formerly the area inhabited by the Tulama lies beyond Ginchi town on the Macha side.



Map 6 Rough Sketch of the Tulama Oromo abode Ca. 1600 on the map of Modern Ethiopia

Meanwhile, classifying the Karrayyuu Oromo subgroups is one of the perplexing issues students of the Oromo culture and history have encountered. For instance, according to Asma Gyorgis, Karrayyuu is the ‘firstborn son’ of the Barentu moiety, which, in turn, has six children, namely Libaan, Walloo, Jiilee, Oboo, Subaa, and Balaa.<sup>375</sup> This issue complicates the conventional classification of the Oromo confederacies. This is because groups like Jiilee and Liibaan are among the

<sup>375</sup> Bairu , *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, P. 137

major *gosa* of the Tulama; they are also among the major sub moieties of the Karrayyuu and the Barentu. Moreover, as we have seen, prof. Asmerom Legesse was cautious about the view which restricts the Oromo *gosa* to a particular territory by taking the Borana case where the Karrayyuu are also one of the subgroups of the Borana. However, according to *Abbaa Gadaa* Nagasaa Nagawoo, the Karrayyuu Oromo's *Gada* centre was not at Odaa Nabee, which perhaps indicates that they are not part and parcel of the Tulama moiety. Yet, the same informant claims that the southern Borana and Tulama and Macha are the same by stating that in southern Borana, the Macha are known as Maccituu and the Galan as Galantuu.<sup>376</sup>

Be that as it may, the southern part of the Tulama land has been inhabited by the Jiillee. The Jiillee territory stretches from around Lake Zeway in the South, Maqi River, and the Wanjii area in the center and includes parts of the Yefat region in the north separated by the Dachi and Karrayyuu territories.<sup>377</sup> The Jiillee consider themselves a blessed people who occupy the fertile land between Lake Danbal in the south and the Awash River in the north.<sup>378</sup> Most of the Jiillee are found in the present-day districts of Dugda, Bora, and Adama of east Shawa zone.<sup>379</sup> Hence, the Jiillee community predominantly settled in the southernmost part of the

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<sup>376</sup> Informant: *Abbaa Gadaa* Nagasaa Nagawoo (Adulala, July 10, 2017).

<sup>377</sup> Nowadays, some parts of the area between Karrayyuu Oromo and Efrata and Jiillee of the Yefat sub-province have been inhabited by the Amharic speakers. The Amharic speakers gradually encroached onto the Tulama and Karrayyuu territory following the conquest of the kingdom of Shawa, as we shall see in the next chapter.

<sup>378</sup> Bizuwork, pp.iii, 1 2; Tsegaye "The Oromo of Salaalee", p. 14, Naol, " p. 21; Ahmed Hassen Omer, "Aspects of the History of Efrata Jiillee Warada (Shoa region) with particular Reference to Twentieth Century" (B.A. Thesis, History , Addis Ababa University, 1987), p.6-7.

<sup>379</sup> Naol, p. 28.

Tulama land.

The second subgroups of the Tulama are the Bachoo. The Bachoo groups have inhabited parts of southwestern, western, and northern parts of the Tulama territory. They have settled on the elongated territory that stretched from the Bachoo district in the south, which is bordered by the Soddoo in the south. In the same direction, we have Bachoo and its subgroups like Iloo and Bantuu in the districts of Iloo, Tolee, and partly Dawoo, Dandi, Jeldu, and Gindeberet districts in the west (where we find the Macha and Tulama subgroups mingled together). These districts are inhabited by other Bachoo subgroups, such as Meettaa, Suubbaa, Gereessuu, Maalimaa, etc. The Meettaa, Suubbaa, and Maalimaa groups are also dominant in the neighbouring districts of Meettaa Roobii, Walmara, and Ada'aa Bargaa. This is why Isenberg reports, "Metta is divided into several districts. From the river Robi, the [Oromo] around are called Metta Robi [Oromo]." <sup>380</sup> The Saglaan (Nine) Uruu of Bachoo have occupied the Kuyyuu and Hidhabu Abotee districts of Salale. We do have other Bachoo groups, such as Meettaa and Wajjiituu mixed with Dachi subgroups, like Ada'aa in the Darra district and Borana sub-province of Walloo in the north. The Bachoo land is larger than the area occupied by Jiillee but smaller than that of Dachi. The principal Oromo *gosa* found in Darra are the Meettaa and Waajituu which belong to the Bachoo and Ada'aa of Galan. According to the oral tradition collected by Teferi Abate, the Ada'aa of Darra were the closest relatives of the Tulama of Borana.

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<sup>380</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 201



Tradition has it that when conflict came into being between the Tulama of Borana over the *qabiyyee* right, the *Abbaa Bokkuu* of Ada'aa interceded and taught them how to share plots of the land among themselves. It is fascinating that the same tradition further specifies that the people of Borana identified themselves as the “descendants of Tulem Boranticha.”<sup>381</sup>

The third subgroup of the Tulama, the Dachi,<sup>382</sup> traditionally considered the *angafa* (senior), inhabited the vast area that extends from Soddo in the south (north of the Gurage land) up to and including the Borana sub-province of Wallo in the north. Their abode is bordered in the west by the Bachoo except in the northwest, where a splinter group of Dachi, Warra Jaarsoo, are found west of Bachoo, in the Warraa Jaarsoo. In Darra and Borana, the Dachi and Bachoo groups are found intermingled. In the southeast, east, and northeast, they are bordered by the Jiillee, Arsii, and the Karrayyuu, respectively. In the northeast, they share a boundary with the Shawan Amhara, where the latter were able to

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<sup>381</sup> Informants: Dubee Buttaa (Sabbataa, June 29, 2017), Wolde Mariam Araarsee (Sabbataa, July 1, 2017). ; See the Tulama genealogy; Odd Eirik Arnesen "The Becoming of Place: a Tulama Oromo Region in North Shoa," in P. T. W. Baxter, J. Hultin and Triulizi (eds), *Being and Becoming Oromo, Historical and Anthropological Enquires*, (Uppsala, 1996), pp.218, 222-23; "Wakene Frew, "The Family of *Ras Darge* and the Church in Salale,1870 - 1941" (B. A: Thesis, History, Hayla Sellase I University, 1973),; pp.23-24, Teferi, pp.21-22; Ege, P. 47; See also Abebe , p. 19, who indicates that we have Tunlama Oromo gosa, Geresuu and Meettaa which belong to the Bachoo sub-moiety within Gendabarat district.

<sup>382</sup> This must have been the most important and dominant subgroup of the Tulama Oromo the Tulama were better known by the name Dacha during the time of population movement. Dacha is perhaps the corrupt form of Dachi. See Merid, "Southern Ethiopia and the Christain Kingdom", p. 402; Beckingham and Huntingford, Some *Records of Ethiopia*, n.3, P.112.

conquer either by displacing or assimilating the former starting from the inception of the Shawan dynasty under the leadership of Nagasi Kristos.<sup>383</sup>

We do not have conclusive evidence concerning the exact time of the settlement of the pastoralist Oromo in the region, yet Asma Gyorgis wrote: "During the time of Birmaji [1578-1586]; Susenyos was captured by the Boran [Oromo]... Birmaji devastated Gojjam and Begemder and made camp in Walaqa."<sup>384</sup> The same source further indicates that when Susenyos was a rebel against the central state from 1597- 1607, "... he crossed the Zama and went to Mugar and settled in a district called Salao, where he was well received by the [Oromo]..."<sup>385</sup> The oral tradition we got pertaining to the family of Abbaa Maallee of Saggoo, in Salale, indicates that they settled fifteen or sixteen generations ago.<sup>386</sup> If we calculate this using twenty-five years for a generation it could be around the turn of the seventeenth century. Therefore, we may deduce that the pastoralist Oromo settled on most parts of the Shawan plateau either in the last quarter of the sixteenth century or at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

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<sup>383</sup> Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee", p. 15; Ege, p.48; Dechasa, "A Socio-Economic History", p. 3 indicates that the Mofar Wuha river was a boundary between the Oromo and the Amhara enclave of Manz. However, as we shall see, there were also Oromo settlers in the Manz proper, although any attempt to demarcate a clear linguistic boundary in this part of Shawa is very much difficult.

<sup>384</sup> Bairu. *Asma Gyorgis* , pp.178-197.

<sup>385</sup> *Ibid*, pp.188-191.

<sup>386</sup> Informants: Beqele Simee, Yashii Badhikee (Saggoo, June 7, 2000), Abba Hayla Maryam Morodaa ( Fichee June 7, 2001 **and** Abraham Tesema ( Fiche, June 10, 2001).

From the above discussion, one may discern that most parts of the Shawan plateau came to be dominated by the Tulama at least since the beginning of the seventeenth century. But we do have pockets of Amharic speakers. In this regard, a Portuguese Jesuit who was in Ethiopia by the beginning of the second quarter of the seventeenth century writes, "...today the [Oromo] possess the greater part of Xaoa [Shawa]; some villages of the Abyssinians still exist on a few ambas."<sup>387</sup> Moreover, when the Oromo overrun the plains, according to Ege, the Amhara who had inhabited considerable part of Shawa retreated to the deep and unreachable gorges of the Jamma- Addabay system, "on remote mountain plateaus in Manz and Geshe, and on the narrow plateaus of the eastern escarpment in Ans'okiya, Efrata, and Gedem.," writes Ege, "Small groups also lived in the upper parts of the Qabbana and the Kassam valleys in the South. The terrain made it impossible for the Oromo to use their cavalry effectively, while their nomadic way of life led them to prefer the high plains."<sup>388</sup>

The Amhara enclaves on the Shawan plateau are traditionally thought to have consisted of about fifteen territorial units, independent of each other, and ruled by their chiefs until their unification by the dynasty, founded by Nagasi Kristos, commonly known as the Shawan dynasty. These chiefdoms were Morat, Marhabete, Dobba, Tagulat, Wagda, Tara, Bulga, Geshe, Gedem, Efrata,

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<sup>387</sup> Almeida, M. de, 'History of Ethiopia', *Some Records of Ethiopia*, translated and edited by Beckingham, C. F. and Huntingford, G. W. B. (Hakluyt Society, 1954), Book 1, chapter 3, p. 19.; See also Darkwah, p.5; Harris, vol. III, p. 129, who almost after two centuries indicated that the Oromo occupied the fairest provinces of Abyssinia and occupied her most pleasant place.

<sup>388</sup> Ege, P. 18; Stitz, "The Amhara Resettlement of Northern Shawa", p. 72.

Ansokiya, Mehuy, Mamma Meder, Lalo Meder, and Gera Meder. The last four chiefdoms were jointly known as Manz.<sup>389</sup>

It was the dynasty founded in Manz that played a pivotal role in the unification of the separate Christian Amhara enclaves as well as embarked upon the conquest of the territories settled by the neighbouring Tulama and Karrayyuu Oromo, albeit gradually. The process of the incorporation and conquest of the Shawan Oromo by the Shawan kingdom took nearly two hundred years, from the beginning of the eighteenth century up to the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Therefore, our discussion in the next chapter commences with the beginning of the Shawan kingdom's expansion towards the Tulama territory and how the Tulama found themselves on the peripheries of the aggressively expanding Kingdom of Shawa.

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<sup>389</sup> Ege, p. 19; Bairu Tafla, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp.966-67; Stitz, "The Amhara Resettlement of Northern Shawa", p. 72; Dechasa, "A Socio-Economic History of North Shawa," p. 1.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE GENESIS OF THE KINGDOM OF SHAWA AND THE TULAMA OROMO CA. 1700**

#### **The Oromo and Amhara Notables and the Genesis of the Shawan Dynasty**

In the previous chapter, we have tried to shed some light on the peopling of the Shawan plateau. As we have seen, most scholars who dealt with this issue did not suspect the presence of the Oromo on the Shawan plateau before the sixteenth century. They indicate that most parts of the Shawan plateau were inhabited by the Amhara, Gafat, Argobba, and the Gurage. But in recent decades, some scholars have started to challenge the hegemonic scholarship and came to propose that there were sedentary Oromo in the area under review who lived side by side with these communities, at least for several centuries, if not for millennia before the sixteenth century.

But after the sixteenth century, the Oromo gradually became one of the two most dominant communities along with the Amhara in the northernmost part of Shawa and the single largest community in other parts except the southwest corner where the famous Gurage people reside. After the sixteenth century, the Shawan plateau has been transformed from the abode of nearly half a dozen communities to virtually an exclusive domain of the Oromo and Amhara. There is no shadow of

a doubt; the history of the Shawan plateau has been chiefly dominated by the interaction between these two communities hitherto. Hence, in this chapter, we shall explore how the fusion and fission between the notables which belonged to these two communities led to the foundation of the Shawan Kingdom at the beginning of the eighteenth century around the northeastern escarpment of the plateau.

Since the interaction between the Oromo and the Amhara, in general, and their notables, in particular, was not limited to the time under review, it is, therefore, plausible to begin our discussion by giving a brief glimpse of the relations between the Oromo notables and perhaps the first Amhara prince, Emperor Susenyos, whose history, especially early history, was very much intertwined with the history of the Oromo in general and the Tulama in particular. As we have seen, the Tulama have continued to be the majority on most of the plateau except in the inaccessible river valleys, gorges, and the cold mountainous areas.<sup>390</sup> This Oromo dominance was lamented by Asma Gyorgis as follows: “አጼ ሱስንዮስ በጎዣም በነገሱ ጊዜ ወደ በጌምድር ዘመቱ እንጂ ወደ ሸዋ አልተመለሱም። በዚህ ምክንያት ሸዋ በትሎማና በከረዩ ጠፋች”<sup>391</sup>:: (which means, when Emperor Susenyos was crowned in Gojjam,

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<sup>390</sup> Harris, Vol.III. p. 28 gives us a rough estimation of the population of Shawa by about 1840. For instance, he claims that the Population of Shawa and its dependence was estimated to be two and a half million, of which the Christians constitute about a million and Muslims and “Pagans” a million and a half. If we assume the majority of Christians were Amharic speakers, Muslims and “pagans” were non-Amharic speakers, it is fascinating that the Amharic speakers were not the majority even in the areas under the influence of King Sahla Sellase (1813-1847).

<sup>391</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 490.

he marched to Bagemder and did not return to Shawa. As a result Shawa was ruined by the Tulama and Karrayyuu).

Notwithstanding what has been claimed by Asma Gyorgis, it is paradoxical that Susenyos, who failed to protect Shawa and handed it over to the Tulama and Karrayyuu, was one of the foremost Amhara princes, whose history inextricably interwoven with the Oromo. The Tulama Oromo captured, adopted, and made him *Ilma Gosaa* (son of the clan) or “son of a Borana Oromo clan” during the *Birmaji Gada* (1578-1586).<sup>392</sup> The chronicler of Susenyos expresses this development as follows, የማረከዉም ኦሮሞ እንደ ልጁ አድርጎ በመልካም አኳኋን ያዘዉ (the Oromo who captured him loved and treated him as his child).<sup>393</sup> It seems that a person who adopted him might have been the one whom Asma Gyorgis characterized as a renowned Oromo whom Susenyos had known and whose name was Buko<sup>394</sup>, who was from the *gosa* of Konno. The Phraseology used by

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<sup>392</sup> Sevir Chernetsov, “Fasil Geram”, *Encyclopedia Aethiopia*, Vol.2, (2005), p. 499; Awegichew Amare, “Oromo Elites in the Post-Medieval Christian Kingdom,1520-1769” ( MA Thesis, Debre Berhan University, 2014), p. 191; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 178-179 and Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, pp. 260-61.

<sup>393</sup> Alemu Haile, *Ye Itiyopiya Tarik (1597-1625 EC): Ye Atse Susenyos Zena Mewa’el / A History of Ethiopia ( 1605-1632): The Chronicle of Emperor Susenyos/* (Addis Ababa: Sirak Printing Press, 2005), pp.3-5; see also Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos*, P. 4 cited in Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 260.

<sup>394</sup> According to the chronicler of Susenyos, Pereira, pp. 44-49 cited in Mohammed Hassen, *the Oromo and the Christian kingdom*, p. 264, Buko was the *Abbaa Gadaa* of the Konno group of the Borana sub-moiety.

Asma Gyoris, “the great [Oromo]” to Characterize Buko further strengthen the chronicler's claim.<sup>395</sup>

From this Asma Gyorgis’s assertion, one may deduce that a person who adopted Susenyos belonged to the Konno<sup>396</sup> subgroup of the Tulama. He also indicates that the Oromo who captured and adopted him lived in the vicinity of the renowned monastery of Dabra Libanos, located in the area mainly inhabited by the Tulama. Moreover, Buko later on, perhaps invested with the title of *dajjasmach* and became one of the highest-ranking officials of Oromo origin in Susenyos’s government and served as *Sahafe Lam* of the province of Damot. Unfortunately, while he was traveling to the town of Enamora with a few of his soldiers, the Oromo intercepted them suddenly and killed him in 1627.<sup>397</sup>

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<sup>395</sup> Bairu, Asma Gyorgis and His Works, PP. 188-91. It is also indicated that the same Buko perhaps came to assume the highest political position within the government of Susenyos and this made him the first Christian Kingdom’s highest-ranking official of Oromo origin.

<sup>396</sup> See the Tulama genealogy in chapter one; See also, Merid, “ Southern Ethiopia and the Christian Kingdom”, pp. 414-15, where he indicates the Konno were among the Tulama Oromo Subgroups, who settled in Walaqa, which included areas around the present-day Darra, Borana, and Goha Tseyon ; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 982; Huntingford, “The History of King Sarsa Dengel “, p. 287, who indicates that it was a former province located between the Walaqa and Wancet rivers; Anaïs Wion – Marie-Laure Derat, “Wäläqa”, *Encyclopedia Æthiopica*, Vol. 4, (2010), p. 1081, was a” historical region in the ancient region of Amhara which owes its name to the homonymous river, a tributary of the Abbay ...separated from Šäwa by the River Gämma and from Goggam by the Abbay.” This area has been predominantly inhabited by the Tulama at least since then, especially with the Borana of Wallo.

<sup>397</sup> Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 264; Sevier Chernetsov, “Bukkoo” in *Encyclopedia Ethiopia*, Vol.I,p. 637, perhaps from Oromo *buqqaa* ‘expelled, uprooted’) was one of the first Oromo war leaders recruited in ca. 1617 to royal service by Ase Susényos”; Sergew, *Dagmai Menilek*, p. 47; See also Anteneh, pp. 58-59, who collected tradition which indicates that Buko served as *Sahafe Lam* of Walaqa and Amhara. He even claims that there is a toponym named after him which is known as, Mana Buko (house of Buko) located in Borana, west of the Makana Salam town.



There is no shadow of a doubt, Susenyos stayed among the Oromo during his captivity<sup>398</sup> up to when he was eighteen. His captivity by the Oromo at the formative years apparently had had a long-term effect upon him and can be considered a blessing in disguise since it helped him to know the plains and rivers of Shawa as far as Awash. It also helped him to learn the Oromo language, traditions and administration of justice. Above all, as a result of his stay among the Oromo, he became a seasoned horseman and came to master the arts of war as practiced among the Oromo by that time.<sup>399</sup>

The Oromo had also equally benefited from this encounter. Susenyos was said to have been very much admired by the Oromo warriors. They came to observe his dynamic persona, vigor, passion in warfare, audacity, and bravery in the face of danger and leadership. The Oromo Warriors used him as an aide when they wanted to capture the Christian mountain-top strongholds.<sup>400</sup> Moreover, this symbiotic relationship is thoroughly stated by Mohammed Hassen as follows: “It appears that the Oromo wanted to use the adventurous Amhara prince to move

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<sup>398</sup> The longevity of Susenyos's initial stay with the Oromo is unclear, for instance, the chronicle of Susenyos, Alemu Haile, *Ye Atse Susenyos Zena Mewa'el*, p.4 indicates that he stayed for a year and a half; meanwhile Bairu, *Asma Gyoris and His Works*, pp. 186-87. Asma Gyorgis indicates that ሶስት ዓመት ከመንፈቅ ወይስ አምስት ዓመት ኖረ ይላሉ አይታወቅም። (It is said that he lived among the Oromo for three and half or five years, but it is not known.). Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 260 indicates that he stayed for two years whereas Awegichew, p.102, claims it was a year and a half.

<sup>399</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyoris and His Works*, pp. 186-87.

<sup>400</sup> Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, P. 264

into both Gojjam and Dambiya, while Susenyos wanted to use Oromo warriors for his rise to power.”<sup>401</sup>

It is also important to underscore, in addition to command of the Oromo language, manners, and fighting skills, Susenyos also married ca. 1601<sup>402</sup> an Oromo Woman, Wald Sa’ala<sup>403</sup>, a daughter of a certain Wäläqa *nagash* (*governor*), Abrako, who was said to have been a member of an influential Oromo *gosa* from Wäläqa. <sup>404</sup> Susenyos’s marriage to a woman who belonged to an Oromo *gosa* who adopted and considered him *ilma gosa* (son of *gosa*), is not surprising. It is one of the earliest distinctive manifestations of the enigmatic<sup>405</sup> and the intertwined relationship between the sovereign of the Christian kingdom and the Oromo in general and the Tulama in particular, although he was not the last Christian kingdom’s sovereign whose history intertwined with the Oromo. For instance, later on, Iyasu I (the Great), one of the descendants of Susenyos and

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<sup>401</sup> Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, P. 264; Merid, “Southern Ethiopia and the Christian Kingdom”, p. 439.

<sup>402</sup> Susenyos married Wald Sa’ala when he was a fugitive and was living among the Oromo after the death of Emperor Sarsa Dingil in 1597.

<sup>403</sup> To which particular Oromo *gosa* she belonged is not clear. For instance, Awigichew, p. 110, claims that she belonged to the Warantisha *gosa*, but it seems he made this judgment based on the assumption that the Oromo *gosa* who settled in Walaqa were the Warantisha. Rather, as we have seen, Susenyos had amicable relations with the Borana (Tulama), and a person who adopted him belonged to a Konno *gosa* of Tulama. Therefore, it is likely that she belonged to the Tulama, who outnumbered the Warantisa in Walaqa and forced them to evacuate the locality.

<sup>404</sup> Andreau Martinez d’Alos-Moner, “Wald Sa’ala”, *Encyclopedia Æthiopica*, Vol. 4, (2010), p. 1094; Awigichew, P. 110.

<sup>405</sup> It is enigmatic since he had lived among the Oromo for several years and fought for them as well as against them more than any Christian Kingdom’s sovereign before the beginning of the nineteenth century. See Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, P. 262. Similarly Tsega Etefa, “Pan Oromo Confederations In the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries”, *The Journal of Oromo Studies* Vol. 15, No. 1 (March 2008), p. 27, indicates Susenyos had a huge stake in the Oromo assaults on the provinces like Amhara, Begameder, Ennarya, Gojjam, and Walaqa between 1597 and 1607; see also Harold G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft109nb00g/> p 39. Susenyos married a daughter of a high-ranking *Gada* official.

often allegedly saluted the most powerful king of Gondar, also stayed among the Tulama when he rebelled against his father.<sup>406</sup>

Be that as it may, there was a long-held view about the existence of several pockets of Christian Amhara enclaves ruled by their respective chiefs on the northernmost part of the Shawan plateau after a considerable part of the area was overrun by the Oromo. For instance, it is said that about a dozen local presumably Amhara notables existed who had the ambition to be crowned and restore the imperial throne on the Shawan plateau using caves and grottoes, as a haven. In this regard, Asma Gyorgis indicated that ‘had the lands of all these [rulers] been accessible to horses, had they not been precipitous, had they not had caves, grottoes, and Qāslā, nobody would have survived.’<sup>407</sup> He understandably exaggerated this issue and further indicates that አምራ አይጥን [እንደምትጠብቅ] ከዛፍ ሁኖ [አሮሞም] ከፈረሱ ላይ ሁኖ አፋፍ አፋፍን ይጠብቅ ነበር።<sup>408</sup> (As hawk watches for a rat from a tree, the Oromo being on their horses wait for the [Amhara] who were found in the lowlands below the areas occupied by the Oromo). This Asma Gyorgis stipulation does not apply to all the localities inhabited by the two

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<sup>406</sup> Merid, p. 583; Levine, *Greater Ethiopia*, p. 83; Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 344; Awegichew, pp. 115, 120. Bakkafa was also another Christian kingdom’s sovereign who took refuge among the Oromo, in this case among the Yajju Oromo. Even he was said to be given the Oromo name and when he became king of Kings, the Yajju Oromo were said to have been welcomed at his court.

<sup>407</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and his Works*, pp. 495, 517.

<sup>408</sup> Ibid, pp. 516-17. On the other hand, scholars like James McCann, *People of the Plow*, p 197 argues that “The Oromo and Amhara populations of Shawa engaged in warfare and cultural exchange along a fluid frontier ...since the sixteenth century”. Therefore, the relations between this communities was not closed as delineated by Asma Gyorgis; See also Abir, *Ethiopia: Era of the Princes*, pp. 163-64, who indicates that it was in Shawa more than anywhere else in Ethiopia, the assimilation between the Oromo and the Amhara was strong.

ethnolinguistic groups. For instance, there were Oromos in the gorges and valleys and the Amharas in the highlands areas like Manz, where we find the highest peak on the Shawan plateau (mount Abuye Meda which is approximately about 4012 m.a.s.l.<sup>409</sup> If we take the neighboring Oromo inhabited areas like Dara, Zagamal (the lowland area near Dabra Libanos monastery), and most parts of Wallo, the account of the Oromo exclusive settlement on the plains and Amhara's confinement to the valleys and gorges is untenable since these localities are very much rugged and dotted with mountains, gorges, and valley like the so-called the Amhara enclaves, if not more. Moreover, if we add another neighboring province, Gojjam, to this equation, things would be more complicated since most of Gojjam is a flat plain akin to the Shawa plateau where most of the Tulama resides.<sup>410</sup>

It also erroneously presumes that there were no relations between the two groups before and during the times he studied except for the period of warfare when the Oromo occupied the plain part of the area under study. It has been previously assumed that following the sixteenth-century population movement, Tulama have been confined to the plains and highlands, whereas the Christian Amhara inhabited the river valleys and gorges.<sup>411</sup>

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<sup>409</sup> Tewodros Kelemu and Worku Wolde, "Ethnobotanical Study of Indigenous Knowledge on Medicinal Plants used to treat diseases in selected districts of Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia", *Journal of Medicinal Plants Research* Vol. 12(29), 10 December 2018, PP. 528-536.

<sup>410</sup> See Merid, "Southern Ethiopia and the Christian Kingdom" pp. 502-503 and Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, P. 299 who discuss in detail how the topography of the central and northern provinces of the Christian kingdom played a pivotal role in checking the advance of the Oromo.

<sup>411</sup> Ibid; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, PP. 493-94 who understandably exaggerated this issue by stating that the Christian Amhara survived the Oromo onslaught, the lands the former occupied were not accessible to the Tulama horses.

There was hardly any part of Shawa not settled or traversed by the Oromo, including the formidable sub-province Manz. It was traditionally considered a springboard for the territorial expansion of the Shawan dynasty, which is albeit no more plausible as we shall see later in this chapter. Rather, there are bits and pieces of evidence which indicate the history of the founders of the Shawan dynasty was intertwined with the Oromo. For instance, the popular tradition in Manz indicates, Manz was founded by three pioneers (አቅኝ አባቶች), namely, Lalo, Mama, and Gera. The three notables were said to have been sent by one of the emperors<sup>412</sup> to settle and govern the districts later named after them. The story recorded by Levine roughly half a century ago goes as follows:

*the emperor offered each of them as much land as he could cross in a single day. They set out from the Adabay River, today a western boundary of Manz, and the result of the long day's journey was the present tripartite division of Manz, into Mama Meder, Lalo Meder, and Gera Meder. This explains why Gera Meder is the largest of the three districts, - for Gera's horse was the strongest.*<sup>413</sup>

Gera, Mama, and Lalo are among the well-known Oromo putative descent groups, personal and topographic names.<sup>414</sup> Even the name of the river itself, Adabay, is derived from the Afaan Oromo term, which means to split or bifurcate. The same is true of its tributaries like the Chacha and Beresa rivers. Moreover, it

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<sup>412</sup> Perhaps they must have been appointed by Emperor Iyasu the Great (1682-1706) when he came to Shawa in 1696 to demote Demetrios as a result of his mishandling of the Warranna rebellion; see, among others, Sergew, p.53, where the chronicle of Emperor Iyyasu was cited and translated into Amharic. It indicates, መለዉን የሸዋን አገር ንጉሥ ከፋፈለዉና ሹመቱን ለ3 ሰዎች ደለደለ። (All part of Shawa was divided [ by Emperor Iyasu] and three notables were appointed to administer the three parts ); Darkawah, p.7, footnote 15.

<sup>413</sup> Levine, *Wax and Gold*, p. 31; Alāmayāhu Wassie, *Imāḡua*, (Bahrdar, TZ printing and advertisement, 2015), pp.104-105

<sup>414</sup> Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, pp. 73-74; Negaso, *History of the Sayyo Oromo*, pp., 23, 53, note 51, Mekuria, *Contours of the Ancient and Emergent Oromo*, P. 192. For instance, Lalo is still one of the most widespread Oromo descent groups in Wallaga, Jimma, and Illubabor..

is fascinating that the name of one of the grandsons of the famous chief of Manz, Gera, was Gole.<sup>415</sup> There is no shadow of a doubt that Gole was an unequivocal Oromo personal name.<sup>416</sup> Moreover, there were also other chiefs with the Oromo names like Lata and Baaroo of Gedem and Wagda respectively, who were among a dozen of princes in Shawa before a single ruler came to have authority over the whole province.<sup>417</sup>

Similarly, there is a neighbourhood called Abdi Gera, located to the northwest of Mehal Meda (named ostensibly after an Oromo known as Abdi, who was, according to tradition, fought with a son of Gera).<sup>418</sup> Moreover, the oral tradition in Maz has it that their founding fathers, Asbo and Gera, introduced the ingenious way of utilizing communal pasture land around the locality known as Guassa in the 17th century. It is said that they observed a wide-open plain in the eastern part of Mänz, which they had reserved as grazing land. Hence, to use the reserved land efficiently, they devised what is known as the Qeerroo Management

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<sup>415</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 299; Levine, *Wax and Gold*, P. 32; *Darkwah*, p.8. According to Isenberg and Krapf, Gole was the maternal great grandfather of *Negus* Sahla Sellase ( 1813-1847) of Shawa. The genealogy goes as follows: Sahla Sellase - Zanaba Warq (mother of Sahla Sellase) – Walansa (mother of Zanaba Waraq)- Gole ( father of Walansa and son of Gera).

<sup>416</sup> For instance, the name of one of the Tulama Oromo notables in the Metta Roobii area goes as follows: *Dajjazmach* Kebede Bizunesh-Geresuu-Birrattuu- Gole. See, Olana Zoga, *Gizitna Gizot*(*Addis Ababa, 1985 E.C, P.432*; Lemmu Baissa, “The Oromo *Gada* system of government: an indigenous African Democracy” in Asafa Jalata (ed), *State Crises, Globalisation and National Movements in North-East Africa*( London and New York, Routeledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2004), p. 116.

<sup>417</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 492-93; Sergwe, *Dagmawi Menilek*, pp. 56-57; Gabra Sellase, p. 36; Harris, Vol II, P. 347; Caquot, p. 125, it is fascinating that the Amharic legend about the origin of the Oromo mentions Lalo and Baaroo as Oromo personal names.

<sup>418</sup> Getinet Belayneh, “A History of Mänz Gera ca.1270-1850” (MA Thesis, Jimma University, 2022), pp. 46-47

System ((ዋቁ ስረአት) which operates by selecting a leader known as Abbaa Qeeraa or Afeeroo who was responsible for the conservation and wise use of the demarcated areas<sup>419</sup>. The term Qeeroo has indisputably derived from the Oromo, which in English is tantamount to youth and Abbaa Qeeraa signifies father of Qeeraa in Afaan Oromo.



Manz Gussa: Photos Taken by Admassu Getaneh

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=365783202248109&set=pcb.36578631558>

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<sup>419</sup> Getinet, p. 33, Dechasa, "A Socio-Economic History", p. 74.

Therefore, this story compels us to debunk the long-held view which made Manz<sup>420</sup> and others the so-called pockets of Amhara settlements on the northeastern part of the Shawan plateau the exclusive abode of the Christian Amhara. Although the sources at our disposal are sketchy and incomplete, both the Amhara and the Oromo have continued to exist in the region side by side or intermingling with each other across time be it before and after the sixteenth century, in the area under study including the Manz proper. For instance, the recently published autobiography of Fitawrari Takla Hawaryat Takla Maryam indeed sheds some light on this issue. Takla Hawaryat writes, ያባቴ ወገኖች ባንድ ዘርፋቸው በኩል ከኦሮሞ ይወለዳሉ። ቀደምቶቹ አባቶቻችን ሞት ዐረቄ ወሬኛ ወርቄ ይባላሉ። በደጋው አገር የታወቁ ፈረሰኞች እና ጦረኞች ነበሩ ይላሉ። ከጠራ ወደ መንዝ አልፈው ፤ እዚያ ተራብተው ፤ ተወላጆቻቸው ካህናት ሆኑ።<sup>421</sup> My father's family on one side descended from the Oromo. Our forefathers were known as Mootii, Araqee, Warragnaa, and Warqee. They were said to have been acclaimed horsemen and warriors on the highland [part of the Shawa Meda where Tara is found]. Then they crossed from Tara to Manz and got many children and their descendants became priests). It is fascinating that the story of the settlement of Manz by the aforementioned three notables is analogous to what Takla Hawarat has recorded. In both cases, the Oromo family crossed to Manz from the northwestern direction, and apparently,

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<sup>420</sup> Ege, p. 20. Ege indicates that the Oromo sometimes crossed through Manz but they might not have settled in it. See also Tekalign, "A city and Its Hinterlands..", p. 43, footnote 1 who corroborates that the Amharic speaking Christian Amhara survived the sixteenth-century wars and Oromo population movement in the province of Manz

<sup>421</sup> Fitawrari Takla Hawaryat Takla Maryam, *Autobiography* (Addis Ababa University Press, 1998) p. 5. Tara is a district found near the town of Dabra Berhan, which was the capital of the former Awraja of Tagulat and Bulga.



the Oromo subgroup who have inhabited this part of Shawa were/ are the Tulama. Hence, the relation between the Oromo and the Amhara in the area under study is not as simple and straightforward as expounded by most scholars to date. Rather it is one of the most difficult conundrums in Ethiopian history which still begs for critical reappraisal.

Meanwhile, Levine underlined that although the deeds of the three notables are portrayed as a legend, they were historical figures who lived in the latter part of the seventeenth century. It indicates that Gera was the most powerful of the three notables and controlled most of Manz, including the impenetrable mountain strongholds like Afqara, which served as a garrison for political inmates for generations. Hence, he was said to have been the founder of Gera Meder and one of the pacesetters of the Shawan Kingdom's expansion.<sup>422</sup> However, Manz became prominent during Nagasi Krestos Warada Qal<sup>423</sup>, who got precedence over other notables, including Gera, as the following couplets specify:

*አገር የነበረች የጌራ (a country belonged to Gera*

*ነገሷ ወሰዳት በጠበራ (But Nagasi took it by (Tebera)).<sup>424</sup>*

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<sup>422</sup> Ege, p. 20. Ege indicates that the Amhara resettlement was led by different autonomous chiefs of whom Gera was the most renowned.

<sup>423</sup> Sources at our disposal are not congruent concerning the name of the father of Nagasi. Levine and Darkwah indicated that his father's name was Warada Qal whereas Sergew Hable Sellase indicates that Nagasi's father was Lebse Qal.

<sup>424</sup> Getinet, p. 45; Ege, p. 20; Darkwah, p. 6.

Sources at our disposal are not congruent concerning the exact name of the father of Nagasi. Levine and Darkwah, as we have seen, indicate that his father's name was Warada Qal, whereas the chronicler of Emperor Menelik II (1889-1913), Gabra Sellase, specifies that his father's name was Segwe Qal.<sup>425</sup> Yet Sergew Hable Sellase, on the other hand, claims that he was the son of Libse Kal.<sup>426</sup>

In the same token, the descent line of Nagasi Krestos (the presumed founder of the Shawan dynasty) is shrouded in mystery. Some sources associated him with the imperial family through the youngest son of Lebna Dengel (r. 1508-1540), *Abeto Yaeqob*. According to this story, he was the descendant of Lebna Dengel through his father, whereas his mother was the daughter of a certain notable known as *Ras Faris*.<sup>427</sup> On the contrary, other sources indicate that Nagasi's connection with the imperial family was through his mother, *Wayzaro Sanbalt*, while his father was a landowner from *Agancha*.<sup>428</sup>

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<sup>425</sup> Gabra Sellase, *Tarka Zamana Za Dagmawi*, p. 34. The chronicle indicates his descent as follows: Lebna Dengel- Yaeqob-Segwe Qal – Nagasi.

<sup>426</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, pp. 50, 55. The Europeans who were in Shawa and recorded every bit and piece of the history of Shawa did not help us in this regard. This tradition was perhaps recorded during the Time of Menilek II, almost after half a century. This according to Levine, *Wax and Gold*, pp. 290, footnote 24 further complicated the saga of the descent of Nagasi krestos.

<sup>427</sup> Ibid, Bairu, Asma Gyorgis, pp. 952-53; Heruy Wolde Sellase, *Ya Itiyophia Tarik ka Nigist Saba Eska Talaqu Ya Adwa Dil* (Addis Ababa, 1999), p. 45; Abir Mordechai, *Ethiopia: Era of the Prices, The Challenge of Islam and the Reunification of the Christian Empire, 1769-1855* (London: Longman, 1968), pp. 144; Harold Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menilek II, 1844-1913* (Lawrenceville, NJ, The Red Sea Press, 1995), p.7; Isenberg and Krapf, p. 312 state that *Nagasi was related to Faris* whom they erroneously called the King of Gondar. It is said that Faris lived for a while at Dair, a fortress in the locality of Amad- Washa had a daughter named Sanbalt, who married a certain administrator of Shawa by whom she had a son called Negassi.

<sup>428</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 312 indicate that 'The first King of Efat is reported to have been born in Amad-Washa. Faris, the King of Gondar, who resided for some time at Dair, a stronghold in the neighbourhood of Amad- Washa, had a daughter of the name Sanbalt, married to a Governor, by

Moreover, Kofi Darkwah indicates, “the male ancestors of Nagasi were of [Oromo] stock and that the Solomonic connection is through his female ancestors.”<sup>429</sup> Similarly, Gerry Salole characterizes Nagasi as “a self-made [Oromo] war leader who made his own position and styled it after a Habesha model.”<sup>430</sup> According to Donald Levine, the picture that we have concerning Nagasi’s ancestry is complicated by the fact that none of the versions we have seen so far were reported by the first half nineteenth-century European travelers before the rise of Menelik.<sup>431</sup> As we have seen above among the European travelers Harris, who was in Shawa by the 1840s, reported that Nagasi's inheritance of royal blood was through his mother. Similarly, the Oromo oral historians indicate that the fact that Nagasi gave names like Akaw<sup>432</sup> to one of his sons is a clear testimony of his Oromo ancestry.

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whom she had a son called Negassi’ ; Sophia Dege “Nagsi Kréstos” in *Encyclopedia Æthiopica*, Vol. 3, (2010), pp. 1110-1111; Levine, *Wax and Gold*, p.31, who had made extensive field research in the area simply indicated that Nagasi was born to a wealthy family in the district of Agancha; Trimmingham, *Islam*, p.106 indicates Nagasi’s relation with the Solomonic dynasty was through matrimonial alliance.

<sup>429</sup> Darkwah, p.6, footnote 12. Darkwah came to this conclusion by analyzing the traditions collected by the European visitors of Shawa in the 1840s, namely, Harris vol. III, pp. 7-8, Rochet d'Hericourt, *Second Voyage sur les deux rives de la Mer Rouge* (Paris, 1846), p. 241), Isenberg, and Krapf , p. 312) and Antonio Cecchi, *Da Zeila alle frontiere del Caffa* (Roma, 1886), vol. vol. I, p. 237. However, Harris erroneously identifies Sanbalit as a son, which is an unequivocally feminine name. Yet it is interesting that Faris originally came from Yajju country, from his description of Southern Wallo, which again it is highly likely that he was Oromo if Harris’s suggestion is credible.

<sup>430</sup> Salole, p. 20; Sisay Megersa, p. 16

<sup>431</sup> Levine, *Wax and Gold*, pp.289- 290, endnote 24.

<sup>432</sup> Informant: Alemayehu Haile (July 3-4, 2017, Addis Ababa). He indicates that the name of one of the sons of Nagasi Krestos was Akawa which is an Afaan Oromo term. Akawa is the name of a wood (aleltu) that is used to brush teeth in the locality. Moreover, another son of Nagasi was known as Dana, perhaps named after the locality where Oromo worshipped their deity known as Albuko. On the other hand, another informant, Wolde Yohannes Workneh (5/10/ 2017, Addis Ababa) claims that the name Akawa originates from the Oromo root word *akaawu* which means to ‘roast’ or ‘crush’. Based on this he claims that Nagasi himself had Oromo ancestry and that was why he named his son so.

Meanwhile, there is no shadow of a doubt that, as Asmerom Legesse rightly claims, the area has been “a veritable cultural corridor”<sup>433</sup>, although scholars did not give much emphasis to the interactions between the Oromo and the Amhara up until a recent couple of years. To borrow his words,

*This remarkable process of cultural exchange deserves full-length investigation because of its far reaching implications for the emergence of a shared national culture. The process cannot be reduced to a simplistic picture in which [Afaan Oromo] speakers become Amhara, or Amharic speakers become [Oromo]. It is, rather, a very complex situation in which many cultural vectors are interacting to produce a result that is fundamentally new. Any attempt to analyze the national culture by reference to any one of the traditional cultures .....is an attempt to describe the whole by reference to one of its parts and, as such, it is a misrepresentation of the emerging reality.<sup>434</sup>*

In the same token, Abir maintains that ‘in Shawa more than anywhere else in Ethiopia, the [Oromo] and the Amhara were more readily assimilated from the early stage.’<sup>435</sup>

Similarly, Salole argues that the assimilative model may not help us understand the relations between the Oromo and the Amhara in Shawa. He rather claims that Shawa has been an abode of a diverse population, at least for more than four hundred years when significant acculturation must have taken place. He went as far as declaring that a unique Shawan identity rather than a Habasha identity

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<sup>433</sup> Asmarom, *Gada*, p. 9, claims that after the sixteenth-century population movement, the area has been evolved into a veritable cultural corridor, but we may argue, even before that it had been where different ethnolinguistic groups, including the Amhara and Oromo, lived side by side as indicated in detail in chapter one. .

<sup>434</sup> Asmarom, *Gada*, p.9. Notwithstanding this excellent exposition, his view which limited contact between the Amhara and the Oromo to the period after the sixteenth century in the region under the study has been recently challenged by scholars as we have seen in chapter one.

<sup>435</sup> Abir Ethiopia: Era of the Princes, pp. 163-64.

evolved.<sup>436</sup> In the same vein, Mackonnen Michael asserts, “Amharic speaking Shoans consider themselves closer to non-Amharic Speaking Shoans than to Amharic speakers from distant regions like Gondar.”<sup>437</sup> Similar to this assertion, Donald Levine corroborates, the Gondares, “love to refer to the Shoan Amhara as “[Oromo].”<sup>438</sup> It is fascinating that the tradition among the Oromo expressed in the following couplets further consolidates this view.

Afaan Oromo	Gloss
<i>Kootu awwaara haanaa</i>	<i>Let’s play with dust</i>
<i>awwaara kararradha</i>	<i>a dust found on the road</i>
<i>hundeen botorodhaa</i>	<i>its root is botoro [ Perhaps root of a tree]</i>
<i>Kootu Amaara tana</i>	<i>Let’s be Amhara</i>
<i>Amaara Shawaadha</i>	<i>the Amhara of Shawa</i>
<i>hundeen Oromoodha.</i> <sup>439</sup>	<i>whose substrata is Oromo</i>

But Salole was cognizant that scholars were not in opposition to deciphering the process of acculturation among the population of Shawa in general and between the Amhara and Oromo in particular. We are badly short of information about the interaction between Amhara and Oromo partially because of the Shawan nobility’s sensitivity concerning ethnicity.

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<sup>436</sup> Salole, P.20.

<sup>437</sup> Mackonnen Michael, “Who is Amhara?”, *African Identities*, Vol. 6, No. 4, ( November 2008), P. 396.

<sup>438</sup> Levine, *Wax and Gold*, p. 47; see John Young, *Peasant Revolution in Ethiopia: The Tigray People’s Liberation Front, 1975-1991* (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, Sao Paulo: Cambridge University Press, 2006),pp. 46-47 indicates that ‘there are few Amharas, particularly among those from Shoa who lived on the border lands of the Oromos, that do not have some Oromo blood in them’.

<sup>439</sup> Informants: Walda Yohannes Workneh ( 5/10/ 2017, Addis Ababa); Jira Mekonnen ( 20/03/2019, Jimma)

Donald Levine attempted to decipher the relations between the Oromo and the Amhara and gives us a wider picture after the sixteenth-century population movement. He substantiates the picture that we have concerning the relations between these two ethnolinguistic groups in the post sixteenth century is very much complex. By the last decades of the sixteenth century, for instance, the Oromo spread north and west over the provinces of Shawa, Amhara, Angot, Begemdir, Damot, and Gojjam contained by the Amhara forces. They endured a stunning defeat by the forces of Sarsa Dengel, but this did not deter them from penetrating deep into the provinces. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed a prolonged skirmish between Amhara and Oromo. However, Levine corroborates, by the end of this period, the Oromo were firmly established to play a pivotal role in working out the destiny of the empire and came to be dominant in two ways, that is, by creating their autonomous sanctuary in the heartland of the Christian Kingdom and by entering directly into the prevalent Amhara life and body politics.<sup>440</sup>

Similarly, Mohammed argues that the Christian sovereigns starting from Sarsa Dengel attempted to balkanize the Oromo by settling them among the Christians. By about 1700, the Oromo who settled in the areas like Gojjam and Begameder were converted to Christianity and adopted the Amharic language and integrated into the dominant Amhara community except those who settled in Wanbara and

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<sup>440</sup> Levine, *Greater Ethiopia*, pp. 81-82.

Dabale [sic Dabate]. On the other hand, he indicates that six Oromo states or principalities named the Arreloch, the Warra Himano, the Yajju, the Qaalluu, the House of the Gattiroch, and the Borana were able to flourish in Wallo.<sup>441</sup>

Meanwhile, the renowned Kenyan scholar, Ali Mazrui's analysis of the relations between the Oromo and the Amhara is much more pertinent. To delineate it, he raised the following thought-provoking questions,

*The big comparative question is whether the Oromo in the history of Ethiopia were more like the Irish in the history of the United Kingdom—totally dominated and despised by the English for centuries? Or were the Oromo more like the Scots—not quite the equals of the English, but often sharing power, and at times even occupying the English throne?*<sup>442</sup>

He audaciously responded to these questions as follows:

*There were times in Ethiopian history when the Oromo elite and the Amhara elite were more like the English aristocracy alongside the Scottish aristocracy—not quite equal, but retaining substantial mutual respect. There have been other periods of Ethiopian history when the Amhara treated the Oromo in the way the English once treated the Irish—as a lower breed of people, and an internalized colony.*<sup>443</sup>

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<sup>441</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and The Christian Kingdom*, pp. 337-351.

<sup>442</sup> Ali Mazrui, "Towards Socio-Political Reform in the Greater Horn of Africa: Ethnicity, Religion, Language, Gender, and Cultural Convergence", *Journal of Oromo Studies*, vol. 16, No. 1(2009), p. 35.

<sup>443</sup> Ibid. We do have a considerable number of scholarly works and scholars who allude to the colonial thesis. These scholars claim the "Abyssinian" conquest against the 'free Oromiya' in the last quarter of nineteenth century during the reign of Emperor Menilek II (1889-1913) heralded the beginning of Amhara colonial system. See, for instance, Bonnie Holcomb and Sisay Ibssa, *The Invention of Ethiopia: The making of a dependent colonial State in North East Africa*; Asafa JaLata, *Oromia and Ethiopia: State Formation and Ethno national Conflict*; Mohammed Hassen, "A Short History of Oromo Colonial Experience 1870's -1990's: Part One 1870's-1935" ,*The Journal of Oromo Studies* , Vol 6, No. 1 & 2 , 1999, pp. 109-158 ; Abba Haji , "Arsi Oromo Political and Military Resistance Against the Shoan Colonial Conquest (1881-6)", *The Journal of Oromo Studies* , Vol. 2 , No. 1& 2 , 1995, pp. 1-21.

Levine maintains that the Oromo adapted to the new environment by borrowing enough culture from their hosts on the one hand, and managed to maintain some elements of their distinct identity, political autonomy, and crucial ingredients of their traditional culture on the other. More specifically, the Tulama embraced ox-drawn plough, and after a while, “Monophysite Christianity from the Amhara, but they maintained [Afaan Oromo] as their mother tongue. To the north, the Wello and Yeju [Oromo] tribes[sic] adopted many Amhara practices and the Amharic language as well,” writes Levine, “ but kept their separateness by becoming Muslims during the eighteenth century. Beyond them, the Raya [Oromo] maintained more elements from their pastoral way of life, but were influenced by Tigrean neighbors and immigrants to learn the Tigrinya language”.<sup>444</sup>

Yet Mazuri’s erudition about the role of the Oromo in Ethiopia is arguably the most conspicuous proposition to date. “The exceptionalism of the role of the Oromo in Ethiopia has continued to be this symbiotic interplay,” writes Mazrui, “between hegemonization (as the Oromo have ascended the ultimate power-sharing) and homogenization (as the Oromo have shared culture and mixed blood with Amhara.”<sup>445</sup>

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<sup>444</sup> Levine, *Greater Ethiopia*, p.82.

<sup>445</sup> Ali, p. 34, Conversely, the latter is often construed as the age-old subtle and overt successive Ethiopian regimes policies of establishing culturally, linguistically, and religiously ‘homogenized’ Ethiopia in their quest to build Ethiopian nationalism as a replica of Amhara and to some extent Tigrayan identities.



On the other hand, despite centuries of historic cultural interaction and rivalries between the Oromo and the Amhara,<sup>446</sup> if not millennia, in the Ethiopian region in general and on the Shawan plateau in particular, its reconstruction is not an easy endeavor. For one thing, scholars who reconstructed the history of Ethiopia embellished the difference between the two communities deliberately or unintentionally. Secondly, they gave much emphasis to political history in general and the tensions and frictions that had existed between these two communities in particular. Thirdly, we do have an acute shortage of written primary sources for the history of the eighteenth and earlier centuries.<sup>447</sup>

By now, we may discern that in the areas formerly considered enclaves of the Amhara communities, there were also Oromo communities<sup>448</sup> and even chiefs, as we have seen, who had Oromo names like Gera, Mama, Lalo, Lata, and Golee. Yet it is said that since predominantly the Oromo were cattle breeders and horsemen for centuries, they favoured, plains, relatively wet areas with adequate rainfall, which is the hallmark of most of the Shawan plateau,<sup>449</sup> while most of the Shawan Amhara were confined, but not in isolation as usually claimed, to the inaccessible valleys and highlands punctuated by river valleys.<sup>450</sup>

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<sup>446</sup> Levine, *Greater Ethiopia*, p. 13

<sup>447</sup> See, for instance Drakwah, p. 6 who discussed about this issue in detail; Salole, p. 20

<sup>448</sup> See, for instance Stitz, pp. 74-78. There were Oromos, although few in number, who lived in the mountainous, bush forests of Manz.

<sup>449</sup> Volker Stitz, "The Amhara Resettlement of Northern Shoa during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries", *Conference on Current Trends in Ethiopian History*, (February 28, 1970), p. 2.

<sup>450</sup> See, for instance, Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 289-90, who attempted to delineate the boundaries of the sub-province of Manz and Gishe. They indicate that "the province of Mans begins with the

From one of these mountainous areas of Manz, the process of the nascent Shawan kingdom's territorial expansion commenced towards the plain inhabited by the Tulama and Karrayyu Oromo. Some scholars characterize this process as a 'reconquest' and 'resettlement' of the former imperial province. In other words, the incorporation of the Christian kingdom's provinces the Oromo have occupied following the sixteenth-century population movement.<sup>451</sup> On the contrary, other scholars contend that the Oromo preceded the Amhara on the Shawan plateau but due to the southward expansion of the Christian Kingdom, the Oromo were forced to leave the plateau.<sup>452</sup> Apparently for the latter, rather the sixteenth-century Oromo settlement on the Shawan plateau should be considered as a reconquest. However, as we have seen in the first chapter, the Oromo were present on and around the Shawan plateau during the thirteenth and the eventful fourteenth century, when the territorial extent of the nascent Christian kingdom extended at least by a couple of hundred kilometers, if not more south of the Shawan plateau. Hence, both narratives do not convey the full picture of the peopling of the Shawan plateau, we should be cautious as the concept 'Reconquista' is not an appropriate term in this

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river Mofer in the north of Tegulet, and extends as far as the river Katchenee in the north. The Katchenee River originates in the province of Geshe, which is bounded in the north by the river Woait [Wanchit] which separates the Shoan dominions in the north-west from the different Wallo [Oromo] tribes."

<sup>451</sup> Darkwah, pp.5-6; Ege, p.20; of these scholars it was Volker Stitz who popularized the term resettlement. .

<sup>452</sup> See, for instance, Mekuria Bulcah who claims that the Shawan plateau was the 'Cradle of the Oromo Civilization and the springboard of Amhara expansion ', Mekuria, pp.131-222, Alemayehu etal, 2006, pp. Asafa, *Oromia and Ethiopia*. p18. Asafa contends that during the sixteenth century "the Oromo were actively recapturing their territories and rolling back the Christian and Muslim empires"

regard and perhaps invented a posteriori to serve later political ambitions in both cases.

## **The Genesis of the Shawan Kingdom and the Tulama Oromo**

Although the Ethiopian region was one of the few areas in sub-Saharan Africa where the culture of recording history had started before the colonial period, we have little written primary source, if any, about the origins and early history of the Kingdom of Shawa. Rather, most of the sources we have on these issues were produced by the Europeans who visited the kingdom in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. For instance, even our insight about Nagasi krestos, often saluted as a founder of the Shawan dynasty, ancestry, and family background, is shrouded in mystery. Agarin, it is not clear whether he was the founder and the first ruler of the Shawan dynasty. Anyhow, the picture that we have in this regard is more complex than usually stated by scholars to date. For instance, a certain notable known as Demetros was said to have been a governor of Shawa and Amhara, with the title of *Sahafe lahem* and *Ras*, respectively in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. But, by about 1699, Iyasu I (1682-1706) had dispossessed him most of Shawa except Gische.<sup>453</sup> In this regard, the early twentieth century Shawan writer and who is often saluted as one of the most prolific writers indicates,

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<sup>453</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyoris and His Works*, PP. 411, 421, 906; Ege, 21

የሸዋ ባላባቶች አስቀድሞ እርስ በራሳቸው ሲጣሉ ይኖሩ ነበርና አድያም ሰገድ ኢያሱ በምክርና በማስፈራራትም ሁሉንም አስማምተው አስታረቃቸው። አቤቶ ነጋሢም ወደ አጼ ኢያሱ ቀርቦ የአጼ ልብነ ድንግል ዘር መሆኑን ስለተናገረና ወዲያውም ኃይለኛና ጎበዝ መሆኑ ስለተመሰከረለት / ከአሮሞው/ አገር ግዛት ጨምሮለት ሹመትና ሽልማት ሰጥቶት ወደ ጎንደር ተመለሰ።<sup>454</sup> Formerly the Shawan notables were fighting among themselves but Emperor Iyasu rebuked and reconciled them. Nagasi Krestos approached the emperor and told him that he was the descendant of Emperor Lebna Dengel and the emperor also came to know that Nagasi was brave and bold. Hence, the emperor gave him territories from the Oromo country (in addition to Shawa) and returned to Gondar).

But it is not clear why Emperor Iyasu deposed Demetros, who was the presumed administrator of Shawa and Amhara and promoted Nagasi.

Another account recorded by Asma Gyorgis indicates that during the reign of Iyasu, the Shawan notables fought against one another and discretely wrote letters to Emperor Iyasu mentioning their dispute. Then Iyasu replied in the eleventh year of his reign by sending an envoy to Shawa. When Iyasu's envoy arrived in Shawa, the *makewannent* (nobility) received him at Zegamal. In the letter, the emperor informed the Shawan nobles to be patient until he would come and visit them. As he promised, the emperor came to Shawa in the fourteenth year of his reign and gave rewards to all nobles, and reconciled them with one another. Asma Gyorgis claims not only the Amhara but also the Karrayyuu and the Argobba notables submitted to him, and he had reconciled all of them.

Then the emperor asked the Argobba notable, 'Are you with the [Oromo] or with us?' He replied that he was not with the Oromo, but he feared not only the Oromo

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<sup>454</sup> Heruy Walda Sellase, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 45

but also the people of Manz. Subsequently, the emperor discussing with the people of Manz identified a strong man known as Nagasi Kristos, whose sit would be at Gafagaf, and coerced the Oromo to evacuate their settlement located between Manz and Argobba. Finally, the emperor appointed Nagasi over Gafagaf and told him he would give him a new title and a seal if he accomplished a heroic deed.<sup>455</sup> Although most Shawan historians seem to have accepted this line of the story about the rise of Nagasi, the chronicle of Iyasu and the nineteenth-century European travelers did not record it. According to Darkwah, the story of Nagasi's appointment as the ruler of Shawa by Iyasu to use his phraseology is 'open to serious doubt.'<sup>456</sup> Rather both groups of sources unequivocally ascertain that Shawa was ruled by a person known as Demetros, and dealt modestly with the relations between the emperor and the governor of Shawa, as we shall see in the subsequent paragraphs.

Meanwhile, from the above Asma Gyorgis's enlightening account, one may discern that there were Amhara, Oromo, and Argobba communities near, if not in the district of Manz. One may also argue that the coming of Emperor Iyasu to the area either perhaps became an initial impetus to disturb the long-held power balance and amicable relations that existed among the different communities of the area under study. Likewise, although we do not know why Iyasu dispossessed Demetros most of Shawa and allegedly appointed three notables as governors of

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<sup>455</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 495-499.

<sup>456</sup> Darkwah, p. 7, footnote 15.

Shawa, it seems that Emperor Iyasu might also have his own schema in this regard, and that might be among the reasons why he had removed Demetros from power.

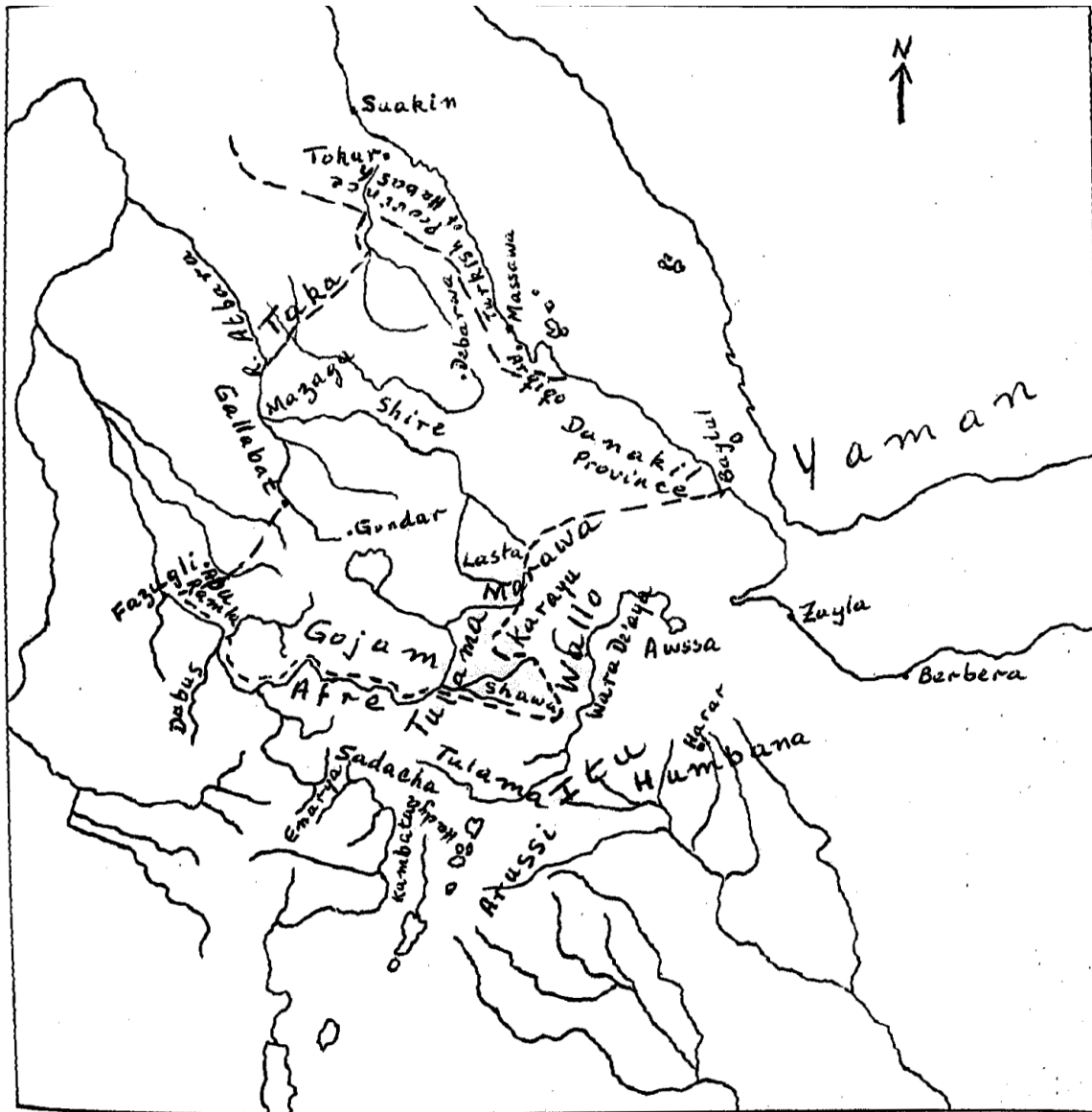
Pertaining to the relations between Iyasu and Demetros, the former's Chronicle indicates that a certain Wärräñña (ወሬኛ) rebelled against the emperor, not near his capital, Gondar, but in far off place, in Shawa. Then the emperor sent the following message to Demetros, who was by then the governor of Shawa: እኔ እስከ ዳዩር እመጣለሁ አንተም ወደዚያ እለፍና ድረስ ። ብቻችንን ተገናኝተን ስለ ወሬኛ ሁናተ እንጨዋወታለን ። አዚህ አማራ አገር የጠራሁህ እንደሆነ ያዉቁብሐልና<sup>457</sup>። (We will meet at Dayer and discuss the rebellion of Waranga clandestinely. If I ask you to come here to the Amhara country, they would be suspicious).

However, Demetros declined to meet the emperor at Dayer, stating if they met there, Wärräñña would hear and hide. Demetros rather told the emperor, he would vigilantly follow up on Wärräñña and report it to him. It is indicated that Wärräñña's revolt had religious and political grounds. However, Wärräñña's attempt to disseminate his sect of Christianity (qebat meaning unction) did not

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<sup>457</sup> "Iyasu Zaman Tarik" Cited in Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek* p., 51 .The letter was originally written in Geez and translated into Amharic by Professor Sergew. The Geez Version goes as follows: እመጽኦ እነ እስከ ዳዩር አንተሂ ጎልፍ ውብጻሕ ዝዮ። ወንትራኩብ በባሕቲትነ ወንዛዋዕ በህዩ ኩነተ ወሬኛ። ወአመጽ ኖዕኩክ ዉስተ አምሓራ የአምሩ ብከ ሰብእ።) Similar sources indicate that Warragna was a smith by profession, and he was from Dabra Warq, Gojjam. He might have been a follower of the Qebat (unction) faction of Orthodox Christianity since he was from Gojjam, where this sect was predominant by that time and he attempted to expand it in Shawa which Iyasu and Demetros vehemently opposed.

thrive and was solved very soon, unlike the political causes of the rebellion, which persisted for some time.<sup>458</sup>



Map 7 Sketch Map of the Ethiopian Kingdom in 1708, adopted from Merid Wolde Aregay, "Southern Ethiopia and the Christian Kingdom , 1508-1708, With Special

<sup>458</sup> Ibid

Reference to the Galla Migration and Their Consequences” ( PhD Dissertation , University of London, 1971), p.593.

Iyasu's chronicle stipulates that Wärräñña was arrested by a person known as Awusignyos, who came to Shawa from Gondar in order to win back people who were influenced by the teachings of Wärräñña. Then Wärräñña was handed over to Demetros and when they were contemplating to hand him over to Emperor Iyasu and the latter sent an envoy who would bring him to Gondar, Wärräñña escaped and went to a place known as Abaro, which was located near the monastery of Dabra Libanos, where he got considerable number of followers and continued his rebellion. From Abaro he preceded further to the Oromo inhabited areas and stayed there. It was by this time that Emperor Iyasu told Demetros that if he caught Wärräñña and handed him over, his descendants would be entrusted to administer Shawa for thousands of years. As a result, in order to capture Wärräñña by alienating him from the Oromo, Demetros and his men devised a trickery mechanism. Demetros went to the area known as Somsa where the son of *Sahafe Lam* Lisano lived carrying a large number of clothes. He publicized that the clothes would be distributed among the Oromo. When the Oromo heard this they went to Somsa in order to receive the gift of clothes from Demetrios. Some of the Oromo who went there were “Godanaa, Nageeb, Antoo, Kooroo, Waaqo, Kiloolee, Tegebe Qiltuu, Suuqo Abbayee, Gna'a Molishoo , Gindoo Laftoo , Abootee Laftoo , Alii Akaakoo etc”. They spent a night there enjoying the feasts prepared but early in the morning Demetros troops who were camped in the



nearby locality came and put them under arrest and fastened their hands. After all of them became under control, Demetros told them,

እዚህ ያላችሁ አሮሞዎች ሁሉ ስሙኝ። ከአሁን በፊት በእኛና በእናንተ መካከል ምንም ጠብ የለም ከዚህ ወሬኛ አንጥረኛ እናንተ ዘንድ ካለዉ በቀር። አሁን እርሱን አስራችሁ ስጡን ንጉስ ዘንድ አኔና ሞላዉ የሸዋ ሰዉ እንድንወስደዉ። እርሱን ካልሰጣችሁን እናንተን አስረን ንጉሡ ዘንድ እንወስዳችኋለን።እርሱም ግዛት ይልኩዎችኋል ወይም ይገድላችኋል።ስለዚህ የሚሻላችሁን ምክሩን።<sup>459</sup> Listen to me all of the Oromo who are here. In the previous time there was no conflict between you and us except the issue of this smith known as Wärräñña. Now fasten his hands together and hand him over to us. The people of Shawa and I in turn will hand him over to Emperor [Iyasu]. If you do not hand him over to us we will hand you over to the emperor. He will either send you to the labour camp or kill you. Deliberate on this issue and let us know your preference).

The inmates deliberated on the issue and decided to hand him over to Demetros. When the decision was sent to the Tulama found in the neighbourhood of Laftoo Awara's residence, the Oromo initially disagreed on this issue. Some of them said that it was imperative to hand over Wärräñña to the Demetros to save the whole Tulama from execution. Others opposed this and said handing over a person who took refuge amongst them to an adversary was against their norm, and they preferred the execution of the whole Tulama. Finally, the local people voted over it, and the former proposition won the day. As a result, the Galan Oromo captured Wärräñña and finally handed him over to Demetros. Wärräñña was said to have been accompanied by about eighty Oromo cavalries when they handed him to Demetros. Demetros, in turn, handed him over to Emperor Iyasu in Darra. Finally, Wärräñña was brought before the traditional court, which was composed of

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<sup>459</sup> Ibid, p. 52 Again it was cited and translated into Amharic from Geez original by Sergew Hable Sellase

nobles and learned men. The court reached a unanimous verdict of guilty and decided that he should be punished by hanging<sup>460</sup>

The chronicle indicates that Iyasu came to Shawa for the first time in the fourteenth year of his reign, around 1696. One of the objectives of the emperor's expedition to Shawa was to dismiss Demetros from his post of the *Sahafe Lam* of Shawa. It seems that the emperor was not pleased by the way Demetros dealt with the havoc caused by Wärräñña. As a result, Demetros was demoted and the emperor divided Shawa into three parts and appointed new individuals over each part. The names of the newly appointed individuals were not specified in the sources, although Sergew claims, Nagasi and a poet known as Zemichael should be among the newly appointed administrators of Shawa.<sup>461</sup> Similarly, Kofi Darkwah indicates that Shawa was then divided up among three governors whose names were not given, but suggests that Mama, Lalo, and Gera were presumably the dignitaries appointed by Iyasu.<sup>462</sup> This presumption seems more plausible and is in line with the Manz tradition recorded by Donald Levine. As we have seen earlier, tradition indicates Gera, Mama, and Lalo were sent by a certain emperor to administer and settle localities named after them in Manz. Moreover, none of the chronicles of the reign of Emperor Iyasu mention Nagasi in

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<sup>460</sup> Ibid, pp. 52-53. Wärräñña was said to have been entrusted (ተቆረኘ) to an *Abbaa Gadaa* called Chuko, who was from the Gumbichu *gosa* of Tulama.

<sup>461</sup> Ibid, p.53, only Marhabite, the principal subdivision of Shawa located between the Jama and Wanchit Rivers, was remained under the suzerainty of Demetros. See Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His works*, pp.411, 906. According to Bairu, Demetros was demoted in 1699, not in 1696. But Asma Gyorgis's exposition is, in line, with the chronicle, which indicates that Iyasu came to Shawa in the fourteenth year of his reign.

<sup>462</sup> Darkwah, p. 7, footnote 15.

connection with the government of any part of Shawa, and what Sergew indicates above is a mere conjecture.

However, Bairu indicates Emperor Iyasu made an expedition to Darra in the seventh year of his reign, perhaps by about 1689, which was directed against a pretender from Gojjam who wanted to be a prince. He got followers in Dabra Libanos and Darra. The pretender was said to have been captured by Emperor Iyasu.<sup>463</sup> It is fascinating that although Bairu did not mention the name of the pretender, he must have been discussing the Wärräñña that we have seen above. This is because Wärräñña was from Gojjam and also stayed among the Oromo found in the vicinities of Dabra Libanos and Darra. Therefore, it seems Bairu is recounting the same story with slight variation. Asma Gyorgis further indicates that Iyasu massacred the Borana in Walaqa during this campaign. Unlike Sergew, Asma Gyorgis maintains the pretender was captured by the emperor, not by Demetros. On the other hand, there is no discrepancy between Asma Gyorgis and Sergew's accounts concerning the year of Iyasu's campaign to Shawa, as both indicate that Iyasu made the campaign to Shawa in the fourteenth year of his reign, although they reported differently on the aims and outcomes of the campaign.

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<sup>463</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 411, footnote 594.

Asma Gyorgis claims that during his first expedition to Shawa, Emperor Iyasu also reached the areas inhabited by the Karrayyuu and Abote Oromo. Even it is said that the Karrayyuu Oromo of Shawa and the Abote Oromo of Morat paid tribute to the emperor.<sup>464</sup> It is fascinating that here Asma Gyorgis inadvertently ascertains the Oromo settlement in areas like Morat, which is often considered, as one of the safe havens and pockets of the Amhara where the Oromo did not dare to settle following their sixteenth-century expansion. Pertaining to the Karrayyuu Oromo, as we have seen earlier, they were found near, if not in the formidable sub-province of Manz and Bahru consolidate this. Moreover, the terms Shawa and Morat were used by Asma Gyorgis, from this; one may also discern that Morat was not part of the Shawa proper, unlike the area inhabited by Karrayyuu Oromo.

After the death of Emperor Iyasu, however, his brother, Emperor Tewoflos (1708-1711)<sup>465</sup> reappointed *Ras Demetros* as governor of Shawa. Although sources at our disposal are not helpful concerning the origins of Demetros, Asma Gyorgis claims, some notables traced their ancestry to him for legitimacy.<sup>466</sup> It is, however, not clearly stated which notables traced their ancestry to him and for how long he had served as governor of Shawa. Rather, the story of the rise of

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<sup>464</sup> Ibid, pp. 712-13.

<sup>465</sup> Alaqa Takla Iyasus Waqjira, *The Gojjam Chronicle* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014), p.34 (translated from the Amharic original and edited by Girma Getahun); Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p 421, maintains that they were brothers and their father was Emperor Yohannes.

<sup>466</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 906. Darkwah, p. 7, footnote 15 indicates that Demetros was appointed governor of Begemder by Emperor Tewoflos (1708-11) but was dismissed by Emperor Yostos (1711-15) soon after his accession.

Nagasi and the expansion of the kingdom during his descendants dominates the annals of Shawan history.<sup>467</sup>

Contrary to the stories recounted by the Shawan historians, which associate Nagasi's rise to power as a principal chieftain of Shawa with Emperor Iyasu's expedition to Shawa, Darkwah cogently claims that his rise to power was the outcome of a sequence of wars he fought with the neighbouring 'Amhara' dignitaries like Gera, Mama, and Lalo, who were well-known warriors, whose names, reverberated in the tradition of Manz. They were among the notables against whom Nagasi fought during his formative years.<sup>468</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, who were in Shawa in the early 1840s, further strengthened Darkwah's claims and reported, Nagasi was the first king of Shawa who made himself independent of the Government of Gondar.<sup>469</sup> Moreover, Levine maintains, "Nagassi's ambition was fed by his victories. He proclaimed himself ruling prince of Shoa and vanquished those who disputed this claim, including the mighty Gera, in a long series of skirmishes."<sup>470</sup> Sergew inadvertently states, ነጋሤ ስሙ ጥር ጀግናና የጦር መሣሪያን አጠቃቀም ጠንቅቆ የሚያዉቅ ስለነበረ በአካባቢዉ የነበሩትን ባለባቶች በማስበርከክ

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<sup>467</sup> See, among others, Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, pp.44-75; Sergew, *Dagwawi Menilek* PP. 57-96 and Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 498-569, who discussed in detail the origins and the expansion of the Kingdom of Shawa.

<sup>468</sup> Darkawh, p. 6; See also Levine, *Wax and Gold*, p. 31, who come up with a similar story.

<sup>469</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 299; see also Harris, Vol. III, P. 312, who similarly reported that Nagasi made himself independent of his mother's father, Known as Faris.

<sup>470</sup> Levine, *Wax and Gold*, pp. 31-32. Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek* p. 56.

የበላይነቱን እንዲያውቁ አድርጓል።<sup>471</sup> Nagasi got precedence over the neighboring dignitaries due to his bravery in warfare and skillful use of weapons). From this, we may discern that Nagasi was initially acting on his own and was independent of the king of Gondar contrary to the entrenched stories recounted by the Shawan historians like Asma Gyorgis, Heruy, and even Sergew.

Agancha<sup>472</sup> was the first part of Shawa that Nagasi controlled and often considered his political power base, where he got a substantial number of followers. Isenberg and Krapf reported that the famous *Negus* of Shawa, Sahla Sellase (1813-1847), considered Agancha as ‘his hereditary portion’ on account of his ancestor Negassi”.<sup>473</sup> The factor(s) which induced him upon his initial conquest (s) was open to speculation. First, his conflict with Gera and the desire to preempt him might have been one of the causes. In other words, Nagasi ambition to get the upper hand by expanding his territories at the expense of the neighboring dignitaries, including the mighty Gera, ought to be the most important cause for his initial territorial conquest.<sup>474</sup> Second, Emperor Iyasu’s pledge to

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<sup>471</sup> Sergew, *Dagwawi Menilek*, p.56; See also Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 44, who also uncharacteristically recorded the humble origins of Nagasi. He indicates that Nagasi’s rise to power was a result of the fortuitous excavation of a pot full of gold when his servants dug the ground. As a result, he came to have a considerable number of servants. Hereafter he started to raid the inhabitants of the highland areas known as (perhaps Gwassa), and when he felt that he became dominant both economically and militarily, he started to invade Gera’s territory. The Amharic original goes as follows: እንደዚህም እያደረገ መሬቱን ሲያስቆፍር በመሬት ውስጥ በማሰሮ የተቀበረ ወርቅ አገኘና ብዙ ሎሌ አሳደረ። ኃይልም ስለተሰማው ወደ ጌስ እየወጣ ደገኛውን እየዘረፈ ገንዘብ ጉልበት ባገኘ ጊዜ ከጌራ ጋር ውጊያ ጀመረ።

<sup>472</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 308, indicate that it is a locality found in the district of Gera.

<sup>473</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 299. The same source further indicates, as we shall discuss later a little bit in detail, Sahla Sellase claimed the locality on account of both his mother Zanabawork and the founder of the dynasty, Negassi.

<sup>474</sup> See Heruy, p. 45.

assist the Muslim Argobba against the ‘common Oromo enemy’ on the other might have emboldened Nagasi to make a raid on the sparsely populated highlands north of the Tarma Bar inhabited predominantly by the Karrayyuu Oromo, who were found on the lower escarpment and had been threatening the Argobba.<sup>475</sup> Asma Gyorgis stipulates the areas initially conquered by Nagasi as follows: ነጋሢ ክርስቶስ ከሰሜን እስከ ቆቦ ከደቡብ ከጣርማ በር በታች እስከ አዋዲ አቅንቶ ውድማውን ደኑን ሁሉ ለመንዝ ዘመዶቹ መራቸው ተከላቸው።<sup>476</sup> ((Nagasi Krestos pacified/restored the forests and wilderness in the north up to Qobo in the south below Tarma Bar up to Awadi and allotted them to his Manzian kins).

Although Nagasi is often hailed as a founder of the dynasty, the genesis of the Shawan kingdom’s expansion towards the territories mainly inhabited by the Karrayyuu Oromo and the settlement of the Amhara on the occupied territories is traced at least back to the last decades of the seventeenth century. It was said to have been fostered by different notables of Manz, including the famous Gera.<sup>477</sup> However, a well-coordinated Shawan kingdom’s expansion began in earnest after the preeminence of Nagasi. The Karrayyuu were the first Oromo subgroup that became a victim of Nagasi’s initial thrust. Asma Gyorgis indicates that Nagasi managed to split the nucleus of the Karrayyuu Oromo into two. Moreover, in collaboration with the rulers of Argobba, they pushed them further to the south

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<sup>475</sup> Ege, p. 21. According to Ege, at least during Nagasi and Sebste, the expansion of the kingdom of Shawa had been confined to the Oromo territories.

<sup>476</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 504.

<sup>477</sup> Ege, p. 20 indicates that the beginning of the ‘resettlement’ of the Amhara on the predominantly Oromo-occupied part of Shawa located near Manz, if not, in it is dated back to the mid-seventeenth century. However, Levine, *Wax, and Gold*, p. 31, Levine places the time of Gera and other dignitaries of Shawa in the late part of the seventeenth century and is more credible.

and forced them to abandon the woods and forests of Gafagaf. Since the Karrayyuu were predominantly pastoralists and did not till the land, Nagasi began cultivating the land. He also founded his first capital known as Ayne in the Karrayyuu territory and established the Church of St. Mary there. Asma Gyorgis further indicates the tradition of Rim dates back to this time. He claims, “Rim means Gašša. They say “Gašša means a land on which we settle by chasing out the [Oromo] with our force, power, and skill. Thus Nagasi began to allot plots of land or Rim.”<sup>478</sup>

Pertaining to the areas settled by the Karrayyuu and the Tulama, Krapf indicates:

Hence the descendants of Karaioo, who were then divided into several other tribes, possessed all the countries in the east and north-east of Ankobar as far as the territories of the Adels, or Danakils. They consequently possessed the lower countries, which are comprised under the general name of Argobba, in the east of Efat. It is a fact, that to this day a tribe called Karaioo, still exists in the south-east of Ankobar. Another son, called Toolom, went over the range and possessed himself of all the countries in the west to the river Hawash in the south, and to the Nile in the west.<sup>479</sup>

Asma Gyorgis further specifies that at that time priests, who provided religious services, *Gendabal* (a contingent of campaigners known as chawa in Gondar), *Gabbars*, and tenants were entitled to possess the plots of land the Karrayyuu Oromo were dispossessed. The difference between *Gašša* land and the land of Manz proper was that, unlike the latter, the former could be sold.<sup>480</sup>

Svein Ege also indicates that the land occupied by Nagasi was tremendously fertile and suitable for the Amhara farmers. During the initial stage of expansion,

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<sup>478</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, PP. 500-503; *Isenberg and Krapf*, p. 285

<sup>479</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 285.

<sup>480</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, P. 504-505.



Oromo were not incorporated to a large degree. They were obliged to evacuate their territory, where Nagasi and his followers settled their soldiers. Concerning the difference between the land tenure in Manz and the newly occupied territories by Nagasi, Ege indicates, "Whereas in Manz they had held land as descendants of one of the numerous *aqegni*, or first settlers,<sup>481</sup> in Nagasi's chieftom land tenure seems to have corresponded closely to the military organization, the land being held against service."<sup>482</sup> Therefore, in this manner, Nagasi had managed to launch the process of territorial expansion of the nascent kingdom of Shawa.

On the other hand, sources at our disposal indicate that it was the lowlands below Manz inhabited mainly by the Karrayyuu Oromo which also included the area known as Yifat, not Manz,<sup>483</sup> which became the launching pad for the 'unification of the Christian provinces' and the military maneuvers against the Oromo. To borrow Isenberg and Krapf's words,

*It must also be remarked, that the Adels [Afars] generally call the King of Shoa only King of Efat, as this province is bounded by their own country; while the people of Northern Abyssinia call him the King of Shoa, this being nearer to them. In like manner, the [Oromos] in the south always call him the King of Efat, as the Shoan power undertook its first military operations against the southern tribes by starting from Efat; and as in fact*

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<sup>481</sup> It is fascinating that we have a similar tradition in the area where the Oromo settled following the sixteenth-century population movement, the pioneers or the first settlers were known as *dagal saaqi* (those who cleared the forest. But in this regard, the identity of the people known as *aqegni* or first settlers was not indicated by the Shawan writers. On the other hand, individuals like Mama, Gera, Lalo, etc. were said to have been pioneers in their respective localities, as we have seen all of them bear names of Oromo origin, and this might not have been a coincidence.

<sup>482</sup> Ibid; Ege, p. 21.

<sup>483</sup> Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menelik II*, p. 8; Siasy, pp. 17-18, on the other hand, indicates that Manz played a significant role in shaping the trajectory of Ethiopian history. It is considered a nucleus for the genesis of the Shawan dynasty, which later came to dominate Ethiopian body politics. Moreover, it is also a springboard for the expansion of the Shawan kingdom into all parts of the Shawan province and the rest of southern Ethiopia.

*most of the Shoan forces which fight against the [Oromos] are composed of Efatian soldiers.*<sup>484</sup>

This is very much interesting that Nagasi and his successors used Ifat as a launching pad because the formidable Manz was not controlled or pacified by Nagasi and his sons. It seems that the dignitaries of Manz, above all Gera and his descendants continued to confront Nagasi and his successors. For instance, Isenberg and Krapf recorded that Gera's grandson, Gole fought with Abeye (1718-1743). When the former was defeated Manz became part of the nascent kingdom of Shaw.<sup>485</sup> Yet, even in the nineteenth century, as Krapf indicates, 'Mans is the largest province of the Shoan dominions; but the Mansians endeavour, by all means, to keep up their independence of old. They pay, however, great respect to the Queen-Dowager, who considers their country her hereditary government.'<sup>486</sup>

Like his earlier years, sources at our disposal (the chronicles, the nineteenth-century European traveler's accounts, and the works of the Shawan historians) are not congruent about Nagasi's last years except for the fact that he went to Gondar and died there perhaps from smallpox. For instance, Asma Gyoris indicates "ከዚህ በኋላ ተጠርቶ ይሁን ተከሶ ይሁን ወይስ ስምና ማጎተም ሊፈልግ ለደጅ ጥናት ይሁን ወደ ጎንደር ሄደ። ግብሩን ከብዙ በረከት ጋራ ይዞ የወላስማዉም መላክተኛ ግብሩን ይዞ

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<sup>484</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, P. 289; Abir, *Era of the Princes*, p. 146

<sup>485</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 299; see also Ege, p. 23 who indicates, " Although chiefs from Manz had taken part in the campaigns, it is more doubtful that Nagasi and Sebste had exercised any substantial control back in Manz, except in the territories to which they had hereditary rights"

<sup>486</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 299.

ከርሱ ጋር ሎደ። ጎንደርም በደረሱ ጊዜ እንደሁኑ የሚያወቅ የለም። ብዙ ዘመን የተገለገለ ይመስላል። ነጋሣም ከዚያ ሞተ” (*After this, he left for Gondar with tribute and rich presents, either [up on] the invitation or accusation, or to seek a title and a seal. A delegate from the Walasma, with his tribute, also left with him. Nobody knows what happened to them after they arrived in Gondar. It seems that they were in trouble for a long time. Nagasi died there*).<sup>487</sup>

Volker Stitz succinctly encapsulates that we may distinguish two phases of Amhara conquests and settlements in northern Shoa. To use his words,

The first dates from Neagassie [died 1703] up to the end of Wossen Seged's reign [1808-1812]. During that time we see a close colonization, filling the area with Amhara peasants ...partly connected with the clearing of the country ... and the extermination, deportation, or assimilation of [Oromo]. The second phase, the time of Sahle Selassie [1813-1847] and later, was distinguished by the superimposition of Amhara landlords over the [Oromo] population who continued as tenant-cultivators, and by the assimilation of the [Oromo] aristocracy into the Amhara society.<sup>488</sup>

Therefore in the next chapter, we shall briefly delineate how the Shawan kingdom managed to gradually encroach on the Tulama territory during the first phase, which took place from its inception up to the time of *Negus Sahla Sellase*. But to wind up this chapter, it is imperative to underline the misconceptions among the populace about the Shawan kingdom's conquest of the Oromo territory and the identity of the rulers of the kingdom in general and notables of Manz in particular.

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<sup>487</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyoris and His Works*, pp. 504-55; translated from Amharic Original by Bairu Tafla. See also Harris, Vol. III, and P. 8. who reported “Nagasi repaired in due time to Gondar, to be formally invested by the Emperor; but after receiving at the royal hands twelve "nugareets," he died suddenly”; Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menelik II*, p.8.

<sup>488</sup> stitz, “The Amhara Re-settlement ”, p. 80.

In this chapter, we have explored that the Shawan kingdom began the conquest of the Oromo land in general, and that of the Karrayyuu and Tulama in particular, not in the second half of the last quarter of the nineteenth century as usually depicted, but one may trace it back to the time of Nagasi and his immediate successors, roughly the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century. Here it is argued that the view which restricts the beginning of the conquest of the Tulama territory by the kingdom of Shawa to the second half of the nineteenth century is an erroneous supposition. It overlooks what took place in the region under study for more than a century and a half, starting from the beginning of the eighteenth century to the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Such kind of contention is also, at best deliberate disregard and at worst, disparaging to the heroic confrontations that the Karrayyuu and the Tulama made against the nascent Shawan kingdom's territorial expansion and conquest. Hence, we argue that the Shawan Oromo, in general, and the Tulama, in particular, served as a defensive wall against the expansion of the Shawan kingdom and were able to confine the kingdom's expansion to the districts which were found in the hinterlands of the aforementioned initial power base of the Nagasi dynasty. It is not a coincidence, as we shall see at the end of the thesis; it was after the Tulama were defeated that the Shawan kingdom managed to overrun other Oromo territories and the southern half of Ethiopia in general.

Moreover, we have also discerned that although the Amharic language and Orthodox Christianity were dominant in the kingdom, the elites and rulers were by no means exclusively Amhara in origin, the Oromo elites were always there, although they absorbed the Christian culture, and perhaps some of them came to identify themselves as Amhara starting from the time of the inception of the kingdom not starting from the late nineteenth century as Yates contends in his recently completed Ph.D. dissertation.<sup>489</sup> That is just beginning from the time of Nagasi, who was perhaps one of the eloquent examples.<sup>490</sup>

We also discerned that both Ethiopianists and Oromo-centric scholars deemphasized or overlooked this version of the history of the kingdom of Shawa. The latter have always been focusing on what took place during the time of Emperor Menilek II, of course for understandable reasons as it was during this time that all the Oromo territories, including most of the area under study, were subjugated, whereas the former have always deemphasized the roles of the Oromo in the empire. In other words, the latter always try to conceal the identity of the rulers of the Christian kingdom and the dignitaries even by omitting their family names when individuals' first names have been derived from Oromo.<sup>491</sup>

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<sup>489</sup> Yates, "Invisible Actors", p. 93

<sup>490</sup> We have seen in detail at the beginning of this chapter that it is highly likely that Nagasi himself was of mixed origin, let alone chiefs like Gera, Mama, Lalo, Lata, Gole, etc.

<sup>491</sup> See Haile Sellase I, *Heywotena ya Itiyophiya Ermja/ My Life and Ethiopia's Progress*(Addis Ababa: Berhanena Selam Printing Press, 1965 E.C.), p. 1.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE TERRITORIAL EXPANSION OF THE SHAWAN KINGDOM AND THE TULAMA (CA. 1700- 1813)

#### The Commencement of the Displacement of the Karrayyuu and Encroachment on the Tulama Territory

Although the territorial expansion in Shawa might not have been started by Nagasi, as we have seen in the previous chapter, he was popularly considered to be the one who had initiated it. Similarly, although the dynasty is commonly known as the Shawan dynasty, Nagasi and his direct descendants dominated it up until the time of King Menilek (1865-1889). However, after 1889 the coronation of King Menilek as the Emperor of Ethiopia, the Shawans came to dominate modern Ethiopia's body politic, and concurrently the Shawan Dynasty was metamorphosed into the "Solomonic 'Dynasty.

Meanwhile, in this unit, we shall explore how Nagasi's descendants consolidated the budding dynasty by encroaching onto the territory of the Shawan Oromo up to the time of the rise of Sahla Sellase ( 1813-1847 ), a great- great-great-great-grandson of Nagasi, who was the first to be crowned as *negus* ( king) of Shawa. It is said that following the mysterious death of Nagasi,<sup>492</sup> the nobles of Manz, who also wanted to exploit the prevailing turmoil, tried to manipulate his sons to advance their causes. Nagasi entrusted the administration of the territories he

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<sup>492</sup> Nagasi was said to have died of Smallpox in Gondar and was buried there. See, among others, Sergew, p. 58; Levine, *Wax and Gold*, 32.

controlled to his son, Akawa when he left for Gondar. However, after the death of Nagasi, the nobles of Manz became the champion of Dana, another son of Nagasi, by deposing Akawa. But Nagasi's third and eldest son, Sebeste, also entered the contest and finally defeated Dana and his supporters. According to Darkwah, the victory of Sebste had had immense constitutional importance for the burgeoning dynasty as it sanctioned the supremacy of Nagasi over other notables of Manz on the one hand and it laid a cornerstone for the transfer of imperial power from the father to the son without protracted succession dispute on the other.<sup>493</sup>

Isenberg and Krapf state, 'Manz was entirely independent of Shoa at the time of Ghera, who governed Mans, when Negassi, the first Shoan King, made himself independent of the Government of Gondar.'<sup>494</sup> It is paradoxical that by this time Manz was controlled by Gera and his family as well as the aforementioned Manzian chiefs, while Nagasi's family had established their headquarters in the lowlands southeast of Manz, predominantly inhabited by the Karrayyuu Oromo.

However, the coming to power of Sebste heralded the beginning of the ascendancy of Nagasi's family on the one hand and the declining of the family of Gera and contemporary Manzian notables who attempted to advance their cause

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<sup>493</sup> Darkwah, p. 7

<sup>494</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 299

by supporting first Dana first against Akawa and then Sebste .<sup>495</sup> The following verse succinctly recounts how Sebste rose to power:

Amharic	Gloss
ነጋሢም አዘዘ አልጋውን ለካዋ	Although Nagasi designated Akawa as his successor;
አምላክ ባይፈቅድለት ሰው ሁሉ ጠላዋ	It was not God's will that all people hated him;
ዳናም ግንባር አጣ አላገኘም ግርማ	Dana was also not fortunate and he did not get grace;
በስብስቱ ጉልበት አልጋውን ተቀማ	Sebste usurped the throne by his strength;
ስብስቱም ተመርጦ አምላክ ፈቀደለት	Sebste was chosen, and God blessed his throne;
ለልጅ ልጁ ሆነ የሸዋ መንግስት <sup>496</sup>	His descendants became the rulers of Shawa.

After he scored a victory over his adversaries, Sebste not only preserved but also consolidated the supremacy of the budding dynasty founded by his father. To win over the nobles of Manz and its environs, Sebste also devised a political marriage, and he married the daughter of a certain Dobba<sup>497</sup> notable, the mother of Abeye. Abeye, in turn, married Tangustyan, who was the daughter of Mama, according to some sources, and Mama's son, Rufael, according to others.<sup>498</sup> Kofi

<sup>495</sup> Ibid.

<sup>496</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, P. 60; Harris vol III, P. 8 contradicts this and indicates that Sebste came to power because he was nominated, by his father to be his successor.

<sup>497</sup> Dobba is said to have been inhabited by the Oromo in earlier times. The grandfather of the last emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Sellase I (1930-1974), and Wolde Michael Guddisa was said to have been an Oromo from this locality. See, for instance, Mahtama Sellase Wolde Maskal, *Che Balaw* (Addis Ababa, Commercial Printing Press, 1961 E.c), pp. 26, 69; see also, Heruy, *Ya Itiyophia Tarik*, P. 48; Tim Carmichael, "Mäkwännén Wäldä Mikayel " in *Encyclopedia Ethiopica*, vol. III (2005), pp. 686-87; Birru Tsegaye, P. 322; Harris, Vol. II, p. 150, where it is stated, Ato Wadi, a famous Oromo who was governor of Angolala and held offices at court during three rulers of Shawa had landed property in Dobba. Historical Dobba is located south of Ahya Fagi between the Wanchet and the Adabay rivers.

<sup>498</sup> *Bairu, Asma Gyorgis and His works*, pp. 506,508, on page 506, indicates that Tangustyan was the daughter of Mama, whereas, on page 508, he rather indicates that she was the daughter of the son of Mama. (The Amharic original version goes as follows: አብዬም የማማን ልጅ ታጉንሥጢያንን



Darkwah and Svein Ege, on the other hand, uncharacteristically disagree with the Shawan writers and complicate this issue stating that Tangustyan was the wife of Sebste and the mother of Abeye.<sup>499</sup> However, as we have seen above, the Shawan writers like Asma Gyorgis and Sergew did not agree with Darkwah and Ege's conjecture, the latter's version of the story seems less credible in this regard.

Meanwhile, the founders of the Shawan rulers used political marriage to consolidate their power. Scholars who dealt with the history of Shawan hitherto indicate that political marriage and the assimilation of the Oromo chiefs by the Amhara commenced during the reign of Sahla Sellase (1813-1887). However, it was commenced right from the time of the foundation of the dynasty, if not before. Moreover, there is no shadow of a doubt, the interaction and integration between the Oromo and the Amhara predate the foundation of the Shawan dynasty and the account of Nagasi and other notables of Manz like the famous Gera, Mama, and Labo are clear testaments.

Apparently the pragmatic political marriage helped Sebste to consolidate his power and even helped him to hold grip over that part of Manz proper, Mama Meder. Moreover, Sebste was also allied with the ruler of Ifat known as The pragmatic political marriage helped Sebste to consolidate his power and helped

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አግብቷልና .....ታንጊስቲያን የሚሉት ልጅ የሩፋኤል ልጅ ናት); see also *Sergew, Dagmawi Menilek, p. 62*, who indicates that Abeye married Tangustya, a daughter of a certain man balabbat.

<sup>499</sup> Darkwah, p. 8, claims that she was the daughter of Mama married to Sebste

him hold a grip over Mama Meder, one of the principal subdivisions of Manz. Moreover, Sebste allied with the ruler of Ifat, Mahamad, often identified as the Walasma of Ifat. The alliance seems to have been strong, and Asma Gyorgis recorded that Sebste even issued a declaration in consultation with the ruler of Ifat. To use Asma Gyorgis's words, ስብስቅዖኛስ አዋጅ አስነገረ ከወላስማ መሐመድ ጋራ ተማክሮ።<sup>500</sup> As to the basis of their alliance, Volker Stitz indicates that the Amhara rulers allied with the Walasma of Yifat to rescue them from the Oromo.<sup>501</sup> However Stitz conjecture is not convincing, rather Sebste's alliance with the Amir of Ifat was a pragmatic move to secure the backing of the Ifat during his encounter with the Oromo. Moreover, Stitz made a serious mistake in his characterization of all the Muslims as non-Oromo. For instance, nineteenth-century sources indicate the Oromo, who were found in Ifat also became Muslims. To use Harris' phraseology, "the tributary [Oromo] tribes of Gille [Jiillee] and Soopa, have become converts to Islamism [Islam]."<sup>502</sup>

Meanwhile, in the declaration, Sebste indicated, henceforth his title was *maredazmach* and warned his subjects that if they declined to call him using the title, they would face dire consequences.<sup>503</sup> Sebste made Doqaqit his capital

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<sup>500</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 506.

<sup>501</sup> Stitz, pp. 78-79.

<sup>502</sup> Harris, vol II, P. 347

<sup>503</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 506-07, 526-27, he warned them that he would mutilate the breast of their daughters and the member of their sons if they did not call him by the title *mared azmach*, Wassan Sagad also warned his subjects similarly.

in December 1704 E.C. (1711). However, the year of the foundation of Doqaqit proposed by Asma Gyorgis is not taken seriously by other scholars who dealt with the history of Shawa. For instance, Abir appropriately warns us that the dates associated with the Shawan dynasty until the death of Wassan Sagdga in 1813 are contentious.<sup>504</sup> Since Svein Ege dealt with this issue in detail, there is no need to dwell on it. Ege indicates the times when Nagasi and his successors ruled Shawa by consulting the available sources above all, Cecchi and Soleillet, as indicated in the following table.<sup>505</sup>

S. No	Ruler	Cecchi	Soleillet
1	Nagassi	Died 1703	Died 1705
2	Sebste	1703-18 ( February)	1705-20
3	Abeye	1718-43 ( February)	1720-45
4	Amha Iyasus	1743-74	1745-75
5	Asfa Wassan	1774 (January) -1807( July)	1775-1808
6	Wassan Sagad	1807-11(June)	1808 -12
7	Sahla Sellase	Ras in 1813	1812-46

Sebste's alliance with the Ifat rulers seems to have been a pragmatic move since his seat was closer to the areas under the jurisdiction of the Walasma rulers. Moreover, in doing so, he managed to besiege the Karrayyu Oromo, who found between Ifat and Manz.

We have incomplete information concerning the deeds of Sebste, and most of the sources indicate that he continued the territorial expansion commenced by his

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<sup>504</sup> Abir, p. 146, foot note 6.

<sup>505</sup> Ege, p. 22.

father. Similarly, like his father, he could not control the Manz proper except perhaps, the area where they had hereditary rights. The marriage alliance opened the door for him to cooperate with the chiefs of Mama Meder, as he had married the daughter of Mama. On the other hand, Asma Gyorgis indicates that *Maredazmach* Sebste drove the Karrayyuu Oromo out of Ifat.<sup>506</sup> Perhaps, this marked the beginning of the displacement of the Karrayyuu Oromo from the area where they had inhabited at least for more than a century if we take the beginning of the seventeenth century as the time of the settlement of the predominantly pastoralist Oromo following the sixteenth-century population movement living aside the presence of sedentary Oromo in the area for several centuries if not millennia before that as we have seen in the previous chapter. On the other hand, although the period of Sebste might have marked the beginning of the displacement of the Oromo in general and the Karrayyuu in particular, we should be cautious that Asma Gyorgis exaggerated this event since the Oromo have continued to exist in these areas hitherto.

Sebste (1703-18) neither went to Gondar nor submitted to the emperors of Gondar, unlike his father, who went to Gondar and died there, However, his son and successor, Abeye (1718-43), was perhaps the second ruler of Shawa, who went to Gondar in late October 1730, although we do not have concrete evidence behind his travel to Gondar. Perhaps, he went to Gondar either to pay tribute or attend Emperor Iyasu II's (1730-1755) coronation. Meanwhile, when he returned

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<sup>506</sup> Bairu, Asma Gyorgis , pp. 506-507; Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p.48

from Gondar, he recruited some artisans and brought them to Shawa since there was a shortage of artisans in Shawa. He also bought some armaments since weapons were being imported to Gondar by that time.<sup>507</sup> The weapons that he bought might have played some role in further tilting the balance of power in his favour, and also, the artisan's roles might have been substantial. Moreover, Abeye also maintained the already started alliance with the Walasma notables and fought against the Karrayyuu Oromo in collaboration with them (መርድ አዝማች አብዬ...ከይፋት ወላስማ ጋራ ሁኖ ከረዩን ይወጋ ነበር).<sup>508</sup>

However, later on, Abeye refused to pay tribute, or according to Asma Gyorgis, rebelled against Emperor Iyasu II. As a result, Iyasu II sent an expeditionary force to Shawa led by his uncle, *Ras Walda Le'ul*, and his brother, *Ras Wadajo*. The disgruntled chiefs of Geshe, Antsokiya, Efrata, Gedem, and Manz joined the force of Iyasu II. Nevertheless, Abeye, who camped at Ayne, the capital of his father, in the territory of the Karrayyuu Oromo, scored a victory over his adversaries and took as prisoners their troops, including Commander *Ras Walda Le'ul* as well as guns and other booty. However, the brother of the emperor *Ras Wadajo* was able to escape. On the contrary, Asma Gyorgis inadvertently indicates that the Gondare's invasion of Abeye's territory was a blessing in disguise for him, because the prisoners of war (POWs) educated his undisciplined Oromo soldiers

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<sup>507</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 63; Darkwah, p. 8 footnote 18; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 431. The chronicle of Iyasu II cited by Sergew indicates that Abeye brought tribute in horses.

<sup>508</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 431

about court etiquette. Moreover, the weapons he confiscated in the battle and the captives boosted his confidence. Perhaps, these were the reasons behind his dispatch of warning to his adversaries in Manz. To use Asma Gyorgis's phraseology: በእነሱ ጉልበት ሞንዘችንም አስፈራችዉ (Abeye threatened the Manzians with the power of the captured [Iyasu's troops]).<sup>509</sup> Moreover, Levine maintains that Abeye ordered the Falasha artisans who trailed the Gondar camp to manufacture agricultural tools like spade and ploughshares, as well as weapons like spears and swords which immensely boosted both the agricultural and military prowess in Shawa.<sup>510</sup> This military confrontation was said to have been followed by negotiation between Iyasu II and Abeye which resulted in the official recognition of the latter's title of *maredazmach*.<sup>511</sup>

It is crystal clear that the above developments brought Abeye some sense of security which helped him to embark on and sanction the conquest of Manz proper by defeating Gole, the grandson of Gera.<sup>512</sup> In other words, the confrontations between the families of Nagasi and Gera, which dated back at least to the last decades of the seventeenth century, culminated with the

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<sup>509</sup> Ibid, pp. 508-11; see also Abir, pp. 146-47; Ege, p. 25; Asma Gyorgis's assertion about the Oromo troops of Abeye is not clear, in other words, sources at our disposal do not help us whether the majority of the troops of Abeye were Oromo or not.

<sup>510</sup> Levine, *Wax and Gold*, pp. 33-34; see also Ege, p. 29, "several factors must be considered in explaining Shawa's expansion. Guns imported from Gondar may have played some role, but were probably few in number and of little effective use. The immigration of craftsmen from the North may have improved the available technology. Shawa may therefore have benefited both from a greater agricultural surplus and from a better supply of weapons."

<sup>511</sup> Ege, p. 25; Darkwah, p. 8; Abir, p. 147.

<sup>512</sup> Darkwah, p. 8; Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 62. Sergew corroborates that before this encounter, Abeye wanted to settle the difference between him and Gole through negotiation; however, his attempts were failed several times.

supremacy of the former during Abeye's time. Hence, for the first time, Nagasi's family came to pacify Manz proper during the period under discussion, and this made his position in Manz more secure than that of his predecessors. The weapons he acquired through purchase and confiscation as well as the artisans he employed who engaged in manufacturing spears and swords played a pivotal role in the victory of Abeye over Gole.

Abeye ended the alliance that he and his predecessors had made with the rulers of Yifat. Contrary to the above Volker Stitz claims, Abir indicates, rather than easing the pressure that the Oromo exerted on the Muslim rulers of lower Yifat, Abeye conquered Yifat and sanctioned the end of its independence, which the people of Yifat had managed to enjoy since the time of Imam Ahmad Gagn.<sup>513</sup> However, we have to be cautious about Abir's characterization of Yifat as an autonomous state starting from the sixteenth century. Even before the sixteenth century the Christian kingdom starting from the time of Amda Siyon ended its autonomy and the militant member of the Ifat ruling family left the eastern escarpment of the Shawan plateau and moved their headquarters further to the east.<sup>514</sup> On the other hand, after the sixteenth century, Yifat had suffered much during the Wars of Imam Ahmad and later on most of their territory was overrun by the Oromo.<sup>515</sup>

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<sup>513</sup> Abir, *Era of the Princes*, p. 147.

<sup>514</sup> Tadesse , *Church and State*, p. 144

<sup>515</sup> Ege, p. 22

It seems that Abeye and his predecessors followed a pragmatic policy concerning their alliance with the rulers of Yifat. The Shawan rulers allied with Yifat when they thought they were vulnerable and under pressure from the Oromo and the neighboring Amhara chiefs. When they felt they were secure, they terminated their alliance with Yifat and made them tributary. They also replicated similar policies in their relations with the Oromo chiefs in the subsequent centuries until the time of Menilek II, when they conquered the whole Tulama, as we shall discuss elsewhere throughout the thesis.

After Abeye consolidated his position in this area, he also started launching campaigns against the Tulama.<sup>516</sup> However, the conquest of the Tulama territory commenced in earnest during his son and successor, Amha Iyasus,<sup>517</sup> as we shall see after a while. Concerning the areas conquered up to the time of Abeye and the pattern of settlements of the people in the core region of the budding dynasty, Asma Gyorgis indicates, Sebste established his capital at Har Amba and initiated the farming of the locality up to the Awadi River. The lowlands along the Ayrarra, Barakat and Kasam rivers were the domain of the Argobba ruler, Walasma Amade. However, the banks of the Awash River were inhabited by the Karrayyuu

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<sup>516</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp.512-13. As we have seen, the dynasty had already controlled the nearby Karrayyuu Oromo territories before this time even their headquarters like Ayne, Doqaqit, and later Har Amba were founded in the Karrayyuu Oromo territory. The beginning of their conquest of the Karrayyuu territory dates back to the time of Nagasi itself, if not before.

<sup>517</sup> However, there were conflicts between the Tulama and the inhabitants of Manz even before the time of Amha Iyasus, for instance, Asma Gyorgis indicates, the people of Manz frequently fought against the Abichu Oromo across the Mofar Wuha. It should be noted that the Mofar river served as a dividing line between the Manz proper and the Abichu country, see Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 492-93.



Oromo, while the remaining Karrayyuu subgroups known as ‘Temmuga, Suba, and Artuma’ settled near the border of Wallo.<sup>518</sup>

From the above Asma Gyorgis exposition, we may discern, most of the areas, if not all, where the Nagasi and his successors undertook their expansion were inhabited by the Karrayyuu Oromo and they pushed the latter southwards and simultaneously moved their capitals to Aybar, Ayne, Doqaqit, Har Amba and Ankobar, respectively established on the territories from where they evicted the Karrayyuu Oromo. Yet the area they managed to control up to the time of Abeye was not extensive and bordered roughly by the Ja Weha and Awadi rivers, the central ridge, and the Muslim settlements in the north, south, west, and east respectively.<sup>519</sup>

Meanwhile, Abeye died after serving for about twenty-five years as *maredazmach* of Shawa, either fighting with the Karrayyuu Oromo or ambushed by the Karrayyuu Oromo while returning from the reconnaissance expedition that he had made to the Arsi country in the pretext of hunting. As a result, the principality encountered severe crisis since not only it lost its ruler but also the veteran military leaders, who perished in the desert of Karrayyuu, either defending their overlord or attempting to avenge the death of their king.<sup>520</sup> Yet the eminent Shawan historians, Asma Gyorgis and Heruy Wolde Sellassie, and Gebre Sellase, Menilek’s chronicler, were silent about the cause of the death of

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<sup>518</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 508-09; see also Ege, p. 23.

<sup>519</sup> Ege, pp. 23-24

<sup>520</sup> Abir, p. 147, Darkwah, p. 9 and Levine, *Wax and Gold*, p.33.

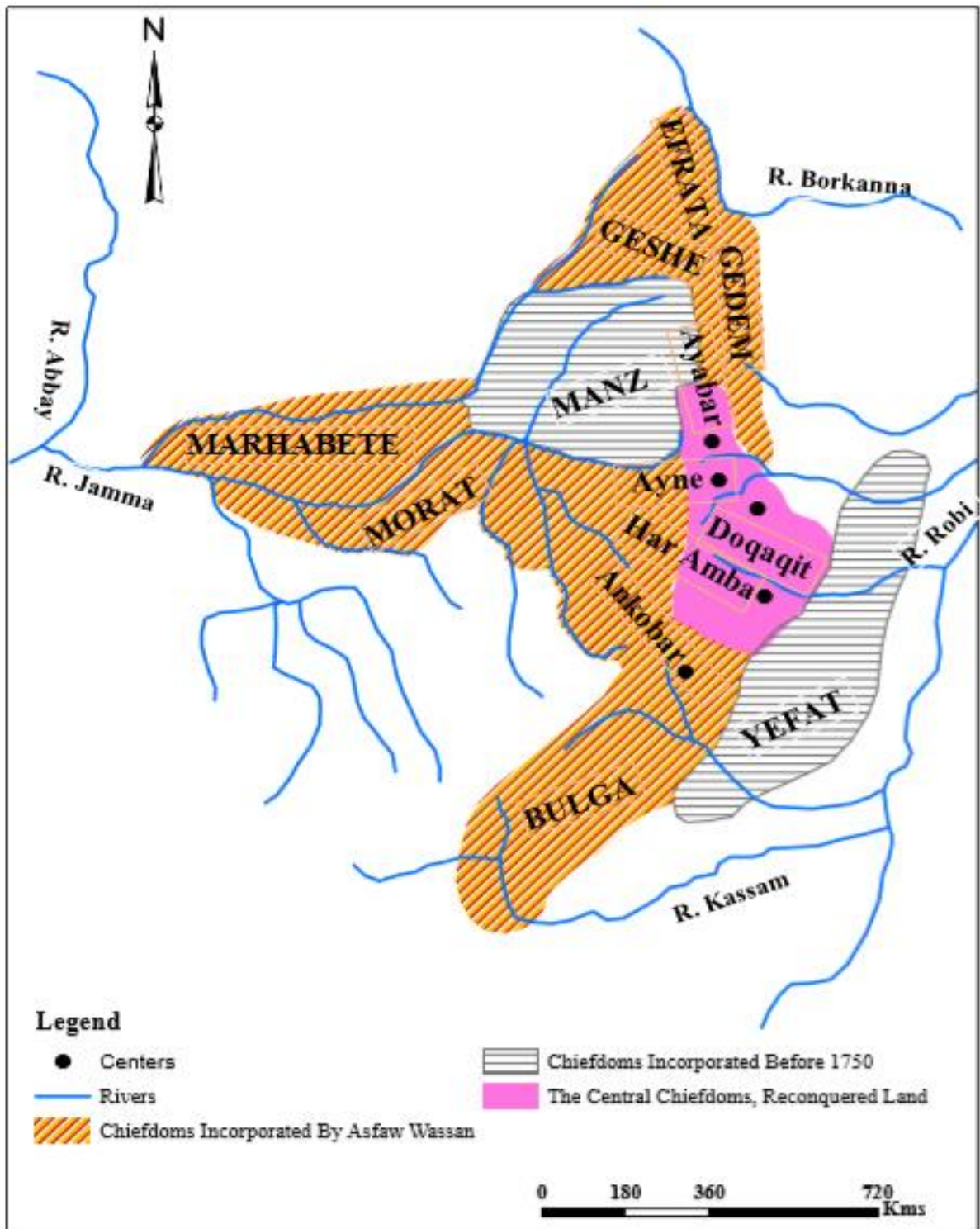
Abeye. Rather, they simply indicate that Abeye passed away after ruling Shawa for twenty-five years and was buried at Har Amba.<sup>521</sup> Meanwhile, in the following couplets Sergew claims that Abeye's death did not destabilize the kingdom:

አደላድሎ ሎዲል አገሩን በቅጡ                      He departed stabilizing his principality very well;  
ሞተ አብዩ ብለው ደፍረው እንዳይመጡ<sup>522</sup>        So that Abeye's foes would not dare to invade it  
after his death.

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<sup>521</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, PP. 512-13; Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, P. 65; Gebre Sellase, p. 34

<sup>522</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek* , P. 65



Map 8 Shawa in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Adpted from Svein Ege, p. 24.)

However, in another place, in the same material Sergew indicates, following the death of Abeye, the principality encountered a power vacuum because his son and successor, Amha Iyasus, was not an accomplished war leader, rather a skilled artisan.<sup>523</sup> Similarly, Seven Ege indicates that we should be cautious that the gradual expansion of territory by the rulers might not be the testimony of the stable power transfer from one ruler to another and was not always secure.<sup>524</sup>

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<sup>523</sup> Ibid, p. 67; Amha Iyasus was said to have been the first Ethiopian sovereign, according to Sergew, who was a skilled craftsman. To use his words, የኢትዮጵያ ነገሥታት ምንም እንኳን ለእጅ ሥራ የጋለ ፍቅር ቢኖራቸውም እራሳቸው በእዚህ ሙያ ላይ መሰማራታቸውን የሚያረጋግጥ መረጃ እስካሁን አላገኘንም። በዚህ አንጻር አምታ ኢየሱስ ግንባር ቀደም ሳይሆን አልቀረም። (Although most of the Ethiopian sovereigns had immense love for handicrafts, we do not have sources which indicate their engagement in this industry. In this regard, Amha Iyasus might be unique as he was a skilled artisan). He might have also been influenced and trained by the artisans, who came to Shawa from Gondar. He also visited Gondar, although we have conflicting information concerning the time of his visit, and if it was before he had come to power, which was albeit less likely, he might have been influenced by the relatively flourishing handicrafts industry in Gondar as opposed to Shawa. Sergew gives us conflicting information about this issue. On the one hand, he indicates that Amha Iyasus visited Gondar while his father was alive, and this must be before 1743, on the other, he claims that Amha Iyasus was in Gondar when James Bruce was in Ethiopia which was in the years from 1768-1773. Meanwhile, Abir, P. 148 indicates that it was in the Year 1771 but maintains that more likely, the one who visited Gondar was not Amha Iyasus but rather his son, presumably Asfa Wassan (1774-1807?). Similarly, Darkaw, p. 10 also confuses this issue and states that Amha Iyasus visited Gondar on 'coming to power' and met James Bruce in 1771. Levine, *Wax and Gold*, p. 34, further complicates this issue. He argues by citing James Bruce that Amha Iyasus was the last Shawan prince to visit Gondar, and 'he was received as an emissary of his father with great honors and treated more like a sovereign ally than a vassal'. In the same token James Bruce, *Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile* V vols (London, 1979), IV, pp.93-94, who was in Gondar and witnessed the visit, seems to have been confused and claims that Amha Iyasus, the son of King of Shawa visited the royal place. Actually, by this time, Amha Iyasus was not the son of the king of Shawa; rather he was the king of Shawa. It seems Bruce mistook Asfa Wassan for Amha Iyasus, he reports that Amha Iyasus was an adult man between twenty-six and twenty-eight years old. Based on this, we may infer that he mistook Asfa Wassan for Amha Iyasus because, at this time, the latter served for about twenty-eight years as governor of Shawa, which is starting from 1743, and he might not be an adult man of twenty-six to twenty-eight years of age.

<sup>524</sup> Ege, p. 23, indicates that following the death of Nagasi, conflict erupted between his sons, of course, backed by various notables found in Manzand its environs. Then the immediate successor and son of Nagasi, sebeste, was killed in the event related to a misunderstanding between him and his son Abeye. The latter, in turn, was killed fighting against the Karrayyuu Oromo. During the time of Abeye, the principality was invaded by the forces of Emperor Iyasu II.

## **The Beginning of the Shawan kingdom's Widespread and Vigorous campaigns against the Tulama and the Amhara Enclaves**

It was during the time of Amha Iyasus that the territorial expansion instigated by Abeye against the Tulama got new impetus.<sup>525</sup> Although other factors also induced Amha Iyasus to embark on the widespread and more vigorous campaigns against the Tulama and fellow Amhara chiefs as we shall see hereunder, the importation of considerable number matchlocks from northern Ethiopia undeniably enhanced his fighting power and “strengthened his position and that of his successors in Šawa vis-a-vis their Amhara and Oromo rivals.”<sup>526</sup> As a result, the balance of power started to shift in favour of the Kingdom of Shawa, and they began a campaign in earnest against the sedentary Oromo.

Concerning the difference in armament, the Scottish traveller, James Bruce, indicates that the weapons used by the Shawans consisted of lances of about ten feet long and javelins and the matchlocks they recently obtained from Gondar, whereas their Oromo counterparts used “lances or poles sharpened at the end and hardened in the fire, and shields made of bulls skins”.<sup>527</sup> Similarly, Abir lucidly writes, after Amha Iyasus had imported some firearms from Northern

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<sup>525</sup> Darkwah, p.9

<sup>526</sup> Bahru Zewde, “Amméha Iyäsus” in *Encyclopedia Aethiopica*, Vol. I( 2003), P. 247; see also Darkwah, p. 12

<sup>527</sup> Bruce, vol. II, p. 220; Vol. IV, p. 18 , Darkwah, p. 12

Ethiopia, he managed to extend his hegemony over most of the Amhara principalities like Bulga, Efrata, Manz, and Tagulat among others, conquered valleys of Gedem which led to the Afar country and renewed the war with the Karrayyuu Oromo. Abir further maintains that Amha Iyasus was 'far more successful in his attacks on the Abitchu [Oromo]. He conquered the area of Ankobar as far as the river Chia Chia near Angolala and made a number of Abitchu tribes his tributary'.<sup>528</sup>

From the above passage, we may discern that Amha Iyasus not only commenced an extensive territorial campaign against the Tulama in general and the Abichu in particular but also managed to incorporate into his principality the districts of Tagulat, Efrata, Manz, and Bulga. Before this time these localities in general and Manz, in particular, had served merely as population reservoirs for the recently settled areas.<sup>529</sup> Starting from this time, according to Ege, we can distinguish three different kinds of territories with varied administrative control, namely first the tightly administered centre, second the Amhara and Argobba territories which accepted the authority of the *maredazmach*, and finally a belt of expansion,<sup>530</sup> mainly inhabited by the Tulama.

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<sup>528</sup> Abir, *Era of the Princes*, pp. 147-148; see also Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 502-03, who indicates, Amhara claim that they settled on the Oromo territory by "chasing out them with their force, power, and skill"; Dechasa, "A Socio-Economic History of North Shawa," p. 60, argues the rugged topography where most of the Amharic speaking Shawa's lived after the sixteenth-century population movement compelled them to be strong in their encounter with the Oromo.

<sup>529</sup> Stitz, p. 7

<sup>530</sup> Ege, p. 23

At this juncture, it is preponderant to shed light on the possible causes for the gradual encroachment of the Shawan kingdom onto the Tulama inhabited territory. However, monocausal explanations for the expansion of the Shawan principality towards the Oromo areas may not help us to discern a full picture of the whole process. Rather, there were multifaceted and yet interrelated factors that induced the descendants of Nagasi to move first against the Karrayyuu and then the Tulama. It is said that the most important justification and the booster of the morale of those who were directly or indirectly involved in the process of territorial expansion was the 'irredentist ideology' aimed at the 'reconquest' of the territory which the Amhara had 'lost' ensuing the sixteenth-century population movement.<sup>531</sup> Although it was based on the wrong premises, which made the Oromo alien to the area under study, there is no doubt, it served as a rallying cry.

This issue was succinctly stipulated by Sergew as follows:

አምታዩስ ሥልጣን ከያዘ በኋላ እንደ ሌሎች ቀደምት አባቶቹ ፊቱ ያተኮረው ወደ ምዕራብ -ደቡብ ነበር። ለዚህም ታሪካዊ ምክንያት አለው። ዓፄ ይኩኖ አምላክ የሸዋ መንግሥት መሥራች ሥርዓተ ንጉሡን በ1262 ዓም የተፈጸመው በደብረ ሊባኖስ በአቡነ ተክለ ሃይማኖት እጅ ነበረ። ዋና ከተማውንም የቆረቆረው ከዚያን ገዳም በጣም ሩቅ ካልሆነ ሥፍራ ከወገዳ ነበረ። ዓፄ ይኩኖ አምላክ ከሐረር ኤሚሮች ጋር የቅርብ ግንኙነት ስለነበረው ወደ እነሱ ቀረብ ለማለት አንድ ሌላ ከተማ ሳይቆረቆር አልቀረም። ይኸውም አንኮበርን ነበር። .... ይህ ታሪካዊ ዜና ሲወርድ ሲዋረድ በአንደበት እየተነገረ ይተላለፍ ነበርና መሳፍንቱ ሁሉ ያዉቁት ነበረ። ስለዚህ ከነጋሢ ጀምሮ የሸዋ መሳፍንት ጥቅት ወደ ምዕራብ ፈቀቅ እያሉ መቀመጫ ከተማ ይቆረቁሩ ነበረ።<sup>532</sup>

Like his predecessors, as soon as Amha Iyasus came to power, he wanted to expand his principality towards the west and south. He has historical justifications for this. Yekuno Amlak's, the founder of the Shawan Dynasty's coronation, was made at Dabra Libanos with the blessing of Abuna Takla Haymanot in 1262[1270]. He founded his capital in the locality which was not very far from the

<sup>531</sup> Tekalign , “ A City and Its Hintelands”, P. 43; Sisay, p. 17

<sup>532</sup> Sergew, Dagmawi *Menilek*, p. 71; see also Ahmed Hassen Omer, “Ankobar” in *Encyclopedia Aethiopica*, Vol. I, PP. 273-74, who recorded a tradition which indicates that Ankobar served as a capital starting from the time of Emperor Yikunno Amlak; Stitz, p. 79, indicates that Abeye founded Haramba as a sign of his southward-oriented policy.

monastery at Wagda. Since Emperor Yikunno Amlak also had amicable relations with the Emirs of Harar in order to be closer to them it seems that he founded another capital. This capital was Ankobar. This history was passed from generation to generation orally and hence all the nobles of Shawa knew this history. As a result, all the Shawan aristocracies starting from Nagasi founded their capitals by moving slightly further to the west.

Though this ideology or historical claim boosted their morale, most scholars who dealt with the Shawan history considered the population pressure within the Christian Amhara inhabited enclaves in general, and around Manz in particular, were the most important impetus behind the Shawan kingdom's territorial expansion. However, this view is conjectural, as the nucleus of the kingdom was not in Manz, the area commonly regarded as the most important enclave of the Christian Amhara in Shawa, where the population pressure is said to have been acute since the Nagasi family did not control it initially. Rather, it seems that the Nagasi family's inability to control the Manz proper and their movement to the nearby lowland areas, which they had used as their initial political power base was a blessing in disguise. For one thing, they initially encountered the Karrayyuu Oromo, who were predominantly pastoralists, and the area was sparsely populated, and this helped them to control it with relatively lesser efforts compared with their encounter with sedentary Tulama, which took them more than a century to fully subdue. Secondly, by moving south, they came to dominate and monopolise the markets below the escarpment and the trade routes, which contributed to their economic power. The taxes and customs revenue they



collected from the markets of Mafud, Aliyu Amba, Abd-er Rassul, Roge, and Ambalai Sire became their source of income.<sup>533</sup>

Another factor that played a pivotal role and helped the Shawan rulers to embark on their territorial expansion was the pragmatic policies and strategies they had adopted, vis-à-vis their adversaries. For instance, as we have seen above, their alliance with the Walasma rulers during the early years of the dynasty was worth mentioning. Similarly, the political marriages that the Nagasi family made with the well-known families of Manz, who were formerly their rivals, might also, have helped them buy time until they would get enough power and resources to fight against their adversaries.<sup>534</sup> It seems that such kind of pragmatic policies were employed by the rulers of the Shawan dynasty right from the time of its inception, although some writers erroneously claim, as we shall see later, the kingdom of Shawa started to employ these policies after some time, specifically starting from the time of the famous Sahla Sellase in the 1830s.

Last but not least, the beginning of the decline of the *Gada* system paved the way for the emergence of dozens of petty chiefs among the Tulama which, in turn,

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<sup>533</sup> Stitz, pp. 6-7. It is fascinating that the control of the same trade route by Yekunno Amlak in the second half of the thirteenth century played a pivotal role in his victory over the Zagwe rulers. See Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State*, p.66.

<sup>534</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 315, indicate until the time of Sahla Sellase, Shawan rulers married the daughters of the notables to establish relations with them and bring them to their side through family bonds. Later Sahla Sellase went so far as soliciting nuptial relations with one of the princesses of England, which was said to have been objected to by Captain Harris, head of the British envoy to Shawa.

weakened their unity, as we shall see later in the thesis, was another significant factor behind the subjugation of the Oromo. In this relation, Ege argues that the combination of organization and geography were the most important factors behind the gradual consolidation of the kingdom and the defeat and subjugation of its hinterlands. For instance, during the initial phase, when the kingdom was weaker and not in a position to challenge the Amhara principalities like Morat and Marhabete, it had hardly any contact with them and rather focused on conquering mainly the Karrayyuu Oromo territories in the east where each additional conquest had been secured by a mountain strongholds. Moreover, most of the time, the kingdom was confronted merely by entities of smaller scale or fragile political disposition, and also in their encounter with the Oromo, the plains, river valleys, and mountains served as barricades and checkpoints. Therefore, inhabiting securely behind the aforementioned strongholds, the Amhara could attack the Oromo plains and securely retreat. However, the Oromo did not have a similar advantage and were often forced to defend their territory against the Shawan onslaught.<sup>535</sup>

Amha Iyasus was often characterized as 'braver than his father', he left Har Amba, the capital of the principality, and attempted to use the little-known Salalhula and Astit as his headquarters. But it seems he soon abandoned both localities in favour of Ankobar, the most renowned capital of the Kingdom which served as a seat of five successive rulers of Shawa, namely Amha Iyasus, Asfa

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<sup>535</sup> Ege, p. 29

Wasan, Sahla Sellase, Hayal Malakot, and Menilek until it was eclipsed first by Entoto and later` Addis Ababa.<sup>536</sup>

The area around Ankobar, like the places where Nagasi and his successors founded their capitals, was mainly inhabited by the Karrayyuu Oromo. As to the etymological origins of the term Ankobar, a popular tradition indicates that it was made up two words, namely, Anko and bar. Pertaining to the first term, it is claimed that the area was the abode of an Oromo woman called Anko. On the other hand, the word *bär* is derived from the Amharic term, which is equivalent to the English word gate. Hence, Ankobar meant the gate of Anko.<sup>537</sup> However, we do not have conclusive evidence about the time of its foundation. For instance, according to Heruy, the area around Ankobar was conquered and founded by Abeye but developed and made the headquarters by his son, Amha Iyasus.<sup>538</sup>

The conquest of the area around Ankobar can be considered as the turning point in the history of the expansion of the Kingdom Shawa, for the first time, Nagasi's descendants founded their seat on the 'protruding ridge' of the highlands from where they started to control the hinterlands. In this regard, Ege vehemently

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<sup>536</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and his Works*, pp. 512-13, 881; Gebre Sellase, p.34; Heruy Wolde Sellase, *Ya Itiyophiya Tartik*, pp. 52-53; Ahmed Hassen Omer, " Ankobar" PP. 273-274; McCann, *People of the Plow*, p. 111.

<sup>537</sup> Informant: *Abbaa Gadaa* Babsaa Badhaasoo, Roobaa Bunee, Shuraa Badhaadhaa ( Adaamaa, July 6, 2017 ; *Ahmed* " Ankobar" P.274

<sup>538</sup> Heruy Wolde Sellase, *Ya Itiyophiya Tartik*, pp. 52-53, አብዬ ካረፈ በኋላ ልጁ አምታ ኢየሱስ በአባቱ አልፎ ተቀመጠ። ወዲያውም ሐር-አምባን ትቶ አባቱ የቆረቆረውን የአንከበር ከተማ በሶስት እርከን ከፍሎ ማለፊያ ከተማ አደረገው። McCann, *People of the Plow*, p. 110, indicates that it was founded in the late eighteenth century.

argues, the reign of Amha Iyasus (1743-1774) marked both the perpetuation and a break with the policy of his predecessors. He occupied Ankobar and established a seat on the mountain, which overlooked the fertile Ayrara valley, and also made possible further southward expansion which led to the eviction of the Karrayyuu Oromo from the localities found north of the Kassam river. During this time, the Amharic-speaking communities of Tara and Bulga were incorporated into his principality. As a result, a small Amharic-speaking community of Bulga was evolved in the river valleys into one of the subdivisions of the kingdom of Shawa,<sup>539</sup> perhaps, by steadily encroaching onto the settlements of the Tulama. However, it is difficult, if not impossible, to pinpoint the time of its incorporation into the Kingdom of Shawa. For instance, Harris indicates that it was incorporated during the time of Asfa Wassan, the son of Amha Iyasus.<sup>540</sup> Perhaps, it seems that the process of incorporation started during Amha Iyasus and was completed during the time of Asfa Wassan.

Likewise, Kofi Darkwah maintains that the subjugation of the locality around Ankobar was an important landmark in the rise of Shawa. It brought the Shawan rulers to the nucleus of the eponymous plateau, which they used as a springboard to conquer the provinces located to the west and south of the plateau.<sup>541</sup> Moreover, according to Sergew, the geographical location and the relative

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<sup>539</sup> Ege, p. 25; Stitz ,p.7 ; Sergew , p.71

<sup>540</sup> Harris , vol. III, pp. 36-37.

<sup>541</sup> Darkwah, p. 12

agricultural productivity of the area around Ankobar made possible the beginning of rudimentary form civilization in Shawa. As a result, the Shawan nobles sent their children to Ankobar for education. The following phrase stipulates this issue.

የትም ተወለድ      It does not matter where you were born,  
አንኮበር እደግ<sup>542</sup>      but grew up in Ankobar.

Unlike the previous capitals of the kingdom which were a mountain strongholds inhabited mainly by *mardazmach* and few followers, Ege claims, Ankobar evolved into a town with complex administration.<sup>543</sup> Similarly James McCann argues, by the mid-nineteenth-century, the Shawan kingdom was “a prosperous, cosmopolitan, culturally diverse, and expanding polity”.<sup>544</sup>

Ater the foundation of Ankobar, the territorial expansion of the principality came to its logical conclusion in this direction. It is said that the decision to halt the move of the capital further to the south in this direction was said to have been made taking into consideration the pattern of settlements of different population groups, the landscape, and the fertility of the area. Moreover, the Karrayyuu have been forced to cross over to the other side of the Kassam River, which forms a natural barrier between the principality and the remaining Karrayyuu territory. Hence, it was imperative that going further to the south would sap the energy of the

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<sup>542</sup> Sergew, Dagmawi *Menilek*, p. 72.

<sup>543</sup> Ege, p. 30

<sup>544</sup> McCann, *People of the Plow*, p. 109 ; Ege, p. 30

nascent principality and even might have exposed the northern part of the principality.<sup>545</sup>

Henceforth, the principality redirected its whole attention to the west, to the area inhabited by the Tulama in general and the Abichu *gosa* in particular, since it was extremely favorable both for agriculture and animal husbandry. Hence, unlike the Karrayyu Oromo, with whom Nagasi's families came in to contact up to this time and who were predominantly pastoralists and less numerous, removing the Abichu, who were sedentary agriculturalists was much more arduous.<sup>546</sup>

Amha Iyasus encountered stiff resistance from the Abichu, who were often identified as one of the strongest *gosa* of the Tulama. However, it seems that the strategic importance of the town of Ankobar was very much helpful for Amha Iyasus, and it helped him to wither the resistance of the Abichu. In this connection, Asma Gyorgis indicates, "The [Oromo] could not descend to Ankobar, even if they were victorious, should they descend they would not return".<sup>547</sup> It is fascinating that Asma Gyorgis claims, the force of Amha Iyasus had also started to compete with the Abichu, in the sphere of cavalry drill, although not yet matched

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<sup>545</sup> Ege, p.25

<sup>546</sup> Ibid, PP. 25-26

<sup>547</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*,pp. 516-17.

them. Therefore, this allegedly helped them subjugate the Abichu as far as the Barressa River.<sup>548</sup>

Meanwhile, the reign of Amha Iyasus is well remembered vis-à-vis the relations between the Tulama and the kingdom of Shawa, for what is known as the bloody massacre nicknamed the “Mad Thursday” perpetrated against the Abichu. It is said that it was not planned by Amha Iyasu and rather an incident orchestrated by a certain Gomme Goshu, one of the lieutenants of Amha Iyasus, who sought to revenge for the death of his brother in the hands of the Oromo, although events that followed the presumed incident never gives us the same picture<sup>549</sup>

We have a fascinating fairytale concerning the beginning of the incident. As to the origin of the incident, tradition has it that while Amha Iyasu’s war leaders were deliberating with some Oromo collaborators on how to commence their attack on the Tulama or which Tulama Gosa’s cattle should they loot, a certain Gomme Goššu, who wanted to revenge the death of his brother in the hands of the Oromo treacherously ran towards them and bowed as if he were taking orders from them. The war leaders did not notice it but he was visible to the army. He then ran quickly back to the army and informed them saying, “የሴራዉን [አሮሞ] ከቤሬሳ እስከ

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<sup>548</sup> Ibid.

<sup>549</sup> Ibid, pp. 518- 521 ; *Heruy, Ya Itiyophia Tarik*, pp. 52-53; Sisay, P. 18; Ege, P. 26, Tsegaye, “The Oromo of Salaalee”, pp. 43, 129 end note no. 77

ዳሳ እረደዉ ብለዉሃል።<sup>550</sup>(They have ordered you to slaughter the plotter [Oromo] from Barressa to Gwassa). When the rank and file heard this they thought that they were ordered by the commanders. As a result, both the infantry and the cavalry started fighting with the Oromo and annihilated the Oromo who were living in the region from Barressa to the highland of Tara, Qundi and Tarma Bar within a day. Finally, Gomme Goššu, however, feared Ammeha Iyasus and fled to Temuga uttering the following couplet:

ወይ ጎሜ ጎሹ	Oh Gomme Goshu
ቡድፍን ይፋት እዳ ነስናሹ <sup>551</sup>	He who put the whole Yifat in danger

In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, Shawan writers recorded almost similar story, which looks like a copy and paste, if we use modern parlance. However, Sergew Hable Sellase, who otherwise recorded bits and pieces of the Shawan history during the period under discussion, was silent concerning this incident. Rather he indicates that Amha Iyasus made protracted campaigns against the Abichu and came to precariously occupy the area up to the Barressa

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<sup>550</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophia Tarik*, pp. 52-53; see also Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 518-21, who almost recorded a similar story. The only difference between the two was that the latter indicates that the commanders were discussing with an Oromo who deserted his gosa and also Gomme Goshu's relative killed by the Oromo was not indicated by the latter. According to the latter, the Oromo killed either his brother or servant, Gebre Sellase, p. 36, which indicates that the event took place during the reign of Asfa Wassan, son of Amha Iyasus. He also indicates that the Oromo were persecuted by the Shawan cavalry the area where the persecution took place stretched from Barressa to Ayabar and from Kand Arabi to Megezaz (ከበሬሳ እስከ ኢያሳር ካንድ ዐርብ እስከ ሞገዘዝ); Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menelik*, p. 9. According to Marcus, 'During his campaigns, the [Oromo] population between Debra Berhan and Ankober was virtually exterminated and the area resettled with Amharas'.

<sup>551</sup> Ibid, according to Heruy it was a battle cry where as for Asma Gyorgis it was a guilty conscience speech



where the Oromo suddenly came and invade time and again.<sup>552</sup> Sergew's assessment of this development compels us to question the saga of Gomme Goshu. It seems that Amha Iyasus was able to displace some of the Abichu from their abode after incessant and arduous wars otherwise; it is highly flawed to assume that all the Oromo who inhabited the localities were evicted.

Conversely, the so-called massacre of the "Mad Thursday " was by no means a mere incident, it must have been the outcome of a well-planned and well-executed military expedition in which perhaps the force of Amha Iyasus outgunned, outnumbered, and outmaneuvered the Abichu. If not, it is difficult to believe that Gomme Goshu could motivate the army of Amha Iyasus to annihilate the people who inhabited the areas that stretched from the Barressa to the highland of Tara and from Qundi to Tarma Bar without the knowledge of Amha Iyasus and his dignitaries. Then if the story about the 'incident' devised by Gomme Goshu is credible, it eclipsed the campaigns made by the famous rulers of Shawa, namely Sahla Sellassie (1813-1847) and Menilek (1865-1889) against the Oromo in its ferocity and enduring legacy, which resulted in either annihilation or deportation of the Abichu Oromo from the area. In this regard, Abir indicates that by this time, the Oromo who inhabited the plains of Shawa Meda 'put to the sword most treacherously'.<sup>553</sup> Following the incident, Asma Gyorgis cogently

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<sup>552</sup> Sergew, "Dagmawi Menilek ", p.73

<sup>553</sup> Abir, *Era of the Princes*, p. 149.

states that Amha Iyasus divided the land that stretched from Qundi to Chacha, from where the Abichu Oromo were evicted and the Amharic speakers from Manz and Tagulat settled as *Gendabal*, *Malkaññäa*, and *Gabbar*. But the Oromo remained in the areas found below the Chacha river. “The campaign against Ammeha Iyasus was now restricted to Caca. For thirty years *Maredazmach* Ammeha Iyasus struggled against the Abeccu and the Galan, and the Karrayyuu in the east,” Asma Gyoris writes, “settling the Christians and displacing the [Oromo]. Since then, nothing was accomplished without removing the [Oromo] and chasing them out of the land”.<sup>554</sup>

We have contradictory information concerning the boundary between the Oromo and the Amhara during the time under discussion. For instance, Sergew, in one place, claims that the Barressa River served as a boundary and, in another place, Amha Iyasus was the first ruler of Shawa whose territory stretched up to the Chacha river.<sup>555</sup> Likewise, Asma Gyorgis also indicates, the Abichu Oromo who survived the so-called the massacre of the ‘bloody Thursday’ crossed the Chacha river by night and joined their brethren, the Galan Oromo on the one hand, and Qundi which was far from the Chacha river was pacified by Wasan Sagad, the grandson of Amha Iyasus on the other.<sup>556</sup> However, according to Krapf, the Barressa river was a real boundary during the time of Wassan Saggad, father of

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<sup>554</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgisd and His Works*, pp. 520-21.

<sup>555</sup> Sergew, “Dagmawi Menilek”, p.73

<sup>556</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis*, PP. 518-19, 528-29, used the Amharic phrase ራስ ወሰን ሰገድ ተብሎ በደስታ ቁንድ ገቡ (He was entitled *Ras bitwadam* Wasan Saggad and entered Qundi with joy).

Sahla Sellase, beyond which the Shawa's dared not to venture to go, without incurring the risk of being executed by the Oromo. He further indicates, "although most of the tribes near the Beresa river paid tribute to Shoa; but the settled boundary was the Beresa, as is now the river Tchatsha in the south of Angollala".<sup>557</sup>

Similarly, as we have seen above, Heruy also indicates that the mischievous Gomme Goshu annihilated the Oromo, who inhabited the locality between Gwasa and the Barressa River, which are very far from the Chacha. Moreover, Svein Ege carefully indicates that the area around the Chacha had only been settled during the reign of Sahla Sellase (1813-1847), and the people who inhabited east of the river spoke Oromo. The Oromo settlement also continued to exist south of the Mofar River side by side with the Amhara, who settled in the valley found between the Chacha and the Mofar rivers. However, after the incident, it seems they lost much of their power and strength in these localities<sup>558</sup>. Therefore, all these conundrums and conflicting information warn us that it is difficult, if not impossible, to demarcate the linguistic boundary in the region under study. That is why even the renowned authorities on the history of Shawa came up with inconsistent accounts.

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<sup>557</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 276

<sup>558</sup> Ege, pp. 26, 43; See also Isenberg and Krapf, p. 276, we shall discuss this issue later on in relation to the period of king Sahla Sellase.

The period of Amha Iyasus was marked by his attempt to consolidate his grip on the hitherto incorporated areas on the one hand and by his attempts to carry out territorial expansion into the plains between his newly founded capital, Ankobar, and the present-day town of Dabra Berhan, on the other. Therefore, the story of the incident of Gomme Goshu could be part and parcel of his endeavour to establish a stronghold in Tagulat.<sup>559</sup> He also tried to make incursions further to the west into Marabiete<sup>560</sup> but this locality was subjugated by Asfa Wassan, his son and successor. Rather he concentrated on pacifying and subduing Tagulat, Manz Efrata, and Bulga. It is said, Amha Iyasus was often ridiculed for the slow pace of territorial expansion, as the following couplet succinctly reveals:

ዛሬስ አምኃየስ አረጀ ደቀቀ	Amha Iyasus has been a frail old man
መሬት ይይዝ ጀመር እየተገፋቀቀ:: <sup>561</sup>	He has started crawling /his territorial expansion became sluggish)

Moreover, Amha Iyasus's hold on his capital, Ankobar itself was far from being secure, and often it was susceptible to the havoc and mayhem caused by the Oromo. However, by citing oral tradition, Sergew recorded that Amha Iyasus was able to curtail the damages caused by the Oromo thanks to the advice that he got from a certain አርከሌዲስ (Arkalades), who had brought to the attention of Amha

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<sup>559</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 289 clearly specified the location of Tagulat by about 1840s as follows: "The province of Tegulet has its boundary from the river Beresa, near Debra Berhan, and from the river Tchatcha, near Angollala, and extends to the river Mofer in the north".

<sup>560</sup> Ibid, Marhabete was located between the Jamma and Wonchit rivers.

<sup>561</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, P.73; Darkwah, p. 13, the second line indicates that Amha Iyasus's territorial expansion was very much sluggish almost tantamount to crawling.

lyasus the fact that the Oromo lit a fire on the high mountains like Qundi at night and made their military expeditions early in the morning and this helped him to be ready so that they could ambush and preempt them.<sup>562</sup>

## **The Completion of the Unification of the Amhara Enclaves and the Persistence of Campaigns to Incorporate the Tulama (1774-1812)**

Amha lyasus was succeeded by his son, Asfa Wassan (1774-1808), often portrayed as a consummate warrior. To borrow Harris's phrases, " a great Nimrod, and an unparalleled warrior, slaying three hundred pagans with his spear from the back of his favorite war steed Amadoo"<sup>563</sup> However, initially, Asfa Wassan was disparaged by his subjects for neglecting administrative duties and his inability to lead his men to battle and for his obsession with religious education.<sup>564</sup> It is said, at that time the areas which his predecessors incorporated into the kingdom started to be ruled by their respective local notables hence regaining their autonomy. The following couplet conspicuously expounds his subjects' apprehension:

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<sup>562</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek* , P.73.

<sup>563</sup> Harris, vol. III, P. 9, Darkwah, p. 13

<sup>564</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 520-21, Asma Gyorgis recounts Asfa Wassan was "የተማሩ አዋቂ ነበሩ። እጅግም ብልህ" (a highly educated, knowledgeable and intelligent leader), See also Ege, p. 27

ነጋሢ ስብስቱ አምቃይስ የሠሩትን ቤት

አስፋ ወሰን ያያል [አረምዎች] ሲያፈርሱት

በድጓ በቅኔ በግዕዝ በዜማ ይሠራ መስሎት.<sup>565</sup> (This means Asfa Wassan failed to stop the Oromo who were annihilating the polity built by Nagasi, Sebste and Amha Iyasus imagining that a state would be built by hymn, poetry, and melody).

When Asfa Wassan came to power, Shawa was one of a dozen chiefdoms that existed on the eponymous plateau, and its core part lay east and south-east of Manz as far south as Ankobar. Hence, emboldened by the above criticism, Asfa Wassan determined to embark upon a territorial expansion beginning with the areas found on the other sides of Manz; as a result, he annexed Efrata (the northern part of the territory that lies between Geddem and the Borkanna River) and the southern part of Geshe, in the north and northwest respectively. Up to this time, the latter was said to have been an independent chiefdom whose ruler at that time was Awusabe and was imprisoned by Asfa-Wassan. Meanwhile, the northern part of Gische continued to be inhabited by the Tulama until the 1850s.<sup>566</sup>

Asfa Wassan's most conspicuous territorial expansion was made in the west, into Marabiete and Morat, formerly hereditary fiefs of Dajan<sup>567</sup> and Tiddu, respectively.

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<sup>565</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 76

<sup>566</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 301, 315, 320; Darkwah, p. 13; Ege, p. 26; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgisd and His Works*, pp. 522-23.

<sup>567</sup> We have conflicting information concerning the ruler of Marhabete by this time. According to Isenberg and Krapf, p. 300, Dajan, who was the grandson of Demetros, and the son of Waldu, was a person who ruled the principality. Meanwhile, Dechasa, "A Socio-Economic History of North

The former is a descendant of Demetros, governor of Shawa, and a contemporary of Nagassi. We do not have sufficient information about the resistance of the former, but, it said, Asfa Wassan encountered stiff resistance in Morat.<sup>568</sup>To use Sergew words, ከሸዋ አገሮች ያስቸገረና ረዘም ላለ ጊዜ የተከራከረዉ የሞረት ህዝብ ነበር።<sup>569</sup> (Among parts of Shawa where Asfa Wassan made a protracted campaign and where he encountered stiff resistance was Morat). According to Sergew the following couplet formed a prologue to the conflict between Asfa Wassan and Tiddu of Morat:

አስፋወሰን ይፋት ጠንክረዉ ይረሱ	Oh Asfa Wassan, you better plough hard your principality, Yifat
ሞረት ጥዲል [ጥዱ አለ] ብለዉ ከመመላለሱ። <sup>570</sup>	rather than wasting your time looking for Tiddu in Morat.

Both principalities are traditionally considered to have been among the enclaves where the Christian Amhara continued to exist unscathed after the sixteenth-century population movement. However, the oral traditions that we have collected from the nearby Oromo inhabited area of Salale indicate that their forefathers came to Salale proper by crossing Marhabete, and they even mentioned the localities like Atete Warka, where they claimed that their forefathers were

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Shawa,” p. 72, indicates that Waldu was the contemporary of Asfa Wassan. Svein Ege, “Marhabete” in *Encyclopedia Aethiopica*, vol.3 (2007), p. 783, further complicates this issue by stating that “M. dynasty is little known. Several sources refer to the appointment of Ras Démetros as governor in this region about 1700. In other contexts, Waldu appears as the key figure in the M. dynasty”.

<sup>568</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, pp. 67-68.

<sup>569</sup> Ege, p. 29; Sergew, “Dagmawi Menilek,”p, 76.

<sup>570</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*,pp.57-58. The term Tiddu refers to the governor of Morat, as well as, to the coniferous tree (tid). See also, Levine, *Wax, and Gold*, p. 34, where a similar couplet is recorded.

stationed for a while.<sup>571</sup> Similarly Svein Ege indicates, during their expansion in the sixteenth century the 'Oromo had passed through Marhabete into Wallo and still occupied the northwestern part of Tachbet' but were compelled to recognize the overlordship of Marhabete chief.<sup>572</sup> Moreover, it is said, the districts which bordered Marhabete, namely Dobba, Midda and Waramo (the corrupt form of Oromo) were the abode of the Tulama during the period under discussion.<sup>573</sup> The above bits and pieces of evidence, therefore, depict that the Oromo and the Amhara have also been living side by side in and around Marhabete and Manz, not to mention, Morat, Bulga, and Gishe.

Meanwhile, the process of incorporation of these two chiefdoms, and other Amhara inhabited areas into the kingdom of Shawa started during the reign of Asfa Wassan. After he subdued Tiddu Abisa of Morat, Asfa Wassan immediately made inroads into the Oromo inhabited territories.<sup>574</sup> Thus, the kingdom of Shawa saw rapid expansion during this time because most of the incorporated areas

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<sup>571</sup> Informants: Begele Sime (18/06/2001); Shawaa Nagash (Fiche, May 2017).

<sup>572</sup> Ege, p. 27; see also Isenberg and Krapf, p. 300, where the genealogies of the rulers of Marhabete and Morat has been recorded.

<sup>573</sup> Informants: Birru Tsegaye (Addis Ababa, May 4, 2018); Wolda Yohannes Workneh (5/10/2017, Addis Ababa); See also Mahtama Sellase Walda Masqal, *Che Balaw* (Addis Ababa, Commercial Printing Press, 1961 E.C.), p. 26; Birru Tsegaye, p. 322; it seems these districts were formerly inhabited by the Oromo, before the incorporation of the areas into the kingdom of Shawa and the gradual Amharization of the inhabitants of these localities. For instance, Dobba is said to have been the birthplace of Walda Mikael Guddissa, the grandfather of Tafari Mekonnen, the future Emperor Haile Sellase I (1930-1974).

<sup>574</sup> Harris, vol.III, pp. 36.37, 187, perhaps the campaign to incorporate this principality started during Amha Iyasus; see also Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 245, 300; DerejeNegussie, "Fiche Ganata Gyorgis Church, 1871-1974 ( BA Thesis, AAU, 1996), pp. 8-9; "Tamra Maryam Parchment in Angorcha Selassie church Treasury' (the first and last folios). It is to be noted local sources and oral traditions and even Isenberg and Krapf on page 300 mention a different order as follows: First *Maramach* (Marid – *Azmach*) Mazamir; second *Maramach* Takla Haymanot; third *Ayyato* (*Abbeto*) Esayyas; Fourth *Ayyato* Abisa; fifth *Ayyato* Tiddu; and Sixth *Ayyato* Hayulu. In other words, according to local tradition, Tiddu was the son of Abisa.



were predominantly inhabited by the Christian Amhara communities, where he had encountered relatively lesser resistance except in Morat as we have seen above. As a result, he became the first among the descendants of Nagasi who had managed to put under the jurisdiction of the Kingdom of Shawa most of the predominantly Christian Amhara inhabited localities.<sup>575</sup>

Henceforth, the rulers of Shawa were to concentrate on the occupation and incorporation of the plains and river valleys, enclosing the so-called enclaves of the Christian Amhara communities, mainly inhabited by the Tulama. To this end, Asfa Wassan further consolidated the campaigning against the Abichu Oromo, which was commenced during the time of his father, as we have seen above. In this regard, Ege writes,

There was extensive fighting against the Abechu of northern Shawa Meda. They still possessed most of the lands up to the Mofar river, but the Amhara had started to settle in the northern and eastern parts of this area, perhaps as far as the Baresa. Not just arms but also religion aided expansion in this area; many Oromo continued to live there and gradually became assimilated. Beyond the Baresa the Amhara did not settle, but the Abechu, Galan, and Oborra tribes were made tributary.<sup>576</sup>

Finally, the remarks made by Asfa Wassan’s subjects to disparage his military ability were later on substituted by words of praise and admiration, as the following couplets portray:

Amharic	Gloss
እኛ መስሎን ነበር ዲን ቅኔ ዐዋቂ	We thought that Asfa Wassan was only well versed in hymn and poetry;
ግዕዝ ዜማ መርማሪ ጠያቂ	Expert on Geez language and song;
አዩ ጉድ እናንተ እንዲህ ያለ ነዉር	Oh, what a shame!
አምኃየስን ልጅ በጦር እንደዚህ መጠርጠር[1]	Doubting the military prowess of the son of Amha Iyasus.

<sup>575</sup> Gabra Sellase, p. 36

<sup>576</sup> Ege, p. 28; See also Gabra Sellase, p. 40.

Unlike the previous time, the rate of conquest and settlement was slowed down; it is argued here that not because of the decrease of the population pressure within the Amhara provinces, but the topography of the territory into which Shawan influence now moved, an open plain, had presented little prospect for gradual 'resettlement' which was practiced hitherto and also it provided equal opportunity for both parties. At this time, rather a new pattern emerged which obliged the Oromo to pay tribute and recognize the Shawan authority. In this regard, Asma Gyorgis indicates, 'the Abečču, i.e. all the Teloma, also submitted and paid tribute. Concerning the pacification...as few as five or six people could make pilgrimage to Dabra Libanos from Bulga through Barak, from Tara through Seriti and from Ankobar through Qirqos.'<sup>577</sup> Asma Gyorgis's conjecture about the submission of the whole of Tulama to Asfa Wassan is an exaggeration, although it is irrefutable that a portion of the Abichu might have started paying tribute to the kingdom of Shawa.

Meanwhile, according to Marie-Laure Derat, the Christian Community of Dabra Libanos abandoned the area after the transfer of the political center of the Christian Kingdom to the region north of the Abbay River. Subsequently, the house of Täklä Haymanot was said to have been founded at Azäzo, in the vicinity of the royal court at Gondär. However, almost after two centuries, that is, in the late eighteenth century, perhaps during the period of Asfa Wassan that the monks

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<sup>577</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 522-23

returned to the locality of Dabra Libanos monastery plausibly 'to re-establish it and to re-discover the tomb of Abuna Täklä Haymanot'.<sup>578</sup>

Nonetheless, the renowned Shawan writer, Heruy Walda Sellase recorded a different story which states, after the Oromo came to the area the cross, the sacred objects including the tabernacle (መስቀሉና ንዋዩ ቅዱሳቱ ሁሉ ታቦቱዎ) were relocated to the nearby low-lying area known as Zegamal where the Oromo cavalry could not traverse.<sup>579</sup> But Heruy's conjecture about the inability of the Oromo to reach Zegama lowland is highly unlikely as it has been discussed elsewhere in the thesis that the lowland area below the monastery of Dabra Libanos and the current Fiche town was inhabited by the Oromo and even the first half of the nineteenth century travelers like Beke witnessed this unequivocally.<sup>580</sup>

Similar to Heruy's supposition, Asma Gyorgis also indicates that when King

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<sup>578</sup> Marie-Laure Derat, "Däbrä Libanos" in *Encyclopedía Aethiopoica*, vol. II, pp. 25-28. Concerning the time of the re-establishment of the church at Dabra Libanos, it is said that the first Church after the occupation of the area by the Oromo was established during the time of Wasan Sagad in 1812 and subsequently the church was rebuilt during the reigns of Yohannes IV and Menilek II in 1908. See also Gabra Sellase, p.38; Bairu, Asma Gyorgis and His Works, pp. 526-27, 563; Takla Sadik Makuria, *Ye Ityophiya Tarik Ka Atse Lebna Dengel Eska Atse Tewodros* (A.A. 1965), p.365, concerning the name of the church, we have contradictory information. According to Gabra Sellase, it was named St. Mary, whereas Heruy and Asma Gyorgis indicate that it was Abuna Takla Haymont. According to Asma Gyorgis, Wasan Sagad went to Dabra Libanos and built the Church of Abuna Taka Haymanot on his tomb at Attegefain on the ruins of the church burnt by Qachen Abubakar, the commander of Imam Ahmad Gagn's force in the second quarter of the sixteenth century. See Sihab ad-Din Ahmad bin 'Abd al-Qader, *Futuh al-Habasa*: pp. 186–193. According to Shihab ad-Din, the monastery was burnt not by Qachen Abubakar but by one of his followers known as Urai Abu Bakr.

<sup>579</sup> Heruy, *Ya Ityophia Tarik*, p. 22. Zegamal is the generic name given to the valley and gorge formed by the tributary of the Jamma River near the monastery of Dabra Libanos, sometimes including the area where the monastery itself is located. See Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 494-95, where both names are used interchangeably. I am indebted to one of my examiners who enlighten us about the existence of the famous Oromo proverb about Zegamal: Abbaa Taklee yaa guddichaa Zegamalii ( Abbott Takle[ Takla Haymanot] the giant of Zegamal) Atii nambeektuu anii siibeekaa barii ( Though you do not know me, I know you very well).

<sup>580</sup> see Beke, pp.351, 366, 369

lysau I of Gondar visited Shawa, the twelve princes and the rest of the Shawan notables came down to Zegamal except the notables of Tara and Bulga , whose territories were besieged by the Tulama.<sup>581</sup> If what has been recorded by the Shawan writers is credible, it is fascinating that the monastery continued to exist not in the area which was not out of the reach of the Oromo but amid the area inhabited by the Oromo and this force us to suspect the stereotypes about the Oromo hostility to the Christian Church.<sup>582</sup> It was Asma Gyorgis himself again who indicates that the future Ethiopian Emperor, Susenyos, when he was in exile had visited the monastery of Dabra Libanos, certainly after the area was occupied by the Oromo.<sup>583</sup> Similarly in the nearby Tulama inhabited area, Fitawrari Takla Hawaryat recorded a tradition which indicates that St. Lideta (Mary) Church of Sayadaber was the only church which miraculously spared from Imam Ahmad Gragn's devastation in the highland part of Shawa and later on continued to exist amid the areas inhabited by the Oromo. He even stated that አሮሞዎች ልደታን በጣም ይወዷታል (The Oromo love St. Lideta very much).<sup>584</sup>

Concerning the territorial extent of the kingdom of Shawa, on the side of the Tulama, Darkwah states that its frontier in the north-west stretched up to the south bank of the Adabay river; in the south, after he subjugated Morat and its

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<sup>581</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 496-97.

<sup>582</sup> See, for instance, Pankhurst, *Ethiopian Borderlands*, p. 312, where it is indicated that the monastery of Dabra Libanos 'had earlier been "devastated" by the Ahmad ibn Ibrahim, or Gran, and later by the Oromos'.

<sup>583</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 496-97.

<sup>584</sup> Fitawrari Takla Hawaryat, p. 4

southern district, stretched to the territory of the Oborii Oromo, which was not far from the area where Angolala was later to be founded.<sup>585</sup> However, it seems that Asfa Wassan initially strove to tighten his grip over the Oromo settled between Ankobar and Dabra Berhan, who had been subjugated by Amha Iyasus.<sup>586</sup> Like his predecessors, he also founded towns and churches in the newly conquered areas. Consequently, he established Salla Dengay,<sup>587</sup> where he erected a church dedicated to Saint Mary. The foundation of churches in the newly-conquered districts had dual motives: first, to serve the Christians who settled in the newly conquered localities; secondly, to smoothen the evangelization of non-Christians, especially in this case, the Oromo to Christianity.<sup>588</sup> In this regard, Sisay Megersa argues, the utilisation of religion as a means of pacification of the subjugated societies by vindicating Shawan Amhara's hegemony can be presumed as a commencement of a state supported assimilation policy in Shawa as far as the relationship of the Shawan Amhara and Oromo is concerned.<sup>589</sup>

Moreover, Isenberg and Krapf recount other nearby territories pacified by Asfa Wassan and his father as follows:

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<sup>585</sup> Darkwah, p. 14

<sup>586</sup> Gabra Sellase, p. 35; Isenberg and Krapf, p.300; Darkwah, p. 13, it is said, he did not leave his capital, Ankobar for three years after he came to power and it was after three years elapsed that he embarked on the conquest of Morat and Marhabiete, as we have seen above in this section.

<sup>587</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 290, 295, 297, when they were in Shawa, Salla Dengay was not a small village, probably it was a third of the houses and inhabitants of Ankobar, the capital of Shawa. The area was pretty and very well cultivated with barley. It was the residence of the mother of Sahla Sellase, Zanaba Warq. As to the etymological origin of the name of the town, Isenberg writes, 'Zalla-Dengai, which means verbally "the jumping stone." My former way of writing Selat Dengai would imply the meaning "sharp stone", and must therefore be corrected.' See also Bairu, Asma Gyorgis and His Works, p. 965.

<sup>588</sup> Darkwah, p. 14; Sisay, p. 18.

<sup>589</sup> Sisay, p. 18

To the east [ of Korra Gadal near Salla Dengay] we had the hill and district of Wodera, the produce of which is divided between the King and his mother, she taking the wood, which is very rare around Zalla-Dengai, and the King claiming the grass places for his cattle. Wodera and the country around was formerly in the hands of three [*Oromo*] Chieftains; viz. Hamte, Berre, and Hoolosffe, until the Efatian Kings Ymmaha-Yasoos and Asfa-Woossen turned them out of their possessions. Hamte displayed such bravery in war, that Asfa-Woossen himself respected him.<sup>590</sup>

The tradition recorded by the nineteenth-century European travellers, therefore, indicates that the area around the town of Salla Dengay and the district of Wadera were inhabited by the Tulama and controlled by the Oromo chiefs like Hamte (?), Berre (Baarii?), and Hoolosffe (?),<sup>591</sup> before they were conquered during the time of Amha Iyasus and Asfa Wassan. Hence it is not a coincidence that the toponym, Wadera, is said to have been derived from an Oromo term.<sup>592</sup> Moreover, Krapf indicates that in March 1842, when he left Angolala for Massawa, he traversed through one of the localities which were formerly under the control of the Oromo but incorporated into the kingdom of Shawa during Asfa Wassan as follows: 'The village of Logheita—the whole district around has the same name—has been so-called from Logo, a former Chief of the [*Oromo*], who had been in the possession of this fertile district, till Asfa-Woossen, grandfather of the present King, had conquered and settled it.'<sup>593</sup>

Be this as it may, the hereditary rulers of Morat and Marhabete also took discrete expansionist undertakings in the west against the salale and Borana Oromo,

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<sup>590</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 297-98

<sup>591</sup> Uncharacteristically, the names of the Oromo chiefs were spelt awfully by Isenberg and Krapf, and it is difficult to associate these names with popular Oromo names.

<sup>592</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 79; Alemayehu *et al*, p. 48.

<sup>593</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 281.

where the former succeeded to a limited extent in settling the Amhara in *golla* below Fiche, and the latter expanded its power towards Darra.<sup>594</sup> The main activity of Morat was directed towards the west, where the lowland of Ensarro across the Barsana towards Dabra Libanos had been conquered and settled,” writes Ege. “Actual settlement was limited to the valley, the border between Amhara and Oromo following the upper escarpment, but the influence of Morat extended to the Oromo chiefs in the Gerar area.<sup>595</sup>

As one may discern from the above quotation, the district of Ensaro was one of the areas previously inhabited by the Tulama, and it is not a coincidence that the capital of the district is named Lammii<sup>596</sup> (which is an Oromo term, meaning relative or citizen in modern parlance). Concerning the fate of the Oromo in the district, Ege does not help us; he rather simply states that the area was settled by the Amhara. However, it is highly likely that most of the Oromo who had inhabited the district were either integrated into the dominant Christian Amhara community or continued to live side by side with them.<sup>597</sup>

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<sup>594</sup> Dereje, pp. 7-8. However, as we shall see, the subjugation of these localities took place in the second half of the nineteenth century.

<sup>595</sup> Ege, p. 27.

<sup>596</sup> Perhaps this term was mentioned in the hagiography of the medieval Qewistos cited in Daniel Kibret, “ሸዋ: የጥንትና የዛሬ መገናኛ” (Shawa: the Rendezvous of Antiquity and Modern Times <http://www.danielkibret.com/2018/10/blog-post.html#more> . To use Daniels words ወለፊቅጦርኒ በሀገረ ለሚ ዘትሰመይ ደብረ ዲባናው - ፊቅጦርንም ደብረ ዲባናው በምትባል በለሚ ሀገር ለሚ ሰጡ፣ በኦሮሞኛ ስህተት ማለት ነው።

<sup>597</sup> In the districts like Ensaro, we have considerable number of Oromo speakers hitherto. See, for instance, the [1994 Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia: Results for Amhara Region, Vol. 1, part 1 Archived](#) November 15, 2010, at the [Wayback Machine](#), Tables 2.1, 2.7, 2.10, 2.13, 2.17,

Tiddu Abisa, the renowned ruler of Morat,<sup>598</sup> seems to have been the first Amhara chief who encroached on the Salale proper. The local tradition indicates that pockets of Amhara survived in some of the surrounding lowlands of the present-day Fiche. He settled at Angorcha and built Angorcha Sellase (Trinity) Church,<sup>599</sup> It is located at a distance of about eight miles, northwest of the famous monastery of Dabra Libanos.<sup>600</sup> It seems that Tiddu governed the nearby lowlands on both flanks of the Jama River from his headquarters at Angorcha after he established a nuptial alliance with the Oromo dignitaries. Previously, he encountered stiff resistance from the local inhabitants, but it is said that a certain wise man advised him to establish a marriage relationship with the Oromo leaders) በግራር እጠረጢጫ<sup>601</sup> literally make a fence by juniper tree). As a result, his daughters married the Oromo notables, namely Guddaa Badhaasaa, father of Abbaa Maallee, Shaashi Nagii of Dagam and Duuloo of Jaarsoo. It is said that the first and the last married the daughters of Tiddu named Sahilitu and Walataa

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Annex II.2 (accessed 9 April 2009 The Amhara (70.27%), and the Oromo (29.58% constitute the two largest groups in the district.

<sup>598</sup> It was bounded by the Barsana River in the west and south, by the Adabay River in the north, and a steep precipice separated it from the highland of the Jerru Oromo in the south and east. See Ege, p. 27.

<sup>599</sup> "Tamra Maryam Parchment at Angorcha Sellasse Church Treasury (the First and the last two folios)" cited in Dereje Negussie, pp. 8-9; see also Darkawah, pp.13-14; see also Harris, Vol.III, p.36; Isenberg and Krapft, pp.244-45; Tsegaye," The Oromo of Salaalee ", p. 44.

<sup>600</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp.33-34.

<sup>601</sup> Informant: Riise Debir Demitse Amare (Fiche, May 15, 2017).



Gyorgis, respectively. Of these three notables, Shaashii of Hillammuu was the only notable who did not give land to the latter.<sup>602</sup>

Moreover, Tiddu Abisa was said to have been buried at Angorcha Sellase church and not in the Morat proper.<sup>603</sup> Unlike the time of Tiddu, we do not have a vibrant oral tradition concerning his successors in Angorcha. Apparently, by this time, Morat and Marhabete were incorporated into the kingdom of Shawa and their expansion towards the Salale proper was halted. Angorcha itself was dominated by the nearby Oromo notables. In this regard by 1840, as we shall see, Beke posits that Angorcha and its surroundings were administrated by Abbaa Maallee of Grar. Specifically, he mentions that the governor of Angorcha at that time was “a tall, good looking young [Oromo]” apparently appointed by Abbaa Maallee.<sup>604</sup>

However, of the rulers of the kingdom of Shawa, Wasan Sagad (1807-1813) was the first to make territorial expansion in the direction of Salale starting from the time when he had served as an *abgaz* of the province of Marhabete. It was by this time that he had pacified and incorporated areas like Midda and Woromo into

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<sup>602</sup> Tsegaye, “The Oromo of Salaalee”, p. 44; Wakene, p. 36; Dereje, pp. 8-9. Shaashii territory was not contiguous to Tidu Abisa’s new stronghold, Angorcha.

<sup>603</sup> Tsegaye, “The Oromo of Salaalee”, p. 44, indicates that the area was either transformed into the heartland of Tiddu Abisa domain or he was frustrated by Asfa Wassan’s occupation of the Morat and decided to stay in Angorcha, closer to his Oromo allies, Badhaasaa, Duuloo and Shashi.

<sup>604</sup> Beke, pp.351, 366, 369; see also Dereje, pp.8-9. Beke reports that the people who inhabited near the palace of Abbaa Maallee were ‘more Oromo than anything else and that language is as much spoken as Amharic, but the rising generation learn the latter almost exclusively’.

Marhabete proper.<sup>605</sup> Moreover, after he came to power, the process of expansion in this direction continued and it was as a result of this expansion that a church at the famous monastery of Dabra Libanos was rebuilt as we have seen a while ago. Heruy Walda Sellasse explains this issue as follows: ወሰን ሰገድ ለጊዜው አባቱን ደስ ለማሰኘት ለኋላውም ግዛቱን ለማስፋት ስለአሰበ በሰላሌ በኩል እስከ ዓባይ አፋፍ በወዲህም እስከ ጨቦና ጉራጌም አገር ይዘምት ነበር<sup>606</sup>:: (To please his father and to further expand his future dominion, Wasan Sagad made campaign as far as the Abbay gorge in the direction of Salale and up to Chabo and Gurage on the other side).

The nineteenth-century British envoy to the Kingdom of Shawa, Harris, also illustrates its territorial expansion during the time of Wasan Sagad, with understandable exaggeration states that he not only managed to keep in submission the localities subjugated by his father but also significantly extended the western borders of Shawa 'by the acquisition of Moogher on the Nile, and by the conquest of the Abidchu, Woberi, and Gillan, so far south as the mountains of Garra Gorphoo".<sup>607</sup>

From the above account, we may discern that Wasan Sagad made campaigns into the predominantly Oromo inhabited neighbouring localities of the Abichu, Oborii, Galan up to the Garra (mount) Gorfo on the one hand and the Mugar river on the other hand. However, Harris' conjecture cannot help us decipher the extent

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<sup>605</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 526-27

<sup>606</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, P. 27

<sup>607</sup> Harris Vol III. PP. 36-37

of Wassan Sagad's territorial expansion. It should be remembered that Gara Gorfo Mountain and the Mugar river are found in the same direction from the kingdom Shawa, and both can't simultaneously be the utmost limit of Wassan Sagad's territorial expansion since the former is found east of the latter. Secondly, let alone Wassan Sagad, even his son and successor, the famous Sahla Sellasse, was also not able to pacify most of these localities after thirty years of relentless campaigns, as we shall see in the subsequent chapter. Rather, Wassan Sagad tried to tighten his grip over the areas nearer to Ankobar, his father's capital. In this regard, Heruy indicates, በመጀመሪያ ከአንኮቦር ወዲህ ያለውን የሜዳውን [ኦሮሞ] ወግቶ ድል ካደረገ በኋላ ቁንዲ ላይ ከተማ ሠረቶ ተቀመጠ።<sup>608</sup> After he [Wassan Sagad] came to power, he fought against the Oromo who were found on the plateau near Ankobar and established a town at Qundi). The same sources indicate, he also established a church of St. George at Qundi, reestablished the town of Dabra Berhan, and founded a church dedicated to the Trinity.<sup>609</sup> Similarly, by 1840, Krapf indicates that "Debra Berhan was conquered by the father of Sahela Selassieh; but settled and secured against the inroads of the [Oromos] by Menilek, which is the family name of Sahela Selassieh, this being his Christian name."<sup>610</sup>

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<sup>608</sup> Heruy, *Ya Ityophiya Tarik*, p. 22; see also Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p., 81, who indicates, there was a town in the locality before the war of Imama Ahmad Gagn.

<sup>609</sup> The town was said to have been founded by Zara Yaiqob ( 1434-1468) , See Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*; Darkawh, p. 18. The town was said to have been founded by Zara Yaiqob ( 1434-1468), see also, Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*; Darkawh, p. 18.

<sup>610</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 274

Svein Ege also indicates that by the end of the reign of Wasn Sagad, the territory as far south as the Baressa River was fully incorporated into the kingdom of Shawa. Hence in the region the north of the Baressa river, the population became 'Amhara or converted Oromo'. At the same time expeditions were made against the Oromo *gosa* and the kingdom's influence stretched as far as the Gorfo and the Salale mountains.<sup>611</sup>

One of the most conspicuous achievements of Wassan Sagad, according to Asma Gyorgis, was the occupation of the strategic highland region of Qundi, from where one could see the mountains of Harar, Arsi and Gojjam in the east, south and west, respectively. He further substantiates why Wassan Sagad chose this place as follows:

*When the [Oromo] intended to invade, all the Abba Dula of the [Oromo] would gather under a huge tree. They would crack their whips and deliberate. They would complete their agreement, would say to one another before departure, 'show me fire on such and such a day. "On the evening of the appointed day, all would kindle fire. All who were old enough would saddle their horses in the morning.... If any [Oromo] – a Qondala a [young] horseman, a [young] spearman, or even an old man, who is still able to ride a horse, absented himself on that day, he would be judged by the Çaffe, and would suffer severe punishment. Thus when the people of Selale and Mèçça lit [fire], it looked as if it were kindled on the threshold of Qundi. The [Oromo] would lit [fire] in the evening, saddle up the next morning. The Amârâ would start out after the [Oromo] lit, and would travel until dawn; and would ambush them en route.<sup>612</sup>*

From the quotation, we may discern that Qundi was one of the most strategically important localities in Shawa.

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<sup>611</sup> Ege, p. 31.

<sup>612</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 527-29.

In addition to territorial expansion, Wassan Sagad had used political marriage to consolidate his power. For instance, he married Zanabawarq, the granddaughter of Gole, who in turn was the grandson of the famous Gera of Manz.<sup>613</sup> Hence, it is fascinating that the descendants of the notables of Manz had had a stake in the power politics of the kingdom of Shawa hitherto. Notwithstanding his enlightening information about the marriage relations, Darkwah failed to suspect the fact that Zanabawarq as the descendant of Gera and Gole, respectively, had an Oromo heritage. Rather he narrates that in addition to his Amhara wife, Zanabawarq; Wassan Sagad “had a number of [Oromo] concubines by whom he had numerous daughters. It became part of his policy sometimes to win, at other times to maintain, the loyalty or friendship of a powerful and influential neighbor by the hand of a princess.”<sup>614</sup>

Although we are not in a position to disentangle clearly why Wassan Sagad came to have Oromo concubines, it was highly likely that he wanted to establish cordial relations with the neighbouring Oromo notables. Those who were characterized as concubines perhaps were his multiple wives. This must have been customary in Shawa. As Krapf indicates, in the 1840s, concubinage was habitual in Shawa, during the reign of Sahla Sellase, a son and successor of Wassan Sagad, “the daughters of many grandees must in this way serve to effect political alliances,

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<sup>613</sup> Sergew , *Dagmawi Menilek* , p., 81; Darkwah, p. 17

<sup>614</sup> Darkwah, p.17, footnote 44.

and Sahela Selassie wished for an English princess to consolidate his alliance with Great Britain!”<sup>615</sup>

Furthermore, Wassan Sagad attempted to promote individuals of diverse backgrounds to power and followed a policy of religious toleration and social equality to foster unity among the diverse inhabitants of his kingdom. To materialize this, he appointed the Amhara, Oromo and Afar, as governors of various districts based on their loyalty to him regardless of their ethnic and religious backgrounds.<sup>616</sup> Meanwhile, Svein Ege comes up with a slightly different story and states that by this time, Shawa was not a petty state and was composed of three different population groups, namely Amhara, Oromo and Argobba. Hence, Wassan Sagad did not have direct control over all the districts, and in the Oromo inhabited areas, he used or appointed Oromo governors and Muslim governors in Yefat. Moreover, Ege differs from Darkawah and states that this policy was not new since the Muslims used to administer Yefat for a long period, while Oromo administrators were appointed for the first time during Asfa Wassan. But, according to Darkwah, this policy was not welcomed by the Amhara notables,

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<sup>615</sup> Krapf, pp.35=36.

<sup>616</sup> Rochet d'Hericourt, *Second Voyage sur les deux rives dela Mer Rouge*(Paris,1846),p.243 cited in Darkwah, p. 18 . This is for the first time perhaps the Afars were considered to be part of the Kingdom of Shawa. However, those who were identified as Muslim Afar by d'Hericourt were likely the Argobba; see also Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menelik*, p. 10, indicates that the tactic of cultural and political assimilation and religious toleration devised by Wassan Sagad was later on employed by his great-grandson Menelik II.

and it was perhaps among the causes, if not the only, for his eventual demise.<sup>617</sup>

To borrow Darkwah's words,

Wassan Saggad's policy of social equality was, however, resented by the Amhara, who wished to revenge themselves on the [Oromo] and the Afar by treating them as social inferiors; again his policy of religious toleration was disliked by the clergy. The disgruntled Amhara made common cause with the clergy and, finding an excuse in the despotic laws which continued to be issued, fomented a conspiracy and secured the assassination of the Ras in June 1813.<sup>618</sup>

Harold Marcus's exposition is also congruent with the above Darkwah's passage.

He believes that Wasan Sagad's pragmatic policy of political and cultural assimilation and religious toleration were far too radical for the "parochial and isolated kingdom". As a result, the religious leaders bridled at the notion of 'Islam is coexisting with Christianity', and the upper nobilities and local administrators must have also been annoyed by the prospect of sharing their political prerogative with non-Christians, whom they could no longer exploit as they wished.<sup>619</sup>

Likewise, Abir indicates that it was Wassan Sagad, who devised the program of complete toleration for Islam and a steady Amharization and Christianization of his Oromo subjects. The Oromo, who voluntarily accepted his policy, were assigned to administer the country.<sup>620</sup>

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<sup>617</sup> See, for instance, Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p., 81, who indicates that Ras Wassan Sagad was not popular among the Shewan, and they had different reasons for this. Some made him responsible for the drought that hit the region during his reign.

<sup>618</sup> Darkwah, p. 19; See also, Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p., 83 and Heruy, *Ya Ityophiya Tarik*, p. 22, who almost recorded a similar story about the cause of the death of Wassan Saggad. Both of them indicated that he was assassinated by his servant named Alem Waza or Yezi Alem, who was an agent of those who conspired to get rid of him. .

<sup>619</sup> Marcus, *The Life and Times Menelik*, P. 10.

<sup>620</sup> Abir, *Ethiopia: The Era of the Princes*, p. 151.

But the Shawan historians were silent about Wassan Sagad's policies and the opposition to his policies, rather they almost unanimously recorded that the Shawan nobles did not like Wassan Sagad's plan of making an expedition to Gondar<sup>621</sup> fearing that if the kingdom was preoccupied with the war, perhaps the recently pacified groups ostensibly the Oromo and even the previously autonomous Amhara principalities would rebel and put the kingdom in danger. Therefore, to eliminate Wassan Sagad, the nobles connived with his servant named Alem, who stabbed the *Ras* to death.<sup>622</sup> But about the fundamental causes behind the assassination of Wassan Sagad, Harold G. Marcus writes, "Wasan Sagad antagonized too many Shoans, particularly Christian clergymen, and after an active and important four-and-a-half-year reign, he was assassinated in 1813 by one of his servants (perhaps his chief eunuch), apparently at the behest of church officials".<sup>623</sup>

Despite some of the Shawan nobility's fear of the adverse effects of the war against *Ras* Gugsa of Yajju, the death of Wassan Sagad was followed by a period

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<sup>621</sup>Wassan Sagad wanted to challenge the authority of *Ras* Gugsa of the Yajju dynasty, who was one of the powerful personalities in northern Ethiopia and made the king of kings' puppet.

<sup>622</sup>Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 530-31; Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, pp. 83-84; Heruy, *Ya Ityophiya Tarik*, p. 23; see also Ege, p. 32 who further adds that personal grievance might also be the cause for the murder of Wassan Sagad. According to Heruy, those who had affairs with his wife, *Waizaro* Taytu, might have been behind the murder of Wassan Sagad.

<sup>623</sup>Marcus, *The Life and Times Menelik*, p. 10, states Menilek succeeded in implementing this policy because, unlike Wassan Sagad, he always managed to maintain the support of his people.



of confusion and upheaval. Immediately after he died in 1813, the Tulama rose just as they did previously and stormed aAttegafin, Dabra Berhan and Qundi.

Likewise, while Bakkurye, the son and heir of Wassan Sagad tried to return to Qundi from Marhebeta, the people of Jirruu obstructed the way and compelled him to fight against them for almost a week. As a result of the delay of Bakkurye, his younger brother Sahla Sellase ascended the throne of his father.<sup>624</sup> The next two chapters will, therefore, be devoted to the developments which took place during the reign of Sahla Sellase (1813-1847), one of the most illustrious rulers of Shawa.

In this chapter, we have tried to shed some light on how the Shawan rulers of Nagasi steadily encroached on the Oromo territories until the beginning of the nineteenth century. We have also seen, notwithstanding the long-held popular view, which characterizes Manz as the heartland of the kingdom, sources at our disposal verify that right from the very beginning, the geopolitical centre of the Nagasi dynasty was not Manz proper. Rather, the adjoining districts inhabited by the Karrayyuu, where the capitals of the kingdom, were founded, namely Ayne, Doqaqit, Har Amba, and Ankobar and the Argobbaa territories, to a lesser extent, also served as the nucleus of the budding dynasty. It is fascinating that the

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<sup>624</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp.530-33: Heruy, *Ya Itiophiya Tarik*, p. 23; Abir, p. 152; Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee", pp. 47-48.

notables of Manz, like the renowned Gera, were little affected during the initial phase and even maintained their autonomy right up to the time of Sahla Sellase, as we shall explore in the following chapter.

We have also seen that after the Karrayyuu Oromo were subjugated; it was the turn of the Tulama, especially the Abichu to be the first to face the onslaught of the sovereigns of Shawa. Perhaps the Shawans started to attack the Tulama during the time of Abeye (1718-43), but it was during the period of his son and successor, Amha Iyasus (1743-1774), that the Shawans' assault against the Tulama began in earnest. Yet even during Amha Iyasus, the Shawans' attack was limited mainly to the area between Ankobar and Dabra Berhan. Even by the end of the period under discussion ca. 1800, the Shawan's conquest was confined to the area around this locality, although some claim that it stretched as far south as the Chacha River. Hence, the majority of the Tulama were not yet affected by the Shawan conquest, but those who were found in the aforementioned areas were annihilated, displaced, and of course, also started to be integrated into the Christian Amhara community, which has been manifested by the continuous use of the Amharic language at the expense of Afaan Oromo which was also accompanied by Christianization predominantly in the areas found north of the Chacha river.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE TULAMA AND THE KINGDOM SHAWA DURING THE REIGN OF SAHLA SELLASE (1813-1840S)

The struggle between the kingdom of Shawa and the Oromo people is one of the most interesting but unexamined historical episodes in the making of the Ethiopian empire state.<sup>625</sup>

In the preceding chapter, we have unravelled the relations between the Tulama and the Kingdom of Shawa starting from ca. 1700 to 1800 shedding some light on how the burgeoning kingdom steadily made encroachments towards the Karrayyuu, Argobba, the Amhara principalities and the Tulama territories. Moreover, we have also tried to uncover that the founders of the Kingdom and the prominent notables of the principality of Manz, who played a preponderant role in the genesis, expansion and consolidation of the kingdom had diverse backgrounds.<sup>626</sup> Some of them had either maternal or paternal Oromo descents and renowned kings like Sahla Sellase spoke Afaan Oromo well,<sup>627</sup> although the...kingdom officially, according to Svein Ege, 'belonged to the Abyssinian cultural sphere characterized by the Semitic language and the Coptic religion'.<sup>628</sup>

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<sup>625</sup> Mekuria, *Contours*, P. 283.

<sup>626</sup> However, Scholars like Mekuria, *Contours*, p. 283 perhaps refute this conjecture and state that "The nineteenth century conquest was initiated and carried out by Amhara communities that emerged and coalesced into a polity ruled by a succession of warlords. The communities were constituted by descendants of pre-sixteen century Amhara settlers"

<sup>627</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 199.

<sup>628</sup> Ege, p. 1. He indicates that the Term Abyssinia refers to the Amhara, Tigre and Agaw societies.

Furthermore, even the Oromo influence in various provinces of north-central Ethiopia was not doubtful, especially in provinces like Wallo and even Gojjam not to speak of the Warra Sheh, Yajju dynasty, who were kingmakers in Gondar at the time. In this regard, Dr Charles Tilstone Beke, the renowned British philologist and traveller indicates that most of the provincial rulers of “Abessinia being of [Oromo] extraction, the two people may in the present day be considered as one. In fact, in the event of a national rising, the greater portion of the fighting men would unquestionably be [Oromo] or their immediate descendants.”<sup>629</sup>

Similarly, the population of the kingdom was not homogeneous as often perceived; at least three ethnolinguistic groups, namely the Amhara, the Argobba and the Oromo were among its principal inhabitants right from the time of its inception. The boundary among these ethnolinguistic groups is very much fluid and it is unwise to refute the pervasiveness of the Oromo-Amhara and Argobba cultural hybridism in areas like Jerru, Bulga, Menjar Yifat, Borana of Wallo, among others, despite the European travellers' prejudiced observation which regarded the Oromo and the Amhara formidable enemies.<sup>630</sup>

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<sup>629</sup>Charles Tilstone Beke, *Letters on the Commerce and Politics of Abessinia and Other Parts of Eastern Africa, Addressed to the Foreign Office and the Board of Trade*, 3 vols. (London: 1852), vol. 1, P. 35 cited in Brian J. Yates, “Acculturation in the Däga: Local Negotiations in Amhara/Oromo Relations” in *International Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 91 . / <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41757593>, accessed: 22/01/2015 11:42/

<sup>630</sup> Harris, vol. III, pp. 248, 257; Ege, pp.66-67. As Ege clearly indicates the Europeans view was influenced by the information they got from their hosts, for instance Harris , who had not been to Arsi territory Characterised them as ‘a tribe distinguished for surpassing ferocity, being declared the bitter, blood-thirsty enemy of every Christian and [Muslim]; see Yemiamrew, pp. 1-2 for an excellent discussion pertaining to the cultural hybridity in the Borana of Wallo, the northernmost

Moreover, although the interaction between the Oromo and the kingdom of Shawa by this time was dominated by warfare, there were ample instances of peaceful interaction. One of the quintessential examples is the Bolloo Warqee market located near the town of Dabra Berhan. In 1840 Krapf unravells that Bolloo Warqee-

*---One of the most celebrated markets is held on Saturday. It is particularly suitable for buying horses, donkeys, cattle, and grain, these articles being supplied in abundance by the [Oromo] tribes in the neighbourhood of Angollala. But money in coin is not much used in this market, as the [Oromo]; being content with barter, or at least salt-pieces, which pass as money, still have a great aversion to silver money. A dollar at Bollo Workie is exchanged for sixteen or eighteen pieces of salt; and consequently for a few pieces less than at the market of Alio Amba in the east of Ankobar. The King receives considerable sums from the duties paid on articles at the market of Bollo Workie. Each article is charged according to its value; as, for instance, he who buys a horse, has to pay half a piece of salt to the King.<sup>631</sup>*

There was also a considerable number of Oromo at Ankobar, the capital of Shawa, who spoke the Amharic language badly. To use Harris's words, "The pagan [Oromo], of whom there are many in Ankober, lifting their voices, joined in the general petition, and, from not comprehending the Amharic tongue, placed upon it the most absurd construction."<sup>632</sup> The population of Ankobar was not homogenous. Different languages, especially Afaan Oromo and the Argobba languages, were also used side by side with Amharic. The king of Shawa, Sahla

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splinter group of Tulama; see also Yates, "Acculturation in the Daga", p. 92 who also indicates "In Ethiopian royal chronicles and travel narratives the boundaries between the Hābāsha (lit. mixed people) and "Galla" (outsider's name for the Oromo) ethnic categories is not fluid and is generally constant throughout the empire for centuries". Yates further indicates that at the same time, Wallo and Shawa as provinces "infected by the permanent "stain" of the [Oromo].

<sup>631</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 274-75; see also Harris Vol. II, p. 49, who indicates that it was the extensive marketplace for horses, mules and woolen Cloths which, with, grain, asses and horned cattle are brought by the neighbouring Oromo.

<sup>632</sup> Harris, vol. II, p. 266.

Sellase, was a proficient Afaan Oromo speaker.<sup>633</sup> Individuals of diverse backgrounds assumed key positions in the kingdom. The quintessential examples in the early 1840s were, *Ato Berri* and *Ato Melko*, who were characterized as “the Quarter-Master General of the royal troops, was originally a Muslim pedlar” and “the commander of the cavalry division of the bodyguard was the son of a petty [Oromo] chieftain who was for a long time a sworn enemy of the Shewan ruler,”<sup>634</sup> respectively.

The term ethnicity in Shawa, therefore, should be seen loosely as referring to the difference in language, religion and social organization. There is no doubt the Oromo have had their language, social organization and faith. Again since the Shawans gradually encroached on the Oromo territory, “there was considerable conflict between the Amhara and the Oromo. However, membership in the ethnic group was not permanent, and there was a considerable change from Oromo to Amhara as the Shawan state expanded”, writes Ege. “Oromo adopted the religion and the language of the Amhara, and after some time ended up describing themselves as Amhara.... The Oromo may have been the most numerous, but the Amhara were the dominant element.”<sup>635</sup>

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<sup>633</sup> See McCann, *people of the Plow*, p. 113, where it is stated that the population of Ankobar in the nineteenth century was diverse, but within a century ‘the Oromo had assimilated or been pushed out, and the distinctive Argobba culture had largely disappeared with its unique language’ – has been one of the endangered languages in the country or ‘within a decade of extinction’.

<sup>634</sup> Darkwah, p. 185.

<sup>635</sup> Ege, p. 40.

Meanwhile, the reign of Sahla Sellase (1813-1847) witnessed the continuation of the processes started by Nagasi and his successors, that is encroachment and expansion towards the Oromo inhabited territories, the assimilation of the Oromo notables as well as the masses who settled in the districts bordering the Amharic speakers. Hence it was in this way that the Oromo, who inhabited the north of the Chacha River, came to be an integral part of the kingdom. Meanwhile, Sahla Sellase's reign marked the beginning of new development as a result of the rapid increment of the areas which came to be the tributary of the kingdom, albeit sporadically. To express it in other words, the relations between the kingdom of Shawa and the Tulama from the time ascendancy of Nagassi until the end of the reign of Wassan Sagad were punctuated by the annexation of the Shawan Oromo territory either by expelling, extermination or assimilation of the Oromo and settling the Amhara peasants.<sup>636</sup> The territorial expansion by this time was mainly confined to the areas closer to the heartland of the Kingdom.

However, the intensity and the degree of military campaigns against the Tulama during the time of Sahla of Sellase were unprecedented and even eclipsed the campaigns made by his famous grandson, Menilek II, in the second half of the

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<sup>636</sup> Although we have tried to see above, scholars like Ege indicate that opting for Oromo chiefs as administrators within the kingdom dates back to the time of Asfa Wassan, and others like Darkawh trace it to the time of Wassan Sagad. The project started to be implemented extensively during the time of Sahla Sellassie. Rather up to this time, what we have observed is the assimilation of the Oromo notables into the dominant Amhara culture, of course starting from the time of Nagasi Krestos, who had had an Oromo background. See, for instance, Harris vol II, p. 150, where he states how a certain Oromo notable name *Ato QWadi* was brought up in court and came to hold offices during three rulers of Shawa that is during Asfa Wassan, Wassan Sagad, and Sahla Sellase. He states he was a distinguished Oromo governor of Angolala, who had an estate in the district of Dobba..

nineteenth century<sup>637</sup>. For instance, in 1840, by citing a Shawan informant Known as *Alaqa Asrat*, who was a royal confessor, Ludwig Krapf indicates, "... the [Oromos], who were formerly superior to the Abyssinians, have at present been weakened as far as Maitsha [Macha] by the heroic virtue of Sahela Selassieh."<sup>638</sup> Hence, during the time of Sahla Sellase, the process of consolidating the Shawan Amhara hegemony upon the Shawan Oromo got a great impetus and momentum.

The reign of Sahla Sellase also marked the culmination, if not the beginning, of the use of pragmatic and wise policies of the alliance, political marriage, and diplomacy to administer and collect tribute from the Tulama.<sup>639</sup> In this regard, M. Abir indicates, although the previous rulers of the kingdom of Shawa frequently annihilated the Oromo and swapped them with Amhara colonists, "Sahle Selassie enthusiastically took up the realistic policy of Wossen Seged of complete tolerance of Islam, and of Amharizing, Christianizing and integrating his [Oromo] subjects within the kingdom."<sup>640</sup> Therefore, the chapter will help us to explore further the intricate and complex relations between the burgeoning indigenous

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<sup>637</sup> Tekalign, p. 64, indicates that Sahla Sellase's reign witnessed the highest point of military confrontations between the Oromo and the Amahra in Shawa.

<sup>638</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 235.

<sup>639</sup> Volker Stitz "The Amhara Resettlement", p.80.;Bairu, *Asma Gyoris and His Works*, pp. 534-55; Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee,"P. 47. This period, according to Stitz, marked the beginning of the super-imposition of Amhara overlords over the Oromo. However, this is not the case in most cases Sahla Sellase mainly made an alliance and appointed Oromo notables as administrators in predominantly Oromo speaking localities.

<sup>640</sup> Abir, *Era of the Princes*, p. 164



African kingdom and the Oromo. The empirical data at our disposal unequivocally indicate that their interaction had been punctuated by warfare, resistance, collaboration, and economic and cultural intercourse, although unfortunately most of the sources give much emphasis to the former. As a result, we have also been compelled to devote much space to the former for plausible reasons.

Sahla Sellase, the son of Wassan Sagad, the direct successor of Nagasi Kresstos on his father's side, was just about eighteen years old<sup>641</sup> when he came to power. While on his mother's side he was a descendant of Gera of Manz. The mother of the King was Zanaba Warq, who was the daughter of Wolansa, who in turn was the daughter of the famous Gole, the grandson of Gera.

Hence the descent of his maternal line goes as follows: Sahla Sellase- Zanaba Waraq—Wolansa-- Gole--- Kedami—Hiskias---Gera. She was said to have been the governor of half of Shawa during the time of Sahla Sellase and most popular among the Manzians, who knew little about Sahla Sellase. To use Krapf's words, "She is a native of the province of Mans and is the daughter of one of the former independent rulers of that county. On this account, the Mansians are more attached to her than to the King himself, whom they scarcely know and

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<sup>641</sup>Harris, vol.III, p. 37, however, indicates that when he acceded to the throne Sahla Sellase was scarcely numbered twelve years whereas Asma Gyorgis indicates that he was eighteen.

acknowledge”.<sup>642</sup> Similarly, Harris also indicates that Zanaba Warq considered Manz as her hereditary fief and the people of Manz also had a special affection for her, ‘although, as regards their allegiance to the crown, they still retain a large share of their ancient independence’.<sup>643</sup>

Meanwhile, the beginning of the reign of Sahla Sellase was attended by insurrections and revolts, like the previous times in Shawa, where the death of a king was often followed by insurrections. Hence, he devoted much of his time and energy, at least during the first couple of decades of his reign, to protect his kingdom from the insurgent neighbouring Tulama and to reincorporating the Amhara principalities of Marhabete and Morat, who reasserted their independence after the death of his father. The uprising of the Oromo at this juncture was recorded by one of the leading Shawan writers, Asma Gyoris , who indicates that following the death of Wassan Sagad, the Oromo once again rebelled and scorched Attegefain, Dabra Berhan and Qunndi.<sup>644</sup> The insurrection of

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<sup>642</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 299; Harris Vol. II, p.348 ; Sergew, “Dagmawi ’, P. 62

<sup>643</sup> Harris, vol. II, p. 348. Harris further indicates the people of Manz knew little about Sahla Sellase and did not swear in his name and even depose the administrators he assigned. “Haughty, brave, obstinate, and quarrelsome, they openly avow to have little knowledge of Sahela Selassie—never swear by his name, as is the usage of His Majesty's more dutiful and loyal subjects— often depose the governors whom he appoints to rule over them—and refuse to take part in the annual raids over the southern border, upon the grounds that they have quite sufficient occupation in the adjustment of intestine feuds and boundary disputes. ”; Harris, vol.III, p. 29, indicates Zanabawarq ruled over the northwest Shawa or in reality over half of the kingdom and she was ‘Judge in her own dominions, her decisions nevertheless lie under appeal to the throne; and even as Queen-dowager, she is debarred participation in certain privileges which form the exclusive prerogatives of her son, over whose mind she exerts an influence compared by the people of Shoa to that which they believe the holy Virgin to exercise over the Redeemers’

<sup>644</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 530-31.; see also Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 25, who almost recorded a similar story. የራስ ወሰን ሰገድ ሞት በየአዉራጃዉ በተሰማ ጊዜ ሴራ ሆኖ የነበረዉ

the Oromo and the reassertion of independence by the Morat and Marhabete hereditary rulers vividly indicate that the newly incorporated areas were not yet fully integrated into the kingdom of Shawa. Therefore, one of the most pressing issues that Sahla Sellase should address when he came to power was reincorporating the western Amhara principalities of Morat and Marhabete, and defeating the defiant Oromo, who put in danger the newly established seats of the Kingdom, Dabra Berhan and Qundi.

However, restoring peace and tranquillity took some time and seems to have been realized after Sahla Sellase had got firearms from Gondar, Tigre and imported some through the port of Tajura. Moreover, individual European travellers gave guns as presents to Sahla Sellase, the British and the French envoys led by Major Cornwallis Harris and Rochet d'Hericourt, respectively, brought a large stock of guns to Shawa. For instance, Harris brought 300 muskets, 100 pistols, 2 cannons, 50 pounds of gunpowder, 5,000 percussion caps, and 1 detonating double-barreled gun, whereas Rochet's gift consisted of 2 cannons of 4 mountains each, 50 cannonballs, 100 shotguns, 50 pistols, 100 broadswords, 5 cuirasses, 2 carbines for light infantry, and 5 muskets, together with their accessories.<sup>645</sup>

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/ኦሮሞ/ እንደገና ተነስቶ ደብረ ሊባኖስን ደብረ ብርሃንን ከዚያም እስከ ቁንዲ ያለውን አገር በእሳት አቃጠለው። (The Oromo who were pacified rose again when they heard the death of *Ras Wassan Sagad* and burnt Dabra Libanos, and Dabra Berhan up to Qundi) .

<sup>645</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 344; Darkwah, p. 199.

In this regard, Sergew aptly indicates that what enabled Sahla Sellase to score victories over his adversaries was his 'superiority in manpower and armaments (የሰዉ ኃይልና የመሣሪያ ብልጫ ነበረ).<sup>646</sup> Moreover, Harris indicates that during one of the campaigns that was made in the direction of Gara Gorfoo, 'the imperial force had about two hundred musqueteers with bayonets fixed; every individual was equipped with spear, sword, and buckler.<sup>647</sup> On the other hand, the weapons used by the Oromo in the 1840s were 'a spear, sword, and shield.<sup>648</sup> Therefore, it is safe to argue that Sahla Sellase's procurement of additional weaponry from Europe was among the factors for the shift of the balance of power on the Shawan plateau or paved the way for the prevalence of asymmetrical power relations and abetted him to carry out the territorial expansion to a higher degree than his predecessors.

However, we should be cautious not to exaggerate the contributions of armaments at this juncture since most of the soldiers of Sahla Sellase were horsemen mainly armed with lances, a shield and a sword-like their Oromo counterparts. Musketeers formed a small segment of the total combatants and most of them served as escorts of the king.<sup>649</sup>

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<sup>646</sup> Sergew, Dagmawi Menilek, p. 86.

<sup>647</sup> Harris, Vol. II, P. 160; vol. III, P. 46.

<sup>648</sup> Krapf, p. 62.

<sup>649</sup> Ege, pp. 203, 207; Darkwah, p. 116, 181-82; Johnston, vol. II, p. 75 . Sahla Sellase's core troops are estimated to be about six hundred to a thousand.

Perhaps, it was not only by gun power but by diplomacy and friendship that Sahla Sellase was able to win over some of the Oromo notables. In this regard, Asma Gyoris succinctly indicates that ሣህለሥላሴ ንጉስ ተባሉ ብቻ አሮሞ አልተገዛላቸዉም።በወዳጅነት በጋብቻ በፖለቲካ ይገዙ ነበር<sup>650</sup>:: (Sahla Sellase was crowned as Negus [of Oromo also] but Oromo did not submit to him. Rather he governed them through friendship, intermarriage and alliance). Similarly, Sahla Sellase also used force and diplomacy to control the areas under the supervision of neighbouring chiefs.<sup>651</sup> In this regard, Harris corroborates, “he was enabled to quell many successive insurrections, and for many years was fortunate in the fidelity of the lion-hearted Medoko [Matakkoo], who was even more feared than himself by the surrounding Gentiles”<sup>652</sup> Yet Harris indicates, Sahla Sellase was also feared and respected by all the adjacent people, whereas he is commonly venerated in Shawa through love than through fear..<sup>653</sup> Furthermore, not only the Oromo areas but also the western Amhara principalities of Moart and Marhabete were also reincorporated by force, diplomacy and political marriage.

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<sup>650</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyoris and His Works*, pp. 534-35.

<sup>651</sup> Harris, vol. III, pp. 40, 42, indicates that he relied more upon political marriages than upon the force of arms.

<sup>652</sup> Harris, vol.III, p.37.

<sup>653</sup> Harris, vol. III, pp.20, 27, 30-31, pertaining to the character of the king, Harris indicates, 'A MORE singular contrast of good and evil was perhaps never presented than in the person and administration of the Christian despot. Avarice, suspicion, caprice, duplicity, and superstition, appear to form the basis of his chequered character, and his every act exhibits a proportion of meanness and selfishness, linked with a desire to appear munificent'. Moreover, Harris characterize the negus as follows: Weak, and at the same time cunning — suspicious of every one, and placing not the smallest confidence in any of his functionaries — he sometimes precipitates them from affluence into a dungeon, when they believe themselves in the enjoyment of the largest share of favour”.

Sahla Sellase managed to reincorporate the Amhara principalities of Morat and Marhabete; however, the process was arduous and took some time. As Harris recorded, he initially “vanquished King Hailoo [Hailu], who still asserted his dignity in Morat”.<sup>654</sup> It seems that Hailu of Morat, submitted to Sahla Sellase after a bloody war since one of the expanses in Morat, Zena Markos, which was devastated as a result of the war made between Sahla Sellase and Hailu was reported to be still a waste even in 1840.<sup>655</sup> Moreover, in May 1840 Krapf indicates that he went through a district that was desolate as a result of the war fought between Asfa Wassan and the people of Morat and Marhabete.<sup>656</sup> It seems that it was a political marriage that finally sealed the integration of Morat into the kingdom of Shawa. Sergew Hable Sellase explains the repercussions of the rebellion of Morat and the process of its reincorporation into the Kingdom as follows:

በብጥብጡ ጊዜ ከአመፁት የአማራ አገሮች አንዱ ሞረት ነበረ። ይህ አገር ቀደም ሲል በወሰን ሰገድ ዘመን ተሸንፎ እንደገበረ ቀደም ብለን በወቅቱ ገልጸናል። ከወንድ ወሰን[sic] ሞት በኋላ በተፈጠረ ብጥብጥ በመጠቀም አፈነገጠ ። የሴራው ቀንደኛ ኃይሉ የተባለ የጥዱ ልጅ ነበረ። ሳህላ ሥላሴ ለዚህ ዘመቻ ቅድሚያ ሰጥቶት ነበረ። ምክንያቱም የዚህ አገር ማመፅ እንደገና ለደብረ ሊባኖስ መመዝበር ምክንያት ስለሆነ። ሞረት ማመዱ በኦሮሞዎቹ ዘንድ በተሰማ ጊዜ ደብረ ሊባኖስን ወርረው ከመነኮሳት ብዙዎችን ገደሉ። አስፋወሰን ያሠራውንም ቤተ ክርስቲያን አቃጠሉ። ያመለጡት ጥቅት መነኮሳት ጽላቱንና ከንዋየ ቅድሳት የቻሉትን ያህል ይዘው እንደገና ወደ ቆላው የኦሮሞ ፈረሰኛ ከማደርስበት ተሠደዱ። ይህ ሳህላ ሥላሴን ስለአስቆጣው ዘመቻውን ወደዚያ አሠማራ ። የአደረገው ዘመቻ ግቡን መትቶአል። ሞረትን አንድ አካል አንድ አምሳል ለማድረግና ዳግመኛ ከእንደዚህ አይነት አድራጎች እንዲታቀብ ለማድረግ በጋብቻ መተሳሰሩ ስለምጠቅም የባላባቱን የኃይሉን ሴት ልጅ ወይዘሮ በዘብሽን አገባ።<sup>657</sup>

<sup>654</sup> Harris Vol. III, p.37.

<sup>655</sup> Ege, p. 32; Abir, pp. 52-53.

<sup>656</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, P, 246

<sup>657</sup> Sergew, “ Dagmawi Menilek”, pp.89-90; Harris, vol. III, pp. 12,16, indicates that ‘at Debra Libanos alone there fell no fewer than eight hundred victims to private animosity, of whose murder no account was ever taken.’ Meanwhile, Isenberg and Krapf indicate that Bezabesh was the

*Morat was one of the Amhara principalities where uprisings took place during the turmoil. As we have indicated earlier, this principality was defeated and became tributary during Wassan Sagad. It ceased to pay tribute after the death of Wand Wassan [sic Wassan Sagad]. The architect of the upsurge of Morat was the son of Tiddu called Hailu. Sahla Sellase gave priority to this campaign. This is because the rebellion of this principality became the cause for the re-embezzlement of Dabra Libanos. When the Oromos heard the rebellion of Morat, they ransacked Dabra Libanos and killed most of the priests. They burned the church built by Asfa Wassan. However, few priests were able to escape again to the lowland area where the Oromo cavalry could not reach, taking the ark and some of the sacred objects. This infuriated Sahla Sellase, and he ordered his forces to make a campaign in the locality. The campaign he had made became successful. To make Morat an integral part of the kingdom and to make the principality not rebel again, he devised a marriage alliance; as a result, he married Mrs Bezabesh, the daughter of Hailu, the balabbat of Morat.*

Meanwhile, sometime after the revolt of the Morat was quelled, an uprising also took place in the neighbouring Amhara principality of Marhabete. It is said that when a certain Mr Tegenu was the administrator of the locality, they paid tribute to the kingdom of Shawa. After the death of Mr Tegenu, the people of Marhabete rose and rebelled against Sahla Sellase and killed his troops who were stationed there. As a result, lawlessness became the order of the day in both Lay Bet and Tach Bet parts of Marhabete as the following couplet indicates:

የላይ ቤት የታች ቤት ነበርኩ ተገኝ The authority of Tegen is felt both in Lay Bet and Tach Bet  
ካልሌደ ካልሞተ ሰው አይመሰገን።<sup>658</sup> A person is often acknowledged when he goes to  
another area or dies.

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daughter of Dajan of Morat, see Isenberg and Krapf, p. 300; see also Ege, p. 32, who agrees with Isenberg and Krapf. However, *Heruy, Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 83, indicates she was the descendant of the ruling families of Marhabete and Morat, Waldu and Tiddu, respectively.

<sup>658</sup> Sergew, “Dagmawi Menilek”, pp.89-90

As a result, Sahla Sellase determined to avenge the persecution of his troops and sent an expeditionary force recruited from Morat and Yifat to Marhabete. The following couplet sarcastically elaborates how the rebellion of Marhabete was quelled by this expeditionary force.

አወይ መርሐቤተ ሁለት ዕዳ ከፋይ    Oh people of Marhabete, who are indebted to two parties  
ይፋቶችን በጥፊ ሞረቶችን በክፋይ<sup>659</sup> For the Yifat's by fist and for the Moret's by material

In this manner, the western Amhara principalities were integrated into the kingdom of Shawa during the time of Sahla Sellase. Perhaps, after Sahla Sellase managed to reintegrate these principalities, he redirected the military campaigns towards the adjoining Oromo territories. Therefore, in the following sections, we will explore the factors that necessitated the Shawan Kingdom's unprecedented military expeditions against the Tulama, the nature of the expeditions and the areas affected by the expeditions.

## **An Overview of Sahla Sellase's Territorial Expansion**

The first Oromo *gosa* to bear the brunt of Sahla Sellase's military expedition, according to Sergew Hable Sellase, was the famous Galan subgroup of the Tulama. During this campaign, Sergew indicates, the Shawans was boasted of their superiority as follows:

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<sup>659</sup> Ibid.



## Amharic

## Gloss

ዲና ተነሥቶ ከጎገላላ ላይ	Dina has started Campaign from Angolala
ሸኖ ማራኪ ገርማማ ገዳይ	Subjugated Shano and annihilated Garmama
ዲና ቢነሣ ከመኃል ጩጩ	When Dina Starts campaign from the centre of Chacha
ገብሮ አደረ እስከ ወጩጩ <sup>660</sup>	All the territories up to Wachaha paid tribute.

Perhaps the above verse was composed sometime after Sahla Sellase had consolidated his grip on power in Shawa and was able to weather the wave of the Abichu Oromo upsurge that erupted after the death of his father. For instance, in 1840, Krapf indicates that the locality around the town of Dabra Berhan was conquered and subjugated by Wassan Saggad during the time of Sahal Sellase.<sup>661</sup> When this couplet was composed, therefore, Sahla Sellase was able to push the boundary of his kingdom up to Angolala and the Chacha River.<sup>662</sup>

<sup>660</sup> Ibid, Shano is a town located on the road from Addis to Dabra Berhan whereas Wachacha is one of the mountain chains around the present-day city of Addis Ababa. All these localities are found between the Chacha river and Finfinne. Dina was the name of Sahla Sellase's horse and the king was often nicknamed Abbaa Diina, which literally meant father of Diina.

<sup>661</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 274; see Ege, p. 191, indicates that the rebellion and disturbance which unfolded in Shawa following the death of Wassan Sagad became under control by 1830.

<sup>662</sup> Krapf, p. 25; See also Harris, vol II, p. 98; see also C.T. Beke, "A Diary written During a Journey in Abessinia in the years 1840, 1841, 1842 and 1843' Vol. I (ADD30,250A ), p.359, It is important to notice here, the Chacha river between Angolala and the village of Cherkos was known as *ka'alla* Chacha (which in Afaan Oromo means small Chacha). The Oromo term qal'aa is equivalent to thin and therefore this must have been one of the tributaries of the Chacha river. It is said that the Chacha river originates from highlands of Bulga and flows towards the northwest forming a deep glen and near Kum Dengai joins with the Beresa and some other rivers and forms the Adabay, which in turn at last under the name of the Jamma, one of the major tributaries of the Blue Nile. Perhaps, according to Krapf by that time, these rivers, namely, the Chacha, Adabay and Jamma, formed 'a natural dike against the incursions' of the Oromo. It is said that the term Adabai itself originated from Afaan Oromo term which means to divide or bifurcate, the Jirruu Oromo used to live in this locality.

On the other hand, Angolala christened the emerging capital of Shawa, which was established in a strategically important area where the Chacha River afforded an extraordinary natural fortification to it. Angolala was “the great outpost of defence to the upper pass into the Christian land. Three small hills which rise abruptly from the verdant plain, and enclose a circular area, had been judiciously selected as a site by the wary founder,” writes Harris, “but the settlement was at this date in all the disorder of infancy.”<sup>663</sup>

Hence, the above meticulous explanation of the geographical setting of the then-emerging capital of Shawa helps us to discern why Sahla Sellase founded his capital in that locality. It was, of course, one of the earliest strategically important garrison towns to be established in the previously Oromo inhabited territories perhaps after Ankobar and Qundi. However, despite its strategic location, Angolala itself was not impenetrable and safe from the Oromo cavalry’s assault. As a result, Harris indicates, the Shawans were forced to build, “an extensive barrier of loose stones hastily thrown up...fortifies the south-eastern environs of Angolala; and although confessedly inferior to the wall of China, it is calculated to offer temporary opposition to horsemen who are no Nimrods.”<sup>664</sup>

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<sup>663</sup> Harris Vol II, pp. 98, 127.

<sup>664</sup> Harris, Vol. II, pp. 153, 167. Probably this one was the one dubbed as an Oromo Wall by Harris.

Similarly, Krapf indicates that Angolala was founded at a point where the Oromos might otherwise have been able to break in.<sup>665</sup> It is, therefore, not by coincidence that one of our key informants claims that the term Angolala itself is derived from Oromo word and it is a contract form of two terms 'aangoo and loola , which means 'power of war' and, he claims, it epitomizes the resounding victory that the Shawans scored over the Tulama or the defeat of the Oromo by the force of the Shawans..<sup>666</sup>

Undoubtedly, Angolala was founded in the area predominantly inhabited by the Tulama, specifically in the territory of the famous Abichu gosa as its official appellation the "Oromo Capital of Shoa' purports. Interestingly, Sahla Sellase's regal designation was also 'negus of Efat, Shawa and Oromo'.<sup>667</sup> Harris further

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<sup>665</sup>Harris Vol II, pp. 98, 127; Isenberg and Krapf, p. 242, indicate, "This morning we passed the Tshatsha river, which separates the Christians and [Oromo] in a north-north-westerly direction for the distance of several days' journey. This river flows through a deep dale between two hills, which prevents the passage on the side of the Christians as well as of the [Oromos]. This natural obstacle may be the reason why the [Oromo] were formerly unable to destroy the whole Christian kingdom of Shoa, and why the King has built Angollala in the neighbourhood of the passage of this river, as he has thus the key to the [Oromo] countries in the south and west of Shoa".

<sup>666</sup> Informants: Wolde Yohannes Workneh (Addis Ababa, October 5, 2018) on the other hand it seems that it might have also derived from the Amharic term Angwalala, which means to purify, cleanse or separate the seed from layers. In this case, it might also signify Sahla Sellase's victory.

<sup>667</sup> However according to Sergew, Dagmawi Menilek, p. 120, on the letter Sahla Sellase sent to Queen Victoria, used the title, "ሣህለ ሥላሴ ንጉሴ ሸዋ የጉራጌ የጋላ የሸንቅላ ያዳል የከረዩ የይቱ የወሎ የረመኔ የክርስቲያን የሁሉ ንጉሥ "(Sahla Sellase King of Shawa, Gurage, [Oromo], Shankila [sic], Adal, Karrayyuu, Ituu, Wallo, Pagan[sic], Christian King of all). This one is perhaps an over-exaggeration of the territories under the influence of Sahla Sellase, according to Harris, vol. III, p. 28, the regions which were subject to the king by that time ( ca. 1840) were "comprised in a rectangular domain of one hundred and fifty by ninety miles, which area is traversed by five systems of mountains, whereof the culminating point divides the basin of the Nile from that of the Hawash. The Christian population of Shoa and Efat are estimated at one million souls and that of the [Muslim] and Pagan population of the numerous dependencies at a million and a half". From Harris's description, we may discern that the area around Gara Gorfoo or perhaps Entoto Mountain was the maximum limit of the kingdom in the South. Perhaps as we have seen the area

indicates, Angolala was “ ...founded ten years since by the reigning monarch, is now the capital of the western portion of Shoa, and during the greater part of the year it forms His Majesty's favourite place of residence’.<sup>668</sup> It seems that the Oromo influence in the town was still noticeable when Harris was at Angolala, and even he mentions that the governor of the town at that time was *Ato Wadi*, ‘the distinguished Oromo.’<sup>669</sup>

Similarly, there was a village known as Cherkos, which was not far from Angolala. It was said to have been located in a picturesque country, well cultivated, and decorated with trees hitherto inhabited by the Abichu, “but now Christians, and the peaceable subjects of the Negus. After a few miles from Cherkos, the road again approaches the ravine, at the bottom of which flows the Chacha; after which the district of Wayu is entered”, writes Beke “which is occupied by the tribe of Gelan [Oromo], now also subjected. There is now no visible difference between these

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beyond the Chacha river was not under the effective control of the king of Shawa as the European travellers including Harris himself witnessed time and again; Abir, *Ethiopia: Era of the Princes*, p. 153, indicates that Angolala was located in the heartland of Abichu Oromo.

<sup>668</sup> Harris, Vol. III, pp. 39, Harris, vol. II, p.393 cited the draft of the commercial relations to be signed between Shawa and Great Britain which goes as follows, “Done and concluded at Angolala, the [Oromo] capital of Shoa, in token whereof we have hereunto set our hand and seal,— Sahela Selassie, who is the Negoos of Shoa, Efat, and the [Oromo].” ; see also Krapf, pp. 21, 51 who indicates that Angolala was the second capital of Shawa, located in the immediate neighbourhood of the Oromo tribes. Moreover, he indicates that there is an Oromo village near Angolala at a distance of two miles; See also Isenberg and Krapf, p. 242, where it is stated that Afaan Oromo was spoken in the areas like Kum Denagay, where his Oromo translation assistance, Berke was born. It is found at the place where the Chacha, Beressa and other three rivers meet and form Adabay.

<sup>669</sup> Harris, vol. II, p. 149.

people and the Shoans, and very many of them speak Amharic.”<sup>670</sup> From the passage we may discern that the village of Cherkos itself was located in the territory of the Abichu Oromo and also very much nearer to the territory of the Galan Oromo. It seems that the Shawan influences have already begun in these localities as the inhabitants of the area started to speak Amharic and also became Christians.

Meanwhile, the campaign indicated in the aforementioned couplet cited by Sergew must have been conducted after the foundation of the town. As we have seen, this campaign is perceived as the earliest campaign to be made by Sahla Sellase in the Tulama territory that lies beyond the Chacha river. Hence, perhaps it was by this time that the king of Shawa was able to get the audacity to make campaigns deep into the heartland of the Tulama as far south as around the then Finfinnee and the present-day town of Addis Ababa as indicated in the cited verse. Hence, this perhaps manifested the beginning of Sahla Sellase’s wide-ranging campaigns against the Tulama nearly after three decades of interregnum. Apparently, before this time his campaigns were confined to the region north of the Chacha River even the area around Dabra Berhan itself seems to have been incorporated recently. “Bollo Workie, like Debra Berhan, was formerly in possession of the [Oromo];” write Isenberg and Krapf “and Tenna Kallo, the [Oromo] Chieftain of this district, is not yet forgotten by the Shoans, who well

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<sup>670</sup> Beke, p. 359

remember the number of their fathers who were killed by Tenna Kallo near Bollo Workie and Debra Berhan.”<sup>671</sup>

Similarly, Harris indicates that the area around Dabra Berhan was possessed by the Oromo during the ‘sire and grandsire’ of Sahla Sellase and the last renowned Oromo chief who administered the locality was Tenna Kaloo.<sup>672</sup> Therefore, from the above discussion we may discern that the area immediately east of the Chacha River where Angolala founded was recently incorporated into the kingdom during the time of Sahla Sellase and there is no doubt that *Afaan* Oromo continued to be spoken in this area.

Moreover, Beke enlightens us, in the districts like Wayu the Oromo *gosa* started to speak Amharic and several Oromo villages were converted to Christianity.<sup>673</sup> Similarly, a little bit to the South of the Salale side of the valley of the Jama river, around the headquarters of Abbaa Maallee, in 1841 Beke also indicates, “The people here are more [Oromo] than anything else, and that language is much spoken as Amharic, but the rising generation learn the latter language almost exclusively.”<sup>674</sup>

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<sup>671</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 276.

<sup>672</sup> Harris vol. II, p 48, to use his phraseology, “Debra Berhan was in the hands of the ... [Oromo]; Tenna Kaloo, the last daring chieftain who disputed its possession.”

<sup>673</sup> Ege, pp. 43-44

<sup>674</sup> Beke, p. 351.

At this juncture, it is imperative to dissect the pattern of settlement of the Tulama *gosa* who had lived in and on the fringes of the newly invigorated kingdom of Shawa by about the 1840s. In this regard, we are very much indebted to Svein Ege's erudition, who by painstakingly examining the diaries, memoirs, letters and accounts of European travellers and missionaries come up with the near-perfect pattern of settlement of the northern Tulama. His reflection on this issue is unparalleled to date and the oral tradition we have collected in recent years, as we have seen in chapter one, almost conforms to Ege's elucidation. For instance, the locality often known as Shawa Meda was occupied by the Jerru subgroup of the Tulama, who were bordered by the district of Ensarro and Morat to the south and north and also Galan territory to the south. The Galan, in turn, lived in the Wayu locality closer to the then capital of the kingdom, Angolala and extended westwards to the Gara Gorfoo hills, neighbouring the Jerru in the north, the Oborii in the west, and the Abichu in the south. The Abichu had previously inhabited the plains up to the Baressa River. However, during the period under discussion, their abode stretched south and westwards from Angolala, up to the Gara Gorfo hills and the Garmama River. The Jidda *gosa* was occasionally stated as located to the south of them, and often designated as the Serte and the Oromo inhabiting the left side of the Garmama River. The area between this river and Mt.

Bokan was populated by another *gosa* known as the Bokan Oromo, who might have been the Gombechu.<sup>675</sup>

We have little information about the Oromo *gosa*, who settled in the plains south and east of Mt. Bokan. There is no doubt that the famous Karrayyuu inhabited the eastern section of the mountain, around the Fantalle Mountain. Perhaps, one of the Torban Oboo splinter groups, the Gamu, also settled around Mt. Boset. But later on, as we have seen in unit one, it seems that other Oboo subgroups like the Yayyaa, Gullaallee and Diigaluu came to settle in the district of Boset. Yet, another unnamed Oromo *gosa* known as the Lume lived around the river of that name, perhaps they belong to the Obbo subgroup of Tulama.<sup>676</sup>

However, the Oromo subgroup who were found near Angolala and identified by Sergew as Galan were perhaps the Abichu since the contemporary travellers and missionaries in Shawa, Isenberg and Krapf, succinctly indicate were the Abichu *gosa*. They indicate, “the tribe of Abedtshoo [Abichu] has its seat in the neighbourhood of Angollala, from which place it is separated by the river

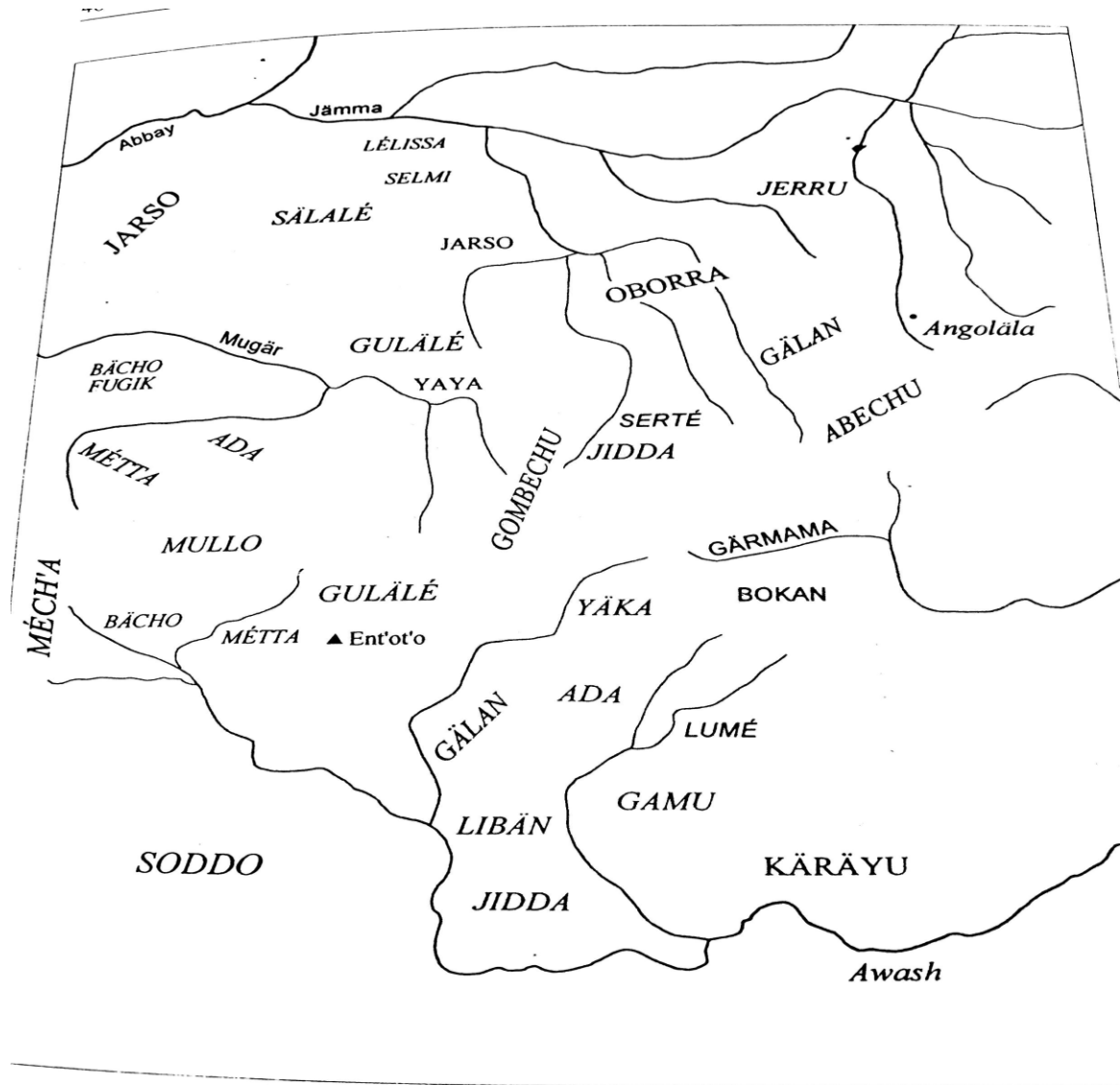
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<sup>675</sup> Ege, pp. 44-45; see also Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 193-94; Harris, vol. II, 182, 187, 217; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgi*, pp. 514-15, indicates Jerru and Wayyu were the sub-group of Jidda which in turn are classified under Galan.

<sup>676</sup> Ege, p. 47, 79, The Eekkaa which belong to the Torbaan Oboo were among the inhabitants of Lume; Informants: *Abbaa Gadaa* Babsa, Rooba Bunee, Shuraa Badhaada, Baqalaa Hawaas, Lama Tumsa Jiruu, Bokonaa, Cuuqalaa, Ifaa Taaliila ( Adama . 06 July 2017). These informants belong to the Gumbichuu and Gullaallee *gosa*.



Tshatsha [Chacha].<sup>677</sup> But what is not undeniable is the fact that according to tradition Abichu are categorized under Galan. Perhaps this might be the reason why Sergew identified them as Galan.



Map 9. The pattern of Settlement of Some of the Tulama gosa by about 1840s  
(adopted from Ege, p. 46)

<sup>677</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 61; see also Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 881, who indicates that Angoläta was founded by Sahla Sellase in the 1830s on the banks of the Chacha river.

Moreover, Sergew recorded that although Sahla Sellase had got the upper hand most of the time as a result of superiority in armament over the Tulama, this does not mean that there was no insurgence and upsurge against the kingdom at all. Even the nearby Oromo *gosa*, the Abichu and the Galan continued to rebel against the monarch and threaten the kingdom. The following verse allegedly composed by the royal singer (የንጉሡአዝማር) succinctly depicts this development.

Amharic

Gloss

አብቸና ገላን ምን ያጉመተምታል      *Why Abichu and Galan are gossiping;*

አሁን የኔ ጌታ በማሌት ይደርሳል<sup>678</sup>:: *My lord would soon reach Malet (to punish them), they would soon bow down to the king [Sahla Sellase].*

But as noticeably indicated by one of the most prolific Shawan historians, Heruy, Sahla Sellase exploited the internal division among the Tulama to his advantage, otherwise, according to Harris,<sup>679</sup> the fear of the [Oromo] is strong in the breast both of Christian and [Muslim].<sup>679</sup> Even he argues that the policy of divide and rule that the civilized world leaders implement in their colonies these days<sup>680</sup> was not new in view of this Sahla Sellase's machination. To use Heruy's words,

...በዙሪያቸው ያለው ጋላ ሴራ ከሆነ በኃላ እንደገና እየከዳ ያስቸግራቸው ነበርና ባመት ሰስት ጊዜ ይዘምቱ ነበር:: በኃላ ግን የአብቸና የገላን ጋሎች /አሮሞዎች/ ተጣልተው ጦርነት በጀመሩ ጊዜ ንጉስ ሣህለ ሥላሴ አብቸን ያቀፉና የወደዱ ዉስጥ ዉስጡን ለርሱ የረዱ እየመሰሉ እርስ በርሳቸው ያዋጋቸው ጀመር:: ሁለቱም ጎሣዎች ሰባት ዓመት ሙሉ ሲዋጉ ዘወትር አሸናፊው ገላን ነበር::በኃላ ግን ሣህለ ሥላሴ አብቸን በእዉነት ለመርዳት አስበዉ በተነሱ ጊዜ አብቸ አሸነፈና ገላን ድል ሆነ::

<sup>678</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Minilek*, p. 91. Malet is a place closer to the territory of Galan.

<sup>679</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 238.

<sup>680</sup> Apparently Heruy wrote his monograph when most of the African countries were the colonies of European powers.

የአብቸን አበጋዝነት ለተወለጁ ላቶ ሞረጭ ሰጡት። ከዚህ በኋላ በአብቸ ጉልበት ገላንን አዳን ወበረን ጅሩን ዋዩን ሰላሌን አድክመው ገባር አደረጉት<sup>681</sup>።

*Sahla Sellase used to make an expedition thrice a year against the neighbouring Oromo who refused to submit to him. Later when the Abichu and the Galan Oromo started to fight against each other, Negus Sahla Sellase backed the Abichu in order to disingenuously indicate that he embraced and loved them but in reality in order to weaken both the Abichu and the Galan. When these two clans battled for seven years the victors were the Galan. But when Sahla Sellase soberly started to back the Abichu, the Abichu won and the Galan was defeated. Then he made Marach the abagaz of Abichu. Henceforth with the power of Abichu, he weakened the Galan, Obori, Jirru, Wayu and Salale and made all of them tributaries.*

## **Irredentism or Booty: Motives of Sahla Sellase's Military Expeditions**

Before discussing the perennial military expedition of king Sahla Sellase against the Tulama, which unmistakably marked the highest point of confrontation between the Oromo and the Amhara in Shawa perhaps after the sixteenth century, it is imperative to dig deep into the purposes of the Shawan expeditions of the 1830s and early 1840s. One of the contemporary sources that we have in this regard is the one produced by the head of the British diplomatic mission to Shawa, Major Cornwallis Harris, who states:

*IN common with all other African potentates, Sahela Selassie never engages in war, induced either by public principles, by national glory, or, least of all, by the love of his people. Whilst the fear of rebellion and disturbance at home deters him from attempting on a grand scale to resume the lost possessions of his ancestors,*

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<sup>681</sup> Heruy, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 28; see also Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, PP.534-35, where an almost similar story is recorded. The cause of the war according to Asma Gyorgis was the killing of a dog of the Galan by the Abichu youth. Asma Gyorgis indicates that ይህ ጦርነት ለሣህለ ሥላሴ ታላቅ ደስታ ሆነ (This war has been of great interest to Sahla Sellase). This is because it was a golden opportunity to exploit the two powerful and renowned Tulama Oromo gosa since they would come out of the war very much weakened.

*to wield the sceptre as they did, three hundred miles south of his present limits, and to reunite the scattered remnants of the Christian population who once acknowledged their supremacy....revenge, the almost invariable success attending his arms, and the insatiable love of plunder inherent in the breast of every savage, impel him thrice a year to gather his undisciplined militia, in order to undertake sudden and sweeping inroads.*<sup>682</sup>

From the above exposition of Harris, we may discern that 'reconquering' the lost territories' and 'reuniting' the scattered Christian communities were not yet the prime objectives of Sahla Sellase's campaigns, although as indicated in the previous chapter his predecessors' territorial expansions were partly prompted by this irredentist ideology. Here, rather it is underlined that revenge and the desire to plunder the properties of the Tulama were the most important causes behind Sahla Sellase's military expedition. In the same vein Krapf also characterizes Sahla Sellase as a virtuous man who had lots of good qualities; 'but he was too much led away by the superstition of the priests, the narrow prejudices of his chiefs, the desire for personal enrichment, and the Oriental habit of accumulating dead treasures..<sup>683</sup> Harris also tells us the king knew the military expeditions he made against the Oromo were 'inhumane' and 'unchristian' but he justified the expeditions stating, "I am aware that it is bad, but in all countries, we must

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<sup>682</sup>Harris, vol.II, p. 163; See Sergew , *Dagmawi Menilek*,pp. 96-100, where the remnants of Christian communities and churches are discussed in detail .

<sup>683</sup> Krapf, p. 28; see also Harris, vol.III, p. 376, stated that the monarch was selfish and appropriated the lion's share of the spoils. By this time Harris also writes, the king invited them to escort him on his next campaign in January and vowed to build a fortified house at Karabarek (Karraa Barraak).

conform to the customs that prevail. The [Oromo] destroy the Amhara without discrimination, and we do but retaliate.”<sup>684</sup>

Although Harris always uses hyperbolic terms, he indicates that expeditions were also justified based on religious grounds. Especially the appalling annihilation of the inhabitants and the burning, looting and destruction of their properties, in particular, was justified based on the religious difference between the ostensibly Christian Shawans and non-Christian or “pagan’ neighbours. It seems there is a kernel of truth in this Harris’ argument, as the Holy Ark and the priests, including the emperor’s father confessor, blessed and escorted the expeditionary forces. Therefore, at least the expeditions were blessed by the religious leaders and had spiritual backing. Again to use Harris’s terms,

*The foe is a Pagan, who does not fast, nor kiss the church, nor wear a mateb [a cord around his or her neck] . All feelings of humanity are thrown to the winds; and a high reward in heaven is believed to await the King and the blood-thirsty soldier for the burning of the hamlet, the capture of the property, and the murder of the accursed Gentile. The words of absolution from the mouth of the Father Confessor usher in the ruthless slaughter; and the name of the Most High is wantonly employed to consecrate the ensuing scenes of savage atrocity.*<sup>685</sup>

Nevertheless, according to Edward Simone, the desire to ensure the steady flow of slaves and various commodities from the southwest as well as the insatiable need to loot cattle obliged King Sahla Sellase to conduct incessant military

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<sup>684</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 227.

<sup>685</sup> Harris, vol. III, pp. 375-76.

expeditions against the Tulama. It is said that Sahla Sellase often wanted the upheaval of the Tulama so that he would use it as an excuse to raid their plains.<sup>686</sup> Simone further states since a large number of cattle were consumed by the Shawans at that time, there was a heavy demand and this forced them to look to the Shawan Oromo plains for the cattle needed.<sup>687</sup> Moreover, the prospect of rich gains and the desire to extract resources from the Oromo territories were also among the causes of Sahla Sellase's campaigns towards the south and the south-west.<sup>688</sup>

No one is more articulate than the head of the British envoy in Shawa, Major Cornwallis Harris, to express how economic factors motivated Sahla Sellase to make perennial forays into the territories of the Tulama. As a result, he indicates that he had advised the king to start modernizing the weaving industry, which was at its rudimentary stage, where spinning jenny was unknown, rather than wasting his time on military expeditions. He further suggested that given the cold climate of Shawa, weaving was an indispensable manufacturing industry and was the only one. To use Harris's phraseology,

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<sup>686</sup>Simone, "The Amhara Military Expeditions", pp.135-38; Edward Simone, "The South Western military Campaigns of Sahla Selassie; A reappraisal." (Mimeographed), 1971, pp.1, 6; Ege, p. 191; Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee," p. 48.

<sup>687</sup>Simone, "The South Western Military Campaigns, p. 6.

<sup>688</sup>Darkwah, pp. 26, 29, the desire to reconquer the lost territories and the disunity of the Oromo were also identified by Darkwah. ; see also Ege, p. 191; Tekalign Wolde-Mariam, p.64.

A commercial convention betwixt Great Britain and Shoa was a subject that had been frequently adverted to, and His Majesty had shaken his head when first assured that five hundred pair of hands efficiently employed at the loom would bring into his country more permanent wealth than ten thousand warriors bearing spear and shield. But he had gradually begun to comprehend how commerce, equitably conducted, might prove a truer source of wealth than forays into the territories of the heathen.<sup>689</sup>

Meanwhile, Major Cornwallis Harris further stipulates that disunity and weakness of the Oromo was the most important factor behind Sahla Sellase's perennial campaigns and victories. According to Harris, the once-mighty Oromo, who often nicknamed the "Tartars of Africa", were weakened and degenerated following their sixteenth-century expansion. He claims when they were "united under one head, they overran the fairest provinces of ÆEthiopia; and had they remained united, they might, with equal ease, have completed the conquest. Relaxing, however, in their common cause against the Christians," they soon started to compete among each other for territorial aggrandizement.<sup>690</sup> Similarly, the often critical British traveller and scholar, Dr Beke, indicates, "The [Oromo] are all divided among themselves. If they made a common cause, Sahela Selassie would soon have to relinquish his late acquisitions, and return to the mountains of Shoa."<sup>691</sup>

But this does not mean that the Shawans had perpetually full control over the Tulama plains, in most cases, the Shawans' hold over the Oromo plains was

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<sup>689</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 391-92.

<sup>690</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 46. Should be seen from the point of view of what he termed the 'realisation of a great project' aimed at reuniting the scattered Christian communities as a result of the sixteenth-century Oromo expansion.

<sup>691</sup> Beke, "A Diary", p. 184.

tenuous. Local-level uprisings were undoubtedly widespread. However, as a result of the political fragmentation among the Oromo and the speedy movements of the Shawan army during expeditions, the Oromo most of the time hardly got enough time to mobilize.<sup>692</sup>

Pertaining to the disunity of the Oromo, Asma Gyorgis also indicates, የትሎማ እርስ በርስ መዋጋት (የአሮሞን) ኃይል አደከመ የአምኃራን ጉልበት አበረታ (the internal wars among the Tulama weakened the Oromo and strengthened the power of the Amhara).<sup>693</sup> Similarly, Darkawh also underlines that the political fragmentation was one of the decisive factors behind the triumph of the Shawans of course in addition to a numerical superiority they had enjoyed vis-à-vis any of the neighbouring Oromo *gosa*. “In Africa at that period when the shield and the lance were a common factor to both the invader and the invaded”, Darkawh indicates, “numerical superiority was the determining factor on the battlefield. And with Shewa's strategy of surprise attacks the [Oromo] enemy was often a helpless loser.”<sup>694</sup>

Meanwhile, the protestant missionaries, who were in Shawa at that time, characterised Sahla Sellase as a ‘narrow-minded’ despot. They indicate that he

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<sup>692</sup> Ege, p. 199; Abir, *Ethiopia: Era of the Princes*, p. 163, the disunited Oromo were not a match for the huge troops that Sahla Sellase was able to put in the field.

<sup>693</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 536-37.

<sup>694</sup> Darkwah, p. 190.



often made campaigns against the Oromo without valid reasons but simply to loot their property, and sell those who were captured as slaves at the port of Tajura. They further expound, 'He repeats this cruel custom every year when the rainy season is over. In this manner, he has enlarged his dominions. The country which he has taken in war is said to be thirty times greater than Shoa itself.'<sup>695</sup>

As we have seen so far, most scholars give precedence to the economic motives behind Sahla Sellase's sporadic campaigns against the Tulama, but we should note that monocausal explanation may not be adequate to comprehend the intricate processes of territorial expansion of the kingdom of Shawa during the period under discussion. Among eminent scholars who studied the history and culture of Shawa was Svein Ege, who put forward at least two fundamental causes, namely economic and security to be behind the expansion of the kingdom towards the Oromo inhabited territories. This is because the massive Oromo grasslands were bounty in cattle and were also ideal to oversee the trade routes that came from Enarya and Gurage. Likewise, it was vital to defeat and pacify the Oromo so that the Amhara could live in peace in the territories they had already subjugated.<sup>696</sup> In the same token, the renowned member of CMS, Krapf, aptly states that the King of Shawa made the campaign to levy the tribute due by the

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<sup>695</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 65; On the other hand, Ege, p. 17 indicates that he does not accept the European concept of despotism about Shawa, rather he proposes that Sahla Sellase's *divide et imperia* was the chief factor behind Sahla Sellase's power; vol.II, p. 39 .

<sup>696</sup> Ege, p.192; Darkwah, p. 128.

[Oromo], and to make further conquests.<sup>697</sup> Hence, it is also unwise to rule out territorial aggrandizement as one of the causes of Sahla Sellase's military expedition.

Moreover, Ege tries to give a broader context to the expansion of the kingdom of Shawa stating that the territorial aggrandizement should be perceived in its 'structural framework'. It was presaged by the strength of the Shawan polity and the political fragmentation of that of the Oromo, which helped the Shawans to make expeditions anywhere they wanted most in the localities north of the Awash river and often beyond that. The form of the administration established over the subjugated *gosa* hinged on the means available to parties, that is, 'means of control for the Shawans and means of resistance for the Oromo.'<sup>698</sup> Therefore, it is imprudent to expect the robust kingdom of Shawa not to encroach on the fertile but weakly guarded plain inhabited by the Tulama.<sup>699</sup>

To put it in a nutshell, Sahla Sellase's thrust towards the Tulama territory and beyond was enhanced by the desire to control the resources and trade routes on the one hand and by what is known as the great project of Reconquista of the territories lost as a result of the sixteenth-century Oromo population expansion on the other. But the so-called political fragmentation of the Tulama was caused by

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<sup>697</sup> John Ludwig Krapf, *Travels, Researches and Missionaries Labors During An Eighteen Yeas Residence in Eastern Africa: Together with Journeys to Jagga, Usambara, Ukambani, Shoa, abessinia and Khartum , and a Coasting Voyage from Mombaz to Cape Delgado* (London: Forgotten Books and Company Limited, 2014),p. 24.

<sup>698</sup> Ege, p.191.

<sup>699</sup> *Ibid.*,pp. 191-92

the decline of the *Gada* system and the concomitant mushrooming of petty chiefs' by about the 1840s vis-à-vis the better organization of the kingdom of Shawa and differences in access to armaments which created asymmetrical power relations should be presumed as enabling factors. Therefore, the most important difference between the imperial and the Oromo troops was not the equipment or quality of the combatants but the superior organizational ability of the former. The majority of the combatants on both sides were the horsemen, even it is said that the Oromo cavalries were superior to that of the Shawans but they were poorly organized.<sup>700</sup> As we shall see in the next chapter, the years around the 1840s saw rapid socio-political changes among the Tulama since by this time the age-old *Gada* system was no longer a unifying factor and chiefs which violated *Gada* rules and regulations mushroomed here and there which led to the political fragmentation. As a result, the Tulama chiefs fought amongst themselves over the acquisition of territory partly as a consequence of external interference.

## **Punitive Campaigns or Armed Confrontations: King Sahla**

### **Sellase and the Tulama Oromo**

As we have seen in the previous discussion, the first Tulama *gosa* to be overrun by the kingdom of Shawa as early as the time of Abeye (1718-43) was the prominent Abichu. Although the Shawan kingdom had steadily encroached on the Abichu Oromo territory often by evicting them, the Abichu Oromo who inhabited north of the Chacha River were not fully subjugated and integrated into the

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<sup>700</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 132-35; Ege, p. 207; Abir, Ethiopia: *Era of the Princes*, p.

kingdom up until the period under review. For instance, as we have seen, the Abichu managed to free themselves from the hegemony of the Shawan kingdom in the localities that stretched up to the Barressa River following the death of Wasan Sagad in 1812. But it seems that by about 1830, Sahla Sellase managed to pacify the Abichu who inhabited the territories north of the Chacha River thanks to his alliance with the Abichu chiefs like Matakoo, Sheshego and Marach.<sup>701</sup> Hence, by about 1830 he managed to unify the Amharic speaking principalities and started making inroad against the Tulama.<sup>702</sup>

In addition to the Abichu Oromo inhabited plains, Sahla Sellase also conquered the area commonly known as Shawa Meda ( a vast plain located between Ankobar and Morat ) in the course of the 1820s and commenced reconstructing Dabra Berhan and a number of other towns which were destroyed by the Oromo. Moreover, he consolidated his grip over the area beyond the Baresa River and founded a number of outposts comprising the town of Angolala, which was erected in the nucleus of Abichu country.<sup>703</sup>

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<sup>701</sup> See Darkwah, p. 26, who indicates 'the disunity between the different [Oromo] tribes was greatly exploited by Sahla Selassie who used not only methods of war but also diplomacy to win to his side many [Oromo] chiefs with whose help he advanced his conquest further afield'.

<sup>702</sup> Ege, p. 33. After a while Sahla Sellase even took the title of *negus* (king) which unambiguously sanctioned the revival of Shawa by thus assuming a rank above that of *ras*, the title of *Ras Ali*, the *de facto* ruler of the north

<sup>703</sup> Abir, *Ethiopia: Era of the Princes*, p. 153.

It was after Sahla Sellase founded the town of Angolala that he started to make campaigns three times annually in January, June, and October, which lasted from two to three weeks in the Oromo territories found south of the Chacha River.<sup>704</sup> There is no doubt, Sahla Sellase's military expeditions in the period before 1830 were confined to the north of the Chacha and the so-called Sahla Sellase's thirty years campaign against the Oromo was actually pertinent to this area.

Meanwhile, of the three campaigns, the October campaign was said to have been the most sought-after, consistent and successful one. This season is when the summer rain stops and the ground starts to be dry and abundant grasses are available for their horses. Also, it is the main harvesting season and the Oromo fields were covered by crops and they were very much vulnerable since even if they succeeded to flee, the imperial expeditionary force could still wreak major havoc by burning their crops. Therefore, the October campaign was the most successful, while the result varied at other times of the year, ending with disaster if the army was surprised by rains. Moreover, the rich spoils and the usual lack of discipline often made the Shawan army susceptible to Oromo reprisals. Especially when the regiments were caught in a difficult situation, for instance, while making a disordered crossing of a river; triumph could unexpectedly be turned to calamity.

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<sup>704</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 195 indicate the last expedition was made in September; See also Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His works*, pp.533; Krapf, p.22. In general, it seems that the campaigns were made in the months: the first September/ October ( after the rainy season is over), the second January/ February( in winter, after harvesting time) and the last May/ June ( before the rainy season begins)

Therefore, the expeditionary force usually evacuated the area they had devastated swiftly; the onslaught lasted only for a day to deny the Oromo time for mobilization and also they returned by a course other than the one by which they had advanced lest the villages they had devastated could retaliate.<sup>705</sup>

Despite temporal differences, all expeditions had certain common features. For instance, in all cases campaign was proclaimed by *dajagafari* several weeks before it was to take place.<sup>706</sup> As a result, each hamlet contributed its quota of mounted warriors who would participate in the perennial expeditions made by Sahla Sellase. The rendezvous for all contingents who participated in the expedition was at Yewal near Belat both of which were not far from Angolala on 5 *Tikmt* (October 16/17).<sup>707</sup> At that locality, those who were unfit for different reasons and not prepared for the expedition were exempted. Concerning the number of the imperial troops, Harris estimated that it was about twenty thousand and had three divisions. Most of them were recruited from the central provinces of the kingdom and composed of peasants.<sup>708</sup>

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<sup>705</sup> Ege, pp. 209-10, 18-19.

<sup>706</sup> Harris, vol. II, p. 155; Ege, p. 214

<sup>707</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 536-37, the duration of the campaign, according Asma Gyorgis was fifteen to twenty days or a month at the most.

<sup>708</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 167-68, 190; see also Ege, p. 201, who indicates that the average size of the Shawan army was some 15,000-20,000 and the same number of camp followers. However, Krapf, p. 31 indicates, "The whole army may muster from 30,000 to 50,000 men, of whom about 1,000 are armed with muskets, the rest being equipped with spears, shields, and swords"

Most of Sahla Sellase's combatants enlisted during the campaigns not dreading the terrifying proclamations usually issued by Sahla Sellase, but it was the expectation of material benefits and the prestigious status soldiers had in the Shawan society which made them participate in the campaign. The material benefit of the campaign was immense which included among others, sheep, household utensils, and captives of war until redeemed by their relatives. The monarch appropriated the cattle, mules and horses. Yet some of the looted cattle were slaughtered in the fields, others allocated to the chiefs, and soldiers, who had distinguished themselves. Moreover, the ordinary soldier who executed a foe was awarded a bar of salts, a shield, cattle, horse, or even a mule. In addition to these material benefits, peasants also participated in the expeditions hoping to receive a land grant.<sup>709</sup>

Meanwhile, concerning the socio-economic status of the part-time peasant soldiers, we have conflicting information. According to Ege, Sahla Sellase's troops were not poor peasants; rather they were land-owning peasants. This is because most of the soldiers were cavalry, and ordinary peasants did not own a pair of oxen, let alone a horse at that time in Shawa. Moreover, there were voluntary

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<sup>709</sup> Ege, pp. 203, 204; Harris, Vol. III, p. 168; Charles, Johnston, *Travels in Southern Abyssinia, Through the Country of Adal to the Kingdom of Shoa* (London, J. Madden and Co., 1844), pp. 75, 377, for instance, Johnston tells us how a certain Karrisaa, from Kambata, benefited from his bravery during the rebellion of Matakoo Borjaa and ' had been rewarded by being made a *nuftania* or gunman, and would, were he to marry, have a house bestowed upon him, with as much land as two oxen could plough in the year'; see also Darkawh, pp. 196-97, where this issue has been discussed meticulously.

young men known as *fanno*, who fought for booty and rewards.<sup>710</sup> But Darkawh maintains that most of the Shawan combatants were peasants, who usually tilled the land but enrolled when mobilization calls were made. Moreover, local governors owed the king a military obligation and were required to conscript capable peasant soldiers resident in their respective territories to serve as soldiers during military campaigns.<sup>711</sup>

Moreover, in addition to the peasant soldiers, Sahla Sellase had better equipped palace forces which of course constituted a fraction of the army of the kingdom. But they were the backbone of the imperial army and were under the direct supervision of the monarch. Of these, the leading detachments were the bodyguard composed of riflemen and cavalries and the *abalam*, keepers of royal cattle who were supervised by the court and were reputed warriors were several thousand leading combatants attached to the royal court.<sup>712</sup>

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<sup>710</sup> Ege, pp. 188, 201; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 532-533, Children as young as fourteen and even ten participated in the expeditions, and when they captured the adults taught them to exercise on them how to stab or hit with the blade the captive. Contrary to Asma Gyorgis's explanation, Sergew indicates, parents did not allow their children to participate in the expedition because they feared that they would be killed by the Oromo, as a result very few youths participated in the expedition; see Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 89; See also Krapf, p. 31, who also indicates the Shawan soldiers were mostly cavalry mounted on horse or mules

<sup>711</sup> Darkwah, p. 186.

<sup>712</sup> Ege, p. 201; Krapf, p. 31 indicates that Sahla Sellase had no standing army but a few hundred bodyguards armed with muskets.



During the expeditions, the Shawan forces were also supplemented by several thousand Oromo cavalries. For instance, in the north, *Abagaz* Marach of Abichu was the first to join the Shawn force by commanding a strong cavalry of about two to three thousand. Similarly, another Abichu chief, Sheshego also commanded his detachments. As the Shawan forces advanced deep into the Tulama plains various chiefs who depended on Shawa joined them. Of these, the most renowned were the sons of Bune, Jaarraa of Mulo and Abbaa Maallee, especially the latter commanded about two to three thousand horsemen.<sup>713</sup>

The activities of the army during campaigns were determined by the purpose of the campaign, and the strength of the Oromo resistance. If its purpose was to collect tribute, the regiments moved slowly, detachment being sent to the nearby homesteads to ascertain whether the group in question paid its tribute, if they paid the regiments moved on. In contrast, deserted homesteads manifested refusal to pay tribute and as result were often set on fire along with the adjoining fields.<sup>714</sup>

It is fascinating that the expeditionary force was accompanied by chiefs, priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant and singers who entertained them. Women also participated in the expedition mainly as porters carrying jugs of local drinks like *tella* (beer) and hydromel at their backs which would be consumed by the

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<sup>713</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 84, 186,308, 380 ; Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 300-301; Ege, p. 202

<sup>714</sup> Ege, p. 217.

soldiers. Similarly, there were also lads with sparkling sheaves of lances upon their shoulders. On top of that a convoy of horses, mules and donkeys loaded with tents, drinks like horns of mead, and rations was evident during the expeditions.<sup>715</sup>

The ordinary combatants experienced terrible conditions during campaigns. For instance, they were supposed to carry their rations which included among others roasted grain or dried meat. They passed nights without protection be it rain or cold. On the other hand, the chiefs and governors occupied tents not to speak of the king who even sat on the bed during the rest time. His tent was pitched at the centre of the camp 'consisting of a gay parti-coloured marquee of Turkish manufacture, surrounded by twelve ample awnings of black serge, over which floated five crimson pennons, surmounted respectively by silver globes.'<sup>716</sup> After this when the night falls rockets were said to have been fired by the command of his majesty to terrorize the Oromo community. Especially the muskets king Sahla Sellase acquired from the British as a gift which was nicknamed as 'fire rainers' and the first of its kind in Shawa had terrified even the royal troops as elaborated by Harris.<sup>717</sup>

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<sup>715</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 167-69, 190-91. During one of the expeditions, Harris indicates that "the Holy Scriptures and the ark of the cathedral of St. Michael, the miraculous virtues of which sacred emblem, throwing into shade those of the Palladium of Troy, are believed to ensure victory to the Christian host."

<sup>716</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 170, 172

<sup>717</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 173-74.

Be this as it may, the direction of the expedition was said to have been kept in secret, and no one had the slenderest hint “in what quarter the thunderbolt is to fall.”<sup>718</sup> Rather it was when the expeditionary force reached the area that the king wanted to attack that he ordered his troops to ‘encamp, destroy and plunder’. For instance, during one of the expeditions made by king Sahla Sellase in the direction of Meettaa Roobii, Harris recounts, at a locality known as Abai Deggar, which was surrounded by hills, king Sahla Sellase ordered his troops to ‘encamp, destroy, and plunder’. Soon the affluent meadows of wheat, barley, and beans, the crops of the industrious and defiant Oromo village were overrun and destroyed by the locust-like Shawan forces; and within “half an hour the soil being stripped of every acre of cultivation, there commenced a general scramble for the rafters and ribs of houses, whereof the skeletons were presently consigned to the flames.”<sup>719</sup>

Apparently during the same campaign, the Tulama village located at the foot of Gara Gorfoo (Gorfoo Mountain) erroneously identified as Karraa Barak and Sirti Oromo by Harris was devastated by the Shawan forces. “Green fields and smiling meadows quickly lost their bloom under the tramp of the steed; for no cultivation was now spared...the country was laid waste, and every vestige of human habitation destroyed under the torch,” witnesses Harris, “the flames racing among

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<sup>718</sup> Harris Vol. II, p. 165; Darkawh, p. 117, indicates Sahla Sellase’s successors including Menilek influenced by this kept to themselves the destination of the expedition.

<sup>719</sup> Harris, vol. II, p. 181.

the riper barley with the speed of a galloping horse; but the wretched inhabitants..., had abandoned their dwellings ...and one aged man only had yet fallen into the merciless clutches of the invaders.”<sup>720</sup>

Correspondingly Krapf indicates that on January 25, 1840, the king and his expeditionary force reached around a village called Sululta, the northern neighbours of Finfinne village, by marching through the country of Gumbichu Oromo. However, during this campaign, unlike the ones reported by Harris in the previous paragraphs, the Sululta Oromo had harvested their crops and the Shawan expeditionary forces could not destroy crops in the fields rather burnt their granaries of wheat or barley and houses.<sup>721</sup>

Krapf further indicates that the Sululta villages were targeted and Sahla Sellase ordered his troops to destroy Tulama villages by fire because the villagers refused to pay their tribute in horses and cows.<sup>722</sup> It seems that the Oromo often rebel against Sahla Sellase because they were mistreated by their fellow Oromo

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<sup>720</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp.182-83. Karraa Barak , Garaa Gorfoo and Sirti are not found closely as indicated by Harris.

<sup>721</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 197-98;Krapf further indicates, he never mind much to know the epithets of the Oromo villages, since it was the order of the day to destroy them almost during each campaign; see also Krapf, p. 24 where he indicates that “Wide-spread devastations follow the frequent refusals to pay the tribute by the [Oromo] tribes, who are very foolish in provoking these calamities, as they might secure themselves by moderate payments in cattle and grain, were it not that their pride and passion for freedom lead to continual revolts and defeats. Pity that those beautiful countries are not turned to better account!”

<sup>722</sup>Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 197-98.

governors appointed by the king. However, the principal cause of their rebellion, according to Harris, was 'the absence of outpost or fortification to hold his wild subjects in check'.<sup>723</sup> Likewise, Krapf also recounts, " what the [ Oromos] call dependency upon Shoa is very little with the southern [ Oromos] , as they are afraid of the King only so long as he is in their territory". However, the Oromo of Mulofalada were said to have been an exception.<sup>724</sup>

It seems that during this campaign, of all the Oromo villages, Krapf found those of Mulo Falda to be unique and on good terms with the king of Shawa, perhaps this happened after Sahla Sellase married the daughter of the Queen of Mullo Falda. Otherwise from Krapf's exposition we may discern that the Oromo who inhabited at least the regions from Sirti or Gara Gorfoo area up to Ada'aa Barga and Mettaa Roobii had had uneasy relations with Shawa, if not in rebellions even as late as 1840.

After Sululta, the brunt of Sahla Sellase's undisciplined troops was felt by the inhabitants of Ada'aa Barga, who were perhaps partially dependent on Mulofalada. They also declined to pay tribute and as a result their domiciles were set on fire. It is interesting that the community of Ada' a Barga practiced a

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<sup>723</sup> Harris, vol. II, p. 203

<sup>724</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp.198-99. Krapf Characterizes Mullo Falda as a region well cultivated and had large forests unlike most parts of the Tulama Oromo 'quite destitute of trees, and but little cultivated.'

scorched earth policy by burning grasses so as to deny the king's troops grass for their horses and hence prevent them from encampment in their territory. After Ada'aa it was the turn of Mettaa Roobii, who did not deliver up their tribute, and had taken flight to their mountains when their houses were burnt.<sup>725</sup> As to the outcome of Negus Sahla Sellase expedition to the territory of Meettaa Oromo at the end of January and early February 1840, Krapf concludes, the former got little benefit as the Oromo refused to pay tribute and took refuge in the nearby mountains.<sup>726</sup>

Sahla Sellase not only annihilated the Mettaa community but also hunted wild animals like elephants and buffalos found in the beautiful domicile of the Meettaa Oromo. Especially the locality between Mettaa and East Macha was said to have been neither settled nor ploughed in the circuit of over twelve hours, although, according to Krapf, "it is the finest country of the world, being rich in water, wood, and a good soil...At present it is the dwelling-place of elephants, buffalos, and other beasts."<sup>727</sup> Apparently the expedition also had adverse effects not only on the Tulama but also on the wild lives which were found in the forest of West Shawa like Ada'aa and Meettaa among others.

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<sup>725</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp.199- 202, Krapf, p. 24. "The [Oromo] possess regions so fruitful, so rich in water and pasturage, and suitable both for tillage and for cattle, that Europeans can scarcely imagine their beauty. The climate, too, is as mild and healthy as that of Italy or Greece. The districts of Mulofalada, Adaberga, Metta, and Mecha are particularly so, where, moreover, there are many and noble trees, among which the juniper deserves particular mention."

<sup>726</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, P. 223.

<sup>727</sup> Ibid., pp. 211, 213. The area became wilderness as a result of a conflict between the Mettaa and Macha Oromo.

Similarly, after a couple of days, on February 2, 1840, Sahla Sellase burnt all the villages and retreated to his encampment at Logagontsha, on eponymous rivulet found near a mountain where they saw the plain of the Awash River.<sup>728</sup> On February 3, 1840 at the base of Entoto, in a flatland called 'Tshaffe Holata' Sahla Sellase ordered a considerable number of hamlets to be burnt.<sup>729</sup> However, all the expeditions were not a walkover for Shawans; we do have examples of campaigns in which the Shawans encountered ferocious and resolute confrontation. The expedition made to the Metta Oromo territory in January 1840 was one the most important instances. The Metta Oromo is said to have fought audaciously, executing thirty and maiming ninety of the Shawan troops before ultimately admitting loss.<sup>730</sup>

Moreover, it seems that Sahla Sellase's perennial expedition did not deter the Tulama who were even closer to the heartland of the Kingdom. For instance, in June 1840, when the Shawan army returned from the campaign in the south, the Oromo who inhabit around Serte intercepted and killed about eight hundred soldiers of Sahla Sellase.<sup>731</sup> Asma Gyoris also recorded how the Abichu and the Galan Oromo, who submitted and became allies of Sahla Sellase, attacked the

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<sup>728</sup> Ibid., p.214, the river is said to have found between the Metta and Macha territory.

<sup>729</sup> Ibid., pp. 214-15. Chaffee Holata is not located at the foot of Entoto or Wachacha Mountain; this should rather be near the present day town of Holata, which is located about forty kilometres west of the modern Addis Ababa.

<sup>730</sup> Darkawah, p. 190.

<sup>731</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 188, 215; see also Ege, p. 199

royal troops who remained behind when they made expeditions to Salale across their territories. This act of the Oromo who was the allies of the kingdom infuriated Haile Malakot, the son and successor of king Sahla Sellase, and he was quoted as saying, አባቴ ሞኝ ናቸው ከጩጩ ጀምረው ጥርግ ማድረግ ትተው ትሎማን ለምን ሄራ ያደርጉታል፡ (My father is not wise; why should he make the Teloma allies instead of wiping them from Ĉaĉa onward).<sup>732</sup>

Moreover, it said that when Sahla Sellase was making incursions deep into the Tulama territory, the latter marched to his capital Angolala and attempted to burn it several times. Hence, it was said to be strongly guarded when the king was making expeditions in the Oromo territory. For instance, Harris indicates, during one of the campaigns Queen Bezabish, the king's consort, and a certain eunuch Wolda Mariam were entrusted to guard the town of Angolala with a battalion adequate to dissuade the inroad on the part of the Oromo, who had several times tried to demolish the palace during the Shawans expeditions into their territories.<sup>733</sup>

In spite of Sahla Sellase's perennial expeditions by about 1840, even the regions near the other side of the Chacha river were not pacified and subdued, let alone remote areas like Mettaa and Ada'aa Barga. "After crossing the Chacha, the

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<sup>732</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 536-37.

<sup>733</sup> Harris, vol. II, p. 167



country is no longer safe for a single traveller;” writes Harris, “and owing to the determined hostility of the various wild [Oromo] tribes by which it is inhabited, small Amhara detachments would even find difficulty in passing...”<sup>734</sup>.

However we have conflicting information about the relations between the king and the Oromo who inhabited around Finfini, According Ludwig Krapf, the inhabitants of the area around the present-day Addis Ababa, the then Finfini were on good terms with Sahla Sellase and were not destroyed by the king’s forces, when the expeditionary force reached there on February 5, 1840. He enlightens us that the area was not as beautiful and forested as those found to the west, namely like the districts of Mulofalada, Ada’aa Bargaa, Mettaa, and Macha ( perhaps which including the current districts of Jalduu, Genda Barat and Ginccii, where the Tulama and the Macha Oromo have been living side by side). But here Krapf claims he saw the very sulphuours hot wells at the foot of a range of hills known as ‘Finfini’ where several Oromo villages existed, which were “well inhabited and cultivated, and the people have been attached to the King for many years.”<sup>735</sup>

But contrary to the above explanation, Harris indicates that the Oromo around Finfinnee were the target of the imperial annihilation and the region was chosen as a site of royal booty and spoliation. For instance, he indicates that the troops,

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<sup>734</sup> Ibid. p. 169.

<sup>735</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 215-16

enthusiastic by the company of the sovereign, annihilated the villagers with a sharp and merciless knife — shooting hamlet after hamlet till the air was darkened with their smolder blended with the dust raised by the impulsive hurry of people and horses. This incident perhaps took place after Krapf witnessed what we have seen above and Harris even confirms this by stating this district escaped the royal punishment for a long period of time; however, by this time there is no doubt they had either rebelled against the king or refused to pay their annual tributes. As a result, apparently the beautifully secluded valley of Finfini, encountered one of the bloodiest annihilations and devastations campaigns ever made by King Sahla Sellase in the abode of the Tulama. It seems that in this case the whole of the villagers were perhaps mercilessly exterminated by unprofessional regiments of King Sahla Sellase as witnessed by Harris.<sup>736</sup> Perhaps the damages inflicted upon the Gullaallee Oromo of Finfini by this time was a tip of an iceberg in view of what they underwent after less than half a century, that is in the last quarter of the nineteenth century when the grandson of Sahla Sellase, the famous Emperor Menilek founded his capital, Finfini as Addis Ababa in this particular locality as we

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<sup>736</sup> Harris, vol.II,pp. 192-93, 196. Children and elders were also among the victims of Sahla Sellase's massacre; See also Darkwah, pp. 194-95, who compares this incident with what happened in Arsi after less than half a century. As to what happened to the conquered people he indicates that in other parts of Africa the conquered people were sold as Slaves and this was not mostly the case in Shawa but in this case, "The first was, of course, and that a considerable number of the enemy was killed off during the campaigns. It has been seen that it was usual for the Shewans to burn down whole villages. One suspects that quite a few of these villages must have had their entire population killed off. In the campaign conducted in the Finfinni district in 1844 (which has been cited already) the Invaders were said to have killed 4,600 of the invaded [Oromo].During the Arussi campaign of 1886, a single battle fought on 6 September terminated with 6,000 and more of the Arussi left dead on the battlefield. Considering the fact that, with the exception of the period 1855—65, campaigns were conducted two or three times annually it is not improbable that at least one-quarter of the total original population of the conquered provinces was killed in the course of the conquest."

shall see in chapter nine. Meanwhile, Harris further indicates how the thriving and alluring valley of Finfini was utterly spoiled and destroyed by the imperial forces within a few hours.<sup>737</sup>

It seems that during this particular campaign almost all the Tulama territories from Chacha up to the border of Macha were prone to Sahla Sellase's vandalizing campaigns perhaps except Mulo Falda and the area under the hegemony of *Abbgaz Marach* which were under the jurisdiction of Sahla Sellase's allies.<sup>738</sup> In addition to the aforementioned material destruction and human massacre in which neither children nor elders were safe, women and girls seem to have been taken as captives.<sup>739</sup> It is said that most of the captives were young women. Perhaps men were said to be emasculated rather than captured since they were not so valuable and also challenging to safeguard and their sex organ was a testimony that they had been slain, for which the soldier was rewarded by the sovereign.<sup>740</sup>

Following the massacre of Finfini, it was the turn of Eekkaa Oromo, who inhabited the area between Finfini and the Garmama River, according to Harris, "which was clean swept with besom of destruction". In this locality at this juncture the material

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<sup>737</sup> Harris, vol II, pp. 193-94

<sup>738</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 197, 201; Ege, p. 39 It is said that the territory of Mullo Falda was exceptionally well cultivated by about 1840 because it was not prone to Sahla Sellase's military expedition unlike the neighbouring territories of Metta, Ada'a Barga, Sululta, etc which lay waste.

<sup>739</sup> Harris. Vol. II, 195-96.

<sup>740</sup> Ege, p. 219.

damage caused by the Shawans was very much discernible as Harris again states that when the Shawans encamped in their territory, "Horses and mules were now turned loose among the standing beans."<sup>741</sup> From this it is not difficult to imagine how destructive turning loose about tens of thousands of hungry horses on the produce of Eekkaa Oromo.

With understandable exaggeration, Harris laments how the regions from Finfini to Gara Gorfoo, from Mt. Zequwala to Wato Dalacha (closer to Subbaa) including the Awash plain were devastated by the royal troops. Even he went as far as stating that one can't see the living in this region. To use his words,

*Over this wide expanse not a living inhabitant was now to be seen...A single day had reduced to a waste wilderness the entire rich and nourishing vale of Germama, including the dark forests of Finfinni, which, for years, had slept in peace...*<sup>742</sup>

This is not the end of the tribulation of the inhabitants of Finfinni and Eekkaa. It said that for the second time, the royal troops returned to this region and did annihilation and pillaging. By this time those who survived from the aforementioned molestation returned to their devastated villages with their remaining flocks and were busy in restoring their dilapidated hamlets believing the enemy had gone and would not return soon. But they were wrong and the undisciplined Shawan regiments again stunned them in their beautiful abode and "slew six hundred souls, and captured all the remaining cattle, thus completing the

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<sup>741</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 196-98; Ege, p. 47.

<sup>742</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 200-201.

chastisement of these devoted clans, who, notwithstanding the generous restoration of their enslaved families”, Harris writes, “had failed to make submission — and redeeming the royal pledge to play the rebels another trick”.<sup>743</sup>

Among the spoils of Sahla Sellase’s military expedition, the major ones mentioned by Harris were: “flocks and herds, donkeys, mules, and horses, honeycombs, poultry, household utensils and farming gear, with captive women and children.”<sup>744</sup> The lion’s share of the spoils was appropriated by the monarch. For instance, about six thousand cattle were said to have been pillaged during a second sweeping raid made against the Eekka and Finfinni Oromo and of these two third of the spoils reserved for the sovereign and the remaining divided among notables and the rank and file.<sup>745</sup>

If we trust the accounts of Harris, of the campaigns made by Sahla Sellase against the Tulama, the most atrocious massacre was made against the Mettaa Oromo, which he characterized as ‘a sad picture of the atrocities perpetrated by the undisciplined armies of Ethiopia’<sup>746</sup>. As we have seen above, Krapf also reported that Sahla Sellase made expeditions against the Mettaa Oromo even in collaboration with the Oromo notables like Jaarraa Gadaa (son of Chamme) of Mulo, which by itself was devastating. But the one witnessed by Harris was apparently another round of expedition and seems unparalleled in terms of the

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<sup>743</sup> Harris, vol. II, p. 253.

<sup>744</sup> Harris, vol. II, p. 202.

<sup>745</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 207, 252; vol. III, p. 376; see also Darkwah, p. 196.

<sup>746</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 376. All the three annual expeditions were a ‘repetition of the most atrocious and monstrous barbarity’ for Harris.

number of people killed and cattle confiscated. Harris indicates that about twenty thousand Shawan troops made expeditions across the Sertie Lake to the Mettaa territory accompanied by the holy ark of St. Michael. Perhaps these were the Mettaa subgroup found around the valley of Finfinni, not the Mettaa of Mettaa Roobii area which is found a little bit to the west. It is said that they were little prepared when the force of Sahla Sellase attacked the locality. Perhaps in the former times they were not molested by the imperial troops. To use Harris's terms,

*Overwhelmed by the torrent of desolation which had so suddenly burst in, four thousand five hundred Gentiles of all ages were butchered by the soldiers of Christ, and of these the greater number were shot from trees that they had ascended in the vain hope of eluding observation. Three hapless individuals were thus barbarously destroyed by the hands of Sahela Selassie, who for the first time led his troops to the summit of the mountain Entoto — the ancient capital of Ethiopia — and, taking formal possession, appointed the arch-rebel Shambo to the government, under the title of " Shoom of all Gurague."<sup>747</sup>*

As we shall see in the next chapter Shambo was one the sons of Bunee Boorrii of Ada'aa, whose seat was around the Yarar mountain. It seems that Shambo was appointed as governor of the area starting from the valley of Finfinni/ Entoto up to Gurage country. However, it is highly likely that Shambo's appointment as governor of the valley of Finfinni was nominal and as he did not succeed in effectively controlling the area for a long period of time. Rather as we shall see in the subsequent chapter rather local chiefs who of course competed among themselves emerged in this locality.

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<sup>747</sup> Harris Vol. III, pp, 373-74

Harris further indicates about 43,000 head of cattle were pillaged by this time to replace the royal pastures and the kingdom of Shawa obtained this rich prize with the cost of only nine of the King's soldiers.<sup>748</sup> Concerning the number of cattle plundered by the Shawans during each military expedition, sometimes we have understandably an exaggerated figure. According to Darkwah, for instance, during a campaign made in September 1841 to the Finfinnee area, where after roughly forty years Entoto or Addis Ababa was established about 14,042 herds of cattle were plundered. During another campaign conducted to the Soddo Oromo territory in March and April 1845 about 87,000 head of cattle were plundered.<sup>749</sup>

Sometime it is stated that the *gosa* who were annihilated and whose women and children mentioned occasionally to be a thousand were captured and imprisoned went to the royal palace bringing tribute so as to redeem them. In this connection Harris recounts, penalized by repeated assaults, the leaders and notable of the insubordinate and annihilated *gosa*, realizing the uselessness of additional resistance to the Shawans 'come in with the tribute exacted, and make feudal submission, whereupon they are suffered to ransom their wives and daughters who have been enslaved.'<sup>750</sup>

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<sup>748</sup>Harris, vol. III, pp. 374-75, on the vol. II, p. 227 Harris quoted the King as saying, "I have slain four thousand six hundred of mine enemies, and have captured thirty seven thousand and forty two head of cattle'. But whether the king refers to this campaign or not it is difficult to verify but since the number is very close perhaps he refers to the outcome of this campaign.

<sup>749</sup>Rochet d'Hericourt, *Second Voyage*, p. 210 cited in Darkwah, p. 192.

<sup>750</sup>Harris, vol. II, p. 39; Ege, p. 218.

Unlike the Mettaa Oromo, the Oromo who were found around Yarar Mountain were said to be on good terms with King Sahla Sellase by about 1840. Krapf reports, when they returned from Mettaa expedition, the people who inhabited around the Yarar mountain paid tribute of about “twenty beautiful horses and forty cows” to the king since the governor of the area named Shambo had amicable relation with the king, whereas those who inhabit in the locality of Garmama were doomed heads upon whose the thunderbolt was next to fall.<sup>751</sup>

It seems that Sahla Sellase made expeditions against the Tulama in all directions, for instance, Harris indicated that a successful expedition against the Loomi (Lumee) Oromo [in the region around the present day Mojo town of east Shawa] had recently returned.<sup>752</sup> It seems, this rebellion took place before the beginning the summer rain of 1841. The Luumee people refused to pay tribute as a result, Gabru, who was the governor of the neighbouring district of Menjar and responsible for the collection of tribute, made expedition against them several times but he failed to subdue them and was removed from his post. The sons of Bunee, Buttaa and Shambo of Ada’aa Oromo also joined the rebels along with a certain leading Oromo notable from the Awash river area, who had submitted to

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<sup>751</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 216; see also Harris, vol. II, p. 189 where it is stated that the area known as Garmama was located between Yarar, Zequwala and Entioto mountains and was inhabited by Eekkaa and Finfinnee Oromo. “At the foot of Ferrer is a village called Roggie, where there is a large market, at which the people of Gurague and the neighbouring [Oromos] sell their slaves, horses, cows, and other productions, coming from the interior of Africa. This market is on the route to Gurague, which is quite safe as far as the mountain of Sekuala and the plain of the Hawash. On arriving at this plain, the traveller is in danger of being pillaged by the Soddo [Oromos] coming from the west. From Sekuala it is a day's journey to Aimellele, the first village of Gurague.”

<sup>752</sup> Harris, vol. II, p. 376.



King Sahla Sellase a year ago. As a result of the rebellion, a trade route that went to the Gurage country was disrupted for some months. But Buttaa and Shambo were compelled back to obedience and after that a large Shawan expeditionary force were sent against Lumee and the rebellion was quelled.<sup>753</sup>

Harris further enlightens us that the uprising of the Lumee Oromo which was quelled after difficult circumstances epitomizes the relationship between the Tulama and the kingdom of Shawa. This was reflected in the serious hostility and clashes between King Sahla Sellase and the Lumee people as clearly explained by Harris.<sup>754</sup> The Lumee uprising was one of the fiercest resistances that Sahla Sellase had ever encountered during his so called thirty years expeditions against the Tulama. They apparently at one time put the king under intense pressure and it is said that he was even advised by the religious leaders not to take field against them lest he might be killed by the Luumees cavalymen.<sup>755</sup>

Apparently the Lumee people were not alone as their brethren in the nearby districts led by Hawash Oosha rallied to their causes even including the Arsi Oromo not to mention their close neighbors among others the Liiban, the Soddoo and the Jiillee. But it seems that again as a result of the indetermination and love and hate relations between the King of Shawa and the Tulama notables on the

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<sup>753</sup> Ege, p. 200.

<sup>754</sup> Harris, Vol. II, pp. 379-80.

<sup>755</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 380-81

one hand and a pragmatic move in view of asymmetric access to modern armaments and difference in organizational capability on the other, this uprising was also thwarted and they were reconciled to the king. What followed this uprising is encapsulated by Harris as follows:

*Two successful inroads followed close upon this threat, and ample vengeance was taken. The wealth of the Pagans was transferred to the royal meadows. Women wrung their hands in captivity, and a black and burning monument attested the lava-like course of the chastising hordes. The season of retribution again drew nigh, and Shambo and Botha trembled at the fate that awaited them. The powerful intercession of the church was sought with bribes, and obtained. A hooded monk from the cloisters of Affaf Woira stood before the throne with a peace offering from those who supplicated pardon, and clemency was graciously extended.<sup>756</sup>*

Botha and Shambo were pardoned by King Sahla Sellase after five hundred cattle were provided as price of pardon.<sup>757</sup> Meanwhile, east of Lumee, the area in the environs of the Boset Mountain was inhabited by the pastoralist Gamuu, one of the sub-groups of the Torban Oboo. Unlike their Lumee neighbours, by this time, Harris indicates that they were on good terms with King Sahla Sellase and even nominally recognized the overlordship Shawa.<sup>758</sup> Again to the east of the Gamuu were the Karrayyu Oromo, who inhabited a vast verdant territory which stretched up to Fantalee stunningly wooded, spotted over with flocks and herds, who were also pastoralists and equally rich in livestock and in meadow like their Gamuu neighbours. They were also nominally attached to the Kingdom of Shawa paying

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<sup>756</sup>Harris, vol. II, pp.381-382.

<sup>757</sup> Harris, vol II, p. 382.

<sup>758</sup>Harris, vol,III, pp, 263-64; According to Harris this locality had large forests where different Mammalia were found. To use his words, "Nothing could exceed the luxuriance of the shady forests of Taboo, which bore evidences throughout of the presence of the giants among mammalia, and abounded in the piebald oryx, the agazin, the hartebeest, and the mhor — clamorous troops of guinea-fowl, which covered every open glade, completing the contrast to the silent regions of Shoa, so utterly destitute of animal life." Moreover, it is indicated that the Gamuu were in permanent conflict with the Arsi Oromo.

about twenty cattle per year as a tribute. It seems that they were reduced to the tributary status after suffering heavy losses in the hands of the Shawans perhaps in the 820s when, “The inhabitants, flying for shelter to their thick hook-thorn coverts, sustained little loss in killed;” writes Harris, “but the whole of their wealth was swept away, and thirty thousand fat beeves were presented to the monarch on the plains of Angolala, as an earnest of successful foray.”<sup>759</sup>

However, the influence of the kingdom beyond the Awash River in the Arsi country was non-existent or if any minimal and the Arsi were very much feared by the Shawans. In this regard, Harris indicates, “the Aroosi [ Arsi] beyond the Hawash, a tribe distinguished for surpassing ferocity, being declared the bitter, bitter enemy of every Christian and [Muslim]”<sup>760</sup>

So far we have seen a little bit in detail how the Tulama who resisted the hegemony of Sahla Sellase had undergone material damage and catastrophic human losses in which in some cases the whole inhabitants of some of the villages were annihilated time again. Meanwhile, it is fascinating that the Tulama who submitted to the king and paid tribute were also not safe. For one thing it is said that they were attacked by their fellow Oromo. This event was witnessed by

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<sup>759</sup> Harris, vol. III, pp. 251-52; see also Ege, p. 33, who indicates , the Shawan overran the Karrayyu Oromo territory from their settlement of Menjar in the year about 1827 and looted a large number of cattle. As a result, the Karrayyu were compelled to pay a tribute of twenty head of cattle per year and the ‘left tusk of all elephants killed or found dead’. Like their Gamuu neighbours, the Karrayyu were said to be in conflict with their Arsi neighbours.

<sup>760</sup> Harris, vol. III, pp. 248, 257 “Sahela Selassie has never yet attempted an expedition in person against these war-hawks, nestled in the lap of the mountains, who fight stark naked, and are besmeared with lard from head to foot’

Krapf who states that on the night of February 3, 1840, they witnessed the fire by which the community of of Ada'aa Bargaa devastated, on a neighboring mountain, all the hamlets which had submitted to the Shawans and brought their- tributes to the monarch.<sup>761</sup> Secondly, the effect of the expedition even on those who submitted and paid tribute to the king was equally devastating. According to Harris, Sahla Sellase did not care about the properties of his subjects. For instance, standing crops were destroyed by the convoy of royal troops in spite of the plea and remonstrance of farmers carrying stones on their heads.<sup>762</sup>

From the above discussion pertaining to the Shawan Kingdom's military expedition and territorial expansion, we may discern that most of the wide ranging military expeditions in the direction of the Tulama territory were made during the last decade and a half of the reign of Sahla Sellase starting from about 1830. The territorial expansion and the conquest of Tulama territory was divided into three phases, during the first phase which was from 1827-1836, the northern Dachii, namely the Galan, Abichu and Jiddaa, who inhabited on both banks of the Chacha river and even as far north as the Barressa and Mofar rivers were the target of Sahla Sellase's military expedition and conquest. Perhaps the Shawan influence also reached as far as Mountain Yarar and the famous market centre of Roge. The second phase was from about 1836-1841 and the Oboo (the Gumbichuu, Gullaallee, Eekkaa Yayyaa among others) were the target of the

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<sup>761</sup> Isenberg and Krapf , p. 215

<sup>762</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 179-80.

military forays. The third and final phase of the expedition was from about 1841 - 1855. By this phase, the Shawan forces crossed the Awash river and hence the Bachoo, Soddoo, Gurage and the Eastern Macha Oromo of West Shawa were also started to be affected. It is said that this phase also marked the firmer subjugation of the Oromo found closer to the heartland of the kingdom.<sup>763</sup>

Following the rebellion and defeat of the famous Oromo *abagaz* of Shawa, Matakoo Borjaa, by about 1837 the kingdom of Shawa's military expedition was shifted towards the west. It seems that there were campaigns and raidings in this direction even before this time but the Shawan's could not pacify and won over to their side the Oromo notables before this time. Perhaps it was by or after this time that Sahla Sellase was able to get the cooperation of two powerful notables, namely that of Abbaa Maallee of Salale and Chammee/ Jaarraa of Mulo Falda.<sup>764</sup>

Yet it seems that although the people who inhabited north of the Awash River were considered tributary of the kingdom, as we have seen above even by about 1841/ 42 the Shawans were not able to pacify the Tulama who inhabited these localities. It is said that the motive of a series of annihilating campaigns which were made in Finfinni, Eekkaa, Ada'aa Bargaa, Lumee, and Serte, in different parts of Mettaa, Sululta and among others around Garaa Gorfoo areas was to

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<sup>763</sup> Ege, p. 192; See Darkawh, p. 29 who mentions that the Libaan and Nonnoo beyond the Awash River were reduced to the tributary status.

<sup>764</sup> Ege, pp. 192-93.

further weaken the Oromo who rebelled and refused to pay tribute time and again.<sup>765</sup>

The year 1842 seems to have witnessed the culmination of Sahla Sellase's military expeditions against multiple Tulama who were found in the center and southern part of Tulama country.<sup>766</sup> Perhaps it was at this juncture that Sahla Sellase's force attacked the Soddo and a certain Yalaliso Oda was appointed as a governor of Aymalal (Soddoo Gurage).<sup>767</sup> However, , the information that we have on the period after 1843 is scanty due to the fact that the Europeans left Shawa by this time and the new travellers and missionaries who sought to enter Shawa and even those who requested for reentry like the famous John Ludwig Krapf were forbidden. As a result, it is unfortunate that we are unable to get the rich accounts left behind by the European travellers and missionaries after this time. It seems that during his last few years, King Sahla Sellase continued the military expeditions in the areas beyond the Awash river towards the Gurage country and the Gibe Oromo states.<sup>768</sup> Moreover, in the west Sahla Sellase made expeditions to Salale and nearby localities.<sup>769</sup>

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<sup>765</sup> Ege, p. 193. .

<sup>766</sup> Ibid., p. 200.

<sup>767</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 529-30.

<sup>768</sup> Ege, p. 194.

<sup>769</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 538-39.

However, this does not mean that Sahla Sellase managed to control and pacify the whole areas inhabited by the Tulama as we have seen elsewhere in the chapter. But the influence of the Shawans over the Tulama varied from region to region. For instance, the Kingdoms' influence over the Oromo who inhabited closer to the center of the kingdom was visible. To this group belong those who inhabited the Shawa Meda, areas closer to the Chacha river and in the hinterlands or districts on the frontiers of Bulga. By about 1840 the Oromo notables who were found in this area had close relations with king Sahla Sellase and were converted to Christianity.<sup>770</sup>

In order to tighten their grip over the Oromo who were found closer to the centre of the kingdom, the Shawans had employed two interrelated policies, namely establishing towns or outposts and evangelization. As a result, a number of towns or fortified villages were founded in these localities. One of the typical examples of the towns founded along the frontier was the famous of Angolala. Another outpost in this area was the residence of the renowned Abichu Chief *Abagaz Marach* at “Ona Aba Dera’, almost just south of the Chacha river. There was also a town further to the west near the magnificent medieval monastery of Dabra Libanos in Salale. Similar towns also founded in the Abichu territory on the Dalata hill and near mount Chole in Qemebet.<sup>771</sup> Moreover, Sahla Sellase invited Harris and

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<sup>770</sup> Ege, p. 194; see also Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 61, 290, 300-301; Harris, vol. II, p. 128, 186.

<sup>771</sup> Ege, p. 195; See also Darkwah, p. 192, who indicates Haramba, Ankobar and Kundi also evolved as frontier outposts in the eighteenth century ; Abir, Ethiopia: *Era of the Princes*, p. 164.

other Europeans in Shawa during one of his expeditions so that they could witness how he could build a fortified house at Karra Barrak, a mountain which separates the Abichu and Jidda abodes.<sup>772</sup>

The foundation of the town and churches usually went hand in hand. Often monasteries were also built in the newly occupied areas but at a distance from the towns. The evangelization of the Oromo was usually carried out after political conquest. Nevertheless, there were very few churches in the Tulama territories during the period under discussion and even up to the 1860s. Meanwhile, in the newly conquered areas initially the notables were baptized and even the king himself acted as their god father. Then the baptism of the notables was followed by the baptism of their followers and hence after a while the whole areas which were the domain of the notables were said to have been officially become Christians.<sup>773</sup>

It seems that the Tulama and notables often heard about gospel before this time but long resisted conversion. For one thing, as Krapf indicates, the Tulama who were found even as far west as Metta Robi, for instance, were not against the gospel but he claims that they hate the Amhara priests who preached the gospel using the language that they could not understand. To use Krapf terms, the Oromo 'are not against instruction; but they hate the Amharic priests, who will

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<sup>772</sup> Harris, vol II, p. 227.

<sup>773</sup> Ege, p. 195.



instruct them in an unknown language, and in things which they consider a heavy yoke'.<sup>774</sup> Secondly, the Christian religion was considered as a dangerous force which would sap their vitality<sup>775</sup>; or as Krapf indicates when a Christian administrator was appointed in their locality they feared "that they would become Christians, and then very soon die. If they get a Christian Governor, they all cry together: " *Ha batu !ha batu !* "—May he perish!"<sup>776</sup>

There is no reasonable shadow of doubt, the Oromo religion was vibrant and little affected by universal religions during the period under discussion. One of the prayers that was said to have been made at Odaa Nabee cited by Krapf is a clear testimony for this. Krapf indicates the Tulama at Odaa Nabee pray to *Waaqa*: "help us to slay our enemies who make war upon us, the Sidama (Christians) and the Islama [Muslims]. O Wak, take us to thee, lead us into the garden, lead us not to Setani, and not into the fire"<sup>777</sup> Moreover, he enlightens us about the grave and religion of the Oromo as follows:

*I saw this afternoon [January 24, 1840], for the first time, [an Oromo] grave in a village called Mutshella. The grave was surrounded by a wall about three feet in height, on which the aloe-plant was growing up very beautifully. The grave was also covered with stones of about two feet in height. I have never seen in Abyssinia a grave adorned so nicely. On asking my [Oromo] boy, why they adorned their graves so beautifully, I received an answer which destroyed my*

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<sup>774</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 201-202; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis*, pp. 136-37, on the other hand, Asma Gyorgis after half a century, during the time of Menilek, indicates that Oromo preferred Islam to Christianity because the Amhara clergy hated them.. He further comments they were of the opinion that Christianity cannot be comprehended by those whose forefathers were non-Christians and hence, they did not preach gospel to them. Trimingham, p. 109 also claims that the Oromo became Muslims so as not to minimize the influence of the Amhara.

<sup>775</sup> Ege, pp. 195-96.

<sup>776</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 151

<sup>777</sup> Krapf. pp. 63-64.

*pleasure. He told me, that the [Oromos] are of opinion, that as soon as the above mentioned plant grows on the grave of a person, he begins to get righteousness before the Wake[Waaqa, God], and goes to him. However, the [Oromos] have an idea of retribution, as they believe that a good man goes to the Wake, and a bad one to the fire of the Setanat, or Geni [Satan]. As I asked [Oromos], who have no connexion with the people of Shoa, I suppose that this is an idea of their- own.<sup>778</sup>*

Rather it seems that the Oromo influence in Shawa can be noticed even among the royal families. For instance, Harris indicates that among the Oromo Kallus, the Wato, who inhabited the Mountain Dalacha, around the Awash River were the most universally celebrated, both among the Christians and the Oromo. Harris further indicates that Zanabawarq, the mother of Sahla Sellase was barren before she begot the present king Sahla Sellase as a result of the prayer of the Wato, apparently the Qalluu of the Oromo. To use Harris's words,

*she sought the benediction of " the wandering " Wato," and her nuptial couch being shortly crowned by the birth of Prince Menilek, the happy event was ascribed to necromantic **intervention**. Thus the tribe of the soothsayer is **to** this day left in peaceful occupation of its **mountains** on the bank of the wooded **Hawash**, whilst **the** destroying hand of the Amhara presses **in wrath** upon the head of the surrounding heathen.<sup>779</sup>*

Harris further indicates that the Oromo Qalluu were equally venerated among the Christians of Shawa and also influenced by the practices of this indigenous African religion. "[Oromo] sorceresses are frequently called in by the Christians of Shoa", witnesses Harris, "to transfer sickness, or to rid the house of evil spirits, by

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<sup>778</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 196-97

<sup>779</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 29.

cabalistic incantations, performed with the blood of ginger-coloured hens, and red he-goats.”<sup>780</sup>

It is fascinating that even in areas like Darra, which was closer to Wallo, where Islam started to take root, the Oromo traditional religion was also vibrant by about 1840s. Dr Beke unambiguously indicates that in the domains of Marie Saburo, one of the chiefs of Darra, the people were followers of Oromo religion. “There were only two or three Muslims, and one Christian, a debtera, who did not even live in the village. But as a result of their interaction with people of the two religions, they have adopted much from each, though they still remain pagans.”<sup>781</sup> Moreover, he indicates, Marie Saburo’s servants, *balagasha* (men armed with Shield and spear) who escorted him on the way to Dima Gyorgis, before crossing the Abbay’ ‘performed certain religious ceremonies. They all squatted down by the side of the river, holding a green spring in each hand, whilst one repeated a prayer in which I heard “Ya Wak!” more than once repeated...”<sup>782</sup>

According to Svein Ege, military expedition, establishing towns and assimilation were the most important factors which punctuated the relations between the kingdom of Shawa and the Oromo who were found in the border districts. The Oromo chiefs and notables were the most important section of the society mainly

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<sup>780</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 50.

<sup>781</sup> Beke, p. 389; See also Harris, vol. II, pp. 357-58.

<sup>782</sup> Beke, “Diary”, p. 398.

affected by the assimilation policy. In doing so the Shawans were able to create a wide-ranging segment of faithful chiefs “whose interest were identified with those of the king and ...a buffer zone against potential rebellious tribes and increased their own power.”<sup>783</sup>

Notwithstanding the multifaceted Shawan kingdom’s attempt to control and pacify the Tulama, they were unable to strictly control the areas which were far from the centre of the kingdom. The more distant Tulama *gosa* often paid tribute, but the king hardly interfered in their internal affairs. For instance, it is said that the Galan Oromo who inhabited on the Robi Gomaro river did not to obey the orders of royal emissaries accompanying itinerants as a result in May 1840 the king himself accompanied pilgrims who went to Dabra Libanos for the anniversary of Abuna Takla- Haymanot so as to guard them against Oromo inroads. Likewise in 1841 the Tulama *gosa* north of the Gara Gofu Mountains were in revolt. Hence, there is no reasonable shadow of doubt these events clearly manifest that the Shawan’s control of even nearby territories was not secure.<sup>784</sup> It seems that, during the time under discussion, it was a coercive force which bound most of the Tulama to the kingdom of Shawa, according to Krapf, “the southern [Oromos] ...

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<sup>783</sup> Ege, p. 196.

<sup>784</sup> Ege, p. 196

afraid of the King only so long as he is in their territory.<sup>785</sup> Hence there were rebellions and upsurges when they did not feel the presence of that force.

In general, by the last years of Sahla Sellase, the Tulama who were found closer to the centre of the Kingdom were relatively under the strict control and even started to be integrated into the Shawan society by adopting the Amharic language and Orthodox Christianity and formed a buffer zone. However, on the vast plains next to this where the majority of the Tulama inhabited, the Shawans had tenuous hold and in these areas they could not even traverse safely. Apparently the subjection of the former derived from their juxtaposition to the centre of the kingdom, developments on the plains were affected by the faithfulness of the various Oromo notables. Since the kingdom by this time was rapidly and extensively expanded, the integration of the newly conquered areas takes time. As a result, rebellions and insurgencies were the order of the day, especially when the kingdom was perceived to be weak and when power vacuum was created at the centre. Therefore, the death of Sahla Sellase was not an exception and was attended by universal uprisings on the Tulama plains. Moreover, the next twenty years were said to have been a period of decline in contrast to Sahla Sellase's reign.<sup>786</sup>

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<sup>785</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 198-99

<sup>786</sup> Ege, pp. 200-201; Darkwah, p. 32.

Meanwhile, the Tulama of Borana and Darra were hardly affected by King Sahla Sellase military campaigns. For one thing it seems that this part of Tulama territory was more organized and the transformation from the egalitarian *Gada* system to the monarchical system was more advanced in these localities than among the Tulama who inhabited the open plateau of Shawa. Secondly, there is no doubt that they also had better access to modern weapons than the Oromo who were found in the south. Thirdly, it said that Sahla Sellase feared that they would create a united front with *Ras Ali II*, the Yajju dynasty, and also with other principalities found in different parties of Wallo against Shawa; fourth, he did not want to disturb the trade route which went to Gondar and Tigre from Shawa through which limited number of armaments and essential exotic goods reached Shawa; finally he might have interested in the existence of the Oromo buffer zone between Shawa and the northern Ethiopia. Therefore, the campaigns he made in this direction were defensive and he favoured the use of intrigue when he dealt with the notables of these localities.<sup>787</sup>

Another locality where the Shawan encountered stiff resistance up to that time, although seems to have been pacified recently, was in the area inhabited by the splinter Tulama sub-group known as Jiilee in northeast Shawa. According to Harris, they were “a wild and savage race, whom the Christians declared to be the

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<sup>787</sup> Abir, *Ethiopia: The Era of Princes*, p 153.

most hardened, cruel, and insubordinate wretches in the whole world, who would take a life for the possession of the veriest trifle.”<sup>788</sup>

Sahla Sellase’s territorial expansion and expeditions were not limited to the Tulama territory since as early as this time, if not before, it seems that the sovereigns of Shawa had also the desire of ‘reconquering’ the areas which were overrun by the Oromo following the sixteenth century population movement, which is named the ‘favourite project’ by Harris, ‘noble desire’ by Darkwah and the ‘great project’ by Svein Ege. The Shawan sphere of interest by the early 1840s stretched beyond the Awash River to the Macha Oromo territory in the west and to the Soddo Oromo land in the southwest.<sup>789</sup>

However, Harris indicates that in spite of his perennial and extensive territorial expansion, King Sahla Sellase failed to formulate an efficient policy so as to bring permanent peace and tranquility in these areas. Therefore, his tenure in these areas was shaky and insecure. He further indicates,

Three annual expeditions made throughout a period of thirty years, for the purpose of collecting the revenues of the crown, have hitherto proved ineffectual to the preservation of permanent tranquility amongst the tribes subjugated by his ancestors; and the Sertie Lake, with other morasses, remain monuments of the dire disasters which sometimes attend his usually successful arms. He neither

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<sup>788</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 335-36.

<sup>789</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 37-38; Darkwah, p. 28 ; Ege, pp. 34, 191. Ege indicates that the areas beyond the Chacha river were not under the effective control of the Shawans although their sphere of influence extended beyond it to the Macha Oromo territory in the west and up to the Awash river in the south and even to the Gurage land.

erects fortifications, nor does he establish outposts; and the government being continued in heathen hands, the tributary tribes rebel during each rainy season, only to be resubdued as soon as it is over—the insurgents often tendering their renewed allegiance the instant they perceive the crimson umbrellas of state, but more frequently delaying until the locust-like army of the Amhara has swept their fair fields, and like the devastating stream from the volcano, has left a smoking desert in its train.<sup>790</sup>

It seems that it was not due to the lack of interest by the Shawans to establish fortifications or outposts deep inside the Tulama plains, but as we have seen elsewhere, they were not even confident enough to confront the Tulama for more than a day because if the latter got time to mobilize they could put in danger the Shawan forces. Apparently, the conspicuous advantages of the Shawans were surprised attack and numerical superiority.<sup>791</sup>

Notwithstanding King Sahla Sellase's perennial and widespread military expeditions against the Tulama, it seems that there were areas that were not affected or oblivious of the campaigns and even did not hear about Sahla Sellase. The best example in this regard was some parts of the Salale which were under the hegemony of Abba Maallee. Perhaps it was spared from Sahla Sellase's shattering military expeditions because Abbaa Maallee had amicable relations with the king or the geographical locations of some of the areas were not suitable for Sahla Sellase's cavalry force as the case in point is the Lelisa area which is located on the Salale part of the Jama river valley. In this regard, Beke

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<sup>790</sup> Harris, vol. III, pp. 38-39.

<sup>791</sup> Harris, vol.II, p. 190.



indicates, the *Shum*(agent )of Lelisa, who accompanied him from Wogiddi to a locality in Darra called Abado informed him that the local community were oblivious about Sahla Sellase. It is fascinating that when he mentioned the name of Sahla Sellse they innocently asked him, “ who he was, and whether he was a *shum* of Abba Moalle's!<sup>792</sup> Moreover, Beke indicates, when the servant of Sahla Sellase, who was in Salale ‘called out “Ba Negus”, but finding that not to answer, he was adopted the country adjuration, “Ba Moalle amlak-by Moalle’s God.”<sup>793</sup> Moreover, Beke indicates, a Tulama informed him that ‘in his country they are acquainted with three Christian states, which they distinguish as Sidama Gojjam or Sidama Goshu, Sidama Sahelu and Sidama Botor; the first meaning Gojjam governed by Dejjach Goshu, the second Shoa governed by Sahela Selassie( of which name Sahelu is a common contraction), and the third....my informer was of the opinion that Sidama Botor means Kaffa...”<sup>794</sup> This Beke’s account lucidly indicates that for the subjects of Abbaa Maallee all the states mentioned were their neighbours or found in the nearby localities and they were independent of all or they were on their fringes.

But this does not mean that the whole part of Salale was unaffected by Sahla Sellase’s march. Otherwise, Beke himself indicates the next Sahla Sellase’s

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<sup>792</sup> C.T. Beke, "A Diary Written During A Journey in Abessinias [sic] in the years 1840, 1841, 1842 and 1843" (Microfilm). Mss. 18/A/1 and 18/A/2. ADD 30, 250A, pp. 410-11.

<sup>793</sup> Beke, “A Diary”, p. 370.

<sup>794</sup> Beke , “ A Diary” , pp. 261-62, according to Beke Sidama was the term which was usually applied to Christians in general.

march was in the direction of Salale and further states, “ This is something new, as it was always understood that it could be to the south; but these things are kept secret as long as possible”<sup>795</sup>.

To put it in nutshell, there is no reasonable shadow of a doubt that as a result of King Sahla Sellase’s persistent campaigns, the Tulama were ruthlessly devastated and terrorized not to speak about the loss of properties. It is often said that in some cases the whole villagers were annihilated of which the typical example was the inhabitants of the beautifully secluded valley of Finfinni. Therefore, the period of Sahla Sellase was one of the darkest chapters in the interaction between the Tulama and the Kingdom of Shawa. To put in perspective, if for most of the other Oromo subgroups except for the Wallo Oromo, the reign of Menilek was a time of hardship and suffering and massacre, for the Tulama it was simply the continuation of what had been going on at least since the second half of the eighteenth century.

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<sup>795</sup> Beke, “A Diary”, p. 350.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **THE TULAMA NOTABLES AND THE KINGDOM OF SHAWA CA. 1840S**

As we have seen in the previous chapter, King Sahla Sellase was able to make wide-ranging campaigns deep into the Tulama plains after the turn of the 1830s. One of the prime factors which spurred his punitive and pillaging campaigns was the political fragmentation among the Tulama which was manifested in the rise of petty chiefs in different parts of Tulama territory. His alliance with the Tulama notables like Matakoo, Sheshego, Marachi, Abbaa Maallee, Chamee/ Jaarraa, and the Buneo Borrii families of Ada'aa also greatly abetted him to be successful in his forays. Therefore, in this chapter, we shall shed some light on when and how these notables came into being by defying the age-old egalitarian Oromo *Gada* system and the genealogy of their interactions with the kingdom of Shawa's rulers in general and King Sahla Sellase in particular.

The years around the 1840s were the period of transition for the Tulama. It was by this time that the process of socio-political transformation among the Tulama started to be observed. Nonetheless, unlike Wallo, the Gibe Region and parts of Wallaga ( Leeqa States) where the socio-political system of the Oromo had evolved from the traditional egalitarian system to a full-fledged monarchical system, here the conditions seem to have been characterized as in between the

regions where the Oromo monarchs were evolved and the age-old egalitarian *Gada* polity persisted. The British philologist, who visited Shawa and the Tulama territories, enlightens us about the mode of Oromo governance by about the 1840s as follows:

*Although most of the [Oromo] countries were without any settled form of government, it is not to be imagined that they are in a state of anarchy. Each tribe has its own chief, ruling districts of greater or less extent, whose authority, it is true, is rather suited for and exercised in times of war than in those of peace, when the traditions of the nation, as presented by the elders, and public opinion, have more to do with the government of each tribe than the will of the abba-dula or chief – literally warrior. In Enarea[ Limmu Enarya], Guma and Kaka Jimma[ Jimma Abba Jiffar] , however, regular hereditary government exist, in which the absolute power is vested in the hands of a sultan or king.<sup>796</sup>*

From the passage, we may discern that although the war leaders known as *Abbaa Duulaa* started to act at least as *quasi-permanent* leaders and played pivotal roles during wars, the government of different *gosa* was still in the hands of the *Gada* officials. Therefore, the transformation was not complete among the Tulama but there is no doubt that some of these notables started to defy the *Gada* system, and the transformation was already underway. Therefore, it is imperative to dissect factors that paved the way for the emergence of chiefs among the Tulama and the nature of the Tulama polity of the time.

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<sup>796</sup> C.T. Beke, "On the Origins of the Gallas" in *The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* , volume Thirteen ( London, John Murray , 1843), pp. 255-56/ Microfilm no. 8/ F/6 IES/

## **Abbaa Duulaa or Chiefs: the Nature of the Tulama Oromo Polity in the 1840s**

Before dealing with the interaction between the Tulama notables and King Sahla Sellase, it is imperative to highlight the internal socio-political and economic dynamics of the Tulama during the period under review. There is no doubt that the beginning of socio-political and economic transformation among the Tulama had determined the pattern of the Tulama's relations with the kingdom of Shawa in general and their notables with King Sahla Sellase in particular.

It seems that in the sixteenth century, the Oromo had had a single system of Gada classes, but between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries, as they settled in large areas, slightly different versions of *Gada*<sup>797</sup> came into being. Ensuing the sixteenth-century Oromo expansion, after the Michelle *Gada* (1554-1562) destroyed the famous Jan-Amora Corps<sup>798</sup> in Fatagar; the Macha -Tulama subgroups founded their *chaffee* (*Gada* centre or assembly) at Odaa Nabee.<sup>799</sup>

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<sup>797</sup> For the role of the *Gada* system in the history of the Oromo, see Asmarom Legesse, *Gada: Three Approaches to the Study of African Society* (London, 1973). According to Asmarom, an authority on the *Gada* system, " the *Gada* system is a system of classes ( *Luba*) that succeed each other every eight years in assuming military, economic, political and ritual responsibilities----", P. 8, as well as C.F. Beckingham, and G.W.B. Huntingford, (ed and trans), *Some Records of Ethiopia, 1593-1646* (London, 1954 extracts from Abba Bahrey's History of the [ Oromo].

<sup>798</sup> Jan Amora Corps was one of the well-known military subdivisions of the Christian Kingdom during the sixteenth century which guarded areas like Fatagra which was later on occupied by the Oromo. See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p.18 for further information pertaining to the Macha - Tulama Oromo occupation of the area under review.

Later on, when the Macha-Tulama Confederation disintegrated, Odaa Nabee became the exclusive *chaffee* of the Tulama.<sup>800</sup>

At Odaa Nabee the various Tulama subgroups sent their delegates known as *Sanachaa* (*Shanachaa*) *Biyyaa*, that are elected representatives of the people who sat at the *chaffee*. And here the entire 'presidium of the ruling *Gada* class in Tulama assembled to formulate laws that could not be done at lower levels and to revise and promulgate laws that would serve for the coming eight years'.<sup>801</sup>

By the 1840, according to Svein Ege, there were three confederations of the Tulama, namely the Torban Oboo, the Dachi, and Bachoo. However, Svein Ege uncharacteristically messed up the geographical locations of the so-called three confederations of the Tulama. For instance, he erroneously indicates that most of the Oboo confederation was 'situated between the Mugar and the Awash rivers'. Nevertheless, the Tulama subgroups that had inhabited mainly the land between the Mugar and Awash rivers belong to the Bachoo. Similarly he indicates that the third confederation consisted 'most likely the Metta and Bachoo in the south east'<sup>802</sup>. Yet the Bachoo are found in the southwest not in the southeast.' Again

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<sup>799</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p.18.

<sup>800</sup> Ibid, pp.41-42; Bayru, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, P132; Arnesen, pp.223-24.

<sup>801</sup> Dinsa Lepisa Abba-Jobir, "The Gada System of Government, Sera Chaffe Oromo" (LLB Thesis, Addis Ababa University, 1975), pp.11-12; Karl Erik Knutsson, *Authority and Change: A Study of the kallu Institution Among the Macha Galla of Ethiopia* (Goteborg, 1967), pp. 122-23.

<sup>802</sup> Ege, pp.78, 80.

Mettaa is the major subgroup of Bachoo and there is no need to mention them as discrete Tulama subgroups. Yet it seems that Ege was not cognizant of the fact that the Torban Oboo were also subdivided under the Dachi, he did not tell us why he has categorized them as separate tribes'.

However, these may not indicate the fragmentation of the *Gada* polity among the Tulama. Even Ege might have mistook the so-called three confederations for the entire presidium at Odaa Nabee which consisted nine officials called 'Saglan Yaa'ii Boorana' (the nine Borana assembly), namely the *Abbaa Bokkuu*, who were the chief officials, and were three in number. The first among three *Abbaa Bokkuus* was the president and the two were the vice presidents. They were traditionally known as *Waraana Sadeen* (the three spears). Binding decisions could be made only when these three reached complete unanimity. The second group of the nine of the Borana assembly also consisted of three leaders of the popular assembly at the *chaffee*. They were the *Abbaa Chaffee*, chairman of the assembly; the *Abbaa Dubbii*, speaker who presented the resolution of the *Saglan Yaa'ii Booranaa* to the assembly; and the *Abbaa Seeraa*, memorizer of the decrees and the outcomes of the Assembly's deliberations. Finally, the third group of officials was less homogeneous. There was the *Abbaa Alangaa*, a judge who executed the decision; *Abbaa Duulaa*, the military leader of the ruling class and

thus of the nation and *Abbaa Sa'aa*, who was considered to have been in charge of the economy.<sup>803</sup>

Moreover, Ege again mistook the three confederations for the three levels of assembly, namely, the highest or pan –Tulama chaffee which was at Odaa Nabee, the intermediate assembly and the lowest assembly (local groups). These three levels of *Gada* assemblies were interrelated and one could not exist independent of the other as long as it functioned smoothly. The lowest assembly of the local group included local members of the *Gada* from whom they elected their local representatives to the intermediate assembly.<sup>804</sup> Yet the three confederations mentioned by Ege might also epitomize the intermediate assemblies of the Tulama which might be the chaffee of the Dachi, Bachoo and the Jiillee, the three major subdivisions of the Tulama as we have seen earlier in the thesis.

Moreover, Blackhurst argues that the decline of *Gada* as a political institution was not a prelude to the complete breakdown of the whole *Gada* system among the Shawan Oromo.<sup>805</sup> *Gada* has persisted because it is not simply a system of

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<sup>803</sup> Gada Melba , *Oromia* ( Khartoum, 1988),p. 13; Knutsson, p. 177, Tsegaye , “ A History of Gar Jarso, ” p. 16.

<sup>804</sup> Gada,p. 13; Knutsson, p. 177, Tsegaye , “ A History of Graar Jaarsoo, ” p. 16.

<sup>805</sup> Hector Blackhurst,, "Continuity and Change in Shoa [ Oromo] Gada System, " in P.T.W. Baxter, and W. Almagor (eds), *Age Generation and Time: Some Features of East African Age Organization* (London, 1978), pp.257, 259-60. He succinctly explains the reasons for the decline of



‘government’; it is also a religious system. Hence, by 1840s Harris witnessed about the significance of the Tulama *chaffee* at Odaa Nabee stating: “Whilst on the banks of Hawash [Awash] stands the venerable Woda Nuwe [Oda Nabe], to which the tribes flock from far and wide to make vows and propitiatory offering...”<sup>806</sup>

Similarly, Krapf indicates that according to the information he got from his servant known as Berkie, who was from Kum Dengay and belonged to the prominent Galan sub-group of the Tulama, the Oromo had religious leaders or priests known as “ Kallitshotsh”( Qalluu) who offered an annual sacrifice to their God ( *Waaqa*) beneath a Qilxuu ( Odaa or Sycamore) tree.<sup>807</sup> “Under the shadow of the Woda[odaa],sacrifices and prayers are offered up ... [Odaa] is esteemed holy, and no one dare fell or harm it without losing his life. Of the greatest sanctity is the Woda Nabi by the river Hawash”, writes Krapf, “where the [ Oromo] every year offer up a great sacrifice and pray to their highest deity..”<sup>808</sup>

From the above contemporaneous witnesses one may discern that the Tulama *Gada* started to be dominated by religious facets, however it is too early to

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and disintegration of the Tulama *Gada* system as a political institution; see also Herbert Lewis, “Wealth, Influence and Prestige among the Shoa [Oromo]”, in Arthur Tuden and Leonard Flotincov, *Social Stratification in Africa* ( New York, 1970) , p.2.

<sup>806</sup>Harris, Vol III, p.49; See also Isenberg and Krapf, pp.151-52; Krapf, pp.76-77.

<sup>807</sup>Isenberg and Krapf, pp.151-52

<sup>808</sup>Krapf, pp. 63-64.

conclude that it had lost all its political aspects at this juncture. As Svein Ege rightly argues, these assemblies were attended by thirty thousand persons or more and such a great meeting could hardly be entirely devoid of political significance and ramification.<sup>809</sup>

It has been discussed everywhere that according to the Oromo *Gada* system, power is transferred from one *Gada* class to the next peacefully and the transfer of power has been made at the centres, in our case at the celebrated Odaa Nabee . Therefore, it seems that the Tulama *Gada* officials used to transfer power from one *Gada* class to the next every eight year during the period under discussion although some powerful *Abbaa Duulaas* started to emerge. Also as we have seen above, the *Abbaa Duulaas* importance was in the time of wars whereas political power was exercised by the *Gada* officials during the period of peace. Again we have to bear in mind that the time under review was when King Sahla Sellase made at least three annual military expeditions in the whole region and no doubt these boosted the importance of *Abbaa Duulaas*. Perhaps the *Abbaa Duulaas* started to violate the *Gada* rules and regulations and declared themselves as the *de facto* head when their terms in office were finished.

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<sup>809</sup> Ege, P.80; see also Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 151-152; Bayru, 1987, pp. 182, 184. Asma Gyorgis on the other hand argues that as many as hundred thousand peoples congregate at Oda Nabe during the reign of Sarsa Dengel (1563–97)

Meanwhile, it seems that the boundary between the *Gada* officials and the newly evolving notables was very much fluid. According to the Tulama oral tradition, most of the notables of the 1840s descended directly from the first settlers known as *Abbaa Lafaa* and *Abbaa Biyyaa* who tied *mendhichaa* and were also the *angafa* (first born) of their respective *gosa*. Of these, the prominent ones were: *Abbaa Maallee* of *Saggoo Grar*, who was the direct descendant of *Odaa Abbayyii*, who settled nine generations ago at *Saggoo*,<sup>810</sup> *Goolee Mooruu* of *Meettaa*, *Wadaay Minoo* of *Muloo*<sup>811</sup> and even the three *Ada'aa* brothers who set out from *Ada'aa Bargaa*<sup>812</sup> with their cattle in search of pasture and *hora* (mineral water) and settled in the current *Ada'aa* district of east *Shawa*.<sup>813</sup>

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<sup>810</sup> *Maallee- Badhaasaa-Guddaa - Baddhaasaa - Ochee - Oborii – Sawa - Lafto - Odaa - Abbayyii*. Informants: *Beqele Simee* (8/6/ 2001, *Saggoo*) and *Haile Mariam Morodaa* (7/6/2001 and July, 2017, *Fiichee*), both of these informans are the descendants of *Abbaa Maallee* and *Gabruu Goobee*, the successor of *Abbaa Maallee*.

<sup>811</sup> Informants: *Fayyisaa Jimmaa* (14/6/2001 and July 2017, *Fiche*) *Abrahaam Tasammaa*( 10/6/2001, *Fiche*) and *Tsegaye*, “ *The Oromoo of Salaalee*”, pp. 27-28 ; *Tufaa Mekonnen*( 06/05/ 2017 *Mulo*)

<sup>812</sup> Despite the popular tradition which indicates that the *Ada'a* brothers moved to *Ada'a* from *Ada'a Bargaa* , *Asma Gyoris* and one of the descendants of the *Boorii* , one of the three *Ada'a* Brothers , *Akilile Teklu Bulloo Jiloo Boorii* indicate that they moved to *Ada'a* from *Darra* and *Borana* . See *Bairu, Asma Gyoris and His Works*, pp. 534-35. *Asma Gyorgis* claims that they settled in *Ada'a* during the time of *Sahla Sellase*, which of course is highly unlikely because by this time the prominent notables in *Ada'a* were not the alleged three brothers rather their sons and grandsons like *Bunnee* and *Jiloo Boorii* as well as the three sons of *Bunee* (*Buttaa*, *Dammoo* and *Shambu*) among others.

<sup>813</sup> Informants: *Badhaadhaa Kiiloolee*, and *Hayla Masqal Wondimu* (6, 18 & 20/ 15/ 2000, *Biishoftuu*), *Akilile- Teklu- Buloo-Jiloo-Boorii* (*Biishoftuu*, July 10, 2017), She is the descendant of one of the three *Ada'a* brothers *Boorii*. As we have discussed in the previous unit *Bunee Boorii* and his sons *Buttaa*, *Dammoo* and *Shabmoo* were among the notables of the time under review; see also *Tesema*, "The Oromo of *Wollega*," pp.35-36, who collected similar tradition in *Wallaggaa* and indicates that “these individuals [the pioneers] had either held important effective posts within the *Gada* titles of *Abba Bokku* or *Abba Dula*.”

Likewise as per the oral tradition collected by Yemiamrew in Borana, the northern Tulama splinter group, there were five pioneering families who came to dominate the body politics of the Borana sub-province of Wallo before their subjugation by the Warra Himano dynasty of the Wallo Oromo. The tradition has it that Boru Bukisa in Gafarsa, Abbaa Haree in Dambii, Choreq and Buttaa in Woglo and Boruu and Abesh Gales in Ayena. But it is fascinating that Mettaa locality of Borana is considered as the land without father.<sup>814</sup> It perhaps meant that unlike the aforementioned localities, in the latter the pioneering Tulama family did not settle ensuing the sixteenth century Oromo expansion.

Similarly Karl Eric Knutsson who conducted research among the Tulama roughly half a century ago also came up with similar tradition and argues that according to the information he got from several hayu,

*a gada office was theoretically open to all. At the same time, however, those elected had to be of 'pure' borana descent preferably belonging to a senior line. Abba boku, 'the gada president' for all the Tulama is, for instance, said to have been always a member of the Galan tribe that has a senior position in Tulama tribal genealogy. With such restrictions imposed on candidates it can hardly have been a question of a free election. Other informants, who unlike the hayu are not to be regarded as special transmitters of gada tradition, also state that the offices passed from father to son at least during the period immediately preceding the conquest by Shoa.<sup>815</sup>*

We have also tried to solicit information from our Tulama Informants pertaining to this issue and they justify this by stating that like the Galan Oromo who are considered the senior *gosa* of the Tulama and had high stakes in the Tulama

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<sup>814</sup> Yemiamrew, p. 79.

<sup>815</sup> Knutsson, p. 172.

*Gada* system, the progenies of the first settlers played similar roles in their respective localities.<sup>816</sup>

But the most important factor which perhaps boosted the power of the pioneers, according to our informants, was that they gradually came to be richer and richer especially during the time of conflict and warfare with the Shawans and their neighbouring Oromo *gosa*. Although at that time land was not a private property and rather owned by the *gosa*, the descendants of the first settlers came to own large number of cattle because tradition has it that the local communities were used to offer to them gifts in terms of cattle during various occasions.<sup>817</sup> In this regard, the British traveler and philologist, Charles Beke enlightens us that when Abbaa Maallee, one of the renowned notables to emerge among the Tulama, was preparing to wage war so as to avenge the death of his cousin by the Jaarsoo chief known as Doolu, considerable number of Abbaa Maallee's subjects brought a "voluntary aid" in the forms cattle, sheep, honey, and salt bars among others.<sup>818</sup>

It seems that the pioneers gradually became richer and richer and this might be among the factors that enabled them to defy the *Gada* rules and regulations and stay on power for more than eight years contrary to the *Gada* rules and

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<sup>816</sup> Informants: Waqshume Bedane, Gadaa Tolaa and Dumecha Tulluu

<sup>817</sup> Informants: Waktola Balcha, Ejara Gameda and Dunmecha Tulluu; Tsegaye, 2002, pp. 27-28.

<sup>818</sup> Beke, p.377 .

regulations. It is interesting that those who administer their respective localities among the Tulama used the title of *Abbaa Duulaa* instead of *Abbaa Bokkuu* or *Abbaa Gada*. Even Krapf characterizes *Abbaa Duulaa* as “a petty governor of several villages.”<sup>819</sup> However, Knutson warns us: “It is important to remember that in the *Gada* system there were special positions as war leaders and that in war time these often became the actual leaders of the tribe with practically dictatorial powers.”<sup>820</sup>

Be this as it may, the economic transformation must also have been another factor for the rise of notables among the Tulama. Scholars who have conducted research among the Oromo areas where full-fledged monarchs emerged give precedence to economic transformation. For instance, Herbert Lewis, who conducted research in the Gibe region indicates that the Oromo monarchs emerged in this region as a result of the development of agrarian economy and the rise of powerful leaders who defied the *Gada* system and came to have private soldiers and controlled land, market places and trade routes.<sup>821</sup>

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<sup>819</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 152.

<sup>820</sup> Knutson, p. 171.

<sup>821</sup> H.S. Lewis, "A Reconsideration of socio-political system of Western Galla", *Journal of Semitic Studies*, ix, 1, (1964), pp. 139-43; see also Alessandro Triulzi, "The Guduru Oromo and their Neighbours in the Two Generations Before the Battle of Embabo", *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, xiii, 1 (1975), p.57; Tesema "The Oromo of Wollega," pp.32-34; Guluma Gameda, "Gomma and Limmu: the Process of state Formation Among the Oromo in the Gibe Region, 1750-1889" (M.A. Thesis in History, A.A.U., 1984), p.32; Oljira, pp.57-58; Tsegaye, " The Oromo of Saalaalee", p. 22

It is, therefore, not by a coincidence that the transformation of the Oromo economy from pastoralism, which was their dominant mode of life during the time of their expansion<sup>822</sup>, to plough agriculture took place first in the areas where full fledged Oromo monarchies emerged. For instance, in the areas like the Gibe region, the relatively rapid transformation was said to have been accelerated by the assimilation of the pre Oromo people like the Ennarya, who had been sedentary agriculturalists and were under the rule of monarchical form of government before the Oromo had settled amidst their abode. This transformation, Mohammed argues, "brought in its train social differentiation and class division within the Oromo society".<sup>823</sup> Mohammed further encapsulates the genealogy of economic transformation and the resultant state formation among the Sadacha Oromo of the Gibe regions, "along with wealth in terms of cattle, there now appeared wealth in terms of land and slaves. Wealthy men fought for the control of more land, and the control of land made kings."<sup>824</sup>

The agrarian peasant economy was, therefore, one of the major, if not the only, material basis of the Oromo monarchs that emerged in three separate geographical regions of modern Ethiopia. It is fascinating that the first Oromo state emerged in Wallo (north central Ethiopia) perhaps towards the end of

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<sup>822</sup> Otherwise it has been well researched by scholars that the Oromo were not pure pastoralists in the period before their sixteenth century expansion. See, for instance, Haberland, *Galla Siid-Athiopiens*, p. 774. and Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 4

<sup>823</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 87-88; see also Haberland, p. 772; Huntingford, in *Some Records of Ethiopia*, Preface, p. lxxviii.

<sup>824</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 90.

seventeenth century followed by the five Oromo monarchs (Limmu- Enarya, Gomma, Gumma, Gera and Jimma) that came into being in the Gibe basin during the first half of nineteenth century and the Leeqa States of Wallagga (Leeqa Qellem and Leeqa Naqamtee) in the second half of the nineteenth century. And of course six Oromo states or principalities came into being in Wallo, namely the Arreloch, the Warra Himano, the Yajju, the Qaalluu, the House of the Gattiroch, and the Borana.<sup>825</sup>

Similar transformation started to appear among the Tulama, although it does not seem to have been completed except perhaps in Borana where the Borana Dynasty or principality was evolved. As to the degree of economic transformation among the Tulama found on the Shawan plateau, Harris witnesses as follows:

*Possessing the finest breed of horses in Ethiopia, and wealth both in flocks and herds, which roam over boundless meadows smiling with clover, trefoil, and butter cups, this **pastoral people** devote their time equally to agricultural pursuits ... aided by a delightful climate, and by a luxuriant, well watered soil. Whilst the women tend the sheep and oxen in the field and manage the hives of bees, the men plough, sow and reap...*<sup>826</sup>

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<sup>825</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 347; Hussien, *Islam in Nineteenth Century Wallo*, pp.116-18,125-8.Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p.88; see also Zergaw Asfera, "Some Aspects of Historical Development in 'Amhara, Wollo' ca 1700-1815" (B.A. Thesis, History, H.S.I.U. 1973), pp. 10-16; It is said that the Arreloch was the first Oromo monarch to emerge in Walioo in the last part of the Seventeenth century which later on absorbed by Warra Himanu, Mamadoch dynasty which came into being by the turn of the eighteenth century.

<sup>826</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 46-47, 122-23 ; Krapf, pp. 75-76 (emphasis added). Harris also indicates that "These [Oromo] tribes dwell with their horses in boundless prairies, engaged, some in the cultivation of the fruitful soil, and others in the pasturage of their numerous flocks"



Harris, on the other hand indicates that the Oromo “dwell with their horses in boundless prairies, engaged, some in the cultivation of the fruitful soil, and others in the pasturage of their numerous flocks.”<sup>827</sup> This means that there was pastoralist as well as those who started the cultivation of crops and it seems that the transformation among the Tulama was not uniform.

From the above discussion we may diagnose that during the period under consideration; most of the Tulama had already started plow agriculture. Yet animal husbandry also continued however the degree of the transformation was difficult to verify. For instance, Krapf also witnessed: "I observe here [around Sululta] as in other places that the [Oromo] leave the plains to their horses, sheep, and cows. ... which they love like their children; while they themselves seek their maintenance by cultivating the mountains..."<sup>828</sup>

It seems that peasant agriculture had already started among the Tulama who inhabited the open plain that stretch from the Chacha up to the Mugar valley and even beyond including Ada’aa Barga and Meettaa Roobii. The same is true to the locality enclosed by the Jama and Mugar rivers in the north and south respectively which encompasses the Salale proper.<sup>829</sup>

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<sup>827</sup> Harris Vol. II, pp. 122-23.

<sup>828</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 197-98.

<sup>829</sup> Ege, p. 76.

In the same token, Harris indicates that in the open plains where Sahla Sellase made perennial raids, the Tulama engaged in mixed farming by about 1840. He indicates that in spite of despicable destruction that the Tulama undergone as a result the expedition, they could recover from the destruction after one harvest since their land was extremely fertile. “Whilst the despoiled husbandman, again tilling his devastated lands, and occupying the brief intervals of peace and repose in agricultural and pastoral pursuits, the fair provinces of the [Oromo],” writes Harris, “ flowing with milk and honey, are speedily reclothed in one sheet of luxuriant cultivation’.<sup>830</sup>

Our informants, on the other hand, posit that until the region’s conquest at the time of King Menilek in the last decades of the nineteenth century, as we shall see later in the thesis, animal husbandry continued to be the leading economic activity since at that time the region was sparsely populated and land was abundant.<sup>831</sup> It seems by that time land was mainly used for grazing cattle which they kept in large numbers. It is said that the extent of land sought after for the production of crops was insignificant as large amounts yields could be obtained from a limited

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<sup>830</sup> Harris, vol. II, p. 207.

<sup>831</sup> Informants: Waaqshumee Badhaanee (16/6/ 2001, Dagam), Gadaa Tolaa (Wuccaalee, June 7, 2001).and Shawaa Nagash ( Fiche, May 2017; See also Mc Cann, *People of the Plow*,pp.203-04; Tekalign Wolde Mariam, p.106; Tsegaye , “ The Oromo of Salaalee”, p. 24.

plots and crops were also cultivated exclusively for their own personal use. On top of that their principal food also comprised meat, milk and cereals.<sup>832</sup>

Moreover, the perpetual incursions of the sovereigns of Shawa into the Tulama land especially in the second quarter of the nineteenth century perhaps made cattle keeping as vital as earlier times since the Shawan armies might easily destroy produces than the herds which they often took with them and flee to the nearby hills and mountains which served them as defensive areas.<sup>833</sup> As a result, the Tulama hamlets and houses by the 1840s were rudimentary akin to those used by pastoralists and they did not build durable residences since they were often destroyed by fire while the Shawan troops made havoc into the Tulama abode.<sup>834</sup>

Therefore, by the time under discussion, animal husbandry was the most important economic activity among the Tulama. This might partly be described by the fact that as a predominantly pastoral people, it was not easy for the Oromo to quit animal husbandry given that there were favourable conditions. This might

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<sup>832</sup>Informants Baqalaa Simee ( 8/6/ 2001, Saggoo) and Waaqtolaa Balchaa ( Garbaa Gurracha, 25/06/ 2001; see also Krapf, pp.75-78; Daba Hunde, "A Portrait of social organization and Institutions of the Oromo of Jibat and Macha in the 19th century till the conquest of Menelik II" (B.A. Thesis in History, H.S.I.U., 1972), pp.34-35.

<sup>833</sup>Isenberg and Krapf, pp.27-28. 197-98; Krapf, pp.75-76 HarrisVol.il, pp.122-23; Tekalign Wolde Mariam, pp.66-67; Tsegaye, " The Oromo of Salaalee,"p. 24

<sup>834</sup>Isenberg and Krapf, pp.27-28, 197-98; Krapf, pp.75-76, on the other hand indicate others constructed houses covered with tached roof enclosed by stone wall for security against the Shawans instaneous inroad.

have been the reason why Krapf witnessed that the Oromo community loved their cattle like their children<sup>835</sup> which is apparently also habitual everywhere among pastoralists.

This being the case for most of the areas inhabited by the Tulama, there must have been exception to this where animal husbandry continued to remain intact during the period under review and even to these days in some localities. The most important exceptions are the Gamu, Jillee, and of course the Karayyu Oromo who inhabited the southeast and eastern part of the region. For instance, pertaining to the former, Harris indicates that the area around the Boset mountain which he characterized as ‘the flowery meadows, shady groves, and rich uncultivated valleys which intervene, being tenanted by the Gamoo [Oromo] [Gamu Oromo], a pastoral tribe, beyond whom are the rebel Loomi’<sup>836</sup>

Perhaps, the Jiillee were the most important Tulama subgroup where animal husbandry persisted beyond the time under review. Even by the end of the nineteenth century their economy continued to be dominated by pastoralism and their staple food was exclusively animal products. For instance, M.S Welby who visited this locality witnesses that “...the [Oromo] who inhabit the banks of Maki River invite me goats and milk which is their sole means of livelihood or

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<sup>835</sup>Isenberg and.Krapf, pp.197-198, Ege, p.68.

<sup>836</sup>Harris, vol,III, pp, 263-64.

subsistence.”<sup>837</sup> Moreover, according to the oral tradition we have collected tilling the land commenced among the Jiillee to a lesser extent during the Italian occupation and in earnest after their eviction ensuing the construction of Wanji Sugar Factory and Koka Dam in 1946 E.C/1954 and 1952 E. C/ 1959/60 respectively.<sup>838</sup>

There is no doubt that the Karrayyuu Oromo remained predominantly pastoralists during the period under review and as they are nowadays. According to Harris, the Karrayyuu land “was an extensive grassy tract stretches away to Fantali, beautifully wooded, dotted over with flocks and herds, and disclosing in every direction the bee-hive cabins of the Karaiyo, a tribe equally rich in cattle and in pasture land...” Moreover, Harris recounts, the Karrayyuu territory was approximately forty by ninety miles in breadth and length respectively and exhibits “a succession of open uncultivated plains, covered with luxuriant shade, and intersected by low range of hills, rising in all the exuberance of turfy grass, dotted with spreading trees—altogether a highly enviable site for a small nomad tribe”<sup>839</sup>

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<sup>837</sup> M.S. Wellby, *Twixt Sirdar and Menelik: An Account of a Year's Expedition from Zeila to Cairo Through Unknown Abyssinia* (New York and London, Harper Brothers Publishers, 1901), P. 123.

<sup>838</sup> Informants: Fiseha Leenjiso ( Biishooftu, July 7, 2017); *Abbaa Gadaa* Babsaa, Roobaa Bune, Shuraa Badhaada, Baqalaa Hawaas, Lama Tumsa Jiruu, Bokonaa, Cuuqalaa, Ifaa Taaliila ( Adama, July 6, 2017 ); Naol , pp. 50-51.

<sup>839</sup> Harris vol. III, pp. 251-52.

Hence, from the above discussion we may not expect a total dissociation of the political system of the Shawan Oromo during the period under review from the age old traditional one. In this regard as Krapf indicates,

*... Every eight years...they appoint a [Hayyuu] or a general Governor, a man who has the reputation of being a warrior and public speaker, who passes through the whole tribe, hearing the complaints of the oppressed, and deciding in cases of justice. He also decides in matters of war and peace. Wherever he goes, he is respected, and supplied with all that he wants. When the eight years have expired, he is called Gedamotsh [Gadamojjii] .... He cannot be chosen the second time. In the south of the Shawa to Hawash, three [Hayyuus] are appointed...*<sup>840</sup>

If we trust Krapf, the pan Tulama *Gada* leaders were elected every eight years by this time and the three *Hayyuus* he mentioned perhaps refer to the three *Abbaa Bokkus* elected every eight years at Odaa Nabee.

This might be the case for most of the Tulama *gosa*; however, it is unwise not to construe that the famous Tulama notables like Matakkoo Borjaa, Marach, Abbaa Maallee and Bunee Boorrii and his sons among others were not defying the *Gada* rules and regulations by this period. Therefore, the internal transformation among the Tulama from predominantly pastoral to mixed agrarian way of life, the intermittent wars they fought with the kingdom of Shawa, and alliance and/or *modus Vivendi* that the newly emerged Tulama notables established with sovereigns of the kingdom of Shawa, especially with Sahla Sellase might have been among the catalysts for the commencement of the decline of the Oromo *Gada* system leading to the socio-economic transformation.

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<sup>840</sup> Isenberg and.Krapf, p. 256.

It is difficult to pinpoint clearly when Sahla Sellase earnestly started to establish diplomatic relations, made alliances and political intermarriage with the Tulama notables. However, what is certain is that Sahla Sellase resorted to these policies after his sporadic military campaigns failed to pacify the Tulama.<sup>841</sup> In this regard, a renowned French envoy who was in Shawa and with whom Sahla Sellase came to establish the most affable relations, Rochet d'Hericourt, writes,

He knew how to make himself respected among the Oromo; he understood that his main strength had to reside in the union of [him with his subject]; and, although the populations that he governed were divided by three different religions, he granted his favors indifferently [to] Muslims, Pagans and Christians. He gave [several positions] in the government of the province of Ifat [a Muslim province] to the Muslims, and he raised Oromos to the position of chiefs; as [he] spread his empire well beyond the limits which his father had left it to him.<sup>842</sup>

Nevertheless the alliances and political marriages did not deter Sahla Sellase from conducting military campaigns. Rather the ever apprehensive and shrewd king of Shawa used both stick and carrot conditionally. As a result, the relations between the Tulama and the kingdom of Shawa was very much fluid and volatile,

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<sup>841</sup> See Dechasa, "A Socio-Economic History", p. 64, who indicates that Argano Wadajo of Jerru Oromo was the first Oromo notable who made a marriage alliance with King Sahla Sellase's family.

<sup>842</sup> C.E.X. Rochet d'Hericourt, *Second Voyage Sur Les Deux Rives De La Mer Rouge, Dans La Pays Des Adels, Et Le Royaume De Choa* ( Paris : A. Betrand, 1848), p. 243 cited in Yates , " Invisible Actors", p. 157; Yates" Acculturation in the Daga, p. 93 who indicates, "Shäwa had an Oromo majority, but the Mânzé dynasty began to assert their dominance in the region. In unifying the province of Shäwa under one banner, alliances were made between Oromo and Amhara rulers, especially during the reign of Sahlä Sellasé (r. 1814-47) which brought Oromo elites into Shäwan Amhara political systems, and provided paths for Oromo contributions. Generally, these Oromo converted to Christianity and became fluent in Amharic."

even his collaboration and alliance with the ostensibly most loyal Tulama chiefs was not always smooth.<sup>843</sup>

Yet the Oromo notables served to boost Shawan control of the Oromo inhabited plains. According to Ege, “they served as peripheral centres” and played crucial roles in maintaining some peace and tranquility in their respective domains and nearby areas, collecting a minor tribute, and especially helping the Shawan army when they marched in or near their strongholds mobilizing thousands of soldiers. Therefore, the alliances of the notables combined with intermittent campaigns helped King Sahla Sellase to maintain a precarious hold over a vast territory inhabited by the Tulama<sup>844</sup>. Therefore, in the following section, we will try dig into this complex and unstable relationships between Sahla Sellase and the Tulama notables on the one hand and between the Tulama and the Kingdom of Shawa on the other.

### **Matakkoo Borjaa: The Pioneering Oromo *Abagaz* of the Kingdom of Shawa**

The most important Oromo notable and with whom Sahla Sellase came to have alliance and who perhaps played a pivotal role in the Shawan territorial expansion was Matakkoo Borja, ‘*abagaz* of the southern frontier and governor of

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<sup>843</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 198-99; Ege, p. 197.

<sup>844</sup> Ege, pp. 198-199.



all the dependent tribes'.<sup>845</sup> It is imperative, therefore, to briefly highlight the relations between Sahla Sellase and Matakkoo Borjaa and how this impacted on the relations between the kingdom of Shawa and the Tulama.

There is no reasonable shadow of doubt that access to firearms was a very decisive factor which tilted the balance of power in the area under review in favour of the Shawan kingdom; however, Sahla Sellase's win over a competent general of Oromo origin, Matakkoo Borjaa was also said to have been of equal importance. According to Sergew: መተኮ በርጃ የሚባል የጀግኖች ቁንጭ ከዚህ በፊት አልነበረም ወደፊትም አይኖረም ተብሎ በሕዝብ አንደበት የተመሰገነ የጦር መሪን አገኘ<sup>846</sup>:: (He [Sahla Sellasse] has got a consummate war leader called Matakkoo Borjaa, unparalleled and will not be paralleled as witnessed by the folk).

Almost similar story has been recorded by a contemporary head of the British envoy to Shawa, Cornwallis Harris who used literally infinite words of admiration to describe Matakkoo Borjaa. According to Harris, he was as a very strong, courageous, handsome warrior and above all the bravest son of Shawa, who not only played a pivotal role in the submission of his fellow Oromo communities on the Shawa Meda to the kingdom but also saved the life of the monarch on more

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<sup>845</sup> Ege, p. 192; See al.so Harris, vol.III, p. 30 where it is stated that there were about fifty *abgazoch* in Shawa, who were considered as the guardians of the border lands or literally  
<sup>846</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, P. 86

than one occasion. As a result, Matakoo was very much respected by the monarch who kept his loyalty by perpetually conferring gifts and promoting him time and again despite perhaps earlier wrongs done by Matakoo or conflict between Matakoo and the monarch. In line with the above Amharic phraseology Harris also encapsulates Matakoo's bravery and beauty as follows: "Like whom to Shoan eyes, None ere has risen and none ere shall rise.... His handsome features and gallant deeds had gained for him the palm of favour among all the dames of the land."<sup>847</sup>

Although often Harris and some of his contemporaries use hyperbolic terms, from the above quotation it is not difficult to imagine that Matakoo Borja was Sahla Sellase's irreplaceable aide. His feat might have been comparable to what Ras Gobana Dachi accomplished during the time of the grandson of Sahla Sellase, Menilek II, in the second half of nineteenth century as we shall see in the subsequent chapter. It seems that Matakoo played a decisive role in the territorial expansion of the kingdom of Shawa on plains apparently closer to the then heartland of the kingdom. "He caused all the [Oromo] of the province of Shoa-Meda to be circumcised and baptized; and having commanded them to wear about their necks the " *mateb*" or cord of blue silk," writes Harris "to fast, and to eat neither with [Muslims] nor Pagans, nor to touch meat that has not been killed in the name of the Trinity, they have thenceforth been denominated

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<sup>847</sup> Harris, Vol. II, pp. 105-106; see also Ege, p. 192.

Christian.”<sup>848</sup> It is said that in this locality Matakoo was feared more than the monarch himself.

Notwithstanding what is stated above, we have to be cautious not to over exaggerate about the complete subjugation of the Oromo who were found on the plains commonly known as Shawa Meda even up until the rebellion of Matakoo in about 1837. For instance, Ege indicates that in 1836 the Europeans who were in Shawa, Combes and Tamisier, travelled from Angolala to Gojjam through Tagulat and Marhabete rather not through the easier route over the plain through Shawa Meda and Salale.<sup>849</sup>

Be that as it may, Matakoo Borja’s ascendancy epitomizes the emergence of new relationship between the sovereigns of the kingdom of Shawa and the Oromo notables. Apparently, as we have indicated in the previous chapters, there were significant notables in Shawa who had Oromo background. However, Matakoo was the first notable who was distinctly identified as an Oromo by both local and foreign writers.<sup>850</sup>

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<sup>848</sup> Harris, vol III, p.37; Ege, p. 33

<sup>849</sup> Ege, p. 193.

<sup>850</sup>It was a titular epithet indicating the status of a function of a military officer filling an administrative post usually on a regional or district level. When referring to a higher commanding officer, such elements as “Wanna (chief) and “Tor” (military) are affixed to it. See Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His works*, p. 869; see also Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 28, who identifies him as war leader of Sahla Sellase.

Little is known about the social background and early life of Matakkoo Borja. Among the Shawan writers the one who touches up on this issue as a passing remark is Sergew Hable Sellase who states that የዚህ ሰው አመጣጥ ከዝቅተኛ ቤተሰብ ከአንጥረኛ እንደሆነ ይነገራል<sup>851</sup>:: (This person has humble background perhaps his family were smith). But Sergew’s conjecture is not convincing in view of the fact that most of the notables that emerged among the Oromo in general and the Tulama in particular were descendants of the pioneers who settled in different parts of central and western part of Ethiopia ensuing the sixteenth century Oromo population movement and Matakkoo may not be an exception. Meanwhile, Darkwah rightly indicates, ‘Medako had risen to this position of favour by sheer 'military talents combined with undaunted personal intrepidity in the presence of the enemy'.<sup>852</sup>

In this regard, the great grandson of Matakkoo Borjaa, a septuagenarian, indicates that the family was renowned for their audacity and valour. He used the following Amharic adage to express this, “የቦርጃ ዘር የአንበሳ ዘር አለበት ይባላል, the family of Borjaa had the gene of lion)<sup>853</sup>. The chronicler of *Ras Gobana Dachi* also indicates, አቶ መተኮ ቦርጃ የሚባሉ ብርቱ ኃያል ጉበዝ ነበሩ::.. ጠምጣማ ዘለግ ያሉ ጫንቃማ 4 ሰሊጢን ጦር 5ኛ አዱቄ የሚባለውን ይዘው ከፈረስ በወጡ ጊዜ መሳት የለ መጣል

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<sup>851</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 86.  
<sup>852</sup> Darkwah, p. 30; Levine, *Wax and Gold*, p. 36 , who also indicates , Matkko had risen to this position one the commander of the Shawan force from that of minor retainer by as a result of his fighting ability.  
<sup>853</sup> Informant: Lij Daniel Jote Mesfin Sileshi Matakkoo Borjaa ( Addis Ababa, July 15, 2017).

ብቻ ነበር ይላሉ<sup>854</sup>:: ( There was a strong, mighty and clever man known as *Ato Matakkoo Borjaa*. He was tall and has muscly shoulder. When he mounts a horse holding four salten spears and the fifth known as *Aduke*, he never misses target and always slays his adversaries).

Meanwhile, *Matakkoo Borjaa* epitomizes not only the collaboration of the Oromo notables with the kingdom of *Shawa* but also their resistance and defiance against the kingdom. *Matakkoo's* great grandson again states with understandable exaggeration, “*Matakkoo* was the first person who attempted coup *d'état* in the history of Ethiopia.” He maintains *Matakkoo* was so courageous and bold that he went as far as the court to dethrone the reigning monarch, *Sahla Sellase*.<sup>855</sup>

The cause of conflict between King *Sahla Sellase* and *Matakkoo Borjaa*, according to contemporary and later writers, was the former's refusal to give one of his daughters to the latter. But why and how *Matakkoo* wanted to establish nuptial relations with the *Shawan* monarch has been recounted slightly in different ways. For instance, according to *Harris* and *Sergew*, many dignitaries and

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<sup>854</sup> “Chronicle of Gobana” n.d. , n.p, ( IE S Manuscript /MSS 4614/ .

<sup>855</sup> Informant: *Lij Daniel (Jote)* , *Mesfin* , *Selashi* , *Jaarraa*, *Matakkoo*. He is currently the president of the Association of Ethiopian Patriots.

nobles<sup>856</sup> envied the amicable relationship between Matakoo and Sahla Sellase and left no stone unturned to saw the seed of animosity between them. For this deed, they deputized *Alaqa* (father) Asrat, who occupied the snug post of a father confessor to the royalty and was said to have been well experienced in all the petty arts of a nasty and sycophantish palace. On top of this, on one fatal festival when the participants were drinking hydromel “a bitter jest was retorted by the exasperated priest’, writes Harris,” a fierce wrangle ensued, and the holy person of Father Asrat was violently spurned against the wall by the strong arm of the hot-blooded chief”.<sup>857</sup>

After the incident, father Asrat left no stone unturned to widen the gulf between Matakoo and King Sahla Sellase. Anyhow Matakoo’s success, prosperity and wild trust of the king as well as the motivating words of “...the deceitful priest to believe that the King would refuse no request preferred by a chief whose services were held in such high esteem, he rashly resolved upon demanding the only remaining favour which the monarch had hitherto withheld”<sup>858</sup> Father Asrat hence misled Matakoo to request the King to allow him to marry his daughter, the

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<sup>856</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 28-29, where it is stated that how as a result of their misunderstanding with Matakko, two dignitaries Ashebir and Gabru were assigned to remote districts at the instigation of Matakko. It is said that these two dignitaries reiterated የቦርጃ ልጅ ከንዱ በምን እንደዚህ ጠነከረለት ይሆን እኔን ቢወረወር ምንጃር። አሽብርን ብወረወር ግድም ጣለን ። ብሎ ተናገረ ይባላል። (How the arm of the son of Borjaa became so strong? He threw me to Minjar and Ashebir to Gedem). These districts were located at the periphery of the kingdom at that time; see also Ege, p. 200.

<sup>857</sup> Harris, vol. II, p. 107; see also Sergew, *Dagmawi Minilek*, p. 122. According to Sergew, *Alaqa* Asrat was renowned for his duplicity ( አለቃ አስራት ነገር በምሸረብ ይታወቅ ነበር).

<sup>858</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 105, 107-108

princess 'Worka-Ferri' (Golden Fruit) or ወርቅ ፍሬን.<sup>859</sup> Pertaining to the name of the princess, Harris's version seems credible, as he unambiguously indicates; 'Belete Shatchau' (Balatishachaw) was a sister of 'Work Ferre and he had participated on the nuptial ceremony of the former.<sup>860</sup>

But in doing so Matakkoo had antagonized King Sahla Sellase and the king refused Matakkoo's marriage request since it was a double breach of etiquette, first the daughter of the king was habitually be given only to somebody from a prominent family; second yet, the request should be tendered by some mediating elders not in person. As a result, the monarch was offended and ordered the imprisonment of Matakkoo at then Shawan state prison located at Guncho, where Walasma Mahammad, the governor of Yifat, was entrusted to supervise. However, Matakkoo was able to escape from Guncho and organize revolt against his master.<sup>861</sup>

After his escape Matakkoo attempted to storm and attack Angolala and fought a bitter war with the royal troops who were able to defend the capital thanks to its

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<sup>859</sup> Harris, vol II, pp. 107-110; Sergew, *Dagamwi Menilek*, p. 123.

<sup>860</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 224-25; Bairu, "Some Aspects of Land Tenure", P. 2 ff. 4; Heruy, *Ya Itiyophia Tarik*, p. 29; Yâ-Bétâ-MângestTarik Madâraja, ንጉሥ ሣህለ ሥላሴ ንጉሠ ሸዋ የዕረፍታቸው መቶኛ መታሰብያ (AddisA bāba, 1940 Ē.C.), pp. 5-8; Levine, *Wax and Gold*, p. 36; Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 133, where Balatishachaw and Work Aferahu (Ferre) were included in the list of offsprings of Sahla Sellase.

<sup>861</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, P. 29; Ege, p. 199; Beke, *Diary*, 156, 159; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, p. 923; Levine, *Wax and Gold*, p. 36.

strategic location.<sup>862</sup> Then it is said that when Matakkoo Borjaa understood he couldn't defeat the royal troops and his followers started to desert him, he took asylum at Salla Dengay, the residence of the mother of King Sahla Sellase, Zanabawarq. As a result through her effective mediation not only Matakkoo 'obtained pardon, but ...eventually restored to all his former dignities'.<sup>863</sup>

Heruy, however, recorded slightly a different story. He claims that after his escape from prison, Matakkoo did not take arms against Sahla Sellase immediately rather in order to buy time he requested *Alaqa* Asrat to reconcile him with the king and the king pardoned him.<sup>864</sup> But this was not the end of the saga of the rebellion of Matakkoo Borjaa. According to Harris, Matakkoo rebelled for the second time as witnessed by the authentic details of eyewitnesses to which, he claims; he devoted six chapters of this volume. The revolt, according to Harris, threatened and shook the kingdom for months, when it was quelled " large offerings were made by His Majesty to all the churches and monasteries throughout the realm, in return for their prayers; and solemn processions and thanksgivings were attended by the exercise of every sort of work of charity and devotion."<sup>865</sup>

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<sup>862</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyoris and His Works*, pp. 536-37 indicates that Matakkoo was even able to burn Angolala.

<sup>863</sup> Harris, vol. II, p. 102.

<sup>864</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p.71.

<sup>865</sup> Harris Vol II, p. 102



But Contrary to Harris’s detailed report about the Tulama uprising against the kingdom of Shawa, the Shawan writers like Heruy remained silent and even recorded a different version of the story. Heruy indicates that when Matakoo took refuge among the Tulama, he tried to convince Bune Borrii of Ada’aa to rebel against Sahla Sellase so that they could form a united front against the monarch. But according to Heruy, Bune was a wise person and responded to Matakoo’s request stating that ንጉሥ ሣህለ ሥላሴ የበደሉኝ ነገር የለምና ካንተ ጋራ ተደርቤ አልከዳም<sup>866</sup>(King Sahla Sellase did nothing wrong against me and I won’t rebel against him with you”. Then Matakoo tried to persuade and even threatened Bune stating that unless he cooperated with him he would go to Ada’aa and invade his territory. To this threat Bune responded, ብትመጣ ምን ቸገረኝ ። ለንተ እኔ አለሁልህ ለልጅህ ለጃራ ልጄ ሽምቡ አለዉ[sic]። ለወንድምህ ለኃይሉ ወንድሜ ጂሎ አለዉ(sic)። ለፈረስህ ለመጋል ፈረሴ ዳማ አለና መጥተህ ሞክረኝ<sup>867</sup>::( Come and try, I am ready to confront you. For your son Jaarraa, there is my son Shambu; for your brother Hailu, there is my brother Jiloo; for your horse Magal, there is my horse Damaa). As a result, Heruy indicates that Matakoo felt that the Oromo would not fight for him against Sahla Sellase and even he feared they would hand him over to the king. Then he decided again to reconcile with the king and murder him treacherously.<sup>868</sup>

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<sup>866</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p.71.  
<sup>867</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>868</sup> Ibid.

But contrary to the above Heruy description, Harris indicates that Matakkoo Borjaa was able to organize a pan-Tulama uprising against Sahla Sellase and “was well assured of receiving every sympathy and protection” from the Tulama. Moreover, as to what galvanized or united the Tulama to combat Sahla Sellase’s force, “ancient wrongs were fully brought to mind, and vengeance was liberally promised. Few were there present who had not suffered either in person or in property,” claims Harris, “from the midnight appearance of the Christian despot: Hereditary feud and quarrel had therefore been laid aside on the soul-inspiring words of the chief.”<sup>869</sup>

It seems that the Oromo who inhabited as far south as the Awash river and around Finfinni, Zequala and Muloo Falda rallied for the cause of Matakkoo Borjaa. According to Harris, Wadaje Girme was one of the commanders of the Tulama battalion who came from the boundless plains of the Awash.<sup>870</sup> However, Heruy indicates that he was the chief of Abichu, where Hailu Borjaa took refuge after the death of his brother, Matakkoo, and became his *mogassa* son.<sup>871</sup>

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<sup>869</sup> Harris, Vol. II, pp. 118, 122.

<sup>870</sup> Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>871</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 73. However, it is said that Wadaje Girme, the renowned Abichu chief was said to have been stabbed to death by his moggassa son, who later on reconciled with king Sahla Sellase through the mediation of his brother in law, Ato Birqe, governor of Bulga and a husband of Matakkoo and Hailu’s sister. Hailu Borjaa perhaps stabbed Wadaje Girme to death because the latter had affair with the wife of the former. When the servants of Wadaje Girme, who ploughed the land of their master, saw this incident at a distance, they started to chase Hailu who mounted on a horse and started galloping towards Bulga from Abichu territory. But Hailu warned them yelling, “አብቸዎች! ዓይናችሁን አጥፍቼ እጃችሁን ቆርጫ ሸሽቻለሁ። እንግዲህ ሞቱን የወደደ ይቅረቡኝ እያለ ድምጹን እያሰማ ስለተናገረ በሚስትህ ነገር መብደልህን እናወቃለንና እግዝአብሔር ያዉጣህ ብለው ተመለሱ። (O Abichu! I am running away by blinding your eyes and cutting your limbs. Hence if you want to die

Anyhow, it seems that the Tulama battalion was assembled in the heartland of Abichu, around the residence of Wadaje Girme or according to Sergew, at Mendida, the residence of the Abichu leader Gomma,<sup>872</sup> before the final showdown with the force of Sahla Sellase at Angolala. In the evening before the Tulama battalion's departure for the warfare lavish feast was prepared and enjoyed by the warriors as a sign of Victory. While they were wining and dining, "the words of contempt burst from every lip. Who is the King of Shoa," writes Harris, "that he should trample upon men braver than himself? Here is our protector and avenger. Medoko is our leader, and he alone shall be our king."<sup>873</sup>

Meanwhile, the first stronghold of the kingdom of Shawa to be shattered by the Tulama battalion was the village named Cherkos located on the opposite side of the Chacha river on a picturesque hill nicknamed by the Oromo, "The Queen of the Hill". It was said to have been occupied by the father of Sahla Sellase and was inhabited by "favourite" Christians of the court. The king and his attendants, according to Harris, gazed at the destruction of the village of Cherkos during one eventful night and even he was warned to leave Angolala for Ankobar; "but his

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in my hands come near me. When they heard this they reiterated "We have heard you were humiliated by the case of your wife" and returned back "may God forsake you".

<sup>872</sup> Sergew, Dagmawi Menilek, p. 124.

<sup>873</sup> Harris, Vol. II. Pp. 124-25.

evening dream had been pleasant, and he was buoyed up by the words of the strong monk".<sup>874</sup>

It seems that for a few days after the destruction of the Village of Cherkos both camps continued to prepare for what Harris called the Battle of Angolala. The battle which was destined to decide the question of supremacy between King Sahla Sellase and the haughty Matakoo Borjaa, which of course would also decide the fate of the Tulama, who were hard pressed by perennial and often wild military expeditions of the King of Shawa. After having amassed a much superior force, King Sahla Sellase finally determined to encounter the Tulama battalion, which was estimated by Harris to be around ten thousand. The important weight given to this encounter by Sahla Sellase and his entourage can be discerned from the following enlightening explication of Major Cornwallis Harris of Great Britain: "Prayers and psalms had been recited the livelong night—vows were made at every shrine in the kingdom — and the ark of the cathedral of St. Michael had been transported from Ankober under a canopy of red cloth," writes Harris, "to shed its holy influence over the Christian army."<sup>875</sup>

The combating forces took their position on the opposite side of the Chacha river on the night before the battle of Angolala. Apparently, Sahla Sellase was the

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<sup>874</sup> Ibid., pp. 130-31; Sergew, Dagmawi Menilek, p. 124.

<sup>875</sup> Harris, Vol. II, p. 131- 133.

commander in chief of the kingdom's force while the insurgent force was commanded and marshalled by the haughty Matakoo Borja. According to Harris, the initiative for the final fray was taken by the repeated shooting from the king's gunmen. But it was ineffective as the distance between the belligerent forces was too great. As a result, a certain gigantic cavalier man identified as Tunkaye leapt forward towards the enemy force and then the Shawan cavaliers soon followed suit.<sup>876</sup>

Simultaneously the cavaliers of Matakoo Borjaa responded to this move 'like the rushing blast' and this led to the unfolding of one of the bloodiest battles ever fought between the kingdom of Shawa and the Tulama. The battle field was within fifty yard from the cataract of the Chacha. Apparently they slaughtered each other and the blood of the combatants poured like flood in the Valley of Chacha River. It seems that the weapons Sahla Sellase accumulated to date became ineffectual and there was hardly any difference between the Kingdom of Shawa and their Tulama neighbours at the beginning of the assault. "The long lance met with little opposition from the cotton robe; and, deprived of other weapons," writes Harris, " Christian and [Oromo], grappling stoutly together, fought with sword and knife, and in the fury of the moment", and in the excitement of the struggle, many

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<sup>876</sup> Ibid., p. 134.

rolled over the frowning scarp, clinging tightly together in the last embrace of death".<sup>877</sup>

As recorded by Harris, Matakoo Borjaa and his sons were valiantly commanding their brigades and they were everywhere in the 'thickest of the fight' during the initial encounter when the Shawan forces 'were reeling from the repeated shock of the wild riders' who ostensibly came from the southern part of Tulama territory, the plains of the Awash river. However, the sudden appearance of a fresh ferocious Manzian forces during the heat of the confrontation played a pivotal role in tilting the balance of power in favour of His Majesty Sahla Sellase. It is said that a young and beloved son of Matakoo, Hailu, was assassinated after the Manzians arrived and this marked the beginning of the end of the saga of the insurgence of the fearless and bravest son of Abichu, Matakoo Borjaa.<sup>878</sup>

The roles played by the troops who came from Manz was recorded by Ludwig Krapf who indicates that when Matakoo Borjaa rebelled against king Sahla Sellase several years ago, and when the monarch was threatened, he requested his manzians kins, " My brothers, my relations, come and help me" As a result they came to help him in multitude and he writes, "decided the royal victory over

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<sup>877</sup>Ibid. , pp. 134-35; Sergew , *Dagmawi Menillek*, p. 125 on the otherhand claims that the force of Sahla Sellase had superiority in armament.

<sup>878</sup> Harris,vol. II. pp. 135-36

the rebel. But this was the first time that they went on an expedition with the King.”<sup>879</sup>

Similarly Harris reports the effect of the arrival of the fresh Manzian force and the final showdown in which the young and beloved son of Matakko, “the youthful Hailoo, sink before his eyes, transfixed by a dozen spear blades”. He also recounts the last desperate act of valour performed by Matakko Borjaa and how he single handedly able to break the enemy force and escape accompanied by few chiefs and his surviving son Jaarraa. “In vain Medoko performed the most incredible acts of valour — his voice had now lost its charm; and, crippled by a spear which had penetrated his shoulder — his proud heart swelling with indignation” Writes Harris, “ he at length perceived that the fortune of the day was not to be retrieved. Cutting his way single-handed through the squadrons of the enemy, he also gave the loose rein to his horse and scoured over the hills.”<sup>880</sup>

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<sup>879</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 301; see also Harris, vol. II, pp. 348-49 where similar story was recorded. “During the rebellion of Medoko, the King in his distress sent an urgent message to the people of Mans, saying “My brothers, my relations, hasten to help me ! ” and pouring in at the summons, the wild hordes arrived in time to decide the issue of the dubious day. But so well aware is the despot of his precarious footing, that he relies entirely upon the tact displayed by his mother, avowing her northern subjects to be his own flesh and blood, upon whom he could not impose a heavy taxation. The only tribute paid, therefore, is in *sekdat*, a black woollen cloth woven of the raven fleece of the native sheep of the country, and invariably employed in the manufacture of the royal tents..”

<sup>880</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 135- 136; Sergew, *Dagamwi Menilek*, p.124, however indicates that Matakko was defeated because his men were reluctant to fight despite his plea except his martyred son, Hailu.

But immediately after this Matakoo conferred with the a few Tulama chiefs who had escaped from the agonizing battlefield, proclaimed his intention of accompanying them no further deep into the Tulama territory. It is fascinating that Matakoo and Jaarraa took reverse course and went to the heartland of the kingdom where they were granted asylum at the monastery of Affaf Woira, the residence of Abba Salama, its chief monk.<sup>881</sup> According Sergew, Matakoo and his son Jaarraa were retired to the Emmamehrat church<sup>882</sup>. This is fascinating that although Matakoo Borjaa fought in order to topple Sahla Sellase from power, he was still very much attached to the kingdom and believed that the Ethiopian Orthodox Church priests would reconcile him to his overlord.

As Matakoo expected the priests of Affaf Woira intervened and held a long and stormy conference with King Sahla Sellase and reconciled Matakoo to the king. However, despite the intercession of the monks, those who conspired against Matakoo Borjaa including the royal confessor again continued to widen the rift between the king and his former favourite vassal, whom the conspirators designated as “the murderer of the Amhara’ and “fresh accusations of disloyalty were daily carried to the palace; and the monarch, hourly assailed on every side,

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<sup>881</sup> Harris, Vol.II, pp.136-38.

<sup>882</sup> Sergew, *Dagamwi Menilek*, p.125.



at length resolved to test the feelings of his vassal, by the offer of an inferior post in the unhealthy country of Giddem.”<sup>883</sup>

As a result, Matakko was summoned to the court to be informed about his new appointment as governor of the remote district of Giddem. Again *Alaqa* Asrat misadvised Matakko not to accept the post in order to further spoil his relation with Sahla Sellase. As he was advised by the priest, Matakko declined to accept the new post in polite ways and rather requested the king — "The slave of the King desires only to be near the person of his master." This was the last straw in the big jigsaw pertaining to Matakko and King Sahla Sellase's relations which also epitomize the relations between the kingdom and the Tulama in general and between the kingdom and the Tulama notables in particular- which has been punctuated by cooperation at a time and resistance at another<sup>884</sup>. In this regard, Harold Marcus claims, 'a Menzi dynasty alternately cooperated or fought with Oromo'.<sup>885</sup>

This was an ideal opportunity for the conspiring band and they wasted no time to eliminate the haughty Matakko Borjaa. If again Harris report is sincere, Matakko Borjaa was perhaps awakened from his bed by a band that surrounded his bed and told him a story that the sovereign would come to accept personally

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<sup>883</sup> Harris, vol. II. pp. 141-42.

<sup>884</sup> Ibid. p. 143; Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 125.

<sup>885</sup> Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, p. 50.

Matakkoo's rejection of appointment in Giddem, and other stories, they unexpectedly stabbed his muscular rear "with five long bladed knives".<sup>886</sup> This incident therefore sealed the love and hate relations that Matakkoo had with King of Shawa. However, before his last gasp the haughty Matakkoo yet again performed the last drama, undaunted by the stab he rose awkwardly from his seat, and instantly removed his virtuous sword from the case and cut the neck of one of the conspirators, Gifawassan.<sup>887</sup>

It is fascinating that although Heruy was silent about the Tulama's uprising under the leadership of Matakkoo Borjaa which was recorded in detail by Harris, his analysis of the way Matakkoo was assassinated was almost similar to that of Harris with only slight difference. Heruy indicates, Matakkoo was waiting for the opportune moment to murder the king of Shawa and when the king came to Angolala , Matakkoo also went there along with his son , Jaarraa. Then his son Jaarraa knew that his militant father planned to kill the king and hence he informed the *aggafari* ( court official) of the king, Shaka Gifawassan , ይህ የእኔ አመለኛ አባት አሳቡና አኳኝነት ሁሉ አላማረኝምና ከንጉሡ ጋራ አነጋግረኝ ብሎ የነገረህ እንደሆነ አይመኝም ብለህ ከልክለዉ እንጂ እንዳታስገባዉ<sup>888</sup>:: ( I am not happy with my militant father's condition today, if he asks you to let him talk with the king please do not allow him. )

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<sup>886</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 143-44.  
<sup>887</sup> Ibid., pp. 144-46.  
<sup>888</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 72.

As he was advised by Jaarraa, the *aggafari* did not let Matakko meet the king, rather he allowed him to stay in the guest house. Then the *aggafari* went to the king and informed him this issue and the king ordered the *aggafari* to inform Matakko that he would be entrusted Feyal Amba as a place of rest. Then Matakko angrily said that I had requested you to allow me meet the king not to request the king to give me a territory. Then again the *aggafari* went to the king and informed him that Matakko declined to accept the offer, and requested the king, may I bring him in front of you chained. Then the king warned the *aggaafi* stating that “do not try to arrest him, he is dangerous and he will kill you”. Then the *aggafari* bragged saying that “it is you who empowered Matakko, otherwise he is the son of *gabbar* or peasant, and I will bring him in front of you in chain.” Then the *aggafari* informed Matakko that the king ordered him to be arrested. In the squabble that followed the courtiers attempt to imprison or assassinate Matakko, the latter rose up abruptly and uttered ‘*Tokkicha Farda*’ (the only son of Farda) and stabbed *Aggafari* Shaka Gifawassan and rushed to confront Sahla Sellase but a person known as Tenkegna by Heruy<sup>889</sup> and Tenkuway by Harris preempted him and stabbed Matakko Borjaa to death. However, according to Darkwa, Matakko Borjaa rebelled against Sahla Sellase twice and defeated in both cases and finally ‘executed for high treason.’<sup>890</sup>

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<sup>889</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophya Tarik*, pp. 72-73.

<sup>890</sup> Darkwah, p. 30.

But it is unclear why Heruy failed to record the confrontations between the Tulama battalion led by Matakoo and the kingdom of Shawa.<sup>891</sup> However, another well-known Shawan writer, Asma Gyorgis indicates, Matakoo rebelled by about twentieth year of the reign of Sahla Sellase, that is about 1833. Matakoo then formed a united front with the Oromo and devastated the land of the Amhara. Even contrary to Harris report that we have seen in detail above, Asma Gyorgis indicates that Matakoo even managed to destroy and burn down Angolala and other fortresses.<sup>892</sup>

As to the legacy of Matakoo Borjaa and how he was remembered when Harris was in Shawa:

*To this hour the stain is settled upon the spot; and it is daily before the eyes of the perpetrators of the outrage. The stern warrior is never mentioned within the precincts of the palace, and rich offerings are continually made to all the churches in the land, to dissipate the unpleasant dreams which too frequently haunt the royal couch. But although the name is now used amongst the Amhara only to still the unruly child, the Gallant Medoko is the darling theme of the roving [Oromo]. The heathen female still draws the long tress across her flashing eye at the recollection of his fate; and the chief yet thinks with respect of the brave spirit, who could quell the feud and the intestine quarrel, and who had led the wild host with success, to spoil the dominions of the Christian despot.<sup>893</sup>*

Asma Gyorgis also maintains that the assassination of Matakoo sent a shockwave among the Tulama and it was one of the reasons behind their

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<sup>891</sup>Almost all contemporary European travellers recorded about Matakoo's rebellion and his confrontation with Sahla Sellase of course including the head of the British envoy to Shawa who devoted chapters to this issue as we have seen; see also Isenberg and Krapf, p. 301.

<sup>892</sup>Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 536-37.

<sup>893</sup>Harris, Vol II, p. 146; Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, P. 125 on the other hand indicates የአገሬዉ ሰዉ አሁንም አልረሰዉም። ሕፃን ልጅ እንኳን ታሪኩን ተርጉሮ ያወራል ( Matakoo Borjaa is well remembered among the people of Shawa even a child can recite the history of Matakoo very well. )

submission to Sahla Sellase when the latter made expedition in their villages.<sup>894</sup> After the death of Matakoo, 'Chara [Jaarraa], the son of the rebel, was one of the only two members of the disgraced family to whom Sahela Selassie had become reconciled. It is further indicated that a young Jaarraa resembled his father, 'not less in appearance than in gallant bearing'. Jaarraa was said to have initially advised King Sahla Sellase to arrest his father but the former did not pay attention to this advice. But Jaarraa subsequently enlisted in his father's army and fought against the monarch. At the end the rebellion was again put under control following the death of Matakoo<sup>895</sup>. It seems that Jaarraa was reconciled with the Sahla Sellase after the death of his father and even came to occupy influential office within the kingdom. For instance, when Birruu Lubo and his men, the hereditary ruler of Warra Qallu district of Wallo, threatened the northern part of the kingdom of Shawa, the Shawan 'Amhara' cavalry was put under the command of Jaarraa to defend the northern districts especially Gedem.<sup>896</sup>

However, one of a great grandson of Jaarraa indicates that after the death of Matakoo, the the sovereigns of the kingdom of Shawa alienated the family of Borjaa very much alienated and they were not even allowed to own property for some time. He further claims that they reentered the aristocratic family after *Ras*

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<sup>894</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 540-41.

<sup>895</sup> Harris, vol. II, P. 103; vol. III, 248-49. Another member of the family of Matakoo who reconciled with Sahla Sellase might have been his brother Hailu. See also Ege, pp. 167, 187, who indicate that Hailu was later on appointed as governor of perhaps a district known as Messer Meder. Similarly one of Matakoo's favourite concubines, Lady Asagash, also retained her estate in Barakat area of east Shawa.

<sup>896</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 352-53.

Makonnen Walda Mikael Guddisaa (father of the future Emperor Hayla Sellase (1930-1974) restored them thanks to his amicable relations with Selashi Jaarraa Matakoo later on towards the end of nineteenth century.<sup>897</sup>

### ***Abagaz Marach of Abichu: Successor of Matakoo Borjao***

Another notable of Abichu origin who established good relations with *negus* Sahla Sellase by about 1840 was *Abagaz Marach*, whose seat of government was at a place known as Wona –Badera, south of Angolala. Contemporary European writers as well as later Shawan writers characterized *abagaz Marach* as ‘the governor’ or ‘the king of all’ the Oromo who were by then dependent on the kingdom,<sup>898</sup> “an influential Governor of the tribe of the Abedtshoo [Oromos]’ or “the most influential chieftain of the [Oromo] in the south of Shoa’ whose seat was south of Angolala,<sup>899</sup> a person appointed as an abgaz by Sahla Sellase<sup>900</sup> and finally a notable very much empowered by Sahla Sellase (ሀብትና ሹሞት በገፍ ለገሰዉ ( who gave him unlimited wealth and power) according to Sergew.<sup>901</sup> From the accounts of the Europeans and reliable Shawan sources, we may discern that Marach was perhaps another Abichu Oromo notable who came to establish amicable relations with King Sahla Sellase like Matakoo Borjaa and a

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<sup>897</sup> Informant: Lij Daniel Jote (Addis Ababa, July 15, 2017).

<sup>898</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 40

<sup>899</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 61. 187.

<sup>900</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 534-35.

<sup>901</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 192

certain Sheshego, who perhaps occupied the post of the *abagaz* of Oromo before him.<sup>902</sup>

Meanwhile, Harris claims that initially, Marach was “a bitter enemy” of Sahla Sellase but “this haughty warrior chief, renowned for his bravery, was finally gained over by bribes and by promises of distinction and advancement, which have actually been fulfilled”. It seems that even later the relationship between *Abagaz* Marach and King Sahla Sellase was far from perfect. It is said that he was under the stringent control of the king and every move of the *abagaz* was under the serious scrutiny of the extremely suspicious and capricious king of Shawa. As a result, Marach had been more than once suspected by the monarch for ‘divulging the royal projects’.<sup>903</sup> However, Sergew contradict Harris’s conjecture and claims that the loyalty of Marach was undisputed and that is why Sahla Sellase appointed him as *abagaz* of all the Oromo after Matakoo was killed (ታማኝነቱ ተፈትኖ የወጣለት ስለነበር ሙተኮ ከተገደለ በኋላ በአሮሞዉ ክፍል አበጋዝ አድርጎ ሾመዉ).<sup>904</sup>

When Harris was in Shawa, *Abagaz* Marach apparently visited the royal court accompanied by thousands of Abichu legion and participated in the spectacle in which about eight to ten thousand cavalymen participated. This event was described by Harris in the following glowing terms:

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<sup>902</sup> Ege, p. 198.

<sup>903</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 40.

<sup>904</sup> Sergew, Dagmawi Menilek, p. 192

*Last of all came the tall martial figure of Abogaz Marech, chief of all tributary [Oromo] in the south, at the head of his Abdichu legion, who closed the display of barbarian tactics. Three thousand in number, the sea of wild horsemen moved in advance to the music of the kettle drums, their arms and decorations flashing in the sun beam, and their ample white robes and long sable braided hair streaming to the breeze. At the shrill woop of their warlike leader, with a rushing sound of a hurricane, the glittering cohort clattered past the royal stand, and the moving forest of lances disappeared under a cloud of dust<sup>905</sup>.*

The cavalry parade on the day was said to have been followed by the firing of the ‘first-ever rocket’ in Shawa in the evening, which took by surprise both the assembled subjects and His Majesty. When the projectile was fired, Harris claims, all the spectators “fell flat upon their faces. Horses and mules broke loose from their tethers and the warrior who had any heart remaining, shouted aloud”. Moreover, the firing of the rocket had also impacted the Oromo who inhabited near Angolala. After the Oromo “witnessed the meteor-like explosion from the vicinity ascribed the phenomenon to the use of potent medicines, and declared that since the Gyptzis [Egyptians] could at pleasure produce comets in the sky and rain fire from heaven”, they decided to submit to the Shawans not to be annihilated by the king, who with the aid of the “Egyptians’ (white men) got the upper hand in armament.<sup>906</sup>

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<sup>905</sup> Harris Vol.II, pp. 84-85, 152.

<sup>906</sup> Harris , vol. II, pp. 85-86



Meanwhile, of course, as presumed governor of the Tulama, *Abgaz* Marach was supposed to participate in the expedition along with the royal force.<sup>907</sup> For instance, during one of the Shawan's campaigns to the Tulama territory, *Abagaz* Marach was said to have been among the commanders of the vanguard force under the title of *werari* (invader). "The van, consisting of skirmishers, is invariably led by the great governor of the subjugated [Oromo], under the title of *Worari*. With Abogaz Marech, who now filled this important post," writes Harris, "were the tried governors of Bulga, Kembibit, Gola, and Ootuba, whose respective detachments are Christians, and who are all drawn from the neighbourhood, where intercourse with the [Oromo] is most frequent"<sup>908</sup>

During one of the campaigns, Harris reports, how *Abagaz* Marach's force along Sheshego's and of course the imperial force destroyed the Oromo hamlets and their corn fields in the locality known as Germama. " Rolling on like the waves of the mighty ocean, down poured the Amhara host among the rich glades and rural hamlets, at the heels of the flying inhabitants — trampling underfoot the fields of ripening corn, in parts half reaped," reports Harris, and widespread in front of them the huge herds of cattle which foraged in the open field. At a distance their devastating advance was manifested by the blazes that surge forward in sequence from the thatched roofs of every assaulted hamlet; and the destruction made at a distance of numerous miles on the right direction by the detachment of

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<sup>907</sup> Ibid., p. 167.

<sup>908</sup> Ibid., 178-79.

*Abagaz Marach*, who campaigned along with the elite division, reinforced by the unit led by *Ato Shishigo*, commander of the cavalries who came from Shawa Meda. Finally the latter's force alone rejoined the imperial force with the booty of about three thousand head of oxen and recounted their efficacious feats to the sovereign, who, naturally, occupied the top of an nearby hill.<sup>909</sup>

In addition to engaging in the military forays, *Abagaz Marach* watched over the border, maintained peace and tranquility in the Shawa Meda and the adjoining Oromo plains to the south and southwest of Shawa, facilitated the collection and payment of tribute, and recruited large squadrons of cavaliers for the expeditions. His position was equivalent to that of an Amhara administrator, and he might be dislodged at the sovereign's will.<sup>910</sup>

### **Queen Chamme<sup>911</sup> / Tshamieh<sup>912</sup> and Jaarraa Gadaa of Mulo Falle/ Falda**

The other Tulama notable family who came to establish relations and allied with King Sahla Sellase was the family of soi-disant Queen/ *Giftii Chamme* of Mulo Falle. She was apparently queen of Mulo and its environs after the death of her husband Gadaa Wadaay and led her *gosa* successfully in the wars of territorial

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<sup>909</sup> Ibid., p.. 217.

<sup>910</sup> Ege, p. 198; Abir, *Era of the Princes*, p. 167.

<sup>911</sup> Spelt by Harris

<sup>912</sup> Spelt by Krapf

aggrandizement and got prominence over the family of Wadaay Minoo, who were said to have been pioneers in the area around Mulo Falle.<sup>913</sup> As we shall see in the next chapter, the family of Wadaay Minoo got supremacy in this locality on the eve of the region's absorption into the kingdom.

Around 1840, the son of Chamee, Jaarraa Gadaa, got preeminence and started to correspond with King Sahla Sellase. This is because Harris indicates that at that time, Jaarraa was among the most influential Oromo chieftains who own allegiance to the Kingdom of Shawa.<sup>914</sup> On how the relations between this family and King Sahla Sellase commenced, Harris indicates that the latter took initiative for matrimonial overtures. But it seems that initially the queen was not ready to establish nuptial relations with the king of Shawa and requested the king to fulfil a near-impossible precondition. "Sahela Selassie, who... relies more upon political marriages than upon the force of arms, sent matrimonial overtures to this lady, and received for answer the haughty message," writes Harris, " that if he would

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<sup>913</sup> Informant: Tufaa Mekonnen, Banti, Shushu, Wadaay ( May 2, 2017, Mulo );See also Ege, p. 90, who indicates that she must have been the widow of a powerful war leader; Sergew, Dagmawi Menilek, p. 92, indicates she was the governor of Mulo after the death of her husband. According to the Octogenarian informant the paternal genealogy of the son of Chamee goes as follows: Jaarraa- Gadaa- Wadaay – Bakkalcha- Awwaree- Bulgaa. Her name is spelt as Chamee in English or Caamee according to Qubee Afaan Oromo (Oromo alphabet) or in Amharic ቄሌሜ. But for the sake of convenience, we have used the way European travellers, especially Harris and Krapf, spelt.

<sup>914</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 42.

spread the entire road from Angollala with rich carpets, she might perhaps listen to the proposal, but upon no other conditions!”<sup>915</sup>

As one expects, it seems that the request of the queen, which was tantamount to an insult, infuriated the King of Shawa, and hence he declared war on Mulo Falda. As a result, Harris claims, “The Christian lances poured over the land to avenge this insult offered to the monarch of Shoa, and the invaded tribe laid down their arms; but Gobanah, foster-brother to Jhara[Jaarraa], and a mighty man of renown,” writes Harris, when he heard the King of Shawa was going to burn their hamlets, he decided to confront them with, However, “At this critical moment an Amhara trumpeter raised his trombone to his lips. The [Oromo], believing the instrument to be none other than a musket, fled in consternation and their doughty chieftain surrendered himself a prisoner at discretion.”<sup>916</sup>

As a result, the doughty Gobana is said to have been frustrated, heartbroken and was on hunger strike for several days. But the marriage of a daughter of Queen Chamme to King Sahla Sellase became ultimately the price of his ransom. Perhaps it was after the king married the daughter of Chamme that Mulo was incorporated into the kingdom of Shawa. Following the conquest of Mulo, Sahla Sellase “might have exclaimed, with the Roman dictator, " Vent,vidi, vici"

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<sup>915</sup> Harris, vol. III, p.42; see also Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 92

<sup>916</sup> Harris, vol. III, pp. 42-43; Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 92, indicates rather Gobana was an Oromo notable whom Sahla Sellase compelled Chamee to marry.

conferred upon Jhara[ Jaarraa] the government of all the subjugated [Oromo] as far as the sources of the Hawash, and to the Nile in the west,” writes Harris. Moreover, Harris indicates that Jaarraa Gadaa was a person who had martial character, courageous, determined, and who exercised important duties almost unilaterally without the ken of Sahla Sellase.<sup>917</sup> Similarly, Sergew also indicates that after Sahla Sellase defeated Queen Chammee, he baptized her son Jaarraa and made him administrator of the area. Henceforth, Jaarraa became a loyal friend of the king and continuously participated in the expeditions made by the king.<sup>918</sup>

Be this as it may, political marriages were used in Shawa to connect the Oromo notable families with the kingdom. Harris, with understandable exaggeration, indicates Sahla Sellase had about five hundred concubines. Of these concubines, seven resided in the palace, thirteen on the outskirts of the palace, and the rest in different parts of the kingdom. From these concubines, the monarch had many offspring, where the boys were appointed as administrators of various districts, while the girls were “bestowed in upon whomsoever his despotic Majesty may think proper to select among the nobles and magnates of the land.”<sup>919</sup> In the same token, Abir also indicates that the king’s daughters were given to the Christian

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<sup>917</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 43.

<sup>918</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 92.

<sup>919</sup> Harris, Vol. III, pp. 16-17; Ege, p. 105; Informant: Liqa Kahnat Qalehiwot Habtewold (interviewed by Journalist Yonas Kebede, *Tizetachi Be EBS*, Sept 21, 2021), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mbK9CTFNA>. According to the oral tradition we have got from the town of Ankobar, about 100 concubines of King Sahla Sellase reside in two localities found closer to the town of Ankobar.

governors and baptized Oromo notables. In doing so, the king not only achieved greater loyalty and unity but also encouraged the expansion of Christianity among the Oromo notables.<sup>920</sup>

The process of making nuptial relations was carried out for political purposes and also consisted of an exchange of gifts between the monarch and the parents of the young girl. Ostensibly, therefore, one of the concubines of King Sahla Sellase was the daughter of the renowned Oromo Queen, Chamee of Mullo Falda,” who occupies a niche in the harem, a dower consisting of two hundred milk cows, one hundred teams of oxen with ploughs, a number of horses,” writes Harris, as well as” many slaves of both sexes, gdssele[leopard] skins, and other choice peltries, and five hundred vessels of virgin honey, with twelve cats to watch over and protect them from the inroads of the mice.”<sup>921</sup>

Meanwhile, Krapf also enlightens us that there was an amicable relationship between Jaarraa Gadaa of Mulo Falllee and King Sahla Sellase of Shawa. For instance, when Krapf requested Jaarraa to allow him to preach the gospel to the people of Mulo, he indicates that Jaarraa replied,” If the King, my uncle, will allow it.” Moreover, Krapf further indicates that when he requested to allow him to take some of the youths of Mulo to Ankobar to teach them there, it is fascination again

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<sup>920</sup> Abir, *Ethiopia: Era of the Princes*, p. 164

<sup>921</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 17; See also Ege, p. 90

Jaarraa replied, " I shall come to Ankobar after several months, and then we will speak about this matter, and you will speak with the King,"<sup>922</sup> From this we may discern that Jaarraa had a special affection for and/ or had amicable relations with negus Sahla Sellase of Shawa, whom he named 'my uncle', which indicates beyond a shadow of a doubt Jaarraa's unusual loyalty to the king.

Like other Tulama notables Jaarraa also participated in the expedition, along with Sahla Sellase's force. For instance, during one of the campaigns made from January 31 up to March 4, 1840, when the Shawans made an expedition to Mettaa, Krapf reports, the force of Queen Shamee and her son Jaarraa campaigned with them.<sup>923</sup>

Last not least, Krapf indicates that one of the manifestations of the relations between the Mulo notables and the kingdom of Shawa was that the former continuously sent envoys to Ankobar.<sup>924</sup> Perhaps her son and of course deputy, Jaarraa was one of her emissaries, who visited the royal palace perhaps to pay tributes or bear gifts not only to the monarch but also to other dignitaries, including expatriates like Krapf, who indicates Jaarraa brought to him an ox and "promised if he should come again to Shoa in September next," writes Harris" he

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<sup>922</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 209-210; Ege, p. 198

<sup>923</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 215

<sup>924</sup> Ibid., P. 223

would present me with a fine horse. I replied that I should be glad if he would deliver to me some Youths, whom I might instruct.”<sup>925</sup>

### **The Ada’aa Notables and the kingdom of Shawa**

The ethnic and linguistic boundary in this direction is very much difficult to demarcate clearly as it is true to other Tulama areas adjoining the kingdom of Shawa during the period under review. There must have been strong ties between the Oromo who inhabited Ada’aa and Lume districts and the Amhara of the provinces of Bulga and Menjar. It seems that Bulga and Menjar, stretching up to Mt. Bokan, were ostensibly mainly inhabited by Amhara, albeit a considerable number of them might have been assimilated Oromo. Moreover, due to the expansion under Sahla Sellase, the Oromo of Ada’aa and Lume had been already converted to Christianity and a large number of priests from Bulga started to settle in the districts.<sup>926</sup>

Our oral informants similarly indicate that Menjar was formerly inhabited by the Oromo and even the name Menjar itself is derived from two Afaan Oromo terms, namely *mana* and *ijaari* (build the house). Similarly, the Amhara and the Oromo lived side by side in and in the hinterlands of Bulga and the interaction between these two communities was very much vibrant. For instance, informants indicate

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<sup>925</sup> Ibid, , P. 231

<sup>926</sup> Ege, p44



that the term Bulga is also derived from the Afaan Oromo term Buliika (pass the night here). It seems other toponyms in these localities like Balchi in Minjar and even the generic name the local Oromo used to identify Minjar, Adaaree Abbaa Booraa etc indicates the presence of Oromo in these localities.<sup>927</sup>

It is difficult to specify clearly when Menjar and Shenkora were occupied by the kingdom of Shawa. But our informants indicate that the Amhara settlement in these localities initially was a peaceful and gradual process. They indicate that when individual farmers came and started to cultivate cotton and other crops, the Oromo pastoralists allowed them to settle in the locality stating 'since we have ample territory, let them cultivate the land. In this way, the Amhara communities settled in Menjar and Shenkora initially but later on, they indicate that it was by gun power (tokko nyatti- a gun to which one bullet is loaded at a time) that they expelled the Oromo from these localities.<sup>928</sup>

According to Harris, the well-known Ada'aa notable who had intimate relations with king Sahla Sellase and acted as governor of the entire Oromo territory which bordered the kingdom of Shawa on the left or the east located on both sides of the Awash River was Bunee Borii, whose sons, namely 'Botha' (Buttaa), Shambu,

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<sup>927</sup> Informants : *Abbaa Gadaa* Babsaa, Roobaa Bunee, Shuraa Badhaada, ( Adama, July 6, 2017 )

<sup>928</sup> Informant: *Abbaa Gadaa* Babsaa (Adama, July 6. 2017). Yet they indicate their encroachment towards the Tulama territory has continued to date.

and Dammoo, also came to establish amicable relations with the king.<sup>929</sup> However, it is difficult to pinpoint the time of the commencement of the interaction between the Ada'aa notables and kingdom of Shawa. Perhaps the relations between the notables of Ada'aa and the kingdom of Shawa can be traced back at least to the time of the grandfather of Sahla Sellase. In this connection, James McCann indicates that 'the initial "conquest" of Ada by the expanding Amhara state must have taken place at some point in the late eighteenth century, its Oromo leadership under no more than a loose tributary relationship between the Amhara and their southern frontier.'<sup>930</sup>

As was true to other Tulama notables, including the famous Matakoo, as we have seen above, the relations between Sahla Sellase and Bune Boorii of the Mountain Yarar area were not always smooth. Hence Harris indicates, 'Bunnie was, in consequence of some transgression, imprisoned in Aramba; and Batora [Boxoraa], another potent [Oromo] chieftain, appointed in his stead'.<sup>931</sup> However, this action of the king led to the conflict between the family of Bune and Batora, who also belonged to one of the prominent families of Ada'aa. Batora was perhaps the son of Adii, who, in turn, was the uncle of Bune. This is because,

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<sup>929</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 41. To use Harris's words, "Botha, Shambu, and Dogmo are the sons of Bunnie, whose father, Borri, governed the entire tract styled *Qhera Meder*, "the country on *the left*," which includes all the [Oromo] tribes bordering on both sides of the Ha wash in the south of Shoa."

<sup>930</sup> McCann, *People of the Plow*, p. 198; see also Ege, pp. 28-29 who states that the Oromo who were found next to Menjar, the Lume were incorporated during the time of Asfa Wassan and it marked the southernmost territory of Shawa.

<sup>931</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 41; Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 93

according to the Ada'aa tradition, the three founding fathers of Ada'aa, who migrated from Ada'aa Bargaa to their current settlement, were Boorii, Adii and Walato.<sup>932</sup> As a result, Bunee was freed and restored to his position by King Sahla Sellase. "But this impolitic transfer of power creating inveterate hatred between the two families," writes Harris," each strove to destroy the other. Bunnie was, in consequence, liberated and restored to his government'.<sup>933</sup>

Sergew also recorded a story almost similar to the one mentioned by Harris. He indicates that Bunee rebelled against Sahla Sellase several times, but he was often imprisoned for a short period and released and reinstated to his post. But eventually, he was captured and incarcerated at Har Amba. At this time, Sahla Sellase appointed Batora as the governor of Ada'aa and its environs. Nonetheless, Batora also rebelled against Sahla Sellase, and even the Shawans could not capture him. As a result, it is said that the following couplets were composed perhaps to elucidate his bravery and the Shawan's inability to capture or kill him. Amharic Gloss

ምንስ ኣረመኔ ምንስ ኣሮሞ ቢሆን	Even if he is a 'pagan' and an Oromo;
ቡሮር ኣይሞትም ወይ የወጉት እንደሆን <sup>934</sup>	Why cannot he [Batora] be killed if stabbed by Spear.

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<sup>932</sup> Informants: *Abbaa Gadaa* Tashomaa Kabtmar Odaa (Biishooftuu, July 8, 2017); see also McCann, *People of the Plow*, p. 197.  
<sup>933</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 41.  
<sup>934</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, P. 93.

However, what Harris recorded above seems tenable. It seems that Bunee was reinstated to his post and administered Ada'aa and its environs for a while before his tragic death. It is said that while Bunee and other Ada'aa notables were returning from an expedition they made to Arsi,

*Suddenly surrounded by the enemy, and slain, together with four chiefs, his confederates, and nearly the whole of his followers. His sons were then severally invested with governments; and Boku, the son of Batora, was at his father's demise entrusted with the preservation of the avenues to the Lake Zooai, long an object of the royal ambition*<sup>935</sup>.

One of the chiefs killed with Bunee was Batora, and that is perhaps why his son, Bokkuu, was entrusted to supervise the trade route that went to the Lake Dambal or Zeway area. Similarly, the sons of Bunee continued to fill the gaps left by the death of their father and resumed their relations with King Sahla Sellase.

According to Ludwig Krapf, by February 1840, Shambu was the governor of the area around Mt. Yarar and had cordial relations with Negus Sahla Sellase. The major duty of Shmabo was to ensure the safety of the trade route and the traders who came from the Gurage country and beyond to the big market of Rogge, located at the foothill of the Yarar Mountain. It is to be noted that this was part of the route that came from Tajura and Zeila and passed through Shawa to the Gibe region from which Sahla Sellase immensely benefited by levying "an import duty of ten per cent in kind on every caravan of merchandize and an import and export

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<sup>935</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 41-42.

duty of four amoles [salt bar] upon every slave that passed through his country”, writes Krapf.<sup>936</sup>

It seems that Shambu was educated at Ankobar, along with the children of the king. Moreover, his brother (perhaps Dammoo), who was the governor of another district was also converted to Christianity.<sup>937</sup> Both Shambu and his brother, Dammoo, might have learnt at Ankobar, this is because Harris also indicates that ‘Dogmo, who resides in the mountain of Yerrur, was educated in the palace; and his undeviating attachment to the crown has been rewarded with the hand of one of the King's illegitimate daughters’.<sup>938</sup>

This fascinating story which of course depicts the complex relations between the Tulama notables and King Sahla Sellase was also encapsulated by Sergew Hable Sellase as follows:

ንጉሥ ሣህለ ሥላሴ ትንሹን ልጅ ደሞን አንኮበር አስወስዶ ካሠለጠነውና ክርስትና ካስነሣው በኋላ ሴት ልጁን ወይዘሮ አስካለን ዳረላትና የአባቱን ግዛት ሰጠው። ደሞ አደን በሚያስተዳድርበት ጊዜ ዘላቂ ሰላም በሀገሩ ሰፍኗል። በጥጫማሪም ክርስትና በእዚያን አከባቢ እንዲስፋፋ ከፍ ያለ አስተዋጽኦ አድርጓል። ከነዋሪው ህዝብ ብዙው የእርሱን አርአያነት በመከተል የክርስትና እምነት በመቀበል ተጠምቋል። የዚያን ጊዜ ነበረ እንግዲህ አምልኮተ እግዚአብሔርን ለማጽናት ታስቦ የረር ቱዎድሮስ በተራራው ሰሜን ምስራቅ ጫፍ የረር ሥላሴ በተራራው ምዕራብ ደቡብ ጫፍ

<sup>936</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 216-17; Ege, p. 198; Darkwah, p. 128; see also Sergew, Dagmawi Menilek, p. 116, Sergew indicates that the Rogge market was the place where four trade routes converge, namely the first route that came from Southwest, from where items trade like coffee, civet musk, and different spices come, the second route went to Mugar area, the third route went to Gondar and Massawa and the fourth route went to the east.

<sup>937</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, pp. 223-24.

<sup>938</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 41.

ደግሞም መንጅግ ሥላሴ በአብቹ ቆፍቱ ላሊበላ በአድኦ እርሱ ከሚኖርበት የተተከሉት ። እርሱም ሲሞት የተቀበረው ቆፍቱ ላሊበላ ነበር።<sup>939</sup>

King Sahla Sellase brought Dammoo to Ankobar, educated, baptized him, allowed him to marry his daughter, Ms Askale, and gave him his father's domain. When Dammoo administered Ada'aa there was permanent peace and stability in the territory. Moreover, he played a pivotal role in the expansion of Christianity in that locality. Following his example, most of the inhabitants accepted Christianity and were baptized. It was by this time that to consolidate Christianity in the area, Yarar Tewodros Church on the northeast summit, Yarar Trinity Church on the southwest summit of the Yarar mountain, and also Menjig Trinity church in Abichu and Koftu Lalibela Church in Ada'aa, where he lived, were established. When he died, he was buried at Koftu Lalibela.

The most important incident which indicates Ada'aa notables' strong relations with King Sahla Sellase was the assassination of the son of *Ato* Bezuneh, nephew of Sahla Sellase by a Muslim merchant residing at Rogge. By this time, *Ato* Jiloo Boorii, Dammoo Bunee Boorii, along with *Ato* Berkie, governor Bulga recruited a detachment of five thousand cavalries to avenge the assassination of the nephew of the king. As a result, they made a forced march through Bulga, although their campaign 'foiled in their principal object by the precipitate flight of the rover whose life they sought, the whole of his family and followers were massacred, his effects plundered, and his house burnt to the ground'.<sup>940</sup>

Further to the south, at a place known as Qajima, there was also another notable known as Jiloo Boorii, brother of Bunee, who established a working relationship with the kingdom of Shawa. It is said that Jiloo also married the daughter of King

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<sup>939</sup> Sergew , *Dagmawi Menilek*, P. 93

<sup>940</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 252-53.

Sahla Sellase. The tradition of this marriage was still alive in Ada’aa, and it is said that among those who accompanied Jiloo on the wedding day to Ankobar, a person was left behind and forbidden to get in. Then he informed Jiloo shouting:

Afaan Oromo

Gloss

Yaa Jiloo! Yaa Jiloo! Nadhoowwaan

Oh Jiloo! Oh Jiloo! They forbade me to get in. Then Jiloo answered:

Maal goona siir’ata Sidaamaatti [Amaaraatti]<sup>941</sup> What can we do, it is the regulation of the Sidaamaa [Amhara].

According to an octogenarian great-granddaughter of Jiloo Boorrii, Sahla Sellase’s daughter who married Jiloo passed away when she was giving birth, and unfortunately, Jiloo and the princess did not get offspring. In connection to this, it is said that when they were mourning the death of Sahla Sellase’s daughter, one of the mourners who came from Shawa composed the following couplet,

Amharic

Gloss

የምን ገለል ገለል የምን ወደ ጥላ

No need to hide and cover it;

መቼ ይገባ ነበር መንግስት ለጋላ።<sup>942</sup>

An [Oromo] did not deserve to be a governor or a ruler.

<sup>941</sup> Informant: Hayla Masqal Wondimu (18/5/ 2000, Qajiima).

<sup>942</sup> Informant: Akilile Teklu Buloo Jiloo (Biishoftuu, July 10, 2017), She was an octogenarian and the descendant of one of the three Ada; a brother. She also indicates that the three Ada’a brothers came from Wollo Boorana several generations ago. This hymn is said to have been coined by a certain lady who came from Shawa to attend and lead the burial ceremony of the wife of Jiloo.

The Ada'aa brothers are also said to have played a pivotal role in the foundation of Churches in Ada'aa. Especially the foundation of the present-day Biishoftu town's first church, Qajiima Gyorgis (Qajiima St. George Church), around 1844, was said to have been associated with the death of Jiloo's wife, daughter of King Sahla Sellase. The Qajiima tradition recount that the people of Qajiima made an arduous journey to Mount Yarar carrying the remains of Jiloo's wife, since Yarar Trinity ( Sellase) church was said to have been founded by Bune Boorii two years before the foundation of Qajiima, perhaps in 1841/42. It is said that when King Sahla Sellase observed this, he advised Jiloo to establish a church in his locality. Thus, in this way, the tabot (ark) of the Qajiima St. George Church was brought from the neighbouring district of Bulga.<sup>943</sup> We have conflicting information about the founder of the Qajiima Gyorgis church. The direct descendants of Bulloo Jiloo claim that it was founded by Bulloo and even there is a customary song sang during epiphany which goes of course a mixture of Geez and Amharic as follows:

ባወት ግባ ባወት	Return in peace to the temple
የቡሎ ጁሎ ታቦት <sup>944</sup>	The tabot (ark) of Bulloo Jiloo).

From the above discussion, we may discern that the Ada'aa notables were among the Tulama notables who came to establish cordial relations with King Sahla Sellase of Shawa by ca. 1840s. Similarly, cultural intercourse has already been

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<sup>943</sup> Informants: Akilile Teklu Buloo Jiloo, Aster Akililee Teklu (Biishoftuu, July 10, 2017), and Dabtara Hayal Masqal Wondimu (18/5/ 2000).

<sup>944</sup> Informants: Akilile Teklu Buloo Jiloo, Aster Akililee Teklu (Biishoftuu, July 10, 2017).



well underway between the Oromo, who inhabited this part of the Tulama territory and the Amhara, who inhabited the neighbouring districts of Bulga and Menjar. Perhaps it was the second locality after Shawa Meda where the influence of the Christian Amhara culture had started to be felt vividly during the period under review.

### **Abbaa<sup>945</sup> Maallee (Badhaasaa Guddaa) of Salale and the kingdom of Shawa**

As we have seen earlier in the thesis, the relations between the Salale notables and the neighbouring Amhara principalities of Morat and Marhabete date back to the time before Sahla Sellase's ascendancy. These principalities served as a springboard from where the Shawan Amhara cultural and political ethos diffused into the Salale area. Especially we have seen that relations between some of the Salale notables like Guddaa Badhaasaa (the father of Abbaa Maallee) and the Morat ruler, Tidu Abbisa preceded the latter's integration into the Shawan kingdom. Tidu even used the Salale area as a haven when Asfa Wassan invaded his principality, and the Salale notables hosted him. However, after Morat and Marhabete's incorporation, the Salale area came into contact and started to share

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<sup>945</sup> Baqalaa Simee (8/6/ 2001, Saggoo), Abba Hayla Maryam Morodaa (7/6/2001 and July, 2017). Tradition has it that the term Abbaa is an honorific title similar to another Oromo term gooftaa, which is equivalent to the English term 'lord.' Oral informants use the terms abbaa and gooftaa interchangeably and identify him as Abbaa or Gooftaa Maallee. Similar tradition indicates that Maallee was either the horse name of Badhaasaa Guddaa or an alternative or regal name. Otherwise, his descendants did not include Maallee in their genealogy. For instance, one of the surviving descendants of Abbaa Maallee recounts her genealogy as follows: Zanabach- Zeleke – Nagawwoo-Badhaasaa- Guddaa- Badhaasaa –Ochee (Shinkurti Mikael/ Fiche, May 2017). But renowned informants Beqele Simee and Hayla Maryam Morodaa indicate that Gooftaa Maallee was the predecessor of Gabruu Goobee. They use the title Gooftaa, not Abbaa.

a boundary with the kingdom of Shawa. It is said that the Kingdom's expansion towards the Salale started in earnest during the time of Wassan Sagad, the father of Sahla Sellase, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. But following the death of Wassan Sagad, the Salale area also got a respite from the incursion of the Kingdom of Shawa, at least for a couple of decades.

The Shawan kingdom's incursion resumed in the Salale area in the 1830s, like other parts of Tulama territory. By this time, the most noticeable Oromo notable in Salale proper was Abbaa Maallee (Badhaasaa) Guddaa of the Saggoo, who was also characterised as 'the King of the West, of more actual importance than Aito Meretch, because he is more out of the Negus's power," by Beke"<sup>946</sup> and " The Vagabond in the West ," by Harris.<sup>947</sup>

Like other Tulama notables, Abbaa Maallee initially resisted the territorial encroachment of the kingdom of Shawa on his stronghold. However, later he came to establish good relations with the king. "Abba Mooalle was ...formerly very inimical to Shoa; but being won over to the royal interests by the espousal of his sister, by preferment to extensive power," writes Harris, " and by the hand of one

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<sup>946</sup> Beke, P.352.

<sup>947</sup> Harris, vol. II, p. 384.

of the despotic princesses, he was four years since converted to Christianity, when the King became his sponsor.”<sup>948</sup>

Abbaa Maallee’s collaboration and alliance with King Sahla Sellase immensely boosted the former’s power. Sources at our disposal unequivocally indicate that Abbaa Maallee had been hostile to the Shawans, and he had perhaps fought with the rulers of Ensaro and Morat. But around 1837 amicable relations had begun between Abbaa Maallee and King Sahla Sellase when the latter married the sister of the former. Moreover, at the same time, Abbaa Maallee was christened and the King of Shawa became his godparent.<sup>949</sup> Similarly, the oral tradition that we have got from the descendants of Abbaa Maallee indicates that the first Orthodox Church founded by this notable around his headquarters at Gombol was Sanbalat Gabrel (St. Gabriel Church at Sanbalat).<sup>950</sup>

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<sup>948</sup> Ibid, pp. 40-41

<sup>949</sup> Ibid, pp.40-41; see also Ege, p.93; Tsegaye, “The Oromo of Salaalee”, pp. 30-31. But according to Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 92, it was Abbaa Maallee who married one of the sisters of Sahla Sellase.

<sup>950</sup> Informat: Zanabach Zeleke, Nagawoo, Badhaasaa Guddaa Badhasaa and Asebe Zanabach Zeleke (Shinkurti Michael .... May 2017). It is perplexing that our informants did not recall Abbaa Maallee rather Badhaasaa Guddaa Badhaasaa. Perhaps Abbaa Maallee was a horse name of Badhaasaa Guddaa. We have also conflicting information about the baptism of this family and the introduction of Christianity to the area around the headquarters of Abbaa Maallee. Our informants believe that it was Guddaa Badhaasaa, who was baptized first when he established relations or married the daughter of Tiddu Abbisa of Morat in the second half of the eighteenth century. On the other hand, one of the memoirs left behind by allegedly a descendant of Abbaa Maallee (Mamhre Teklu Lamma, passed away recently) and in possession of a priest at Fiche Ganata Gyoris Church Riise Debir Demitse (Fiche, May 15, 2017) indicates that the famous Ethiopian Orthodox Church abun, Abuna Petros, who was killed by the Fascist Italians in Addis in 1936 was the grandson of Abbaa Maallee. The memoir indicates that Maallee had four children:

1. Guddaa – Badhaasaa- Nagawoo- Zeleke
2. Washu- Gojje- Waaqjira- Kollalla- Lamma. Memhre Teklu ( producer of the memoir)
3. Kummee- Seggu- Fitawrari

Abbaa Maallee was a good looking and amiable man, who was a little over thirty years old in 1841.<sup>951</sup> Beke further indicates that he went to Geraar, the paternal residence of Abbaa Maallee passing through the country of Jarsoo Oromo recently subjugated by A. Merrit. On the way to Geraar, he indicates, to the right, he saw “the high mountain of Emmano [Xummanoo] belonging to Abba Moalle...after passing through the large village of Doyo[ Doyyuu], we...arrived at Gerrar... a small village pleasantly situate on rising ground, in a well-cultivated district...W.S.W of Mount Selala[ Salale]” .<sup>952</sup>

Nonetheless, Abbaa Maallee’s palace at Saggoo Graar was smaller than his newly founded headquarters at Waggiddi. Beke posits that Waggiddi was a great settlement like Angorchaa, and it overlooks the gorge of the Zega Wodam. There is no doubt that Abbaa Maallee's seat at Waggiddi was much larger than his residence at Saggoo Ganda Ujubaa. The highland on which Abbaa Maallee’s

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4. Alko- Abuna Petros (Interestingly, Abuna Petros is also known as Magaarsaa Badhaasaa. Bdadhaasaa must have been another name of Abbaa Maallee, the maternal grandfather of Abuna Petros as per this memoir). According to this memoir, Abbaa Maallee was Badhaasaa Ochee, the grandfather of Badhaasaa Guddaa Badhaasaa. This is highly unlikely since the living relatives of the notable indicated above disagree with this. They indicate that Abuna Petros was the son of Yekib wuha (daughter of Badhaasaa Guddaa), that is Yekib Wuha Badhaasaa Guddaa Badhaasaa. Informants also indicate that the name of Abuna Petros was Mootumaa not Magaarsaa.

<sup>951</sup> One of the direct descendants of Abbaa Maallee, Zanabach Zeleke Nagawoo Badhaasaa Guddaa Badhaasaa indicates that when she was born her father, Zeleke was 72 years old; her age in 2017 was 64. Therefore  $72+64=136$  if we subtract 136 from 2017, it is 1881. Therefore, Zeleke was born in ca. 1881. If we subtract again twenty five years ( a generation ) from 1881- it is about 1856, perhaps Nagawo was born before 1856 when Abbaa Maallee ( Badhaasaa was about 46 years old) which is almost in agreement with Beke’s conjecture.

<sup>952</sup> Ibid, p. 369.

palace at Waggiddi was located has an excellent panorama of the gorge of the Jama River, and it is said that from there, one can even see the Abbay gorge and even the highlands of Gojjam afar.<sup>953</sup>

Abbaa Maallee's court at Waggiddi was akin to that of King Sahla Sellase's court.

Concerning the feasts observed at Waggiddi, Beke writes:

*In the internal arrangements of his household, the form of Negus's [Sahla Sellase's] establishment would appear to be imitated . . . this [the banquet] . . . was precisely similar to those which I have attended at Ankobar... Abba Moalie reclined on an elevated couch, his near relations and principal chiefs sitting at a small table below him, whilst down the hall extended tables loaded with bread, at which were seated his numerous retainers and attendants, several sets of whom followed each other in succession till all were satisfied. Musicians and singers (of whom I was told he has nineteen, twelve men and seven women) kept up an incessant din during the entertainment, in which, like the Negus, Abba Moallee took no part, except drinking, a little mead from a small cut glass brillee...<sup>954</sup>*

Beke further documented that the status of Abbaa Maallee was second to none except that King Sahla Sellase. He nearly maintained the same etiquette as that of King Sahla Sellase. When he toured onetime from Graar to Waggiddi, Beke observed that his escorts adopted almost similar etiquette to those of the King of Shawa. At Waggiddi, he was greeted with song and shouts of ecstasy, almost the way Sahla Sellase saluted when he reached Ankobar. It is fascinating that the clothes he put on were similar to that of the sovereign of Shawa.<sup>955</sup>

Providing tribute was the leading mode of administration in the Abbaa Maallee's

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<sup>953</sup>Ibid pp.369-73.

<sup>954</sup>Ibid, pp. 366, 368, 374-75, 382, 411; Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee", pp. 31-32.

<sup>955</sup>Beke., p.411; see also Harris, vol.III, pp.40-41, who also indicated that Abbaa Maallee's power was only a little bit inferior to that of the king of Shawa.

dominion. An important mode of the tribute was serving as a soldier in Maallee's army, which was roughly about 10,000, which mainly consisted of horsemen,<sup>956</sup> composed partly of lesser notables under his jurisdiction and their cohorts. It is said that tributes collected in the form of services and goods seem to have been substantial and manifested both by the prodigious display around him and by the fact that he also had a treasury at Gombol, where tributes collected in kind were stored.<sup>957</sup>

We have a fascinating story about Abbaa Maallee's day to day activities. His activities, among others, included: giving audience, hearing cases, supervising his personnel etc. Beke further mentioned that one morning; he stayed with Abbaa Maallee for some hours, showed him his tools and took a meridian observation of the sun. Simultaneously, Abbaa Maallee had his hair dressed by one of his female servants, while his spouses and a beloved sister, who constantly accompanied him and appeared to have exercised substantial sway over him, seated beside him with their confidants, stringing beads, in which he also partook. Beke further exposed that there was no sign of formality, they all laughed and chatted without reservation, which perhaps manifested perfect empathy.<sup>958</sup>

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<sup>956</sup>HarrisVol. III, pp.40-41.

<sup>957</sup>Beke, p.375; see also Ege, p.94.

<sup>958</sup>Beke, p.412.

Both primary and secondary sources do not help us to delineate vividly the extent of the areas controlled by Abbaa Maallee and his successors including Gabruu Goobee. For example, Harris characterizes Abbaa Maallee as the administrator of Mugar and the adjacent Oromo in the west on the one hand and he was at continuous warfare with the Oromo who inhabited around the Mugar river gorge on the other.<sup>959</sup> Beke, who had visited the territory of Abbaa Maallee, also indicates that the precise extent of Abbaa Maallee's dominion was difficult to specify, rather he indicates that Abbaa Maallee was in conflict with the Jaarsoo Oromo.<sup>960</sup> And the fact that a kin of Abbaa Maallee was murdered by the Jaarsoo notables and the former would not retaliate the death of his relative until Sahla Sellase next campaigned to the locality purports that the chief of Jaarsoo was a ruthless opponent of Abbaa Maallee and warns us not to embellish the power of the latter and the extent of the area under his control. Meanwhile, the oral tradition we have got in Salale indicates that the territories controlled by Abbaa Maallee stretched approximately from the Mugar river in the south to the Jama river in the north, from Oborii in the east to Kuyyuu and Hidhabuu in the west.<sup>961</sup> Another tradition indicates that it extended from Yayyaa Gullaallee in the south up to the Jama River in the north, from Kuyyuu and Hidhabuu in the west to Wayyuu

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<sup>959</sup> Harris Vol.III, pp.40-41.

<sup>960</sup> Beke, pp. 410-12.

<sup>961</sup> Informants: Abbaa Hayla Maryam Morodaa (7/6/2001 and July, 2017, Fiichee), Baqalaa Simee (8/6/ 2001, Saggoo), Abrahaam Tasammaa (10/6/2001, Fichee).

and Jaarsoo land in the east.<sup>962</sup>

From the above passage, it is difficult to delineate the realms of Abbaa Maallee. However, the degree of the allegiance of minor notables to Abbaa Maallee was not uniform. Perhaps notabilities nearer to his headquarters were more faithful and their faithfulness to his authority diminished in the areas far away from the heartland of his territory. Beke indicates that when he passed through the area, notables near Abbaa Maallee's stronghold treated him marvellously and those who reside in distant areas did not treat him properly.<sup>963</sup> Meanwhile, during the period under review as transformation amongst the Tulama from an egalitarian Gada to the monarchical system was not consummated, it is difficult to demarcate the boundary of the dominion of Abbaa Maallee and other Tulama notables.

The relations between king Sahla Sellase and Abbaa Maallee of Salale after 1837 seems smooth and Sahla Sellase's devastating military expedition in the Salale proper was also not reported by the European travellers. However, as we have seen in the previous chapter, the influence of King Sahla Sellase was minimal in

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<sup>962</sup>Informants: Asir Alaqa Fayyisaa Jimaa (Fiche, April 20, 2018), Beqele Dammuu( Fiche, June 9, 2001); Shawaa Nagash ( Fiche, May 2017) and Fayyee Dabalee ( Dagam, June 18, 2001).

<sup>963</sup> Beke, pp.380,378 and 379.



Salale. It is fascinating that the subjects of Abbaa Maallee knew little about the king.

Concerning the relations between Sahla Sellase and Abbaa Maallee and between the latter and petty notables in Salale let's wind up using the following Harris's glowing terms.

*The valuable presents which he [ Abbaa Maallee] is enabled to make to the throne, owing to his proximity to the high caravan-road from the interior, preserve him a distinguished place in the estimation of the Negoos [ Sahla Sellase], than whom he is little inferior in point of state. At constant war with the [Oromo] occupying the country to the westward, between Sullala Moogher and Gojam, he hastily assembles his troops twice or thrice during the year, and making eagle-like descents across the Nile at the head of ten thousand cavalry, rarely fails to recruit the royal herds with a rich harvest in cattle.<sup>964</sup>*

### **The Northern Tulama Notables and King Sahla Sellase**

As we have seen briefly, in the previous chapter, the kingdom of Shawa encountered tough resistance from the northern Tulama splinter groups who settled in Borana and Darraa. It seems that their occupation of the isolated and most lofty uplands could be one of the factors that helped them unscathed during the period under review although Wassan Sagad, the father of Sahla Sellase, for a while attempted to subjugate a portion of them. But when Sahla Sellase came to power they were able to regain their independence and became implacable rivals of Shawa. "Force after force has been sent against Kalala, the capital, on the

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<sup>964</sup> Harris, vol. III, p. 41.

borders of Morabaitie, and always with the same result. Birroo-Bukiza and his successor the brave Abbaa Damto,” writes Harris, “have invariably repulsed the ‘soldiers of the cross,’ with fearful slaughter, and many governors have been hewn in twain from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot”.<sup>965</sup> Apparently the Borana rulers used Kalala as their headquarters and it also served as the headquarters of *Abbaa Bokkuu*.<sup>966</sup>

In the nineteenth century, the Borana dynasty was also said to have been ruled by Abbaa Damtaw or Wadaje Berru. Perhaps Wadaje was the son of Berru Bukisa mentioned by Harris in the previous passage. However, it is not clear whether Abbaa Damtaw was the horse name or nickname of Wadaje Berru or the name of another ruler of the Borana dynasty <sup>967</sup> Moreover, according to the British itinerant, the famous Dr Chales T. Beke, Berru Bukisa ( Berru has rooted out) of

Godji (Gojee) was “ the ruler of the Tuloma ( Tulumo[ Oromo] on the northwestern frontiers of Shoa.” Perhaps he might have been nominally subject to *Ras Ali*. He was very much powerful and alleged to have owned a great number of muskets and the king of Shawa and his subjects dreaded him most actually much more so than, Berru of Warra Qalluu or Argobba. “Only two or three years back, he killed in battle twelve governors of the *Negus*, with upward of a thousand men; an event

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<sup>965</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 357-58.

<sup>966</sup> Yemiamrew, p. 2.

<sup>967</sup> Hussien, *Islam in Nineteenth-Century Wollo*, pp.126- 27. It is not clear whether Abba Damtaw was a horse or the nickname of Wadaje Berru. Perhaps Wadaje was the son of Berru BUKisa mentioned by Harris in the previous paragraph; See also Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His works*, pp. 642-43, where it is stated that Abba Damtaw was the ruler of Borana.

which caused the greatest distress and terror throughout the whole of Shoa. Since that event," writes Beke, "it is only by means of large presents and good words that the Negus keeps friends with him; and thus prevents his falling upon his dominions."<sup>968</sup> Similarly it seems that in addition to the kingdom of Shawa, the Borana dynasty was also in conflict with the Warra Himanu dynasty and resisted their encroachment on their territory up to the last quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>969</sup>

It seems that Berru Bukisa was a practising Muslim since Beke indicates that Berru of Yajju and Berru Bukisa of the Tulama were united by the bonds of faith and amity and might be considered as the agents and frontrunners of Islam in "Abessinia". They dominated the hub of the country and might, "if cordially cooperating, be able to effect the greatest changes in the political state of Abessinia."<sup>970</sup>

Similarly, a local dynasty was also on the verge of ascendancy in Darraa during the period under review. According to Asma Gyorgis, one of the local dynasties that bordered Wallo in the south was that of Darraa ruled by Asaffa Abbaa Kurara.<sup>971</sup> But it is not clear whether Asma Gyorgis refers to the famous Asanu

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<sup>968</sup> Beke, "Diary", p. 326.

<sup>969</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 644-45

<sup>970</sup> Beke, "Diary", p. 326.

<sup>971</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 644-45

Wadaj who was nicknamed Abbaa Kurara or to another Abbaa Kurara. As we shall see later in the thesis, Abbaa Kurara was the ruler of Darraa who bitterly resisted Menilek and Ras Mikael's encroachment on his domain in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>972</sup>

However, Charle T. Beke unmistakably indicates that the notable or one of the notables of Darraa Oromo was a young man of about twenty-five years of age known as Marie Saburo, whose residence was at Selalkulla. Beke further claims that Marie was more dependent on the rulers of Gojjam than Shawa and even claimed that he was a servant of Dajjach Berru of Gojjam, and promised to see them in safety beyond the Abbay up to Dima Gyorgis.<sup>973</sup>

Beke claims that the people of Darraa were not inferior to the inhabitants of 'Shawa' and by dint of their geographical location seem to have been more in communication with the Gojjam rulers than those of Shawa.

*I expected to find these people a package of savages, but they seem really quite as civilized as the inhabitants of Shoa, if not more so. Their communications with Godjam...and their tight dialect, show their alliance with that country, rather than with Shoa. They will persist in declaring that I am a[ Muslim], which they intend as a compliment, as all the knowledge they are aware of it possessed by the Turks and Egyptians, who came to them by the way of Sennar and Gondar. The*

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<sup>972</sup> Enrico Cerulli, "The Folk-Literature of the Galla of Southern Abyssinia", *Harvard African Studies* Vol.3 (Cambridge, 1922), p. 23.

<sup>973</sup> Beke, pp. 384-85.

*language spoken there is far more Amharic than [Oromo]. Marie tells me that he is a Christian, but others say he is not. He wears a matab [cord...<sup>974</sup>*

Moreover, at the time, there were cordial relations between Marie Saburo of Darraa and Abbaa Maallee of Saggoo. For instance, Beke writes, Marie had gone to pacify some of Abbaa Moalle's Oromo subjects, who had rebelled against him. Apparently, he campaigned along with Abbaa Maallee's followers. Beke claims, "I fancy this great generation is "independent" so long only as he keeps friends with his principal neighbour and that as soon as some quarrel takes place, he will get swallowed up like the rest".<sup>975</sup>

There was also another chief in Darraa during the period under review. For instance, when Beke was in Darraa he witnesses that Ali Wodaj of Chakota was making inroads and burning the Tuti village of Darraa which was located to the N.N.E of where Beke stayed. As to the exact domain of Ali Wodaj, Beke put it in vague terms and indicates that it was below that of Berru Lubo, who was often considered the ruler of Argobba, the locality around the modern-day Qalluu district of Wallo.<sup>976</sup>

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<sup>974</sup>Ibid, "pp. 384-85.

<sup>975</sup> Ibid, p. 387.

<sup>976</sup> Ibid, p. 394

Marie Saburo was not in control of all parts of Darraa. In this regard, Beke indicates that the Mettaa Oromo who inhabited the western bank of the Abbay River were not the subjects of Marie as he claimed but were subjects of the ruler of Gojjam. Yet he further explains the Gojjames influence also seemed not very strong as Marie Saburo also had exercised a certain influence on them by dint of family connections. "In fact, the relations between the tribes on the opposite banks of the Abai appear to be considerable. At a few [Oromo] huts my guide stopped to inform the inhabitants of Ali Wodaji's having burnt the villages of the Tuti, whereupon they set up a cry just like on the death of a relative."<sup>977</sup>

It seems that Sahla Sellase's also tried to win over one of the powerful notables of Wallo through diplomacy and marriage but failed in vain. For instance, when Adara Bille robbed Ludwig Krapf, Sahla Sellase told Harris, "I have no power over Adara Bille. I give him cloths every year, and have asked his daughter in marriage because I wish to secure his friendship."<sup>978</sup> Adara Bille also known as Abbaa Dagat was the ruler of Laga Gora from his centre at Gattira and Dayar. His dynasty was termed as Gattiroch, derived from Gattita. Adara Bille had some influence over the neighboring smaller chiefdoms found in South Wallo, perhaps including that of Borana.<sup>979</sup>

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<sup>977</sup> Beke, "Diary", p. 400.

<sup>978</sup> BSP, LG 193, no. 2918A: Harris, 8.5.1842, para. 19. Cited in Darkwah, p. 26.

<sup>979</sup> Hussien, *Islam in Nineteenth Century Wollo*, pp. 126-27.

In the chapter, we have tried to unravel the socio-political and economic conditions among the Tulama by about the 1840s. We have discerned that changes started to emerge and was unequivocally manifested in the rise of at least more than a dozen of chiefs, of whom the most prominent ones were: Matakoo Borjaa, Abagaz Marach, Sheshego, Abbaa Maallee, Buneo Borrii and his three sons, Jiloo Boorii and his son Bulloo, Queen Chamee and her son Jaarraa. Some of these chiefs, who had perhaps come to power as Abbaa Duulaa (war leader) of their respective gosa stayed in power for more than eight years violating the rules and regulations of the egalitarian Gada system of the Oromo necessitated by the perennial wars made during the period under discussion. It is to be noted that most of them, if not all, fought with King Sahla Sellase before they came to establish relations with him. Perhaps they were compelled to establish relations with Sahla Sellase since the militarily dominant Shawan rulers put the Tulama notables in a very awkward position. As a result, they had either to resist and continue to be raided and liable to seasonal plunder executed by the kingdom of Shawa or establish relations with the sovereigns of the kingdom and continue to administer their respective localities and guarantee the perpetuation of their relatives' ascendancy through nuptial ties directly to the King.<sup>980</sup> Apparently, from the above discussion we may discern that almost all of the aforementioned Tulama notables were won over by King Sahla Sellase by the interplay of stick and carrot.

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<sup>980</sup> Yates, "Invisible Actors", pp. 152, 155.

Meanwhile, conditions among the northern Tulama splinter groups seem to have been quite different. Here, the transformation from the egalitarian Gada System to the monarchical form of polity was far ahead, compared to the rest of the Tulama. Specifically in the Borana sub-province Wallo, the 'Borana Dynasty' had already been founded and, by about 1840s, ruled by Wadaje Berru, a son and successor of the redoubtable Berru Bukisa, whom the contemporary sources witnessed that Sahla Sellase dreaded. Similarly, the notables of Darraa were also far stronger and less influenced by the Shawan rulers. It is, therefore, unambiguous that the Northern Tulama Splinter groups' geographical location helped them to get access to and possess muskets, which was the most important factor behind their strength and audacity.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE TULAMA AND THE KINGDOM OF SHAWA DURING THE PERIOD OF INTERREGNUM (1850S -1865)

#### The Tulama and the Kingdom of Shawa during the Reign of Hayla Malakot (1847-1855)

The death of the long serving and one of the most renowned rulers of Shawa, Sahla Sellase, in 1847 marked the beginning of the waning of the kingdom which persisted up to about 1865.<sup>981</sup> On his death bed, it is said that Sahla Sellase issued an edict which designated his son, Hayla Malakot as his successor stating, በእግሬ የረገጥሁትን በእጄ የጨበጥሁትን ለልጄ... ለኃይለመለኮት ሰጥቻለሁ። የሸዋ ሰጢ ልጄን ኃይለመለኮትን አደራ ሰጥቼሃለሁ።<sup>982</sup> ( I have given to my beloved son, Hayla Malakot, all that I had in my hand, all that I trod with my feet. Oh, people of Shawa, I have entrusted my son Hayla Malakot to you). As a result, by default Sahla Sellase also handed over the Tulama territories, where he made perennial campaigns, to his successor.

Meanwhile, although Asma Gyorgis characterizes Hayla Malakot as a favourite son of Sahla Sellase, contemporary sources contradict this. For instance, the Shawan king was quoted as saying that Sayfa Sellase (commonly known as

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<sup>981</sup> It was in 1865 that his arguably more famous grandson, the future Menilek II escaped from Maqdala, one of the headquarters of King of Kings Tewdros II (1855-1868) as we shall see later in this chapter.

<sup>982</sup>Bairu , *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 540-41.

Sayfu) was "...the light of mine [my] eyes, and dearer to me than life itself".<sup>983</sup> Yet according to Abir, Sahla Sellase might have changed his mind because he "...suffered greatly in the last years of his life and was tortured by remorse for having taken the place of his brother and being instrumental in his death."<sup>984</sup> It was in this way that Hayla Malakot became the successor of Sahla Sellase, but according to Harold Marcus, we know hardly anything about the reign of Hayla Malakot 'except for its end'.<sup>985</sup>

Meanwhile, Sergew Habla Seallse indicates that Sahla Sellase made utmost efforts to facilitate the smooth transfer of power after his death. Even it is said that he summoned the neighbouring Tulama notables to Angolala and deliberated with them on how to preserve peace and tranquillity in Shawa and also pleaded with them to be loyal to the kingdom. Then he returned to Dabra Berhan and enthroned Hayla Malakot a few days before his death. At that time, Hayla Malakot was a young man of twenty-two years old.<sup>986</sup>

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<sup>983</sup> Harris, Vol. II, p. 243; see also Ege, p. 105 who indicates that Sayfa Sellase was for long considered as successor of his father

<sup>984</sup> Abir, *Era of the Princes* p. 177. See the last section chapter two where we have seen how the Sahla Sellase became the successor of his father in spite of the presence of his elder brother Bakureye.

<sup>985</sup> Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menilek II*, P. 13.

<sup>986</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 133; See also Gabra Sellase, p. 43; Heruy, *Ya Itipyophiya Tarik*, p. 84; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 542-43 who indicate that Sahla Sellase died at Dabra Berhan and was buried at St. Michael Church which he had built at Ankobar. Gabra Seallse indicates that Sahla Sellase's funeral ceremony was unprecedented in the history of Shawa since earlier rulers were said to have been buried secretly and even their passing away was not disclosed to the public on time fearing that there would be an uprising and rebellion.

After the death of his father, Hayla Malakot also issued an edict which states, የሞትንም እኛ ያለንም እኛ ነንና አይዘህ ባለህ እርጋ<sup>987</sup> (which literally means, it is we who are dead, but it is we who are alive. Do not worry and keep calm everywhere). After his coronation, Hayla Malakot made changes in modern parlance to his cabinet (ሹም ሸር አደረገ) and also advised to jail his brothers as it was a custom by that time to incarcerate potential rivals, of course including the reigning monarch's brothers, at Guncho under the supervision of the Ifat administrators, of whom the most important one by the time of Sahla Sellase was Walasma Mohammad, where the well-known Oromo Abagaz, Matakoo Borjaa was also imprisoned. However, Hayla Malakot did not send his brothers to royal prison asserting that if possible he would live in harmony with his brothers otherwise he who was favoured by God would be the ruler of the kingdom. He further said to have stated with whom he would live and be happy if he sent his brothers to prison. Rather he made Sayfu and Darge, commanders of his army.<sup>988</sup>

It seems that Hayla Malakot's priority was also to ensure the loyalty of the Tulama. Hence after his father's funeral ceremony was over, he went directly to Angolala to deliberate with Oromo notables and urged them to be loyal to him as they promised to his late father. Initially, according to Sergew, the leaders of

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<sup>987</sup> Heruy, Ya Itiyophiya Tarik, p. 84; The chronicler of Sahla Sellase's grandson, Gabra Sellase, p. 43 where almost similar edict said to have been issued by Hayla Malakot, was recorded. የሞትንም እኛ ያለንም እኛ የእጄን ለልጄ ብለዋል ( It is us who are deceased and also alive, [ Sahla Sellase has said] I entrusted what I have in my hands to my son); see also Abir, p. 178.

<sup>988</sup> Gabra Sellase, p. 43-44; Sergew, Dagmawi Menilek, p. 133; Heruy, Ya Itiyophiya Tarik, P. 84; Bairu, " Some Aspects of Land Tenure, " p. 3.

Tulama and Karayyuu hesitated a little bit and eventually they agreed and more or less kept their promise since they did not form a united front against Hayla Malakot but separately they were not as such loyal. For instance, Galan Oromo used to attack Dabra Berhan and Ankobar intermittently. A certain folk singer who noticed this sang sarcastically,

*ከቤት ሲወጡ ወደ ደጅ*

*ገለጎ ታጥበዉ ነዉ እንጂ* which literally meant

*When you go out from home, You have to wash your body ( ገለ in Amharic), you have to be clean which means genuine or honest and you are not supposed to be a saboteur like Galan( ገለጎ) Oromo because they broke the promise and attacked the capitals of the Kingdom, Dabra Berhan and Angolala.*

Sergew further indicates that similar development started to be observed among the Oromo; as a result, making an expedition against them became imperative. Hence Hayla Malakot made his two brothers, Sayfu and Darge, commanders of his force and started expeditions to subjugate the Tulama.<sup>989</sup>

Nonetheless, Asma Gyorgis indicates that the death of Sahla Sellase was again followed by the uprising of the Tulama like in the bygone times. It seems that Hayla Malakot hardly got enough time to mourn the death of his father, it is said that he was compelled to go from the funeral ceremony of his father held at Ankobar directly to Angolala to suppress the uprising of the Tulama. Asma Gyorgis writes about this issue as follows:

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<sup>989</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 135.

But when the [Oromo] heard the death of King Sahla Sellase, they rose again and saddled [up horses]. The war resumed [between the Oromo and the Kingdom of Shawa]. When Hayla Malakot heard the Saddling of the Oromo, he went to Angolala and fought with Abichu at Chacha. Seriti was attacked. Tulluu Ofaa was fortified. Maset was also fortified. A year after his coronation Timuga was attacked. Next in November Ali Dheeraa was attacked. Then they attacked Salale with *Ato Sayfu* and entered Fiche, the town of *Ato Sayfu*. Then they campaigned to Entoto. It was a great expedition. *Ato Sayfu*, *Ato Darge*, the whole Shawa campaigned. Gumbichuu, Jiddaa, Gullaallee Mettaa and Bachoo were invaded and Entoto was fortified. In this way, they annihilated the Oromo who rebelled again. In the third year after his coronation, Karrayyuu, Lumee, Abbuu, the Oromo who were found around the foot of the Zeqwala Mountain were massacred. They attacked Jillee. Many Amhara were settled in Ada'a and Lumee.<sup>990</sup>

From the above Asma Gyorgis' passage, we may discern that most of the Shawan Oromo, if not all, from Abichu up to Bachoo and from Salale up to Jiillee and Karrayyuu rose again against the kingdom of Shawa. The famous Shawan historian, Heruy, also wrote almost what looks like a summary of the above Asma Gyorgis' passage. Heruy indicates, ከዚህ በኋላ የደጋው / ኦሮሞ/ ሁሉ ንጉሥ ሣህለ ሥላሴ ስለሞቱና ንጉሥ ኃይለ መለኮች ኃይል የሌላቸው ስለመሰለው ሁሉም ሸፍቶ ነበርና እየተከታተሉ እየተዋጉ ድል አደረጉት። እስከ አሩስም ድረስ ዘምተው ነበር<sup>991</sup>:: Hereafter the Oromo who inhabit the highland part of Shawa thought that since Sahla Sellase passed away, Hayla Malakot was weak. As a result, all of them rebelled but Hayla Malakot fought against them one by one and defeated them. He even campaigned as far as Arsi). According to Sergew, during this campaign, Hayla Malakot made the

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<sup>990</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 542-43.

<sup>991</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 86; see also Darkwah, p. 35, who indicates that the death of Sahla Sellase was followed by disturbance in some parts of the kingdom of Shawa. The Oromo rose because they were no longer deterred by the fear of Sahla Selase and also attempted to exploit the inexperience of his successor.

Entoto Mountain his command centre (የዘመቻ መምሪያቸውን እንጦጦ ላይ አደረጉ).<sup>992</sup>

Moreover, with understandable overstatement given what we have seen so far, a famous Jewish historian, Mordechai Abir indicates, notwithstanding the precautions taken by Sahla Sellase, this resulted in very serious bloodshed more than what had occurred in the annals of Shawa. This happened because the Tulama chiefs who were subjugated earlier by the deceased monarch rebelled and fought for more territorial gains.<sup>993</sup>

Hayla Malakot's early campaigns were made to protect his realm from the Oromo onslaught. He started from the areas which were closer to the heartland of the kingdom, for instance, from Chacha and then step by step carried his expedition deep into the Tulama territory which included the Jiillee and Bachoo, among others, who were relatively far away from the areas effectively controlled by the kingdom. It seems that Hayla Malakot even made his territorial campaign as far as Arsi, with whom, his brother, Sayfu said to have been established warm relations which annoyed the king.<sup>994</sup>

As Hayla Malakot feared, Sayfu and Jaarraa, the son of Matakoo Borjaa, were said to have been rebelled against him simultaneously, though it is difficult to verify whether the two rebellions had a connection.<sup>995</sup> Anyhow, Sayfu's rebellion

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<sup>992</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 135.

<sup>993</sup> Abir, p. 178; Darkwah, P. 35.

<sup>994</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 135.

<sup>995</sup> See Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His work*, pp. 568-69 where it is indicated that Sayfu sided with the Oromo.

was said to have been quelled and he was imprisoned but later on, released after he promised that he would not rebel again. Pertaining to Jaarraa's rebellion, Sergew indicates that we do not have conclusive evidence. But he claims that he must have been offended by the assassination of his father by King Sahla Sellase, the father of the reigning monarch and even said to have been accused of Hayla Mikael.<sup>996</sup>

Be that as it may, in addition to military campaigns, Hayla Malakot also tried to use his father's

pragmatic policies of diplomacy

and, of course intermarriage and assimilation. He attempted to implement one of these policies by settling Amharic speakers in the areas predominantly inhabited by the Oromo. The typical example in this regard was the settlement of Amhara peasants in the districts found on the fringes of the kingdom, namely in the Ada'aa and Lumee districts of the present-day East Shawa. The settlement of Amharic speakers amid the predominantly Afaan Oromo speakers was said to have been considered the lasting solution. To use Sergew words, ለችግሩ ዘላቂ መፍትሔ ብለው የሚከተሉት የአባታቸውን የሃህን ሥላሴን አመራር ነበር--- መቀላቀል።ስለዚህ ብዙ አማሮችን በአረምዎች መካከል አሰፈሩ።<sup>997</sup> (They followed their father's policy to be the lasting

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<sup>996</sup>Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, pp. 135-36. Sergew further indicates that the contemporary writers and especially the chronicler of Menilek did not mention Jaarraa but after Shawa was defeated by Tewodros II it is said that Jaarraa accused Hayle Mikael Sahla Sellase, Tewdros appointee, for the assassination of his father during the time of Sahla Sellase.

<sup>997</sup>Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 135.

solution for this problem which is the mixture of [Amhara and Oromo]. As a result they settled many Amhara amongst the Oromo). According to Bairu Tafla, a person who played a pivotal role in pacifying East Shawa and settling the Amharic speakers in this locality was *Dajjazmach* Garmame Abbaa Malaa.

*He began his career as a servant of Haylä-Mäläkot, while Sahlä- Sellasé was still alive. On the death of the latter, the [Oromo] of Shoa rebelled and this was perhaps the first time that Gârmamé had the opportunity to play a major role both at the court and in the field. It is said that he advised the young king not to lead a military expedition himself, but if he was charged with the task he (Gârmamé) himself would successfully accomplish his mission. And indeed, so it happened. Ato Gârmamé, as he was then known, instructed one of his servants who spoke Galliñña fluently to go to the [Oromo] chiefs in at least three different regions and to give them "the message of God". The disguised servant announced to the [Oromo] chiefs that he was sent by God to tell them that if the Christian King marched into their regions, they should not touch him lest a drop of his blood burnt their land. A few days later, Gârmamé led a military expedition and met with little resistance from the [Oromo]. He marched as far as Qäcâma (Nazrét) and made his seat at Däbbä Gojjo (Täbba Gojjo). He governed the region of the Awash Valley from this seat till his death with the exception of a few years' break during the reign of Asé Téwodros.<sup>998</sup>*

Similarly, the Shawan kingdom's encroachment towards the Tulama territory in the other direction, in the direction of the present-day Salale, had started to be visible. In relation to campaigns made in this direction, tradition has it that the campaign which was started by Tiddu Abbisa was consolidated by his grandson, Sayfu Sahla Sellase. He re-conquered the region around Angorchara and Zegamal (lowland area including and below the monastery of Dabra Libanos) and carried out expansion into the nearby highland parts of the Salale proper above the Jama valley as far as the present-day town of Fiche and erected the defensive barricades known as *Sayfu kab* (literally Sayfu's fort) and also dug ditches

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<sup>998</sup> Bairu Tafla, "Four Ethiopian Biographies: Däjjazmač Gärmamé, Däjjazmač Gäbrä-Egzi'abehér Moroda, Däjjazmač Balča and Kántiba Gäbru Dästa", *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (July 1969), P. 3.



termed *Sayfu Gurba* so as to defend his recently occupied realm from the Oromo cavalry. He after a while based himself between Fiche and Angorcha at a locality named Qirti.<sup>999</sup>

*Abeto Sayfu* advanced to the area using Merhabete as his launching pad. Perhaps he was appointed as governor of Marhabete before the death of his father in 1847 since his mother, Bezzabesh, was from this part of Shawa. Sayfu was banished to Marhabete after he was made to swear that he would not revolt against his brother. This was made in order to remove Sayfu from the capital of the kingdom.<sup>1000</sup>

Meanwhile, Bairu indicates, Fiche's strategic location induced Sayfu to choose it as his capital since "it was conveniently located between the [Oromo] regions and Ensaro-Mârhabété, which was also his governorate. It was also at the edge of a steep precipice which would serve as a natural defence to his camp"<sup>1001</sup>. However, even under such circumstances, Sayfu faced fierce opposition from the local people and could not manage to subjugate the open fields south of the

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<sup>999</sup>Takle Yemane Birhan (Arata Maryam, 27/8/ 95), Gabra Hiwct Gabre (Dagam, 21/7/95) and Abrahaam Tesemma (Fiche, 10/6/2001). Abarra Zeleke "Fiche: Foundation, Growth and Development up to 1941," (B.A. Thesis in History, Addis Ababa University, 1986), p.4. Dereje Negussie, p. 12; Tsegaye "The Oromo of Salaalee,"P. 50 ; see also Bairu, " Some Aspects of Land Tenure, " P. 3 who indicates that "Dargé and Sâyfu set up their camp at the hill where the town of Fiçé stands today and they led a series of military expeditions to the north, west and south".

<sup>1000</sup>Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, P. 83; Abir, p. 177; Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menelik II*, P. 13

<sup>1001</sup>Bairu, "Some Aspects of Land Tenure," p. 3.

present-day Fiche town.<sup>1002</sup> The oral tradition has it that Sayfu Sahla Sellase tried to pacify the Graar Jarsoo notables through political marriage. It is said that a wise man advised Sayfu Saying ግራራን በግራራ አሸክ ፤ ጃራሶን በጃራት እሸክ እጠርና ወደ ደጋዉ ዉጣ።<sup>1003</sup> ( You have to make a fence of Graar ( acacia) wood around Graar and a fence of Porcupine around Jarso). It is said that Sayfu was advised to give his two daughters, one to the Jaarsoo and another to Graar notables in marriage). However, as we shall see later, the popular tradition in Salale rather indicates that it was his brother, Darge Sahla Sellase, who founded Fiche as his capital in the 1870s not Sayfu as claimed by Bairu.

Be this as it may, although Abir and Yates indicate that the most loyal Tulama notables or Oromo did not rebel against Hayla Malakot<sup>1004</sup>, we are not in a position to ascertain, how the Tulama notables like Abbaa Maallee of Salale, the sons of Bunee Boorii of Ada'aa , Jaarraa Gadaa and his mother Shaamee of Mulo Faldaa/ Falle/ , and even Abagaz Marach of the famous Abichu gosa of Tulama reacted to the death of Sahla Sellase, with whom , there is no doubt, they had established amicable relations.

They were more or less Sahla Sellase's loyal governors of the Tulama territories, at least during the last few years of his reign and were able to prevent or minimize the havoc and destruction other Tulama territories went through. This is because

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<sup>1002</sup> Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee,"p. 51.

<sup>1003</sup> Informant : Major Tilahun Fayisa ( Fiche, April 21, 2018)

<sup>1004</sup> Abir, P. 178 ; Yates" Invisible Actors", p. 157

the European travellers, who were in Shawa, especially from 1839 to 1842, did not report Sahla Sellase's punitive campaigns in the domains of the aforementioned notables. Perhaps the only exception might be the imprisonment of Bune by King Sahla Sellase at Haramba for some transgression and his sons' joining of the Lumee uprising.

Meanwhile, although these Tulama notables had strong relations with Sahla Sellase, they may also exploit the power vacuum created in Shawa following the death of the most illustrious ruler to date to restore their autonomy. We should also bear in mind that these chiefs were won over by King Sahla Sellase by the interplay of stick and carrot. There is no doubt that for most of the Tulama, the power vacuum was a golden opportunity to avenge the humiliation and annihilation they suffered, recover the territories they had lost, and free themselves from the suzerainty of the kingdom of Shawa.

Asma Gyorgis and other Shawan writers, however, were able to tell us about the relations between Hayla Malakot and one of the Tulama chiefs, Waage Diibboo (Dabboo) of Darra which revolved around the escape of Ras Ali to Darra. It is said that in June 1853, Dajjach Kassa Haylu, the future Tewodros II (1855-1868) scored a shattering victory over Ras Ali II of the Yajju Dynasty at the Battle of Ayshal, which symbolized the end of the Zamana Masafent (the era of lords) and the dominance of the Yajju Oromo lords.

After the defeat, Ras Ali escaped to Darra intending to reorganize his force to confront Kassa Haylu. But the chief of Darra, Waaqe Diibboo, detained and incarcerated Ras Ali and even sought to hand him over to Kassa Haylu. But when King Hayla Malakot heard about this event, he led an expedition to Darra in order to liberate Ras Ali, his ally,<sup>1005</sup> from the custody of Waaqe Diibboo. As a result, Hayla Malakot defeated Waaqe Diibboo, freed Ras Ali II and returned to Ankobar triumphantly singing:

Amharic	Gloss
ናደዉ ናደዉ	Oh, he pulled it down! He pulled it down!
ደራን ናደዉ	He pulled Darra down!
ያጤ ኃይሉ ፈረስ አይበላም ገለባ	The horse of Emperor [Hayla Malakot] eats no straw;
አስለሙዱትና የ [አሮሞ] ሰለባ <sup>1006</sup>	For he has accustomed to defeat the Oromo

However, it is unclear from Asma Gyorgis's passage why Waaqe Diibboo arrested and imprisoned Ras Ali II. Yet we may construe that it is highly likely that he did not want to trade the more powerful Kassa to the now weaker Ras Ali or he might have some information about the relations between Ras Ali and the kingdom of Shawa, with which the Darra notables including Waaqe were in conflict. However, Paulos Gnogno claims that initially Waaqe did not arrest Ras Ali but it was after he heard Kassa's growing power that he dreaded and contemplated handing him over to Kassa.<sup>1007</sup>

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<sup>1005</sup> Abir, p. 179 indicates that initially the relations between Ras Ali and Hayla Malakot was not good since the former objected the latter's taking of the title of Negus (king). But by about 1849 Ras Ali recognized Hayla Malakot's claim of the title king and as a result their relations was improved. Meanwhile Abir indicates that some of the generals of Hayla Malakot opposed Hayla Malakot's intention of liberating Ras Ali fearing that it would infuriate Kassa Haylu (Tewodros) and 'they did not wish to bring down Kassa's wrath on Shawa'.

<sup>1006</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, PP. 542-45; Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 86

<sup>1007</sup> Paulos Gnogno, *Ate Tewodros / Emperor Tewodros* ( Addis Ababa, 1985), p. 38

On the other hand, Sergew tells us that Waaqe arrested Ras Ali and contemplated handing him over to Kassa Haylu to establish friendly relations with the latter. When Ras Ali heard Waaqe's ploy, he pleaded with King Hayla Malakot for help. It seems that it was as a result of this that Hayla Malakot campaigned to Darra to liberate Ras Ali. As a result, Hayla Malakot defeated and incarcerated Waaqe Diibboo. The following verse was said to have been composed to specify the defeat of Waaqe Diibboo by the force of Hayla Malakot.

Amharic	Gloss
የእኛ ቤት ንጉሥ ኮራ ተንቋጠጠ ኃይሉ ስወርድበት ደራ ተለመጠ። <sup>1008</sup>	Our king has been honoured and decorated; when Haylu [Hayla Malakot] used force, Darra has been brittle

Another couplet further indicates,

Amharic	Gloss
ዋቄ ዲቦ ቤቱን አኩርቶ ቢሰራ ኃይሉ ቢወጣበት ተለመጠ ደራ። <sup>1009</sup>	Although Waaqe Diibboo has built a graceful house; It has been brittle when Haylu mounted on it ( attacked).

According to Asma Gyorgis, the defeat of Waaqe Diibboo by Hayla Malakot had a far reaching consequence for the Tulama as it supposedly compelled them to recognize the suzerainty of the kingdom of Shawa. But for scholars like Tekalign, the reign of Hayla Malakot and the following decade up to the time of the escape of Menilek from Maqdala was the slack period when the Shawan Oromo reasserted their autonomy.<sup>1010</sup>

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<sup>1008</sup> Sergew, Dagmawi Menilek, pp. 137 -38.

<sup>1009</sup> Sergew, Dagmawi Menilek, p. 138. Hayla Malakot's campaign against Waaqe Diibboo was one of the factors for Tewdros's campaign to Shawa but not the sole cause for the campaign.

<sup>1010</sup> Tekalign, pp. 67-8.

Meanwhile, after Kassa Haylu of Qwara crowned Tewodros II, King of kings of Ethiopia on February 11, 1855, it was only a matter of time before his expedition to Shawa, which was considered “the Jewel in the Ethiopian Crown”. Moreover, “To Tewodros who was accustomed to northern harshness,” Marcus indicates, “Haile Malakot's province flowed with milk and honey.”<sup>1011</sup> However, in order to realize his dream of uniting Shawa with northern Ethiopia, he should conquer and pacify the Wallo Oromo country, which acted as a buffer between Shawa and northern Ethiopia since the second half of the sixteenth century.

Hence, according to Hussien Ahmed, Emperor Tewodros's policy towards Wallo was driven by two very much intertwined factors, first by ‘political considerations’ which was aimed at suppressing the local dynastic power so as to ease his strategy of reunification, and second, by ideological factors ‘... as a Christian ruler, [he] was resolved to push back its [Islam's] position in Ethiopia.....’<sup>1012</sup> Sven Rubenson also indicates that to the emperor who called himself ‘the slave of Christ’, political supremacy was a means of Christianizing and rechristianizing the population and the growing moral and spiritual strength of the Christian population a relapse into the rule of the country by a largely [ sic] Muslim [Oromo] faction.”<sup>1013</sup>

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<sup>1011</sup>Harold G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*.(Berkeley: University of California Press, c1994) <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft109nb00q/>, p. 66; Bahru, *A History of Modern Ethiopia* , p. 30.

<sup>1012</sup> Hussien Ahmed, *Islam in Nineteenth Century Wallo, Ethiopia: Revival , Reform and Reaction* (Leiden, Boston , Koln: Brill, 2000), p. 163; see also Sven Rubenson , *King of Kings Tewdros of Ethiopia*( Addis Ababa/ Nairbi, 1966), p. 59.

<sup>1013</sup>Rubenson, *King of Kings*, P. 59; Hussien, *Islam in Nineteenth Century Wallo*, p. 164; see also Abir, *Era of the Princes*, p. 180, who claims that one of the reasons for Tewodros's campaign to

As to how the Wallo Oromo notables reacted to Tewodros policy of incorporating their domains into his empire, Harold Marcus aptly encapsulates,

*Although the seven normally fractious Welo clans united against Tewodros, they were defeated after a relatively short campaign in which firepower and mobility dominated. They even lost their major stronghold, Mekdela, whose strategic importance the emperor recognized by making it his most important fortress in central Ethiopia. He established there a prison for political hostages, whose first inmates were the vanquished Welo leaders. His rear secure, Tewodros turned to Shewa.<sup>1014</sup>*

Nevertheless, according to Hussien Ahmad's seminal work on Wallo, Tewodros's victory over the lords of Wallo was not as overwhelming as usually perceived. For instance, he indicates that Tewodros was compelled to make another campaign to Warra Himano before even the end of 1855 to punish Warqitu, who had burnt churches at Garagara. Again, shortly afterwards, Liban Amade, who had been appointed as governor of Wallo, revolted and captured Maqdala, which compelled him to march and recapture it. Therefore, it seems that the Wallo notables like Amade Bashir and his brother Shumin, and Warqitu, among others, revolted against Tewodros time and again and forced him to make about five different campaigns up to 1865.<sup>1015</sup>

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Wallo was that northern Ethiopians hated *the* Wallo Oromo more than any other Oromo subgroups because of the havoc they had made in the previous centuries and because of their implacable anti-Christian attitude.

<sup>1014</sup> Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, p. 66; contrary to Harold Marcus' view, Bahru, *A History of Modern Ethiopia*, p.30 indicates that Tewodros' campaign to Wallo was a protracted one; see also Darkawah, p. 38, who indicates that Tewodros made unsuccessful attempts to pacify Wallo.

<sup>1015</sup> Hussien, *Islam in the Nineteenth Century Wallo*, pp. 163-64.

Meanwhile, Tewodros's campaign to Shawa overlapped with that of Wallo and, according to Bahru, lasted for five months.<sup>1016</sup> Initially the Shawans agreed to form a united front with Warqitu of Warra Himano against Tewodros and even started a campaign in the direction of Wallo. But later developments contributed to the failure of this plan and also to the emergence of differences among the Shawan notables. The Shawan historian succinctly explains this issue as follows:

*... a man whom Sahla Sellase had appointed a regent for Hayla Malakot and who was in sympathy with the Coptic faith, was corresponding in collaboration with a few Dabtaroch, with Abuna Salama and Ase Tewodros. He did not like the decision; he called its revocation by saying: "Let us retreat; our people may perish from cold and hunger. He will not enter Shawa, and if he comes, we will all fight him at our respective frontiers". Actually the decision was revoked by God, for he favoured Kassa. Had it not been so, in those days Wallo was indeed by far the strongest in horses and rifles and was ready to march on Gondar. While he [Hayla Malakot] was still at the camp of Sako, Ato Sayfu sent a spy to Kasa. The spy entered the camp, and saw a messenger of Ato Baddelu being summoned into the presence of Ase Tewodros and talking with him. After this Ase Tewodros realized that an enemy was behind him, and he retreated from Gembiya. He broke into Maqdala and spent the rainy season there. Ato Sayfu's spy told his master all that he had seen and heard. He also reported that a messenger of Wayzaro Zanabawarq had been there. Ato Sayfu spoke to Hayla Malakot, and said: 'our enemies are our mother and your regent, Ato Baddelu; hence let us arrest them'...When Ato Sayfu was insisted that Ato Baddelu was the enemy and that he should be arrested, Hayla Malakot refused to do so.<sup>1017</sup>*

The same sources further indicate that when Tewodros II heard about Hayla Malakot's campaign to Wallo, he retreated and attacked Maqdala, defeating

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<sup>1016</sup> Bahru, *A History of Modern Ethiopia*, p. 30

<sup>1017</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 546-49; Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 136; Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, pp. 86-87; Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menelik*, p. 18; Abir, *Ethiopia: the Era of Princes*, p. 180 indicates religion also must have played a pivotal role in the failure of the Wallo-Shawan united front against Tewodros as the latter notables were divided over the issue of creating united front with the Muslims (the Walloye) against a Christian Emperor. Moreover, Tewodros's espousal of the Hulat Ledat (Walda Walda Qeb or Qebat) faction of Orthodox Christianity which was also supported by Queen mother Zanaba Warq and some notables was among the factors for Zanaba Warq and Baddelu's surrender to Tewodros without fighting when he invaded Shawa. There is no doubt Sayfu was the most implacable Shawan prince who determined to resist Tewodros even more than the king, Hayla Malakot himself. It is said that after this incident the two brothers did not meet.



Warqitu and passed the summer there. Hayla Malakot also returned to Shawa hoping that he would campaign after the rainy season. But it was Emperor Tewodros who took initiative and attacked Shawa in October. As expected, Ato Baddelu and Zanaba Warq submitted to Tewodros peacefully, then in order to contain Tewodros's advance to his Capital, Ankobar, and Hayla Malakot went to Salla Dengay. However, when Hayla Malakot heard Emperor Tewodros's advance via the highland of Gwassa, he retreated to Dabra Berhan. Yet by the twist of fate, Hayla Malakot felt ill at a place known as Atakilit, near Dabra Berhan, and died in the middle of the campaign.<sup>1018</sup>

Soon following the death of Hayla Malakot, the Shawan force was routed by the force of Tewodros II at the Battle of Barakat in November 1855. Henceforth, Tewodros's main objective was to capture Hayla Malakot's son, Menilek, who became the rallying-point of Shawan's resistance against Tewodros. After the battle of Barakat, according to Asma Gyorgis, "Lij Menilek fled to Menjar and the [Oromo] of Ada'aa received him, for they had intermarried with [the house of] Sahla Sellase".<sup>1019</sup> Similarly, Heruy also indicates,

ከጦርነቱም በኋላ የሸዋ መኪንንት የጌታቸውን ልጅ ይዘው ወደ ምንጃር ተመለሱ። ስለሆነም የአጼ ቴዎድሮስን ሠራዊት ብዛት የጦርነቱንም ብርታት አይተው ነበርና እኩሉ ጌታችንን አቤቱ ምኒልክን

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<sup>1018</sup>Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 552-53; Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, pp. 139-140. However, Lubie Birru claims that according to the Abichu oral tradition he had collected more than half a century ago "while Haile Malakot and his army were on their way to Angolala, the Abichu Oromo ambushed them on December 14, 1855, and mortally wounded King Haile Malakot." See Lubie Birru, "Abyssinian Colonialism as the Genesis of the Crisis In the Horn: Oromo Resistance (1855-1913), *Northeast African Studies*, 2, 3 (1980-81), 3, 1 (1981), p. 94.

<sup>1019</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 552-53.

ይዘን ወደ [አሮሞ ] እንሸሽ ብለዉ ሙከሩ።እኩሉ ግን ይህን ሕፃን ንጉሥ በ[አሮሞ ] አገር ከማንከራተት አጼ ቴዎድሮስ ተከታትለዉ ከሚወስዱብን በፈቃዳችን ብንሰጣቸዉ ይሻለል ብለዉ ሙከሩ።እኩሉ ግን ምንም ህፃን ቢሆኑ የንጉሥ ልጅ ናቸዉና አሳባቸዉን እንጠይቃለን ብለዉ “ወደ [አሮሞ] አገር ከመሄድና ወደ አጼ ቴዎድሮስ ከመግባት ማናቸዉን ይመርጣሉ” ቢለዉ ብጠይቋቸዉ” ወደ [አሮሞ ] አገር ይዛቸሁኝ ብትሸሹ ይሻለኛል ብለዉ ተናገሩ።<sup>1020</sup>

After the War, the Shawan nobilities returned to Menjar with the son of their lord. Since they saw the number of Emperor Tewodros’s troops and the intensity of the war, some of them proposed escaping to the Oromo country taking their lord Menilek. While others deliberated that ‘rather than making the infant king fugitive in the Oromo country and perhaps even Emperor Tewodros may follow us and arrest him’, hence, they said we should hand him over to the emperor voluntarily. Yet others stated even if he is a kid he is the son of the king, let us ask him what he wants, and enquired him “Do you want to go to the Oromo country or go with Emperor Tewodros?” He replied, “I prefer escaping to the Oromo country with you”.

From the above two enlightening passages, we may discern that although the Shawan nobility knew that the Oromo were rising against their kingdom and the sovereigns of Shawa were campaigning to subdue them for generations, it is fascinating that they tried to escape to the Oromo country taking the young Menilek who also preferred becoming fugitive within the Oromo country than surrendering to Emperor Tewodros. This unmistakably indicates the love and hate relations between the Shawan nobilities and the Oromo notables. It is indicated that perhaps Menilek took refuge in Ada’aa among the sons of Bunee (Dammoo, Buttaa and Shambu) who had strong relations, albeit not always smooth, with the Shawan aristocracy.<sup>1021</sup> Moreover, this incident is analogous to what the haughty

<sup>1020</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, pp. 51-52; Gabra Sellase, P. 28. His chronicler also confirms that the young Menilek was in favour of escaping to the Oromo country.

<sup>1021</sup> In this regard, Alamaayoo Hayilee, *Seenaa Oromo Hanga Jaarraa 20<sup>ffaa</sup>* (A History of the Oromo up to 20th Century) (Finfinnee, 2016), pp. 381-82 come with fascinating story concerning

Matakkoo Borjaa did almost a decade and a half ago, when he preferred taking refuge among the priests of the monastery of Afafa Woira, at the residence of Zanaba Warq, the mother of Sahla Sellase or requested for the intercession of *Alaqa* Asrat, the royal confessor, rather than being fugitive with in the Tulama country.

Meanwhile, it is difficult to specify for how long, the young Menilek stayed among the Ada'aa Oromo. Perhaps he might have stayed there for more than a couple of months, namely from November 1855 up to February 1856.<sup>1022</sup> As to why the Shawan nobility decided to hand the young Menilek to Emperor Tewodros, the Shawan writers indicate that the edict issued by Tewodros II played a pivotal role and the Shawan nobility expected that Tewodros would recognize Menilek as a successor of King Hayla Malkot. And hence would make him the king of Shawa. The edict issued by Emperor Tewodros goes as follows: አባት ያለህ ያባትህን እስጥሃለሁና አባትህን ሞርቅ።አባት የሌለህ ግን አባትህ እኔነኝና ደጅ ጥናኝ።<sup>1023</sup> You, who have a father, I have given you each of your father's right, bless your father. You, who do not have a father, I am your father, submit to me).

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this issue. Alemayehu claims that the mother of Emperor Menilek, Ejigayahu Lamma was an Oromo from Ada'aa and that was why the young Menilek preferred taking refuge among the Ada'aa Oromo to surrendering to Emperor Tewodros II. But the Shawan historians or writers were silent about this issue.

<sup>1022</sup> Darkwah, p. 42; Yates, "Invisible Actors", p. 158; Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menelik*, p. 19.

<sup>1023</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, P. 92; see also Bairu, *Asma Gyorgisand His Works*, p. 544: Gabra Sellase, p. 45.

Meanwhile, Emperor Tewodros encountered resistance not only from the Shawan Amhara but also from the Shawan Oromo. Even after the surrender of the Shawan Kingdom's force to the emperor, Abichu Oromo were fighting with Tewodros's contingents stationed around Angolala. Thus, the emperor was compelled to go to Angolala from Ankobar soon after the Shawan nobility handed over the young Menilek to him in order to punish the Abichu Oromo. Consequently, the Abichu Oromo were said to have suffered a humiliating defeat, which is said to have even annoyed the future king Menilek's loyal lieutenant, Gobana Dachi of Abichu. According to Plowden, the Abichu Oromo suffered, "1000 of their number dead on the field, besides wounded and prisoners, the king (Tewodros) has sent messengers to all parts of Abyssinia to announce his complete success in Shoa."<sup>1024</sup>

On the contrary, Gabra Sellase indicates that when Emperor Tewodros went from Kimbibit to Dabra Libanos, the Abichu Oromo killed many of his soldiers with their cavalry (አሮሞ በፈረስ እጅግ ሰዉ ፈጀባቸዉ).<sup>1025</sup> However, it is not clear if there is any connection between Tewodros' massacre of the Abichu Oromo at Angolala and this incident. However, oral tradition has it that when Emperor Tewodros was in this locality, he summoned the Oromo notables to Angolala but it is said that

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<sup>1024</sup> *CRA*, p. 269, no. 469: Plowden to Earl of Clarendon 22.12.1855, cited in Darkwah, p. 42; Informant: Alemayehu Hayle (Addis Ababa, July 4-5, 2017); Marcus, *The Life and Times*, p. 19.

<sup>1025</sup> Gabra Sellase, p. 49.

they came without taking tribute with them and this infuriated Tewodros and he annihilated them.<sup>1026</sup>

Be that as it may, when Menilek surrendered to Tewodros II, rather than making him king of Shawa, he arrested him and took him to Maqdala, where he stayed for about a decade up to 1865. Instead of Menilek, Tewodros appointed the young son of Sahla Sellase, Hayle Mikael as a governor of Shawa with the old Shawan title maredazmach.<sup>1027</sup> As a result of Hayle Mikael's appointment two rival factions emerged in Shawa. The first faction was the one which supported Hayla Mikael and the doctrine of two births of Jesus Christ, whereas the second faction supported Abeto Sayfu and the three births doctrine and hated Tewodros and Abuna Salama.<sup>1028</sup>

It is said that following the appointment of Hayla Mikael, lawlessness became the order of the day in Shawa. To depict the time of Hayla, the next famous Amharic phraseology was said to have been repeatedly voiced at that time, ያህ ምን አላ ያገኘስ ምን አገኘ (He who does not have property lost nothing and he who has property owns nothing). It is said that when Emperor Tewodros heard about the chaotic situation in Shawa, he ordered Hayla Mikael to come to Maqdala and

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<sup>1026</sup> Informant: Alemayehu Haile (Addis Ababa, July 3-4, 2017).

<sup>1027</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 144; Bairu, *Asma Gyporgis and his Works*, pp. 554-55; Bahru, *A History of Modern Ethiopia*, p. 31.

<sup>1028</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 149.

removed him from his post and put him in chains. Following Hayla Mikael's imprisonment, *Ato* Abboyye, the son-in-law of Sahla Sellase was appointed as administrator of Shawa with the title Afa Negus (speaker /mouth of the emperor). At the same time, the mighty Bezzabeh was appointed as abagaz of Shawa. Bezzabeh was said to have been the most courageous commander in Shawa second to none except allegedly the haughty Matakoo Borjaa.<sup>1029</sup>

According to Kofi Darkwah, in spite of their defeat and the incarceration of the son and successor of Hayla Malakot, the young Menilek, 'the people of Shewa successfully resisted all efforts to pacify the conquered kingdom' Especially the imprisonment of Hayla Mikael and the appointment of *Ato* Abboyye and Bezzabeh as governor and abbgaz of Shawa respectively further spurred Abeto Sayfu to resist Emperor Tewodros II and his appointees. According to Heruy, Sayfu was infuriated when he heard about the appointment of Bezzabeh and complained,

የወንድሜን የኃይለ መለኮትን ልጅ ምኒልክን መልሰው ባባቱ አልጋ ያስቀምጡታል መስሎኝ ነው እንጂ ለባዕድ ለበዛብህማ ከሰጡት ለምን ዝም እላለሁ” ብለው ከምንጃር እስከ ኤፍራታ ያለውን ምሥራቅ ምሥራቁን አገር እያስገበሩና እያሰበሩ አንከበር መጥተው በአባታዊ[sic] በሣህለ ሥላሤ አልጋ ተቀመጡ<sup>1030</sup> (‘I thought he[ Emperor Tewodros] would put my nephew, Menilek on the throne, why should I keep quiet when he gives it to Bezzabeh, who is not our relative.’ As a

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<sup>1029</sup> *Gabra Sellase*, pp. 151-153; *Sergew, Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 149-55. Hayla Mikael was called to come to Wallo on the pretext that Jaarraa Matakoo had accused him for his father's, King Sahla Sellase's, assassination of Jaarraa's father, Matakoo Borjaa.

<sup>1030</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 94

result, he pacified the eastern part of Shawa from Menjar up to Efrata and came to Ankobar and ascended the throne of his father, Sahla Sellase).

It is fascinating that Basha Mashle, a person who was assigned to keep the palace at Ankobar, when Abboyye and Bezzabeh were at the court of Tewodros, welcomed Sayfu without a single shot.<sup>1031</sup>

Tewodros's appointees encountered repeated defeats at the hands of the insurgents between 1856 and 1859. As a result, it seems that Hayle was imprisoned and in his place, *Ato* Abboyye was designated as governor and *Ato* Bezzabeh as abagaz of Shawa. Yet they also did not manage to restore peace and tranquillity in Shawa and were even unable to control Ankobar, the capital. Hence after several unsuccessful efforts to take back Ankobar, the administrator sent an envoy to Tewodros to request support. This brought the sovereign back to Shawa for the second time when in the first week of October 1859 the insurgents successfully repelled every attack on Ankobar, perpetrating severe fatalities on the imperial forces. Hence, unable to make a meaningful advance against the insurgents, Tewodros decided to halt the assault and ordered his contingents to withdraw.<sup>1032</sup>

But *Abeto* Sayfu's miscalculation turned the nearly hard-won victory into a humiliating defeat when Sayfu left the strategically important hill of Ankobar to pursue the demoralized emperor. When the emperor saw Sayfu's evacuation of Ankobar, he reorganized his regiments and defeated Sayfu and the Shawan

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<sup>1031</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 149.

<sup>1032</sup> Darkwah, pp. 46-47; Gabra Sellase, p. 53; Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 94.

insurgents. After this defeat, Abeto Sayfu attempted to base himself in his stronghold of Marhabete, but his deputy, *Ato* Kibret, rebelled against him and did not allow him to enter Marhabete. As a result, he went to Borana and requested its governor, Emero Ali for help. Emero gave him some of his troops and Sayfu went to Marhabete and fought with his officer but was stabbed to death by *Ato* Kibret in 1860 in Midda.<sup>1033</sup> This brought to an end the eventful life of the favourite son of Sahla Sellase and an assiduous military commander who was compelled to be a fugitive for most of the time after Tewodoros defeated the Shawans in 1855. It is enigmatic that Sayfu Sahla Sellase who fought hard to pacify the Oromo after the death of his father in 1847 came to establish good relations with the Arsi, Ituu and the Tulama and even took refuge among some of these Oromo gosas during the times of distress.

Yet the death of Sayfu was not the end of the Shawan's resistance against Emperor Tewodros II. As we have seen after the defeat of Sayfu, the already appointed personalities, *Ato* Abboyye and Abagaz Bezzabeh, were at the helm of the administration of Shawa. However, after a few years, one of the appointees of Tewodros, Bezzabeh, became the leader of the revolt that unfolded again against Tewodros in Shawa and even went as far as declaring himself 'king' of Shawa in November 1864,<sup>1034</sup> as we shall see later in this chapter.

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<sup>1033</sup> IES MSS 4614; Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 94; Evgenia Sokolinskaia, " Säyfu Sahlä Séllase", *Enclopedia Aethiopica*, PP. 568-69.

<sup>1034</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 96.



## **The Waning of the Influence of the Kingdom Shawa and the Intensification of Conflicts among Tulama Notables for Territorial Aggrandizement (1855-1865)**

The death of Hayla Malakot and the occupation of Shawa by Tewodros II in 1855 once again offered another opportunity for the Tulama to free themselves from the subjugation of the Shawan kingdom. Asma Gyorgis even went as far as stating that the Amhara who settled during the reign of Sahla Sellase and Hayla Malakot in areas like Ada'aa, Borana, Darraa and Lumee, making the Oromo as their mogassa fathers were massacred.<sup>1035</sup> This seems an exaggeration in view of the fact that in areas like Ada'aa, as we have seen, even the young Menilek lived for some time hiding from Emperor Tewodros. Moreover, it is unprecedented and is against the rules of the egalitarian Oromo Gada, once non Oromos went through the mogassa process, they were not considered alien.

Tekalign also indicates, "For many of the Oromo groups, particularly for those not directly bordering on Shoa, what appears to have been a decade of respite and revenge followed the loss of Shoan independence."<sup>1036</sup> It is even said that Emperor Tewodros witnessed the war made between the Tulama and the kingdom of Shawa and admired their bravery. According to Asma Gyorgis,

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<sup>1035</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyoris and His Works*, pp. 578 . Asma Gyoris in this regard, used a strong Amharic term በአሮሞ ዉስጥ የነበረ አማራ ሁሉ ታረደ። (All the Amhara who settled amidst the Oromo were slaughtered".

<sup>1036</sup> Tekalign, pp. 68, 70.

“Emperor Tewodros and his regiments watched in admiration their back and forth movements on their horses, their art of throwing spears, their manner of bravery.” But the emperor was quoted as saying, “I have not come to assist the [Oromo]”.<sup>1037</sup> This locality came to be characterized as አጥብቂኝ (grip) because “the Shawans were squeezed in between the Abichu Oromo in the front and Emperor Tewodros at the back”.<sup>1038</sup>

However, it was not the period of peace and tranquility for the Tulama, it was the time when another batch of notables who violated *Gada* rules and regulations came into being in addition to the ones we have seen in the preceding chapter. The oral traditions that we have collected from different parts of Tulama country indicate that it was the time of intense rivalry among the Tulama notables for territorial aggrandizement. Moreover, the period also saw the rise of Bezzabeh, commonly known as Bazzu Abbaa Dekker, who later on even declared himself king of Shawa. Bezzabeh made a wide-ranging territorial expansion and informants indicate that it was hitherto unprecedented in the history of the Shawan kingdom’s territorial expansion towards the Tulama territory. It is baffling that even more than the illustrious Sahla Sellase, the Tulama informants recall Bazzu Abbaa Dekker.

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<sup>1037</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 550-53.

<sup>1038</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 552-53, ff. 752.

Before discussing Bazzu Abbaa Dekker's territorial expansion towards Tulama, it is imperative to briefly highlight internal developments among the Tulama since it has, in one way or another, impacted the relations between the Oromo and the kingdom of Shawa. As indicated in the previous paragraph, the time under discussion also saw the rise of dozens of notables in the Tulama country. Therefore, it is vital to have a few glimpses of the most important chiefs that came into being and their relations with the neighbouring chiefs and the kingdom of Shawa, although the influence of the kingdom of Shawa subsided as the result of its occupation by Emperor Tewodros II in 1855.

One of the illustrious Tulama notables that rose during this time was Wadaay Minoo of Mulo Falle. But before his rise, as we have seen in the previous chapter, the well-known notables in this locality and who had established amicable relations with King Sahla Sellase of Shawa were Queen Chamee and her son Jaarraa Gadaa. However, despite the prominence of the family of Queen Chamee, oral informants indicate that the angafa or pioneer of the Mulo area was the family of Waday Minoo, but the family of Chamee got prominence as a result of their alliance with King Sahla Sellase.<sup>1039</sup> But after the death of king Sahla Sellase, Waday Minoo's family became more powerful and they even attempted

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<sup>1039</sup> One of our key informants in Mulo Tufaa Mekonneen indicates that they were not legitimate to assume the power but they got it through mogassa/ adoption. Even is said that they were Amhara who became Oromo by mogassa. Our informant justifies that there is the term Bulga in their genealogy, and associates, Bulga with Amhara because he indicates they came from the Bulga sub-province of Shawa where the majority of inhabitants of Bulga were Amhara. But the contemporary sources Chamee and her family as Oromo and characterize her as the Oromo queen..

to expand their territory as far as Meettaa Roobii, Dhamoottu, Sululta and Graar Jarso district of Salale proper among others.

Oral informants meticulously recount, one of the many territorial aggrandizements, named in Afaan Oromo Lola Meettaa (the Meettaa War), which the family of Wadaay Minoo fought with the neighboring notable, Goolee Mooruu of Meettaa Roobii.<sup>1040</sup> In this case, it was Goolee Mooruu who took initiative for territorial aggrandizement. Goolee was the most powerful notable in this locality and wanted to expand his territory towards Mulo Falle. In the west Goolee's sphere of influence was said to have been extended as far as the domains of Garoo Goodanaa of the area around the present-day town of Ginchii of west Shawa, where the Macha and Tulama settlements converge. Even it is said that the Meettaa and the nearby Macha Oromoo formed a united front against Wadaay Minoo. As a result, Goolee Mooruu undermined the Mulo's force and encouraged his contingents stating in Afaan Oromo: Eeboon Warraa Mulo akkaa Xalladutii, Wantaan isaan akkaa Kobotaat<sup>1041</sup> (The spear of Mulo is like

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<sup>1040</sup>Goolee Mooruu's family was among the prominent families of the Tulama Oromo. But there is a saying that they were the descendants of Walaqoo, who came from Walqayt and assimilated by the Oromo several generations ago. Among the prominent personalities who descended from this family were: Dajjazzmach Kebede Bizunesh Gereessu, Biirraatuu Goolee Mooruu. General Tafarii Batii, one of the presidents of Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC) of Ethiopia from 1974 to 1977, was also related to this family. Kebede Bizunesh was one of the founders of the Macha Tulama Self Help Association. But the claim which made them non Oromo seems only based on mere speculation because of the relation between the terms Walaqo and Walqayt. But it should be remembered that oral tradition collected by Alemayehu Haile, Gada System: the Politics of Tulama Oromo, p. 23 make Walaqo one of the subgroups of the Meettaa, which in turn categorized under Bachoo Oromo.

<sup>1041</sup> Informant: Tufaa Mekonnen ( 06/05/ 2017 , Mulo)

long grass and their shield is made up of cow dung). In this way, he was able to recruit a cavalry force from Mettaa and the nearby Macha Oromo territories.

Meanwhile, concerning the territorial extent of Goolee Mooruu's domain in the west, we have conflicting information. For instance, according to the biography of General Jagamaa Keelloo, the grandson of Garoo Goodanaa, “ይኸው የገሮ አባት ጎዳና ነሞ የአባቱን ግዛት በማስፋት እስከ በርጋ ወንዝ ድረስ ዘጠኝ መቶ ገሻ መሬት ይዞ የባለባት ያስተዳድረ ነበር”<sup>1042</sup> (The father of Garoo, Goodanaa Namoo's domain which was about nine hundred gasha extended up to the Barga river). This means that it was the domain of Garoo Goodanaa, which extended up to Meettaa, not the domain of Goolee Mooruu, which extended up to the locality around Ginchii.

After the cavalry force of Meettaa under the leadership of Goolee Mooruu finished its mobilization to attack the domain of Wadaay, who was said to have been a hero by himself and even killed an elephant,<sup>1043</sup> was stunned. But a certain servant of Wadaay, known as Gollosuu, who was lame but very much astute, advised Wadaay to devise a trick so that Goolee Mooruu's force would annihilate

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<sup>1042</sup>Fekre Markos Desta , *Jagama Kello, Ya Bagaw Mabraq ( Ya Hiwot Tarek) / Jagama Kello, A winter Thunder ( A Biography)* ( Addis Ababa: Shama Books, 2002 E.C. ), p. 7.

<sup>1043</sup> It is fascinating that the presence of elephants around Meettaa was reported by Krapf in 1840, See Isenberg and Krapf, p. 211. Perhaps Wadaay Minoo existed around this time. Wadaay Minoo told his subjects to call him Abbaa Bulloo because he killed an elephant that had white colour on its face and front. It is said that he entered into the stomach of an elephant through the anus when it drinks water (Arbaa hudduun seenee ajjese) and killed it. Killing elephants at that time was one of the indicators of bravery and heroism among the Oromo and other Ethiopian communities, including the Shawan Amhara.

each other. Then Gollosuu took the mission of creating havoc among the cavalries of Goolee Mooruu. So Gollosuu entered the camp of Goolee Mooruu clandestinely and stabbed the horse of one of Goolee's soldiers. Then the one whose horse was stabbed thought his horse was stabbed by the man who stood near him and he, in turn, stabbed his fellow combatant, and in such manner, they started to exterminate each other. When Wadaay Minoo saw this, his force started to attack the embattled force of Goolee Mooruu.<sup>1044</sup>

The battalion of Goolee Mooruu was massacred near a river, which was after that incident named Lagaa Aja'aa (literally, the Smelling river) –where the blood of Goolee Mooruu's troops flew like a flood. The commander of the Meettaa force, Goolee Mooruu, was able to survive but was caught by one of the sons of Wadaay known as Konnoo at a place known as Ulaa Bolloo Macha. The war is said to have continued up to a locality found in Meettaa known as Ulaa Abbayii. When Konnoo told his father he had arrested Goolee, he shrugged it saying how on earth you, who was a cowherd could arrest Goolee, who even did not bow down to God (*Goolee Waaqnu hindadhabee atti tikkiseen hoorii ni qabda?*). But when Konnoo brought Goolee to Wadaay, the latter uttered in disbelief and amazingly, "O Goolee, are you arrested by cowherd?"<sup>1045</sup>

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<sup>1044</sup> Informant: Tufaa Makonnen (Mulo, 06/ 05/ 2017).

<sup>1045</sup> Informant: Tufaa Mekonnen ( Mulo, 06/05/2017)

But after his arrest , Goolee was said to have been treated very well by Wadaay. Even Wadaay dismounted from his horse and allowed Goolee to mount it. He was said to have stayed at Wadaay's house for some time, until his eight sons came and took him to Meettaa. Before his departure, it is said that Goolee Mooruu wanted to establish marriage relations with the Wadaay family and gave his granddaughter, Dhiibbii Makkoo Goolee, to the grandson of Wadaay, Bune Shuushuu Wadaay. As a result, conflict between the families of Wadaay and Goolee was said to have come to an end.<sup>1046</sup>

Our key oral informant further indicates that as a result of Mulo's victory over the joint force of Meettaa and Macha, they were admired in both areas, especially among the Macha Oromo. Informants indicate perhaps that after this incident, the people of Mulo started to be characterized as astute and conspirators. As a result, there came into being an Afaan Oromo adage, Mulo yoo tokko ta'e balleessi, yoo lama ta'an biiraa deemii( if you find an individual Mulo eliminate him/her if you find two or more Mulo together depart from them as soon as possible). Moreover, it is said that there is an oath among the Macha Oromo, especially among the followers of Garoo Goodanaa Namoo which goes as follows: Biyee biyyaa Mulo ( By the soil of the country of Mulo, because the Macha contingents who came to

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<sup>1046</sup> Informant: Tufaa Mekonnen ( Mulo, 06/05/ 2017)

Mulo during the time of Meettaa War were massacred as we have seen above at Mulo).<sup>1047</sup>

Wadaay Minoo was said to have also fought with other nearby notables, of course, it was a war fought for territorial aggrandizement and the chiefs he fought with are portrayed by the following extended Afaan Oromo poem.

### **Afaan Oromo**

### **Gloss**

Yaa Jaldeessaa Mulo	You the monkey <sup>1048</sup> of Mulo
Yaa Wadaay Minoo	Oh, you Wadaay Minoo
Abbaa Biyyaa Mulo	The father / lord of the country Mulo
Adduureen maal dheessaa	A cat escapes from what?
Yaa Wadaay Minoo	Oh, you Wadaay Minoo
Jabaa Mulo Keechaa	The powerful man of Mulo
Ada'aan gamaa bahe	He ascended to Ada'aa
Karraa gadii bu'e	He descended to Karraa
Malkaa Rayyaa jiigse	He made Malka Rayyaa flow
Rayyaa achiin bitnechee	He dispersed Rayyaa from there
Bargaa ol deebi'ee	He ascended to Bargaa again
Yaa Wadaay Minoo	Oh, you Wadaay Minoo
Eeffana oololee	Like the young bull
Bargaa gammaan bahee	He went over to Braga
Dhamootutti dhaaqe	He went to Dhamootu
Kan Caangareen loolee	and fought with Caangaree <sup>1049</sup>

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<sup>1047</sup> Informant: Tufaa Mekonnen ( Mulo, 06/05/ 2017)

<sup>1048</sup> It is an affectionate term used for someone who is likeable



Andarfaa leencaa	a powerful man like a lion
Cangareen baroode	Cangaree has roared
Han garrachaa Meettaa	from the heartland of Meettaa
Leencii Dhaamotudhaa	The lion of Dhaamotuu
Mulotaan sifarsa	I praise you in Mulloo
Bachoo ta'eetani	sitting in Bachoo
Yaa mangaagaa farda	Oh, you the jaw of horse
Yaa Dachaasaa Baqsaa <sup>1050</sup>	You Dachaasaa Baqsaa
Achumaan bu'ee	He went down
Kekkuu gamaan bahe	He went over to Kekkuu
Biyyaa Tufaa Munaa dhageen	to the country of Tufaa Munaa
Taffeen ol garagaree	Returned to Taffee
Baddiin ol deebi'ee <sup>1051</sup>	Ascended again to Baddii
Gurraandatti dhaaqee	went to Gurraanda
Kan Agadoo Graariin loolee	fought with Agadoo of Graar
Yaa Wadaay Minoo	Oh, you Wadaay Minoo
Abbaa Biyyaa Mulo. <sup>1052</sup>	The father / lord of the country Mulo

Therefore, the poem clearly illustrates the wars of territorial aggrandisement fought between Wadaay Minoo of Mulo and the neighbouring Tulama notables, some of whom were more popular and powerful than him. From the poem, we

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<sup>1049</sup> Caangaree Sookiilee was one of the local notables around Dahmoottu., his descendant was the famous Ligaba Beqele Hordofaa Caangaree, Informants: Dubee Buttaa Tufaa ( Sabbataa, June 29, 2017); Tufaa Makonnen

<sup>1050</sup> Dachaasaa Baqsaa was one of the notables of Dhaamottuu area in addition to Cangaree However, Tekalign, " A City and Its Hinterlands,"p. 102 indicates that Dachaasaa Baqsaa was notable of Yayyaa and also mentions another notable of the neighbouring gosa of Farachu, Borde Abaa Hare.

<sup>1051</sup> The notable of Baddii was Garbii Sakiiluu, but not mentioned in the poem, perhaps he might rose later on or did not resist Wadaay Minoo.

<sup>1052</sup> Informant: Tufaa Makonnen (Mulo, May 6, 2017).

may discern that first of all, he fought with a certain notable of Ada'aa Bargaas who was identified as Malkaa Rayyaa, about whom we know little. Then it was the turn of the famous Caangaree Sookiilee Boorantoo of Dhaamoottu,<sup>1053</sup> who was characterised as a man from the heartland of Meettaa, the dominant Bachoo Oromo subgroups. Caangaree must have been a hero and powerful notable, as he is characterised as the lion of Dhaamottuu.

It is fascinating that it was by this time that we have started to hear about the famous and legendary Tufaa Munaa of the Gumbichuu Oromoo, who was considered the chief of Gullaallee of Finfinnee aka Addis Ababa. Tufaa Muna's initial power base was in the area located north of Entoto town around what is commonly known as Gutoo Wasarbii locality of Sululta. Therefore, Wadaay Minoo fought perhaps at this juncture with the young Tufaa Munaa Jiiloo. The conflict also subsided after a political marriage was arranged between these two Tulama notable families. It is said that Tufaa Munaa married the granddaughter Wadaay Minoo known as Mukoo Shuushuu Wadaay, who was the mother of Dadhii Tufaa.<sup>1054</sup> Finally, what is most fascinating about this poem in view of Wadaay Minoo's territorial aggrandizement was the mentioning of Gurranda of Graar, which is found on the opposite side of the Mugar river in Salale proper unlike other areas

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<sup>1053</sup> Nagada, " Ya Gobana Tarik, " P. 3; One of the grandsons of Cangaree Sookiilee, Ligaba Bekele Hordofaa Cangaree came to be the most important notable in the twentieth century and integrated into the Ethiopian aristocracy.

<sup>1054</sup> Informants: Tufaa Mekonnen ( Mulo, 06/05/ 2107)

like Sululta, Ada'aa Bargaa, Meettaa, and of course Dhamootu which are found on this side.

The locality found southwest of Finfinnee in and around the present-day town of Sabbataa, was another area, where the noticeable war of territorial aggrandizement was made, between the notables of Meettaa/ Subbaa<sup>1055</sup> and Ada'aa, who, in turn, are categorized under the famous Galan subgroup of Tulama. As a result, our informants use the term Galan and Ada'aa on the one hand and Meettaa and Subbaa on the other interchangeably.

It is said that the area around Sabbataa was initially inhabited by the Galan/ Ada'aa. The Meettaa were said to have been moved to this locality from Meettaa Roobii, which is located further to the west near the Mugar River valley. Anyhow, during the period under review, the notable Meettaa/Subbaa was Yaa'ii Galdasiis, whereas the notable Galan/ Ada'aa was Jimaa Sanbarroo. The area on the opposite side of the Moglee mountain, from the direction of Sabbataa was inhabited by the Meettaa/ Subbaa, whereas on the side of Sabbataa was the settlement of Ada'aa/ Galan.<sup>1056</sup>

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<sup>1055</sup>Subbaa is one of the subgroups of Saddeettan Meettaa, See Alemayehu, *Gada System*, p. 23

<sup>1056</sup> Nagada, "Ya Gobana Tarik," p. 3; Informants : Birbirsa Hey'ii ( Sabbataa, June 28, 2017), Dubee Buttaa ( Sabbataa, June 29, 2017), Worku Meettaa, Hirpha Araddaa, Eshetu Aritii, Teka Begna ( Sabbataa, June 30, 2017).

Before the beginning of the conflict between Ada'aa / Gaaan and Subbaa/Meettaa, it is said that Jimaa Sanbarro prophesied that he would be killed by his enemies, and no one would see his dead body, but the black dog. As he predicted the devastating conflict between Ada'aa / Galan and Subbaa/Meetta commenced during his time and he used to score victories over the Subbaa/Meettaa force time and again. But it is said that Yaa'ii Galdasiis devised a trick to eliminate Jimaa Sanbarro and gave one of his relatives to the relative of Jimaa Sanbarro as a wife? But Yaa'ii intended to use her as a spy. Then on a certain day when most of the people of Jimaa Sanbarro went to the Loggee market which was by then held at the foot of the Furi Mountain, the relative of Yaa'ii sent a messenger stating that Jimaa was alone and they could annihilate him. Based on the information they got, Yaa'ii Galdasiis attacked Jimaa Sanbarro, when he was alone but initially the audacious Jimaa was able to turn away the Meettaa invaders beyond the Diimaa River but in due course of the war, he was badly wounded and fell from his horse and passed away.<sup>1057</sup>

It is said that at a place where Jimaa Sanbarro died, a spring was sprang. Following the death of Jimaa Sanbarro, the Meettaa under the leadership of Yaa'ii Galdasiis were able to conquer the area around Meettaa Abboo, where the eponymous church was founded by Yaa'ii Galdasiis and also a brewery with a similar name was founded later. Informants further indicate that after the death of

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<sup>1057</sup> Informants: Worku Meettaa, Hirpha Araddaa, Eshetu Aritii, Teka Begna (Sabbataa, June 30, 2017).

Jimaa Sanbarroo, the Galan/ Ada'aa were evicted from the area around the present-day Sabbataa town and compelled to move beyond the Akaki River.<sup>1058</sup>

Therefore, the conflict between Yaa'ii Galdasiis and Jimaa Sanbarroo was one of the well-known wars of territorial expansion made among the Tulama notables on the eve of their territories incorporation into the kingdom of Shawa.

In the area around the districts of Adaamaa and Booseet of East Shawa, traditions indicate that several local notables came into being during the period under review. Of these the most renowned ones were, Bokkaan Jimaa, Badhaadhaa Guufii, Baatii Jiiloo, Boset Taboree and Hayyee Malmalee. Traditions further indicate that intense rivalry came into being between two Torban Oboo notables known as Bokkaan Jimaa of Gumbichuu and Baatii Jiiloo of Digaluu. The settlement of the family of Bokkaan Jimaa was at a place known as Saqalo, which nowadays has been part of the Adaamaa/ Nazareth town. Bokkaan Jimaa was the pioneer or angafa of the area whereas Baatii Jiiloo came to be prominent as a result of the wealth he had amassed. Informants indicate that continuous wars of territorial expansion were made between these two notables in the locality before the coming of the force of Menilek.<sup>1059</sup> There is a couplet which succinctly indicates this rivalry which was said to have been composed by Baatii Jiiloo to defame Bokkaan Jimaa. It is said that Baatii Jiiloo

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<sup>1058</sup> Informants: Dubee Buttaa (Sabbataa, June 29, 2017), Birbirsa Hey'ii (Sabbataa, June 28, 2017 and Takkaa Begna (Sabbataa, June 30, 2017).

<sup>1059</sup> Informants : *Abbaa Gadaa* Babsaa Badhaaso, , Lammaa Tumsaa, Bokonaa Cuqaalaa, ( Adaamaa, July 6, 2017)

orders his servants to mount a horse and disseminate defaming information among the local inhabitants about Bokkaan Jimaa,

Afaan Oromo

Gloss

Bokkaan Jimaa Nama Ajjesee Jedha oddechaa Inform the local people, Bokkaan  
Oduun biyyaa Nama ballechaa<sup>1060</sup>. Jimaa had killed a person.

Because such kind of news may force a person to flee from his homeland

There is also a fascinating story about the contest made between Baatii Jiiloo and Jango Qumbii of Jiillee, who lived around the present-day Koka dam, in relation to their wealth. Then they started to count their wealth in front of witnesses as follows:

*Jango Qumbi counted his wealth saying:*

*Goorommi loonii kan gurraa bajii kan waatiin jaala jirtuu dhibbaa sitti lakka'ee*

*(I have one hundred young cows with recently born calves)*

*Baatii Jiiloo in turn counted:*

*Harroota gurraa bajii qanqaloo xaafii aadii wajjiin dhibba sitti lakka'e*

*(I have counted one hundred donkeys with short ears with sacks of white teff /Eragrostis tef)<sup>1061</sup>*

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<sup>1060</sup> Informants: *Abbaa Gadaa* Babsaa Badhaasoo, Roobaa Bunee, Shuraa Badhaadhaa(Adaamaa, July 6, 2017)

<sup>1061</sup> Informants: *Abbaa Gadaa* Babsaa Badaaso and Ifaa Taaliiaa (Adaamaa, July 6, 2017) ; See Naol, P.60, where about the wealth of Jango Qumbii was discussed. He was said to have owned more than a thousand cattle.

As a result, they indicate that Baatii Jiiloo was recognized as the wealthiest person in the present-day east Shawa because he not only had cattle and draught animals but also he was a prosperous farmer who produced staple crops like *teff*. It is said that the Jiillee Oromo of the area around the Koka dam started to cultivate crops after this contest.<sup>1062</sup>

So far, we have examined the emergence of the first generation notables among the Tulama who defied the egalitarian Gada system except in Mulo Falle, where another rival family led by Wadaay Minoo got prominence over the family of Queen Chamee/ Jaarraa. But it was in the area known as Salale that the most successful transfer of power from one generation to the next was observed, during the period under discussion.

As we have seen, the most renowned notable in the Salale area and the contemporary of King Sahla Sellase of Shawa was Abbaa Maallee, who came to establish relation with the King of Shawa perhaps in the 1837. It seems sometime before the incorporation of Salale into the kingdom of Shawa by the force of *Ras Darge Sahla Sellase* in the 1870s, Abbaa Maallee became old and succeeded by the more energetic and young Gabruu Gobee, who also belonged to the same *gosa*, whose family lived closer to Saggoo Ujubaa, Abbaa Maallee's paternal

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<sup>1062</sup> Informants: *Abbaa Gadaa* Babsaa Badhaasoo , Roobaa Bune, Shuraa Badhaadhaa, and Ifaa Taaliiiaa ( Adaamaa, July 6, 2017)

residence. The family of Gabruu Goobee resided in the nearby territory known as Dhakkaboora.

According to the popular tradition in Salale, Abbaa Maallee had relinquished his power due to old age and was succeeded by his deputy Gabruu Goobee. The same tradition specifies that as it was the period of warfare, only strong and energetic men could mount horses and could also provide leadership.<sup>1063</sup> Oral tradition, on the other hand, indicates that Abbaa Maallee was a very active and able leader. As a result, the following couplet was composed posthumously to portray his strength and courage.

<b>Oromo</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
<i>Gaanggoolii golaiti sooraanii Eegaa Maallee du'aa hin oolani<sup>1064</sup>.</i>	<i>Mules are fed (fatten) in the pen, one cannot be immortal for strength because Maallee [who was strong]himself had died.</i>

There is a fascinating story how Gabruu Goobee became successor of Abbaa Maallee. Before Maallee retired, Gabruu was said to have been appointed as the royal overseer. It is said that Gabruu was an authoritative and hardworking guy and made the family of Maallee busy especially when there were feasts. It is said that one day, a wife of Abbaa Maallee, frustrated by this monotonous duty at the palace and moaned in the presence of Gabruu, Maloo Goofta Kiyaa [Waaqayyoo] alamii Kana nurra fudhaadhu ( which means, Oh God, please

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<sup>1063</sup> Informants: Abbaa Hayla Maryam Morodaa (7/6/2001 and July 2018, Fiche), Baqalaa Simee( 8/6/ 2001, Saggoo), Abrahaam Tasammaa ( 10/6/2001, Fiche)

<sup>1064</sup> Informants: Baqalaa Simee( 8/6/ 2001, Saggoo), Abbaa Hayla Maryam Morodaa (7/6/2001 and July , 2018)



disown us the wealth you bestowed upon us, of course, which made them busy), then Gabruu was standing there wearing a long cotton scarf Known as yadee in Afaan Oromo and abujedee in Amharic., Gabruu enquired Maallee's wife to bless him so that Waaqa would give him the wealth. The wife Maallee blessed him, and then Gabruu spread his cotton scarf in front of her and said to her I had taken. It is said that in this manner, Waaqa/ God recognised the desire of Gabruu and made him Maallee's successor.<sup>1065</sup> Gabruu Goobee Ochee, who was close kin of Abbaa Maallee, was a man of equal acumen, if not more. He sustained the territorial expansion started by his predecessor until about the 1870s, and he was among the notables who resisted the Shawan encroachment led by Ras Darge Sahla Sellase, as we shall see.<sup>1066</sup>

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the territory of Abbaa Maallee stretched from the Mugar river in the south up to Jamma in the north except for the territory of Jaarsoo, which they could not dominate and of course, Gaabruu attempted to incorporate. It is said that to subdue the indomitable Jaarsoo, Gabruu needed the alliance of Ashee Ruufoo of Ariiroo. Abba Hayla Maryam Morodaa, the descendant of both notables on his father's and mother's side, respectively, narrates that Gabruu Goobee invited Ashee to Saggoo Ganda Ujubaa and put on his table fat meat and mead, but did not give him a knife. When Ashee asked

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<sup>1065</sup> Informant : Abba Hayla Maryam Morodaa ( July 2018, Fiche)

<sup>1066</sup> Informants: Baqalaa Simee (8/6/ 2001, Saggoo), Abrahaam Tasammaa (10/6/2001, Fiche), Abba Hayla Maryam Morodaa (July 2018, Fiche).

Gabruu why he forsook the knife, Gabruu told him he was baffled by the issue of Jaarsoo and requested him not to be an obstacle or to remain neutral so that Gabruu could attack and subdue the Jaarsoo (Jaarsoo tanaan mucucceessa). Ashee was said to have agreed to remain neutral and returned to his residence, Ariiroo and told his seven son's about this issue. However, one of his sons Abbaayye<sup>1067</sup> disagreed and told him that 'if we allow Gabruu to subdue Jaarsoo, the next turn would be ours. When Gabruu mobilized and attacked Jaarsoo Ashee and his sons resisted him and as a result, Gabruu was not able to subdue Jaarsoo. In this manner, Gabruu like his predecessor failed to subdue Jaarsoo of Graar.<sup>1068</sup>.

It is fascinating that Ashee Rufoo, as we shall see in the next chapter, started to emerge as one of the notables of sub-province of Jaarsoo Graar, Ariiroo. Ashee Rufoo and his seven sons were among the notables that came into being in Salale proper who resisted the force of king Menilek led by his uncle Dajjazmach later Ras DargeSahla Sellase, in the 1870s. Therefore, the Jaarsoo and of course, Ariiroo were not subdued by the family of Abbaa Maallee and Gabruu Goobee up until the region's incorporation into the kingdom of Shawa.

More than half a dozen of notable families came into being in Salale proper alone along with the families of Abbaa Maallee of Saggoo Graar and Dooluu of

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<sup>1067</sup> Traditionally Abbayye's horse eats human flesh and drinks blood and a very courageous person

<sup>1068</sup> Informants: Abba Hayla Maryam Morodaa (July 2018, Fiche); Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee", pp. 35-36.

Jaarsoo who rose sometime before the 1840s as we have seen in the previous chapter. The most renowned notables in Salale during the period under discussion were Ashee Ruufoo of Ariiroo, Nagawoo Gammadaa and Jaallee Massoo of Kuyyuu (Hiillaamuu), Jaankaa Nagawoo of Kurfaa ( Dabra Libanos), Gojii Bariii and Dadhii Manyuu of Hidhabuu Abotee, Fursaa Daboo of Warraa Jaarsoo, and Gooshuu Giissiillaa of Darro.<sup>1069</sup> Apparently, there were intense rivalries among these notables as we shall see briefly in relation to the history of one of these notables, Nagawoo Gamaddaa of Kuyyuu since dealing with the history of all these notables is beyond the scope of the thesis.

Arguably the family of Nagawoo Gammadaa came to be the second most prominent family in Salale proper after Abbaa Maallee and his successor Gabruu Goobee. However, unlike most of the chiefs we have listed above, Nagawoo was not the descendant of the pioneers rather it is said that his family came into prominence as a result of the wealth they had accumulated. According to a mesmerizing story about the ancestry of Nagawoo, it is said that Nagawoo's grandsire Bonayyaa was not indigenous to Kuyyuu and was not originally among the prominent families of the district. Nagawoo's lineage does not go more than the fourth generation and it is said that the young Bonayyaa, the grandfather of Nagawoo, came from Gojjam with traders who came to buy cattle and was

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<sup>1069</sup> Informants: Fayyee Dabalee ( 18/6/ 2001, Dagam), Tufaa Washaaree ( July 2001, Kootichoo Goobboollaa), Waaqshumee Badhaanee ( 16/6/ 2001, Dagam ), Tirunesh Badhaanee ( 28/6/ 2001, Gohatsion ), Waaqtolaa Balchaa ( Garbaa Gurracha, 25/06/ 2001), Mabree Goofee (Aannoo Qarree, May 7, 2018).

exchanged for hay they needed for the cattle they bought. Then the young lad was adopted by the Hillammuu Oromo sub-group of Kuyyuu and renamed Bonayyaa.<sup>1070</sup>

It is fascinating that Nagawoo's family came to be prominent among the Salale Oromo and perhaps he came to dominate the second largest territory after that of Abbaa Maallee and Gabruu Goobee. Especially since the Shawan plateau in general and Salale, in particular, have been ideal for animal farming, Nagawoo's parents also began raising animals and came to have a large number of cattle. It was due to their fortune in cattle that they became conspicuous in Kuyyuu and then started to defy the power of the presumed Abbaa Biyyaa of Kuyyuu, who was the heir of the pioneer of Kuyyuu, a notable known as Jaalee Masoo.<sup>1071</sup>

One of the unforgettable performances which earned Nagawoo an admirable reputation was his generosity. Informants recount that on one occasion, around three hundred of Nagawoo's cows had calves in a day. He informed his cowherds to ascend the nearby hill and yell loudly. Flabbergasted by the shout, the local people gathered around Nagawoo's residence. Then Nagawoo gave those who

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<sup>1070</sup>Informant: Shawallul Sanyii and Ayyalaa Qanaani (Garba Gurrachaa, 21-24/06/ 2001. Hence his genealogy did not go beyond the grandfather, namely Nagawoo -Gammadaa - Bonayyaa - Achin Hafo- the last one is a phrase which means one who did not return or disappeared. This saga is spoken clandestinely. One of the relatives of this notable family, our key informant, Abbaa Machaal - Borjaa - Biiraatuu -Waaqee - Gammadaa - Bonayyaa, a septuagenarian also reiterates that his descendants' origin was Gojjam; See Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee," p., 128.

<sup>1071</sup> Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee", p. 36.

came to his residence a cow to milk for free.<sup>1072</sup> This story is recited in slightly different ways, which of course specifies that Nagawoo was a very wealthy man in this locality.

Another story regarding the ascendancy of Nagawoo and his successors in Kuyyuu is connected to the incursion of the kingdom of Shawa into the area. It is said that when the soldiers of Bazzu Abbaa Dekker<sup>1073</sup> attacked the district of Kuyyuu, the local community tried to repulse the Shawans however the latter became victorious and took a large number of the local people as captives and plundered thousands of cattle, which they took to Ankobar. But later Bazzu dispatched an envoy to Kuyyuu notables and informed them if they came and deliberate with him, he would discharge their people and cattle. But the angafa of Kuyyuu, Jaalee Maasoo, did not dare to go to Ankobar but rather he sent Nagawoo. When Nagawoo went to Ankobar, Bazzu asked him what he favoured to be returned to him, cattle or people. Nagawoo replied politely, according to tradition saying: "let the cattle be consumed by your troops, I want my people." In this way, the belligerent groups made peace and Nagawoo's men were freed and

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<sup>1072</sup>*Informants:* Abbaa Machal Borjaa (24/6/2001, Garba Gurrachaa), Waaqshumee Badhaanee (16/6/ 2001, Dagam) and Fayyisaa Jimaa (14/6/2001) Wakene, p.20; Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee", p. 37.

<sup>1073</sup> Bezzabeh was a self proclaimed ruler of Shawa. See, for instance, Harlold Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menelik II 1844-1913* (Oxford, 1975), pp.23-27

in unison Bazzu designated Nagawoo as an administrator of the region from Kuyyuu to Abbay.<sup>1074</sup>

Nonetheless, concerning the size of the dominion of Nagawoo and his descendants, we have contradictory traditions. At the zenith of his authority, Nagawoo dominated all the territories west of Abbaa Maallee's domain, namely the nowadays districts of Kuyyuu, Hidhabuu Aboote and Warra Jaarsoo.<sup>1075</sup> Another tradition states that Nagawoo controlled merely some parts of Kuyyuu. Even in the present day, Kuyyuu itself, the Darroo led by their Abbaa Biyyaa Gooshuu Gissiillaa's family repelled the intrusion of Nagawoo on their territory. On the eastern side, Nagawoo was fighting with Abbaa Maallee and his descendant Gabruu Goobee and with quite smaller notables like Shanoo Waaqee of Dagam. In the other direction, he was at war with the notable of Hidhabuu Gojii Bariii. Finally, Nagawoo was not on good terms with Warra Jaarsoo notables like Fuursaa Dabboo and Dooluu Jiloo.<sup>1076</sup>

It seems that by around the 1860s at least two powerful notables came into being in the Salale proper, namely Gabruu Goobee of Graar and Nagawoo Gammadaa of Kuyyuu. It is said that Gooshu Gissiillaa, a notable of Darroo, convinced

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<sup>1074</sup>Informant: Abbaa Machal Borjaa (24/6/2001, Garba Gurrachaa,); Tsegaye , “ The Oromo of Salaalee”, p. 37.

<sup>1075</sup> Informants: Abbaa Machal Borjaa (24/6/2001, Garba Gurrachaa), Lemma Dastaa (23/6/2001, Garba Gurracha) and Beqele Dammuu (09/6/2001, Fiche).

<sup>1076</sup>Informants: Ababu Gizaw (Ejere, ,May 8, 2017) and Waaqtolaa Balchaa ( 25/6/2001, Garba Gurrachaa); Tsegaye, “ The Oromo of Salaalee).

Nagawoo Gammadaa to attack Gabruu Goobee by campaigning as far as Saggoo Ujubaa and Dhakkaboora, the seat of Gabruu Goobee. Therefore, Nagawoo Gamadda started mobilization by recruiting troops from Kuyyuu, Abootee, and Darroo. When the people of Gabruu heard Nagawoo's mobilization, they started yelling to inform Gabruu. Yelling was the traditional mode of conveying a message at that time. Then it is said, they yelled 'uuu, Nagawoo Gammadda Gabruu warranuuf deemed (Uuu, Nagawoo Gammadaa is going to attack Gabruu). At that time it was said that Gabruu became old but the son of Abbaa Maallee, Takluu started to be the lieutenant of Gabruu and also had the ambition of claiming his father's post. On that day, Taklu drank Kosso (*Hagenia abyssinica*- indigenous herbal medicine used for the treatment of intestinal parasites, especially tapeworm) and was in pain but when the force of Gammadaa reached Leman locality in Dagam, he was relieved from his pain. Then he told his mother he was relieved from pain and started tying a forty cubit sabbataa (a scarf like cloth usually worn by women as a decoration and to fasten the waist) around his waist and ate porridge made by his mother and drank seven glasses of mead while he fastens sabbataa. When the force Nagawoo Gammadaa reached around Saggoo Ujubaa and saw the white fence of Takluu they mistook it for a tent and anticipated that either there was weeding at Ganda Ujubaa or Saggoo notables decided to submit to Nagawoo and pitched a tent to welcome them. Therefore they did say to each other, 'let's go and eat fat meat and drink mead' and started bathing in the Dhanqa River. When they were bathing, Gabruu and Taklu, who had already mobilized their forces and had

been waiting positioning themselves at a strategic locality, caught Nagawoo's force by surprise and pursued them as far as Ulaa Hummoo. Ulaa Hummoo, which is located nearby the present-day Gabra Gurrachaa town and is considered the boundary between the domain of Gabruu Goobee and Nagawoo Gammaddaa. However, one of our knowledge informants, Obboo Mabree Goofee of Dagam, narrates a slightly different version of this story. He indicates that the force of Nagawoo Gammadaa of Kuyyuu was defeated by Gabruu Gobee at a place known as Hambisoo, in Dagam, and even Hambisoo is said to have been named after this incident to commemorate the annihilation of Nagawoo's force.<sup>1077</sup>

We have an amusing tale about the circumstances surrounding the death of Nagawoo Gammadaa. It is said that Nagawoo's quarrel with Dooluu Jiloo, the notable of Jaarsoo, led to his downfall. Tradition has it that Dooluu was a shrewd person and wanted to eliminate his rival by employing the latter's conflict with Bazzu as an instrument. Hence, Dooluu dispatched an envoy to Bazzu so that he should mobilize his force because Nagawoo was contemplating rebelling against him. On the other hand, he informed Nagawoo to get prepared as he was going to invade his territory. Then when Bezzabeh dispatched a reconnaissance force to Kuyyuu and discovered that a notable of Kuyyuu was mobilizing his force. Consequently, Bazzu sent his force to Kuyyuu and when Nagawoo heard the

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<sup>1077</sup> <sup>1077</sup> Informants: Abba Hyala Maryam Morodaa (July 2017, Fiche) and Mabree Goofee (Aannoo Qarree, May 7, 2018).



coming of Bazzu's army, he started galloping a horse in order not to be arrested but he accidentally fell from his horse and died.<sup>1078</sup> This story about the manner of death of Nagawoo is very much doubt but no account is given about his relations with Darge Sahla Sellase perhaps because Nagawoo might have vanished from the political scene before the arrival of Darge in the region. However, it is not clear whether Nagawoo had vanished from the political scene as a result of old age or death. But we know that his son and successor Hawaas Nagawoo was the one who put up stiff resistance against Ras Darge in the late 1860s or early 1870s.

At this juncture we have to underline that the wars conducted among the the Tulama notables were made mainly for territorial aggrandizement, inherently akin to the patterns of the emergence of the monarchs among the Macha of the Gibe area and Wallaga. In this regard, Mohammed Hassen posits: "In the Gibe region, the transition from the collective ownership to private ownership was a bloody episode in the drama of the struggle between the war leaders..."<sup>1079</sup> Likewise the chaotic conditions that were unfolded among the Tulama were attempts to materialize the transition from traditionally egalitarian Oromo system to the stratified system which was not completed during the period under discussion.

Last but not least, the same can be said about the Tulama notables found in the northern part of Tulama territory, namely Borana and Darraa. Especially

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<sup>1078</sup> Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee", p. 35.

<sup>1079</sup> Mohammed, *the Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 119-120.

concerning the latter, the oral tradition we have got indicates that perhaps during the period under review, there was bitter rivalry between Asanu Wadaj and Alii Maaree, the son of the famous Darra Chief Marro Sabaroo, who were based at Salalkula and Meettaa respectively. It seems that Asanu Waday got the upper hand over Alii Maaree and even the followers of the latter were forced to flee Darraa and settled in the neighbouring district of Hidhaabuu Aboote. The place where Alii Maree's men settled is known as Godaa Darraa to date. Meanwhile, there is the famous Afaan Oromo song which indicates that Salalkula was the seat of the family of Alii Maaree:

Afaan Oromo

Gloss

Salalkulaan kan warra Alii Maareetii Najibitee san hundaa waliin tanetti. <sup>1080</sup>	Salakula belonged to the family of Alii Maaree, Why do you hate me after we saw good and bad days together?.
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Similarly, the Tulama notables of Borana part of Wallo also engaged in wars of territorial aggrandizement, which seems often devastating. However, eventually, they have reconciled thanks to the mediation of a certain Abbaa Bokkuu of Darraa Oromo.<sup>1081</sup>

### **The Period of Bazzu Abbaa Dekker and the Tulama (1858/9-65)**

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<sup>1080</sup> Informant : Ababu Gizaw ( Ejere, May 8, 2018)

<sup>1081</sup> See Yemiamrew, p. 94.

Of all the rulers of the kingdom of Shawa, no one is as popular as Bezzabeh, commonly known as Bazzu Abbaa Dekker in the oral tradition of the Tulama except Emperor Menilek and his famous Tulama general, *Ras Gobana Dachi* of Abichu. The origin of Bazzu Abbaa Deker is open to speculation. According Bairu Tafla, he was a *balabbat* of Manz and his father was a certain Wariq. But he further indicates, ‘it is not established whether this was the name of his father, or a nickname’.<sup>1082</sup> Similarly, one of our key informants and Bazzu Abbaa Dekker’s descendant on his mother’s side, an octogenarian, vehemently claims that he was an Amhara from Manz, who became prominent as a result of his military prowess.<sup>1083</sup> However, some of our informants indicate that he was an Oromo, who was made an *abagaz* like his predecessors, Matakko Borjaa and Marach. Yet, our informants are not in a position to trace his social and family background alike the written sources.<sup>1084</sup>

The so-called time of Bezzabeh indicated by the oral informants perhaps includes not only the time of his self-proclaimed kingship of Shawa but also the time when he was appointed as *abagaz* of Shawa by Emperor Tewodros starting from 1858/59. Otherwise, the time of his self-proclaimed kingship was too short and he cannot make a wide-ranging campaign within a year or so in view of the mode of transportation available at that time. As we have seen above, Bazzu Abbaa

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<sup>1082</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyoris and His Works*, pp. 893-94.

<sup>1083</sup> Informant: Eshetu Tadesse Bayyuu (Addis Ababa, June 3, 2017), an octogenarian retired World Bank fellow.

<sup>1084</sup> Informants: Alemayehu Haile (Addis Ababa, July 3-4, 2017). Wolde Mariam Ararse (Sabbataa, July 1, 2017).

Dekker played a pivotal role in the rise of Nagawoo Gammadaa of Kuyyu. There is no doubt that he was able to make territorial expansion as far as Salale in the west. Similarly, the oral tradition Naol Getachew collected from the Jiillee Oromo, who were found in the southeastern part of the Tulama abode, indicates that Bazzu Abbaa Dekker also tried to incorporate this locality into the kingdom of Shawa perhaps initially peacefully, but when the Jiillee Oromo rejected his request, he resorted to warfare which led to his defeat in the hands of the Jiillee Oromo.<sup>1085</sup>

In this regard, it is imperative to discuss the relations between Bazzu Abbaa Dekker and one of the Tulama notables Jankaa Nagawoo Gadaa of Dabra Libanos, aka Kurfaa of Wayyu gosa, with whom the family of Bazzu came to establish enduring relations. According to oral tradition we have got from the relatives of Jankaa Nagawoo, at the outset, Jankaa and Bazzu Abbaa Dekker were mortal enemies and perhaps the former was one of the Tulama notables who resisted Bazzu Abbaa Dekker's territorial expansion. But later on they became close friends and even Jankaa adopted one of the biological sons of Bazzu Abbaa Dekker, whom he renamed Maallee or Abbaa Fardaa.<sup>1086</sup>

We have another version of the same story recited by one of our knowledgeable informants, who is the descendant of Bezzabeh on his mother's side. According to

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<sup>1085</sup> Naol, P. 29.

<sup>1086</sup> Informants: Eshetu Taddesse Bayyuu( Addis Ababa, June 3, 2017), Kidane Dabalaa ( Dabra Tsige, April 20, 2018) It is said that for sometimes Jankaa did not have his own biological offspring but later on he got his biological son known as Badhaanee.

this informant, right from the beginning, amicable relations existed between Bezzabeh and Jankaa Nagawoo. He claims that Bezzabeh had a special affection for Jankaa and he even allowed him to foster his biological son, Maallee/ Abbaa Fardaa. As to why Bezzabeh gave his son to Jankaa, our informants indicate that Bezzabeh was a warrior and he had no time to look after his children, thus he gave his children to the Oromo notables. Maallee/ Abbaa Fardaa was not an exception, there were other biological sons of Bezzabeh named Jimaa and Buttaa Bezzabeh, who were adopted by other Oromo notables.<sup>1087</sup>

Jankaa Nagawoo was not the only Oromo notable to foster a child of the Shawan nobility. Similarly, another Oromo notable known as Dubbaroo Araddoo kennee of Gorfoo, whose residence was around the often mentioned Garaa Gorfoo Mountain also adopted Wosenu, the biological son of Dajjazmach Nadaw Asheber, who was a tutor and guardian of a young Menilek. Moreover, Wosenu was also a biological sibling of the famous Ras Tasamma Nadaw, who played a pivotal role in the conquest of Gumaa (Gumay), Ilubabor and some parts of western Wallagga and was later appointed as regent for Lij Iyasu by Emperor Menilek with the title *Ras Bitwadda* ( favourite duke). It is fascinating that Wosenu

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<sup>1087</sup> Informant: Eshetu Tadesse Bayyuu( Addis Ababa, June 3, 2017) ; Mahtämä-Sellásé Wäldä-Mäsqäl and Bairu Tafla, “ A Study of the Ethiopian Culture of Horse-Names / የኢትዮጵያ ብሀልጽ ጥናት።፳፻፲፱፻፲፱”, *Journal of Ethiopian Studies* , Vol. 7, No. 2 (JULY 1969), p. 287 Jimaa was the brother of Bezzabeh.

in turn adopted the son of Abbaa Fardaa/ Maallee, the famous Mekonnen Wosenu.<sup>1088</sup>

We have seen so far just a few instances of the adoption of the Shawan nobility's children by the Oromo notable families. As to why the Shawan nobilities in general and Bezzabeh, in particular, gave their children for adoption to the Oromo notables, for one thing, he was the war leader and also *abagaz* of Shawa, this might help him to establish cordial relations with the Oromo notables, like Janka Nagawoo of Kurfaa, so that he could win them over to his side. Second, since Bezzabeh's position in Shawa was not secure, giving up his children for adoption was tantamount to securing a safe haven for them. Moreover, adoption was a tool used by the Shawans in addition to intermarriage and christening to establish friendly relations with the Oromo notables. It is also said to have been another secure and easiest means of getting access to the resources of the Oromo.<sup>1089</sup>

The lieutenant and later successor of Abbaa Maallee of Salale, Gabruu Goobee, was also among the Tulama notables who established relations with Bazzu Abbaa Dekker. It is very much fascinating that in areas like Salale, Bezzabeh was the first Shawan *abagaz* and ruler who is widely recalled by our informants and

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<sup>1088</sup> Informants: Eshetu Tadesse Bayyuu (Addis Ababa, June 3, 2017). It is interesting that this family, later on, came to be among the founders of the Macha and Tulama Self Help Association (MTSHA), the harbinger of Oromo nationalism. For instance, Mekonnen Wasanu and his son Baqele Mekonnen came to be the only father and son who became the founding member of MTSHA. Our Key informant Eshetu Tadesse, who was a descendant of Bezzabeh also, was one of the founding members of MTSHA. He told us he was the number 39 founding member of MTSHA.

<sup>1089</sup> Informants: Eshetu Tadesse Bayyuu (Addis Ababa, June 3, 2017) and Alemayehu Haile (Addis Ababa, July 3-4, 2017).

who was said to have also made intermittent territorial campaigns and established relations with Oromo notables. As we have seen in the previous chapter, even the famous Sahla Sellase was not known by the ordinary people as reported by Beke in the 1840s in the domains of Abbaa Maallee. This compels us to debunk the long-held view which considered the period of interregnum as the period of peace and stability among the Tulama. We have to suspect that at least after Bezzabeh was appointed as *abagaz* of Shawa, along with *Afa negus* Abboyye as administrator by Tewodros II in 1858/ 59, he might have made widespread territorial expansion against the Tulama which even surpassed the campaigns made by Sahla Sellase, at least definitely in localities like Salale. It is also important to note that Bazzu Abbaa Dekker was said to have been a gallant fighter and second to none except perhaps that of Matakoo Borjaa and *Ras* Gobana Dachi. For instance, according to a prophecy of a certain monk named Abba Wulba, a young Gobana would excel Matakoo Borjaa and Bezzabeh sevenfold.<sup>1090</sup> Yet, it is interesting that *Ras* Gobana Dachi had also special regard for Bazzu Abba Dekker.<sup>1091</sup> At this juncture, it is, therefore, imperative to shed some light on the relations between Gobana Dachi and Bazzu Abbaa Dekker by the time under review.

Concerning the relations between these two dignitaries, we have conflicting information. The oral tradition collected by Alemayehu indicates that the relations

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<sup>1090</sup> IES MSS 4614.

<sup>1091</sup> IES MSS, 4614. This manuscript clearly indicates that *Ras* Gobana witnessed the bravery of Bazzu Abbaa Dekker. Bezzabeh also said to have very much admired Gobana.

between these two high ranking personalities were initially marked by conflict and rivalry. The main cause of rivalry between Bezzabeh and Gobana was the assassination of the latter's elder brother by the former. As a result, Gobana became a bandit in the forest of Himaan Gultii to avenge the assassination of his brother. As he had desired, he was, in turn, managed to assassinate the brother of Bezzabeh and was even said to have been sent his body to Bezzabeh loading on a horse. But after sometime, they were reconciled through the traditional Oromo conflict resolution system known as Gumaa.<sup>1092</sup>

The local tradition further indicates that Bezzabeh's rebellion against Emperor Tewodros II cemented his relations with Gobana. It is said that Gobana was not happy with what Emperor Tewodos did to his Abichu kins in 1855/ 56, especially as we have seen, when about a thousand Abichu combatants were massacred by Emperor Tewodros in the vicinity of Angolala. Hence, Gobana wanted to revenge it forming a united front with Bezzabeh. But in the meantime, Menilek escaped from Maqdala to Shawa and Gobana was said to have been instrumental in the submission of Bezzabeh to Menilek. In other words, it was Gobana who reconciled Bezzabeh and Menilek after the latter was defeated by Menilek's forces. But tradition is silent concerning the role of Gobana during the war that was made between Menilek and Bezzabeh. But it indicates that Gobana was

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<sup>1092</sup> Alemayehu ,*Seenaa Oromoo Hanga Jaarraa 20<sup>ffaa</sup>*, p.449.



offended by the deeds of Menilek, when he assassinated his lord Bezzabeh after he reconciled them.<sup>1093</sup>

The presumed chronicle of Gobana (an Amharic manuscript at the Institute of Ethiopian Studies of Addis Ababa University), contrary to what we have seen above, indicates that the relations between Gobana Dachi and Bezzabeh commenced peacefully. It seems that Gobana's father-in-law, *Ato* Abboyye, introduced Gobana to Bezzabeh or made Gobana be the lieutenant of Bezzabeh as indicated in the following excerpt taken from the chronicle.

*ይህ ጎበና ዳጪ አማኛ ነው። አደራህን ሰውነቱም የስምረት ሰው ነው። ለአንተ ደስ የሚያሰኝህ ነው አልቀኛል። አበጋዝ በዛብህም ክቡር አቶ አበዬን ቤታቸውን ውስጡን ሁሉ ያወቁ የንጉሡንም ልጅ ሚስታቸውን ወ/ሮ አያህሉሽምን የሚያከብሩና የሚገናኙ ነበሩና ይህን አማኛዎን የአየለችን ባል በምን ያሳድሩት ነበር ቢልቀኛል ዘንባባ የሚትባል ድንጋይ ጢራ ውስጥ መልከኝነት ሰጥቷቸው ነበር ቢልቀኛል አበጋዝ በዛብህም በግዛታቸው ውስጥ ሞክሼ አገር ስላላቸው እንደመገረም ብለው እኔም ከግዛቱ ወግዳ ውስጥ ከመሴንሳ አፋፍ ዘንባባና ጋናሚት የሚባሉ ዘንባባ ከፍ ያለ ገናሚት ትንሽ መልከኝነት አላችኝ ስለእርስዎ ፍቅር ሁለቱንም ሰጥቼልዎታለሁ እርስዎ ከመንግስት ቤት ይጠብቁኝ አልቀኛልና ለበጋዝ አቶ በዛብህ ሎሌ ሆኑ<sup>1094</sup>።*

This is my son-in-law Gobana Dachi, please take care of him, he has a stature of a good soldier. Since Abagaz Bezzabeh knew very well the family of *Ato* Abboyye including his daughter and consort wayzaro Ayahilushim and he respect them, he inquired *Ato* Abboyye about what assets he gave to Gobana for his maintenance, his son-in-law and husband of Ayalach. *Ato* Abboyye told him, I gave him a malkagnat at Zenbaba located in Dengay Tira. Being amused by the similarity of the places' names, Abagaz Bezzabeh said to *Ato* Abboyye that he

<sup>1093</sup> Informant: Alemayehu Haile (Addis Ababa, July 3-4, 2017); see also Bairu, “ Three Portraits”, p. 145 who also indicates that when “ Menilek and Bāzabeh were reconciled under an oath that Bāzabeh would no longer lead an insurrection and that Menilek would cause him no harm, and Gobāna was on that occasion master of ceremonies”

<sup>1094</sup> “Ya Gobana Dachawu Sanadoch (Gobana Dachi's Documents)”, Institute of Ethiopian Studies Manuscript, Folder Number, 4614 (Hereafter IES MSS. 4614). The manuscript is said to have been deposited in the IES by *Ato* Degife Gabra Tsadiq in 1979 Ethiopian Calendar (1986/87). Unlike the well known Gobana's chronicle said to have been written by Negede ( as we shall see later in the thesis ) where the early life of Gobana was missing , this one offers a few glimpse of Gobana's early life and even his achievements before he joined the service of King Mnilek of Shawa. See also Sergew, Dagmawi Menilek, p. 184, who also indicates that Gobana's relation with the kingdom of Shawa dates back to the time of Bezzabeh.

would also give malkagnanat in Wogda near the precipice of Kamansa at the localities known as Zanbaba and Ganamit, the former modest and the latter small for your friendship to Gobana. In this way, Gobana has been a servant of *Abagaz Bezzabeh*.

Therefore, according to the chronicle *Ato Abboyye*, the father-in –law of Gobana, played a pivotal role in the commencement of relations between Gobana and Bezzabeh.

The chronicle further enlightens us, Bezzabeh and Gobana also started making military expedition against the Tulama as soon as Gobana became servant of *Abagaz Bezzabeh*. Concerning the factors which induced them to make campaigns against the Tulama, especially against the Gnya, ኧአዎች አማራን ገደሉ እርስ በእርሳቸውም ተዋጉ (the Gnya killed the Amhara and fought against each other). At that time *Abagaz Bezzabeh*'s town was known as *Walda Tensay*<sup>1095</sup>, located below the town of *Angolala* overlooking *Wagda* and *Tagualt*. As to what happened during the campaign the long but highly enlightening Gobana's chronicle recounts as follows:

ጎበና ዳጩ ፈረስ ለፈረስ ምሪ ገሎ ገባ ማለት ሁለት ። አቶ በዛብህ ግን አልገደሉምና መቼም በቤታቸው እድር አለ ተፈርዶ።አበጋዝ አቶ በዛብህ ካልገደሉ [ኦሮሞ] ጌራ አይልም ። አማራም ምነው ገለሌ አይሉም። አይዘፈንም ነውር ነው ክልክል ነው። ቢዘፈን መሰቀያ ነውር ነው። ይህን እድር አባጥጉ ጎበና ዳጩ አያውቅም ነበርና አንድ ግዜ በአማርኛ አንድ ጊዜ [በአሮምኛ]ጌራውን ቀጭን ነበር ድምፁ ለቆለቆ ሰደደው።አበጋዝ አቶ በዛብህ ሰሙና ፡- ዘራፍ በዙ አባ ዲክር የሣሉ ገበሬ የጦሩ መሪ ብለው ፎክሩ። ተቅባባባቡና ማነው ማነው ጥራው ብለው ገቡ ባዩአቸው ጊዜ አዩ አዩ እድራችንን አልሰማህም ወይ ቢልዋቸው አልሰማሁም አሉ። ይሁን እስከ የአቶ አባዩ አማች ሆይ ከዶሮ ጩኸት በኋላ ከኔ እንዳትለይ አድረን አሳይሃለሁ ትፈርዳለህ

<sup>1095</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 96.

አልዋቸውና እሽ ብለው እጅ ነስተው ሄዱ። ከሰፈራቸው ሰፈርተኛው ሁሉ አዩ አዩ ሲል ጎበና አባ ጥጉ ኮርማ ዳጩ ኮርቻቸውን ጫነው ሲያዳምጡ ደሮ ጮኹ ። አቶ በዛብህም በሰንጊ በቅሎው ተቀምጦ ሰው በሌ የሚባል አፍቄውን ከጫንቃው አድርጎ የጦር ለምዱን ለብሰው በራና ጠለፋን ከፊቱ እየሰበ ጎሰጎሰ። አባጥጉም ጋሻውን ከፈረሱ ቀድሞ ሰሊጢን ጣምራ ጦሮችን ከጫንቃው አድርጎ የዛይ አንገት የመሰለች ብር ካራውን ቆንኖ እፊት እፊት እፍጫውን ያዘ። አባ ደክር በዙም እህ በል አለሁ ጌታ አለ። ሲነጋጋ ወለል ሲል በጎርፋና በጅዳ ድንበር [ኦሮሞ] ሳይሰማ ከማሃሉ ገቡ። ግዳይ በየቀዬው በየደጃ ተጀመረ። ከበጋዝ በዛብህ ጋራ 7 አሽከሮች ብቻ ቀሩ። 200 የሚያህል ፈረስ ከበባቸው አባ ደክር በዙ ቢወረወር ሳተ ቢሉ ያቀጣች [ኦሮሞ] አባጥጉ ማጅራቱን ወግቶ ጣለው። ..... አባ ደክር በዙም ከጠለፋ ፈረሁ ተጋብቶ ..... 13ን አጋደማቸው ይልም ነበር በዙ አባ ደክር የሣህሉ ገበሬ የጠፋ መምህር ፡- [ኦሮሞም] ያወቅ ይሰማ ነበርና ሲይ በዙዳ እያለ ሸሽ ጎበና ዳጩም 5 ገሎ ገቡ። ማታ አቶ በዛብህ የአቶ አባዬን አማች ጥሩ ብለው ተጠሩ። ..... በዛብህም አሉ አሁንስ ከኔ በፊት ምነው ገለሌ ማለት ይገባል ወይ በል ፍረድ ቢሏቸው ፡- እኔ ጌታዬ እንደዚህ ያለ መብረቅ የት አይቼ ስንኳንስ አይ የት ሰምቼ ቢልዋቸው አይ አንቺም ብልጥ ነሽ ዘይ ታወቁአለሽ ይልቁንም በፈረሁ ያለ ልክ ሰልጥነህበታል የኔው የድፍረት የገደጊደሽ ነው ያንተ የእውቀት ነውና እለት እለት እንድንመካከር አጋፋርዬ አድርጌሃለሁ አልዋቸው። ጎበና አባጥጉም ጌታዬ ሰውን አልለመድሁት ስራተ መንግስት አልለመድሁም ቢልዋቸው አጋፋርአቸው አቶ ቸሬ ይባሉ ነበርና ለጊዜው ዘጊ ሆነህ ልመደው ተብለው ተሾሙ<sup>1096</sup>።

*Gobana Dachi was able to kill two but Ato Bezzabeh could not kill. It has been customary that if Ato Bezzabeh did not kill, the Amhara would not say Galele and the Oromo Geraara. It is uncustomary and forbidden. If anyone attempts, he will be a laughing stock. But Abba Tigu Gobana Dachi did not know this custom and his voice was sharp and loud and he said Geraara both in Amharic and Oromo. Then, Abagaz Ato Bezzabeh heard it and bragged, Oh, Bazzu Abba Dekker the veteran fighter of Sahlu and the commander-in-chief. He became nervous and said who is he, who is he, call him? Then Gobana was called and got into the house of Bezzabeh. When Bezzabeh saw Gobana, he inquired him; 'did not you hear our custom?' He responded 'I did not hear'. Ok, the son-in-law of Ato Abboyye, be ready after the cockcrow tomorrow morning we will go on an expedition and you will witness what I will do. Gobana agreed and left Bezzabeh's home after paying homage to him. When the cockcrow they saddled their horses and started an expedition. Ato Bezzabeh mounted his mule called Sangi wearing his war paraphernalia and holding a spear known as Afke nicknamed man-eater on his shoulder and pulling his two horses Bora and Talafa. Aba Tigu Gobana also mounted his horse holding two Salten spears on his shoulder and continued riding in front. At dawn, they reached around the border of Jiddaa and Gorfoo before the Oromo noticed their presence in their territory. Mutilation started in every homestead and village. Only Bezzabeh and his seven servants remained. About two hundred [Oromo] cavalries besieged them. When Bezzabeh threw at*

<sup>1096</sup>IES MSS. 4614; See also Paul Merab, *Impressions D'ethiopie ( L'abyssinie Sous Menelik II)*, 3 vols., vol. II ( Paris: Editions Ernest Leroux, 1929), p. 32 cited in Yates, " Invisible Actors", p. 160.

*them, he could not hit the target but Abba Tigu Gobana; the brave Oromo stabbed the neck of [the foe] and made him fall.... Abba Dekker Bazzu mounted his horse named Talafa and slew about thirteen foes and bragged Bazzu Abba Dekker the warrior of Sahlu the spoiled trainer. When the Oromo heard his voice, since they knew him, they said he is Bazzuu and run away. Gobana killed five on that day. Then Bezzabeh called Gobana to come to his house. Then Bezzabeh requested him saying is it appropriate to say Galale before me, please judge? Then Gobana responded by saying let alone seeing but also he hasn't heard about a person who attacks enemies like a thunderbolt. But Bezzabeh also admired Gobana saying you are also smart and systematic and expert rider; mine is out of courage and audacity but yours is by knowledge. Bezzabeh told Gobana, I have made you my Aggafari so that I can consult you every day. But Gobana responded, my lord I am a stranger and did not know many people and the system of government. Then Bezzabeh appointed him as the servant (Zagi) of his former Aggafari, Ato Chare so that he could be acclimatized.*

From the above long but highly enlightening quotation, we may discern that Gobana Dachi started making a campaign against the Tulama, not during the period of Menilek after 1865, but perhaps starting at least from the late 1850s or early 1860s, when Ato Abboyye and Bezzabeh were assigned by Emperor Tewodros to administer Shawa.<sup>1097</sup> The chronicle indicates that the so-called the period of interregnum was not the period of peace and respite as usually perceived, but at that time the Tulama were harassed by the expeditions headed by two outstanding generals, Bazzu Abbaa Dekker and Abbaa Tiggu Gobana, who perhaps advanced Sahla Sellase's strategy of diplomacy and warfare. We may argue that Gobana himself was the byproduct of this policy. The chronicle also clearly indicates that Gobana was a gallant fighter, who was even admired by his master, Bezzabeh, whom the Shawans, in turn, considered second to none in his military prowess except Matakoo Borjaa, as we have seen above.

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<sup>1097</sup> See also Darkwah, p. 134 who indicates that the name of Gobana was mentioned by about 1864 ofcourse by this time as a rank and file but courageous soldier in the service of Bezzabeh.

However, contrary to the oral tradition we have got from different parts of Tulama territory,<sup>1098</sup> the chronicle indicates that Bezzabeh's expedition was limited to nearby areas like Jiddaa, Oborii, Gumbichu and Gorfoo. It unequivocally depicts :  
 መቼም አበጋዝ አቶ በዛብህ በምሥራቅ አዳል ከረዩ አርጡማ ጂሌ ዱጉጉፋ ጩፋ ፤ በምዕራብ ሰላሌ ጃርሶ ከሲቢሉ በታች በላይ እስከ አዋሽ በሙሉ በአዳኦ በግንደበረት በሜታ በሜጫ በግራ በሉሜ በጮረ እስከ አጩብር በጩቦ በአመያ በቶክ በጥቁር ምድር በጩሊያ አልደረሡም።<sup>1099</sup>  
 (Obviously *Abgaz Ato* Bezzabeh did not reach in the east: Adal, Karrayyuu , Artuma, Jiillee, Duguguru Chafa; in the west: Salale , Jaarsoo , below the Siblu River up to the Awash River including Ada'aa , Gendabarat, Meettaa, Macha; in the left Lumee, Corree [ around the present-day Adaamaa aka Nazareth town] up to Achabir including Chabo, Ammayyaa, Tokkee, Tikur Meder and Caliyaa).

The chronicle further indicates that even in the areas where Abagaz Bezzabeh made military expeditions peace and tranquillity were not restored.

ይህ የደረሡበት ስንኳ ገበርን አለ እንጂ እርስ በርሡ መዋጋቱን አለስጣሉትም ክርስቲያንም መሄድ አይችልም ነበር። መልዕክት ብላክ ስንኳ በአበጋዙ ወረቀት ከባላባት ወደ ባላባት ገበር አማርኛ [ከኦሮሞኛ] ያወቀ ስማ በለዉ የሚባሉ ይላካሉ እንጂ ያዉም [ኦሮሞዎች ] አይታመኑም። ስንኳ ጥቅት ለራቀ ግምብቹ መካከል ደብረ ሊባኖስ ለጠበል በተጉለት በመንዝ በዜና ማርቆስ ነበር የሚኾዱ ። ሁለተኛም በዋዩ በባኪሳ ቤት ባንጨቆረር ዜና ማርቆስ ወርደዉ ነበር ወበር አያሳልፍምና ። ይህዉም ከትልቁ ንጉሥ ሣህለ ሥላሴ ወዲህ ነዉ<sup>1100</sup>።

Even the areas they reached allegedly agreed to pay tribute, otherwise they could not persuade them to stop fighting among themselves and

<sup>1098</sup> Our informants in different part of Tulama territory recall Bazzu Abbaa Dekker very well and they claim that he was the one who invaded their territory before Negus Menilek and his famous general, Ras Gobana Dachi.  
<sup>1099</sup> IES MSS. 4614.  
<sup>1100</sup> IES MSS. 4614.

Christians could not reach there. When the message was dispatched, it was the one which was written by *abagaz* or sent through *balabbat* and those who spoke both Afaan Oromo and Amharic could translate, otherwise, the Oromo were unreliable. Let alone far off places, even to go to Dabra Libanos for holy water, which is located amid the Gumichu territory, they [the Shawan Christians] traverse through Tagulat, Manz and Zena Markos. The second route was through Wayyuu around the residence of Bokkisa, Anchoqorar, and Zena MaKos, since the Oborii Oromo could not allow them to pass through their territory. This happened after the time of Great King Sahla Sellase of Shawa.

Meanwhile, it was not only Gobana but his close relatives who also came to establish amicable relations with Bezzabeh. One of the relatives of Gobana who served Bezzabeh was his nephew, Hirphaayee Jimaa Dachi. Like Gobana Hirphaayee was said to have been a proven horseman and even characterized by Bezzabeh as ከሰጧ የተረፈኝ ወንድ ነኝ (a superman) and was appointed as a malkagna of Gurane, in the territory of a balabbat known as Takle Annoo. But Hirphaayee was said to have been killed by Takle Annoo for he allegedly had affair with the youngest wife of Takle Anno. It is said that when Gobana heard about the assassination of Hirphaayee by Takle Annoo, he bragged in Oromo, hin bannee Koormaa Daaccii... qorichaa fardaa (Oh, we have been humiliated, [Gobana] the consummate rider]. The assassination of Hirphaayee induced Gobana Abba Tiggu to go to Gurane and assassinate Takle, his four brothers and two servants. It is said when Gobana stabbed Takle Anno with his Salatin spear bragged again in Afaan Oromo, Kunotii Kormii Dachi (Here is a prodigy son of Dachi). It is said Gobana dismembered the limbs of Takle Annoo and took them to Abdala and threw it at his relatives' cemetery (ujubaa) and was quoted as

saying, “I have avenged the blood of your son.” After this, he went directly to the house of his sister (perhaps sister-in-law), Roobee and cried bitterly saying “what can I do for you,” then she said to him “please do not cry, you won’t be alone, here is his younger brother, Baalchaa Jimaa Dachi”. After this, she had put butter on her head and his head and stopped bereavement <sup>1101</sup>

From the above passage, we may discern that Gobana Dachi had strong ties with his family and was a man of his community, who was brought up according to the culture and custom of the society. For instance, he had special regard not only for the living but also for dead; otherwise he would not go to the burial ground of his kinfolk when he avenged the assassination of Hirphaayee by Takle Annoo of Gurranee. He was also a fluent speaker of Afaan Oromo and was not ashamed of using it. His bragging at the headquarters of Bezzabeh was a clear testimony for this. As we have seen, the chronicle indicates, he bragged both in Amharic and Afaan Oromo. This conclusively indicates that he is not ashamed of his background and he typically epitomized the kingdom itself in which both Amharic and Afaan Oromo were used side by side, at least during the period under review, and even before, as we have seen in the previous chapters repeatedly.

Meanwhile, the chronicle indicates that fault line started to appear between Bazzu Abbaa Dekker and Gobana Dachi as follows:

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<sup>1101</sup>IES MSS. 4614.

ከዚህ በኋላ አቶ በዛብህ እንዳይለቅዎቸው ያቃሉና ከገላንና ከአብቹ ጋራ በሐዩ በቦኩ በሉባ ነገር መቋጠር ጀመሩ። ነገር ግን በዙ አባ ደክር ጊዜ አልሰጧቸውም ። አበጋዝ አቶ በዛብህ ቶሎ ና ብለው ላኩባቸው።አልመጣም ብለው መለሡ።አቶ በዛብህ ተቆጥተው ቢነሡ ብዙ የአብቹ ባላባዎች አልዎቸው አያሻ እኛ እጁን ይዘን እናመጠዋለን ሲሉ ፎክሩላቸውና መጡ። አማን ከቤታቸው ቤት አጠገብ ገጠሙ። ፈረስ ለፈረስ ገጥመው አጠጥመው መለሡት።<sup>1102</sup>

*Hereafter they knew that Ato Bezzabeh would pursue them, the Galan and Abichu started to conspire with Hayuu, Bokkuu and Luba. But Bazzu Abbaa Dekker did not give them time. Abagaz Ato Bezzabeh sent to [Gobana] stating come as soon as possible. But he replied I wouldn't come. When Ato Bezzabeh was infuriated and contemplated to penalize Gobana, many Abichu balabats bragged, do not worry we would bring him to you tying his hands. They fought at Aman near their residence. They fought with horses and defeated and turned them back.*

Although it is difficult to discern from the document concerning the cause of rivalry and even the time when conflict came into being between these veteran fighters of Shawa, perhaps Gobana's assassination of the *balabbat* of Gurane, Takle Annoo might have been one of the causes. But Bairu Tafla indicates that the reason for his rebellion was, 'Gobäna saw no reason why he should submit to or ally himself with any pretender to the throne of Säwa and refused to acknowledge the proclamation of *Ato Bäzabeh* in 1865."<sup>1103</sup> Moreover, Bezzabeh declared himself king of Shawa in the absence of Gobana's father-in-law, *Ato Abboyye*, who was at the court of Emperor Tewodros. And perhaps this might have also infuriated Gobana. It is said that almost most of the Shawan high-ranking officials were at the court of Tewodros except Bezzabeh, who remained in Shawa, according to Heruy, አቶ በዛብህ ብቻ ሸዋን / አሮሞ/ እንዳያጠፋው ጠብቅ ተብሎ ቀርቶ

<sup>1102</sup>IES MSS. 4614.  
<sup>1103</sup> Bairu, "Three Portraits,"p. 145.



ነበር።<sup>1104</sup> (Only *Ato Bezzabeh* remained in Shawa lest the Oromo would destroy it if all of the dignitaries went to the court of Terwodros. Hence, Bezzabeh remained in Shawa to guard it from the Oromo invasion).

After the battle of Aman, the chronicle further indicates, Gobana deliberated with the Oromo elders what actions to take as follows:

ከዚህ በኋላ አጋፋር ጎበናን የጋላ አዛውንቶች መሃል [አሮሞ] ወደ ሰላሌ እንዲሸሹ መከረዋቸው። አጋፋር ጎበና ግን ምርጥ ምርጥ ነፍጠኞች በትልቁ ንጉሥ ቤት ያደጉ ከአቶ ሴፉ ጋራ ሆነው አንኮበር አጼ ቴዎድሮስ ባባረራቸው ጊዜ 15 ነፍጠኞች ከአርበኛው ከሲላ በዳሳ ጋራ አጋምሰው ያመለጡ ወደ መራቤቴ ተደብቀው ሲሄዱ አግኝተው አባብለው አኑረዋቸው ነበሩና ስለዚህ ከሚስቴ ከልጆቹ አልለይም እነዚህን ካገኘሁ ከዋሻዬ ገብቼ እሞክረዋለሁ ቢቸግረኝ ከዚያ ወዲያ ከ[አሮሞ] እገባለሁ የሚል አሳባቸውን ለሽማግሌዎች አመለከቱ። ሽማግሌዎችም የአቅማችንን መከረንህ ከዚህ ወዲያ የለንም ብለው ተበተኑ<sup>1105</sup>

After this the Oromo elders advised Gobana to escape to Salale, the heartland of the Oromo. But Gobana told them that ‘I won’t separate from my wife and children, I have fifteen veteran soldiers who grew up in the palace of the senior King [Sahla Sellase]’. He persuaded them to stay at his home when they were on the way to Marhabete along with the patriot Sila Badhaasaa after their defeat at Ankobar, when Tewodros defeated Sayfu. He told elders, “I have these veteran soldiers, I will go to my cave and try, after that if I can’t [resist Bezzabeh], I will go to the Oromo country”. But the elders warned him that we have tried to advise you our level best, henceforth it is up to you.

From this highly enlightening passage, we can construe again Gobana was at the outset a man of his community and also the Oromo, who inhabited around Gobana’s residence, had amicable relations with the Oromo, who were found in the nucleus of the Tulama, in this case with the Salale, despite the over reported hostility among different Oromo subgroups by the time under review. Moreover,

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<sup>1104</sup>Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 95; Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 151, በዛብህ አገር ለመጠበቅ ቀረ (literally Bezzabeh remained in Shawa to guard the country).

<sup>1105</sup>IES MSS. 4614.

the relations between Gobana and Bezzabeh started after Sayfu was defeated by the force of Emperor Tewodros or Gobana was sympathetic to the cause of Sayfu Sahla Sellase, if not he would not have kept the soldiers of Sayfu Sahla Sellase at his home. In this regard, Gobana's chronicle indicates that all the people of Abichu, Galan, Jiddaa and Oboori, Gorfo and Gumbichu were Sayfu's allies.<sup>1106</sup>

We may also discern that Sayfu's force that fought against Emperor Tewodros was composed of both Amhara and Oromo. For instance, one of the soldiers of Sayfu Sahla Sellase, who took refuge at the home of Gobana after they were defeated by Emperor Tewodros was a patriot known as Sila Badhaasaa, who is allegedly an Oromo. This and other developments we have seen so far compel us to reassess the relations between the Amhara and the Oromo in this part of Ethiopia, even in this time of chaos and crisis the alliance was not always along ethnic lines. There was interdependence between the Oromo and the Amhara not only during peace time but also during the time of chaos.

Moreover, this might not be the first rebellion of Gobana as he clearly indicated that he would go to his cave and resist Bezzabeh. But we are not in a position to decipher when and why he became bandit. Perhaps as we have seen above, a popular tradition which indicates that Gobana was very much devastated by the massacre of the Abichu Oromo in the hands of Emperor Tewodros around Angolala in 1856, although his chronicle does not help us in this regard, and it

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<sup>1106</sup> IES MSS 4614.

could be the cause of his alleged earlier rebellion. But why he later on came to be the servant of Bezzabeh, who was an appointee of Tewodros II makes this issue more confusing. Moreover, he was also the son-in-law of the Shawan governor who was deputized by Tewodros II, Ato Abboyye. Perhaps, who knows Gobana's acceptance of this post might have been to please his father-in-law; otherwise as we shall see, the chronicle indicates that Gobana fought against his master, Bezzabeh in the year before the latter's deposition following the escape of Menilek from Maqdala in 1865.

Meanwhile, it seems that Bezzabeh was infuriated by the defeat of his forces at the hands Gobana and started mobilizing in order to punish him. But his advisors undermined Gobana's ability and advised him to send just few men who would punish what they called forty insurgent adolescents. The chronicle further indicates,

ለ40 ጎረምሳ እንዴት ይሄዳሉ ተብሎ አማራ [ከአሮሞ] ላኩ ከዚያው ከአማን ....ገጠሙ። ፈረስ ለፈረስ ገጥመው አንድ የድጎማ ጎበዝ አቶ አብዬ ቡቶ የሚባል [አሮሞ] በአጋፋር ጎበና ወርወሮ ጋሻቸውን ወግቶ በአንደኛው ጦር ሊያስቀራቸው ሲል ትንሽ ጋሜ አሽከር በሻኩራ አረር ተኩሳ እግባሩ ብላ ጣለችው ። ነፍጠኞችም ምርጥ ምርጡን አነሱለት ሸሸ። አጋፋር ጎበናም እንደገና ብዙ ፈጅተው አበረርዋቸው። ያች ጋሜ ልጅ ግን እየለገሰ እየጨመረ መሄድ ሆነና በኃላ ስሙ ጋሜ ገላጋይ ሆኖ ቀረ። የፊዉተራር ሸንኮሩ ታላቅ ወንድም ነዉ<sup>1107</sup>።

*Perceiving there is no need for [Bezzabeh] to fight with forty youth insurgents; they sent some Amhara and Oromo fighters and the two forces met at Aman. They fought with cavalry and a certain skilled Oromo cavalryman from Degoma known as Abyee Buttoo, who threw one of his spears and hit the shield of Aggafari Gobana and almost when he was on the verge to stab Gobana to death with the other spear, a young servant of Gobana known as Little Gammee preempted him and shot him in the forehead. After that Gobana's riflemen killed the leading contingents of Bezzabeh and forced them to flee. Aggafari Gobana had also killed many and the remaining retreated. That little Gammee became*

<sup>1107</sup>IES MSS. 4614.

*prominent and he was renamed Gamee the rescuer. He is the elder brother of Fitawurai Shenkoru.*

Again the above excerpt from Gobana chronicle also induces us to debunk the long held view which considers the confrontation between the Tulama and the kingdom of Shawa along ethnic or linguistic lines. Here we have Amharas on the side of Gobana and Oromos on the side of Bezzabeh. As we have time and again tried to explicate, the kingdom of Shawa was founded by individuals who had diverse background, especially Amhara and Oromo heritages and this salient feature of the kingdom persisted up to the period under review.

After the defeat of his force in the hands of Gobana, *Abagaz* Bezzabeh became furious and came to Aman to punish the insurgent Gobana. Gobana also expected the retaliatory attack of his former master and prepared well by putting his paraphernalia in the nearby cave known as *Azzu*, <sup>1108</sup>and waited for the coming of Bezzabeh's force being at his town, Aman.

*ይህ አማን ማለት እንደ ኮረብታ ያለች ናት ዙርያዋን ገደል ሆኖ ግንባሩ ብቻ ቀጭን ሜዳ ናት። እሁለት ላይ እርድ አላት። ከእርድዋ ውጪ መስቀል መተኮሻ የተባለችዋ ሜዳ ናትና ቢበዛ 200 ፈረስ እንጂ በብዙ ፈረስ ለማጥለቅለቅ አትመችም። አበጋዝ አቶ በዛብሀም ተቆጥተው ሲመጡ በግንባር ያገጠው ከአጋፋር ጎበና ጋር ገጠመ። አስመለሱት በዙ አባ ደክር በቦራ ገበሬ ሣህሉ ሲል ደረሰ። አጋፋር ጎበናም ጌታውን ባየ ጊዜ ቀድሞ መክሮ ነበርና ሺሹ ብሎ ከአማን አፋፍ ወደ ቆላ ሸሹ።<sup>1109</sup>*

*This Aman is like a hilly place encircled with precipice on all sides except the front side which is a narrow plain, which itself is divided into two by a valley. Outside that valley there is only a locality known as the Masqal feast torch lighting which accommodates a maximum of 200 horses. When Abagaz Ato Bezzabeh came to penalize Gobana, his vanguard force had already started fighting with Aggafari Gobana. Then Bezzabeh came leading the rear force and bragged Bazzu Abbaa Dekker rider of Bora, veteran of Sahlu! When Aggafari Gobana saw his master,*

<sup>1108</sup> Bairu, "Three portraits", p. 145; Bairu, "Asma Gyoris and His Works," p. 888.

<sup>1109</sup> IES MSS. 4614.

*since he had fought with Bezzabeh in the past and knew his military prowess, he ordered his men to escape to the valley situated below the Aman precipice.*

This seems to have been the last open confrontation between Bezzabeh and Gobana, however, it was not the first since the chronicle indicates that Gobana and Bezzabeh had already ‘tried’ each other before this time. Yet it is not clear when and why the two leading Shawan generals fought before this one.

Meanwhile, we have another version of the story recorded by Heruy Walda Sellase, who indicates that initially Bezzabeh colluded with Gobana in order to resist Emperor Tewodros II. Even it is said that Bezzabeh wanted to share the Azzu cave, which is located near the town of Aman, with Gobana. Heruy further recounts,

አቶ በዛብህ ግን በሸዋ የነጋሢ ዘር አለመኖሩን አይቶ ከአብቹ / አሮሞ/ ካቶ ጎበና ዳጪ ጋራ ተማክሮ ከአጼ ቴዎድሮስ ለመክዳት ቁርጥ አሳብ ስለአደረገ አብደላ አማን በሚባል አገር አጠገብ አዙ ዋሻ የሚባለውን አስጠርጎ ዕቃውንና ገንዘቡን የምግብም ዓይነት ሁሉ ከሰልና እንጨት ሳይቀር ማግባት ጀመረ<sup>1110</sup>:: (Ato Bezzabeh cognizant of the fact that the descendants of Nagasi were not present in Shawa, conspired with Gobana Dachi of the Abichu Oromo to rebel against Emperor Tewodros. As a result, Bezzabeh ordered his men to clean Azzu cave, which is located near Abdalla Aman, and even started storing equipment, money and food as well as firewood and charcoal there).

However, Heruy further indicates, in the meantime Gobana in turn rebelled against Bezzabeh and started to use all the materials accumulated by Bezzabeh in the cave (አቶ ጎበና አዙ ዋሻ ገብቶ አቶ በዛብህ የሰበሰበውን ገንዘብ ሁሉ ይዞ ሸፈተ).<sup>1111</sup>

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<sup>1110</sup>Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 96; Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 151 also indicates that Gobana helped Bezzabeh to rebel against Emperor Tewodros.

<sup>1111</sup>Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 96.

The chronicle further recounts that Bezzabeh and his troops tried to attack Gobana's force at Azzu cave, but it was a strategically important locality, where it is difficult to mobilize large contingents.<sup>1112</sup> This being the case, Bezzabeh and his force tried to attack Gobana and his men on the next day after their escape going down to the cave. As a result, minor skirmishes took place between Bezzabeh and Gobana's troops on the nearby narrow plain which could accommodate about seventy to hundred fighters at a time but they could not dislodge Gobana and his followers from the cave. In the evening, Bezzabeh and his contingents returned to Aman, where a feast was prepared to welcome Bezzabeh, as it was customary at that time when dignitaries visited parts of their domain. After the feast, most of Bezzabeh's followers were completely drunk and fell into a deep sleep. Since Gobana knew this very well, he came to Aman the same night with two of his servants, the chronicle recounts the upcoming incident as follows:

*አበጥጉ ጎበናም ከሁለት አሽከሮቹ ጋራ ሌሊት በወደቅት በጨረቃ አማን መጥተው አጥራቸውን በካቡ ከፍተው ዘለው ገብተው ከአደራሹ ቢያዩ በሩ ሳይዘጋ ሰው ሁሉ አፉን ከፍቶ ተኝቶ መቅረዙ የሁለት በሬ ሞራ የሚያህል እንደችበ ይልቅ የሚያበራ ነበር።ከዚያ ገብተው እያዩ ይህ እገሌ ነው እሱን ተወ ይህን እረደው እያሉ ሁለት ከማሮች 3 [ከአሮሞዎች] እንዳታረዱ አንዱ ስታረድ ቢያጓራ አንዱ ይኸሮ ተነሳ ። እልፍኙ ቅርብ ነበርና አበጋዝ አቶ በዛብህ ቆቅ ነበሩ ይላሉ ፍክረው ጎራዬ ሸተላቸውን መዘው ከምን ጊዜ ጋሻ በክንዱ አረገ ብቅ ሲሉ አጋፋር ጎበና ዳጩ ድምጻቸውን ያወቀዋልና ካቡን ዘሎ ዘሎ ... ከአሽከሮቻቸው ዋሻ ገቡ<sup>1113</sup>።*

Abbaa Tiagu Gobana came to Aman with two of his servants in the moonlight. When they opened the gate and approach the hall its door was not closed and all people fell into a deep sleep and there was a fat candle which lights more than a torch. Then they get into the hall and said to each other, this is Mr. X leave him and this is Mr. Y slaughter him, in such a way after they slaughtered two Amhara and three Oromo, when one of those who were slaughtered shouted loudly a certain soldier bragged and woke up. When *Abagaz Ato* Bezzabeh heard the sound, it is said he was alert at night, he woke up and come out of his separate room wearing shield and holding sword in his hand. When Aggafari Gobana Dachi

<sup>1112</sup> IES MSS. 4614.

<sup>1113</sup> Gobana's Chronicle, IES Manuscript.

heard his voice, he knew it very well; they jumped over the stone fence and returned to their cave.

Again it is interesting to underscore that the contingents of Bezzabeh, perhaps after he 'proclaimed himself the independent ruler of Shoa in 1864,'<sup>1114</sup> had diverse background. Moreover, Bezzabeh's soldiers who were assassinated by Gobana and his servants during that eventful night consisted of both Amhara and Oromo. There is no doubt that Aggafari Gobana, an Oromo, did not selectively slaughter the Amhara and spare his Oromo Kins who served Bezzabeh. This again induces us to infer that the Shawan aristocracy and their followers including their regiments had always diverse background as personified by Bezzabeh and Gobana and their followers. Moreover, the identities of the people who were found on the peripheries of the Amharic and Afaan Oromo language speakers shifted time and again based on the balance of power or they came to have multiple identities at the same time.

It seems that Gobana used the Azzu cave as his stronghold and fought against Bezzabeh, the 'pretender', for about five months. By this time, Bairu claims, "Gobäna's strategic position, his bravery and the war-tactics he demonstrated soon made it clear to Bätzabeh that his antagonist was invincible."<sup>1115</sup> However, by this time, Bezzabeh had also established himself allegedly at strategically more important place known as Afqara, a mountain (2800 masl) located at the border of

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<sup>1114</sup> Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menilek*, pp. 23.

<sup>1115</sup> Bairu, "Three Portraits," p., 145

Gera and Lalo Meder, in Manz, before Menilek reached Shawa, following his escape from Maqdala on July 1, 1865. <sup>1116</sup>

According to Menilek's chronicler, Gabra Sellase, Bezzabeh wanted to prevent Menilek from occupying the post of his father by hook or by crook. He states that አቶ በዛብህ ስለ ተንኮል የጌታ ልጅ ሚኒልክ የመጣ እንደሆነ የአባቱን ዙፋን እለቃለሁ። ሌላ ግን ባለ አልጋ ነኝ ብሎ ቢመጣ ላትከዳን እያለ መኳንንቱን ሁሉ አማለ አስገዘተ።<sup>1117</sup> (In order to deceive the nobility, Ato Bezzabeh stated that if the son of my [former] master returns, I shall hand his father's crown to him. But if anyone else comes claiming to be king of Shawa, he made the nobility to take oath of allegiance so that they would not betray him). Contrary to Gabra Sellase's view, Sergew indicates that initially Bezzabeh was genuine and supported the accession of Menilek to his father's throne. But it was after the Shawan nobility voted on the issue and the majority of war leaders and governors (ጦር መሪዎችና አስተዳረሪዎች ደረጃ) opposed Menilek's accession that Bezzabeh decided to resist Menilek. <sup>1118</sup>

Meanwhile, Heruy indicates that Bezzabeh declared his coronation as king of Shawa in November 1864, at the town of Dabra Berhan issuing the following proclamation, “የሸዋ ሰጧ ከቴዎድሮስ መገዛት የማድንህ ገዥህ እኔ ነኝና ባለህ እርጋ ባትገዛልኝ

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<sup>1116</sup> Bairu, “Three Portraits, ” p., 145; Gabra Sellsase, pp. 58-59; Svein Ege, “ Afqara”, *Encyclopedia Aethiopia* , Vol.I, p. 128; Marcus, *The Life and Times*, pp. 24; Darkwah, p. 52 on the other hand indicates that the escape of Menilek effected on the night of 30 June 1865, whereas as we have seen Marcus indicates that it took place on July 1, 1865; Heruy , *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik* ,p. 57 indicates , it was on Sane ( June ) 24 , 1957 EC.

<sup>1117</sup>Gabra Sellase, p. 54; Marcus, *The Life and Times*, pp. 23-24; Darkwah, p. 50.

<sup>1118</sup>Sergew, *Dagmawi Menile*, p. 153.



ግን ብርቱ ቅጣት እቀጣለሁ”<sup>1119</sup>(Oh, the people of Shawa, I am the one who would redeem you from the authority of Tewodros. I am your ruler; you have to keep peace and tranquility in your locality. If you do not obey my authority, I would penalize you severely). But as Bezzabeh had feared, the people of Shawa derided him and uprisings unfolded in different parts of the region. Hence, Heruy further indicates, አቶ በዛብሀ ከአፍቀራ ወርዶ አልገዛልህም ያለውን አማራውንም / አሮሞውንም / እየፈጁ በንጉሥነት ዘጠኝ ወር ያህል ሸዋን ገዛ<sup>1120</sup>:: (Ato Bezzabeh descended from Afqara and massacred the Amhara and the Oromo, who rebelled against him. In such a way he ruled Shawa for nine months as a king).

In the meantime, as we shall see, Abeto Menilek escaped from Maqdala on July 1, 1865, where he had stayed for almost ten years from 1856 to 1865. It is interesting that when he was in custody, he used to communicate with the Shawan nobility in secret. Heruy indicates that the Shawan nobility except Bezzabeh unanimously assured Menilek asserting, የጌታችን የኃይለመለኮት ልጅ ከመጡልን በደስታ እንቀበልዎታለን::<sup>1121</sup>(If the son of our king Hayla Malkot comes, we will welcome happily).

It seems that as a result of the beginning of rivalry between Bezzabeh and Gobana Dachi and the crisis that accompanied Menilek’s escape from Maqdala,

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<sup>1119</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik*, p. 96; Sergew, *Dagmawi Menile*, p. 150

<sup>1120</sup> Heruy, *Ya Itiyophia Tarik*, p. 96.

<sup>1121</sup> Ibid.

the Tulama who lived on the fringes of the kingdom of Shawa again got some respite from the military expedition. But as we have seen, it was not the time of peace and tranquility, as more than a dozen of notables, who apparently defied the egalitarian Oromo *Gada* system mushroomed almost in most parts of the Tulama country, starting from Mettaa Roobii in the west where Goolee Mooruu was the most prominent up to Adaamaa in the east, where Bokkaan Jimaa was the leading notable in the east. Moreover, Oromo notables arose in areas that stretched from Wadaje Berru Bukisaa's Borana in the north up to Turee Galatee's Soddoo in the South, and not to mention Abbaa Maallee of Salale, Marach of Mulo, Bune and his brothers and their sons in Ada'aa and of course *soi-disant* Queen/ *Giftii* Chamee and her son, Jaarraa *Gada* of Mulo Falle/ Faldaa.

Yet the Shawan kingdom's expansion towards the Tulama resumed arguably in a more organized way after some time following Menilek's escape from Maqdala. Therefore, in the coming couple of chapters we shall see how the Tulama reacted to the better and more organized campaigns of *Negus* Menilek and the mechanism which enabled the latter to control or conquer the Tulama and even helped him to move his seat deep into their heartland, which transformed the Tulama territory from the fringes of the Shawan Kingdom to the hub of modern Ethiopia.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE INCORPORATION OF THE TULAMA INTO THE KINGDOM OF SHAWA AND THE FINAL SHOWDOWN CA. 1870S

In the previous chapter, we have tried to disentangle how the Kingdom of Shawa even during the period that is commonly known as the interregnum (1855-1865) tried to tighten its grip on the Tulama under the leadership of Bazzu Abbaa Dekker. We have also seen that contrary to the popular perception which made it a time of respite for the Tulama from the raiding of the Shawan kingdom, developments that unfolded made it to be one of the most chaotic periods. Apparently, the period not only witnessed the perpetuation of the Shawan territorial aggrandizement but was also punctuated by the rise of more than a dozen of notables who defied the egalitarian Oromo *Gada* system and were engaged in the wars of territorial aggrandizement of their own.

In this regard, Asma Gyorgis with understandable exaggeration indicates...አሮሞዉም እርስ በርሱ እየተጋደለ ህዝቡ አለቀ ረሀብ ሽሽት ዘረፋ የዳኛ ጥፋት በሸቀ ላይ ሆነ።<sup>1122</sup> (The Oromo Killed one another, the people were exterminated.

Hunger, flight, looting and the absence of justice prevailed in Shawa). Asma Gyorgis further notes that during the time of his self-proclaimed kingship,

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<sup>1122</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 572-73. He claims this happened when Tewodros appointed *Ato Abboye* and *Abagaz Bezabeh* as governor of Shawa and commander of the Shawan force and Sayfu Sahla Sellase failed to recognize them; See also Arnesen, p. 226 who characterizes conflict among the Oromo notables as “in fights” between different Oromo groups for territorial aspirations of their own.

Bezzabeh “never descended from the saddle. All the districts were full of outlaws- the [Oromo] on the one hand and the Amhara on the other. He, too, was slaughtering and exterminating them.”<sup>1123</sup>

Meanwhile, in this chapter, we shall explore the last and the final showdown between the kingdom of Shawa and the Tulama or Shawan Oromo in general and between King Menilek and the Tulama notables in particular which commenced soon after Menilek’s escape from his confinement at Maqdala in 1865. Apparently, during this time the Shawan kingdom managed to incorporate the Shawan Oromo by the end of the 1870s, which was immediately followed by the shift of the seat of the kingdom from Liche/ Ankobar to Dildila aka Entoto in 1881 and later to Finfinnee, which was renamed Addis Ababa in 1886. Here, we shall shed some light on how Menilek managed to incorporate the entire Tulama into his kingdom, which his forefathers failed to materialize for at least more than a century, if we limit the beginning of the kingdom’s attempt to incorporate the Tulama to the reign of Amha Iyasus (1743-1774).

It is imperative to begin our discussion by highlighting Menilek’s personal relations with the Oromo and the manner of his escape from Maqdala before delving into his territorial expansion. It is enigmatic that Emperor Menilek, who broke the Oromo resistance against the kingdom of Shawa, once and for all was immensely indebted to the Oromo and his own history is inextricably intertwined

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<sup>1123</sup>Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 584-85.

with that of the Oromo. For instance, as we have seen in the previous chapter, after the Shawan forces were defeated by Emperor Tewodros at Barakat, he took refuge among the Ada'aa Oromo of east Shawa for some time. Again during the time of his escape from Maqdala, he had benefited a lot from the assistance he got from Queen Warqitu of Warra Himano as was even witnessed by Emperor Tewodros, who was quoted as saying, "Workitu has found a son, who is free [Menilek]; she can dispense with the one who is chained [her son Imam Amade Ali Liban]".<sup>1124</sup> Moreover, as we shall see in a while, the service Menilek got from the Tulama cavalrymen in general, and from *Ras Gobana Dachi* in particular, during the consequential territorial expansion was invaluable.

When Menilek escaped from Maqdala, Gabra Sellase indicates that he pleaded to Queen Warqitu to send him a force that would accompany and welcome him to Warra Himano. As a result, she sent a force that welcomed him, although it is said that the queen perhaps contemplated exchanging Menilek for her son, who was also imprisoned at Maqdala. But when she heard that Emperor Tewodros had killed her son and other Wallo dignitaries,<sup>1125</sup> who were also imprisoned at Maqdala, she changed her mind and issued a proclamation that urged the people of Shawa to welcome their leader jubilantly. Hence, she ordered three divisions of

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<sup>1124</sup> Stern, p. 220. Emperor Tewodros perceived that Queen Warqitu had stake in the escape of Menilek.

<sup>1125</sup> See Stern, pp. 220-21, who reports that immediately after the escape of Menilek, the emperor mercilessly executed the son of Warqitu along with twenty five Wallo dignitaries, to use stern words, "hacked and chopped into pieces".

her squadrons to accompany him up to the border of Shawa,<sup>1126</sup> who according to his chronicler, played a pivotal role in his victory over Bezzabeh.<sup>1127</sup>

Moreover, Greenfield claims that after he escape from Maqdala, Menilek again was 'sheltered at first with the Buta family of the Ada [Oromo]'.<sup>1128</sup> But Menilek's chronicler, the contemporary, and later Shawan writers were silent about this issue. It seems that this is highly unlikely since by that time Menilek was perhaps welcomed by a wide spectrum of the Shawan society<sup>1129</sup> and did not encounter strong opposition except perhaps what is termed as a Battle of Gadillo ( in August 1865) ,which took place in Gadem, where Bezzabeh tried to prevent Menilek's advance towards Ankobar. But when Bezzabeh's followers, by then a self-proclaimed king of Shawa, knew that the one whom they were fighting against was not Tewodros, they began to support Menilek. Hence, when Bezzabeh realized that most of his troops deserted him, he retreated to his fortress of Afqara. According to Sergew, therefore, the major cause for the defeat of Bezzabeh was the desertion of his troops otherwise, he claims, there is no doubt

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<sup>1126</sup> Gabra Sellase, pp. 56-57; Stern, p.220, reports that Emperor Tewodros personally saw with his telescope when Warqitu's men welcomed him, "Being informed of the direction the runaways had taken, he calmly ordered his telescope, and gazed towards the spot where Menilek was exchanging courtesies and felicitations with his mortal foes".;See also, Darkawh, pp. 52-53; Greenfield, p. 97. It is said that Warqitu's regiments refused to return to Warra Himano and continued serving Menilek in Shawa

<sup>1127</sup> Gabra Sellase, p. 58; IES MSS. 4614; See also Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 586-87, states that the people of Shawa welcomed Menilek with 'joy, jubilation and songs"; Darkwah, p. 54.

<sup>1128</sup> Greenfield, p. 97; See also Biratu, p. 26

<sup>1129</sup> See, for instance Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 586-87 who indicates that the people Shawa received Menilek with 'joy, jubilation and songs'.

that Bezzabeh was a gallant fighter in Shawa second to none except the haughty Matakoo Borjaa.<sup>1130</sup>

## **The Elimination of Bezzabeh and Motives of Menilek's territorial Expansion**

Meanwhile, Bezzabeh and Menilek were said to have been reconciled and the former was appointed as an administrator of a locality in Tagulat known as Abbaa Mooti. However, there is no doubt that this is an insult to dignitaries like Bezzabeh and the reconciliation was a tactical move, otherwise, it is said that Bezzabeh continued to plot against Menilek and the latter also continued to follow strictly the former's day to day activities assigning spies. Hence, according to the report of one of the spies, Bezzabeh was quoted as saying ቢሆንልኝ አልጋዬን አገኛለሁ ባይሆን እንኳ ከ[አሮሞ] ( If possible I will regain my throne otherwise I will go to the Oromo country). It is enigmatic that despite the devastating campaigns that he had made against the Tulama, Bezzabeh wanted to take refuge among them during the time of his distress. There is no doubt, as we have seen that the adoption of his biological sons by the Tulama notables epitomizes Bezzabeh's special affection for the Oromo in general and the Oromo notables like Jankaa Nagawoo of Kurfaa/ Dabra Libanos in particular.

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<sup>1130</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek* , p. 153; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 586-87.

Be that as it may, Gabra Sellase further notes that when Menilek heard the report, he sent to Ato Bezzabeh to leave the Afqara fortress, but the latter refused and even killed the messengers/ servants of the king. Moreover, it claims that even the letter which confirms Bezzabeh’s plot against Menilek was said to have been discovered. Henceforth, Bezzabeh was captured and brought in front of the dignitaries’ court accused of three things, first, for resisting and attempting to prevent Menilek’s entry to Shawa when he escaped from Maqdala; second, for plotting to overthrow Menilek and finally for refusing to leave the Afqara fortress.<sup>1131</sup>

However, contrary to Gabra Sellase’s claim, Asma Gyorgis notes that Bezzabeh was arrested when he went to Liche to pay tribute and was burnt to death with gunpowder in public. The reason for his execution, according to Asma Gyorgis, was that king Menilek became restive from the fear of Bezzabeh which denied him ‘appetite for eating and the peace to sleep’.<sup>1132</sup> The following Amharic couplet further encapsulates the execution of Bezzabeh and its ramifications for both the Oromo and Amhara in Shawa.

Amharic

Gloss

*አረግምም አርፈህ ተኛ አዉልቀህ ጀልዶህን*    *The Oromo [combatant] remove your Jaldo and sleep Peacefully;*

*ያማራዉም ጎበዝ ፍታህ ኮርቻህን*        *The Amhara hero unsaddle your horse;*

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<sup>1131</sup> Gabra Sellase, pp.59-60.

<sup>1132</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 588-591.



*በእሳት አቃጠሉት የሚያገንገህን።<sup>1133</sup> They have burnt with fire, he who awoke you from sleep.*

The couplet, therefore, further confirms that the Shawan kingdom's campaign against the Tulama had continued during the interregnum and is in line with the oral tradition we have got from parts of the area under study as we have seen in the previous chapter.

The death of Bezzabeh, therefore, removed Menilek's direct and implacable rival in Shawa. Immediately after that, he started making a territorial campaign against the Tulama. Therefore, in the following section, we shall shed some light on the processes of the conquest of the entire Tulama by the kingdom of Shawa around the 1870s. But before that, it is imperative again to highlight briefly the motives behind Menilek's campaign during the period under discussion.

By now we are cognizant of the fact that the genesis of the Shawan kingdom's encroachment towards the Shawan Oromo territory dates back to the time of the foundation of the dynasty by the end of the seventeenth century or the beginning of the eighteenth century. Therefore, Menilek's expansion was not an exception and a new project. The same can also be said about the motives behind his expansion and there is no need to repeat all of them here.

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<sup>1133</sup> Sergew, Dagmawi Menilek, p. 156; Heruy, Yaltiyophiya Tarik , p. 102 ; Bairu, Asma gyorgis and His Works, pp. 590-91.

Hence, the narrative which associates Menilek's expansion with the European scramble for Africa is not tenable at least concerning the Shawan kingdom's expansion towards the Tulama unless one may argue with his acquisition of European firearms. Perhaps the European scramble for Africa might have given it a new momentum in the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>1134</sup> However, the young Menilek rather simply resumed the Nagasi family's project which was underway at least for more than a century and a half. Therefore, Menilek was not the first Shawan ruler to encroach upon and establish his seats amid the Shawan Oromo territory. As we have seen almost throughout the thesis, all the Shawan capitals including the famous Ankobar, Kundi, Angolala and Dabra Berhan among others were founded amid the Oromo inhabited territories or from where the Oromo were evicted. Perhaps what made Menielk's expansion different from his predecessors was the degree of success perhaps aided by his unprecedented access to modern weapons. He was the first Shawan ruler who not only incorporated the entire Shawan plateau into the Kingdom but also extended the boundaries of the modern Ethiopian Empire state even beyond the limit of the most expansionist medieval emperors like Amda-Tseyon (r. 1314-1344). It is fascinating, according to Taddesse Tamrat, Amda Seyon's 'extensive conquests and expansion... were

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<sup>1134</sup> It has been extensively discussed by other scholars and there is no need to delve into this discordant issue since it is beyond the scope of this thesis. See, for instance Bereket Habte Selassie, *Conflict and Intervention in the Horn of Africa* (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1980), p.2; see also McClellan, p. 3 who objectively evaluates the roles of Menilek during the period under review. According to McClellan, Menilek can be considered both as 'freedom fighter' and 'imperialist'; See also Marakais, *The Last Two Frontiers*, p.4, who vehemently argues that Ethiopia was one of the participants in the European scramble for Africa and even it is fascinating that he further explicates that Ethiopia was able to forge its own empire and its 'rulers governed their new possessions more or less the same way and for similar ends as other imperial powers were doing.'

dramatically re-enacted by Emperor Menilek.”<sup>1135</sup> In the same vein John Markakis also cogently encapsulates,

Empire building in this corner of Africa follows the classic pattern of expansion from a dynamic core state whose energy spills over its borders to conquer neighbouring lands, from which it draws resources and additional strength for further conquests abroad. The core state in this tale is Shoa.....<sup>1136</sup>

Yet again some scholars associate Menilek’s expansion with that of Tewodros (1855-1868). However, Tewodros' vision of Ethiopia did not extend beyond the then southern frontier of Shawa.<sup>1137</sup> For instance, in a letter he wrote to Queen Victoria in 1862, Tewodros affirms that

እስተ ዛሬ ድረስ አባቶቻችን ነገሥታቱ ፈጣሪዎቻችንን ቢበድሉት መንግሥታቸውን [ለአረምኛ] ለቱርክ አሣልፎ ሰጥቶባቸው ነበረ። ዛሬ ግን እኔ ከተወለድሁ ፈጣሪዎ ካመድ አንስቶ ኃይል ሰጥቶ ባባቶቻችን መንግሥት አቆመኝ ። በእግዚአብሔር ኃይል [አረምኛን] አስለቀቅኛለሁ...*My fathers, the emperors, having forgotten the creator, He handed over their kingdom to the [Oromos] and the Turks. But God created me, lifted me out of the dust, and restored this empire to my rule. He endowed me with power and enabled me to stand in the place of my fathers. By this power I drove away the [Oromos].*<sup>1138</sup>

Apparently, in his letter Tewodros refers to his victory over the Yajju Oromo lords which was sanctioned by the defeat of Ras Ali II at the Battle of Ayshal on June 29, 1853,<sup>1139</sup> otherwise, Tewodros was either oblivious or unconcerned about the

<sup>1135</sup> Tadesse Tamrat, *Church and State*, p. 302; Bahru, *Modern Ethiopia*, p. 60.

<sup>1136</sup> Markakis, *The Last Two Frontiers*, p. 89.

<sup>1137</sup> Bahru, *Modern Ethiopia*, p. 60; Abbas, *Conquest and Resistance*, p. 111.

<sup>1138</sup> Sven Rubenson (ed), “Tewodros and His Contemporaries, 1855-1868”, *Acta Ethiopica*, Vol II (Addis Ababa University and Lund University Press, 1994), pp.197-98; see also Anderzei Bartneski and Joana Mantel Niecko, Joana, *Ya Itiyophiya Tarik Ka Majamarya eska ahunu Zaman* (Addis Ababa, ZA printers, 2006 E.C), pp. 265-66 (trans. Alemayehu Abebe) .

<sup>1139</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyoris and His Works*, pp. 640-41; Bahru, *Modern Ethiopia*, pp. 29-30.

Oromo who inhabited considerable parts of the present-day southern half of Ethiopia. From this, we may discern that his Ethiopia had encompassed only the northern and central part of modern Ethiopia.

Rather it seems that king Menilek strived to execute by combining the Nagasi family's project of 'reconquista' echoed by his predecessors above all by his illustrious grandfather, Sahla Sellase (1813-1847) and Tewodros's vision of uniting the core provinces of the Christian kingdom. In relation to the former, Harris indicates that the enduring ambition of the Shawan's was restoring the 'lost' territories of their ancestors which extended about three hundred miles south of the then boundary of the kingdom but they were handicapped by the fear of rebellion and disturbance at home.<sup>1140</sup> Moreover, Asma Gyorgis further complicates this issue and indicates that the project of restoring the 'lost' territory had started during the time of Galawdewos (1540-1559) and 'materialized after four hundred years by Emperor Menilek.<sup>1141</sup> Apparently it seems that Menilek considered not only the Nagasi family as his ancestors but also the medieval kings who ruled the Christian kingdom including of course Galawdewos.<sup>1142</sup> Similarly, his chronicler, Gabra Sellase indicates that by 1877( 1884/85) the

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<sup>1140</sup>Harris, vol.II, p. 163; See Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, pp. 96-100; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 612-13; Gabra Sellase, p. 123; Tim Carmichael, "Approaching Ethiopian history: Addis Ababa and Local Governance in Harar, c. 1900 to 1950" (PhD Dissertation, Michigan State University, 2001), p. 28; Darkwah, p. 211, McClellan, pp. 19-20.

<sup>1141</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 612-13.

<sup>1142</sup> Darkwah, p. 104, footnote 146; see also Nagada, P. 8 where Ras Gobana in a letter he wrote to his wife, Ayelech, the purpose of his campaign was to 'reestablish the Christian country that had been destroyed in the reign of Atse Libne Dengel'.

territory invaded by the Oromo ensuing the War of Imam Ahmad Gragn started to be measured by አጼ ገመድ ( the Emperor [ Menilek's ] measuring thong) and distributed among the Shawan aristocracy and the church living aside about a third to the Oromo notables.<sup>1143</sup>

It seems unlike the grand project of 'reconquering' the areas presumably overrun by the Oromo, mainly found to the South of Shawa except Wallo, which had been unanimously supported by the aristocracy, Menilek's intention to expand his domain in the north did not have universal support in Shawa. It seems that the Shawan aristocracy did not want to involve their burgeoning kingdom in the politics of northern Ethiopia. Apparently Menilek was not the first Shawan ruler who wanted to make campaign to the north. Rather, as we have seen, one of the causes for the Shawan aristocracies' opposition against Wassan Sagad, the great grandfather of Menilek was his desire to involve Shawa in the Gondarine (Northern Ethiopian) politics. Sahla Sellase, the grandfather of Menilek was also said to have been advised by a certain monk who came from Azalo wilderness, የጎንደርን መንግስት አትሻ በኩርህ ነዉና። ይልቅ የተነጠቃችሁትን [አሮሞ] የያዘዉን መልስ ። ጉራጌን ከ[አሮሞ] እጅ አዉጣ ። ፊትህን ወደ [አሮሞ] ብትመልስ ትሰፋለህ ትለመልማለህ ለልጅ ልጅ ትገዛለህ ። ጎንደርንም በማብላት በማጠጣት በማልበስ ትገዛለህ። ወሎን አትክፈት በርህ

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<sup>1143</sup> Gabra Sellase, p. 123.

ነጢና<sup>1144</sup>:: ( Do not desire the Gondar government, it is founded by your seniors. Rather you have to restore the areas occupied by the [Oromo]. Liberate the Gurage from the hegemony of the Oromo. If you face towards the Oromo you will expand your domain, prosper and your progenies would rule it. You can simply rule Gondar by dining, wining and giving them clothes. Do not open Wallo it is your buffer). Similarly, as we shall see in the next section, the Shawan elites advised Menilek to abstain from the politics of the north although he gave deaf ears to their advice.

As per the above claims , therefore, the territorial expansions and the dispossession of the Tulama peasants had justifiable reasons since the Oromo were ‘alien’ or ‘ newcomers ‘ and ‘invaders’ whereas the Christian kingdom was victim of the Oromo expansion and therefore, what happened during the time of Menilek was the regaining of the lost territory.<sup>1145</sup> On the contrary as we have seen earlier in the thesis, the Oromo-centric scholarship also has come up with its own counter narrative. It claims that the Shawan plateau was the abode of the

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<sup>1144</sup>IES MSS. 4614.

<sup>1145</sup>Getachew Haile, "The Unity and Territorial Integrity of Ethiopia." *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 24(30) (1986): 465-487 cited in Abbas, *Conquest and Resistance in the Ethiopian Empire*, pp. 113 -114 Abbas insicates, "The alleged lost territories practically included everything in the Eastern Africa including Khartoum and Lake Nyaza and particularly all lands inhabited by the Oromo and the Somali people." This extravagant claim would suggest these lands constituted the Amhara "ethnic homeland" and people who lived there have been "newcomers" and "outsiders"; see also Markakis, *The Last Two Frontiers*, p. 21 who indicates that the Oromo have also been depicted as uncouth intruders who destabilised the Christian kingdom"

Oromo during the early medieval periods but the majority of the Oromo <sup>1146</sup> were pushed to the south by the aggressively expanding Christian kingdom and the sixteenth century Oromo movement/expansion was the 'reconquest' of their former territory<sup>1147</sup>. As a result, it rather claims that the late nineteenth century Shawan expansion which resulted in the subjugation of the Oromo and other southern Ethiopian communities was invasion and 'colonisation'. It is appalling that such kind of incompatible discourses and selective memory of the past to justify ones position have continued to bedevil Ethiopian historiography to date. But contrary to the above two conflicting narratives, we argue that both communities, the Oromo and the Amhara have continued to exist side by side at least for more than a millennium in the area under discussion although one group might be dominant and hegemonic at a time and vice versa. Hence, the assertion which makes one group 'alien' and the other 'indigenous' is untenable and ahistorical. Rather it is a clear testimony of a highly politicized context of Ethiopia historical studies and the polemics surrounding the position of the southern half peoples in general and the Oromo in particular in the Ethiopian state. This issue has been aptly summarized by John Markakis as follows:

*Interestingly, the 'Oromisation' of the Sidama [sic]<sup>1148</sup> is celebrated by Oromo nationalists who, on the other hand, fulminate against 'Amharisation'. 'The Oromo conquest and settlement were qualitatively different from the process of Ethiopian colonialism which took place within the context of a racist and capitalist world-*

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<sup>1146</sup> Otherwise there were Sedentary Oromo who were found on the Shawan plateau as witnessed by the hagiography of Abuna Qawestos as we have seen in the first chapter.

<sup>1147</sup> See also Asala Jalata, *Oromia & Ethiopia*, p. 18; see also Marakais, *The last Two Frontiers*, p. 38, who indicate that this is a 'revisionist approach from an Oromo nationalist perspective'.

<sup>1148</sup> The term Sidama as we have seen in the first chapter is the vague and generic term given to the people who inhabited an extensive area located on the left bank of the Abbay as well as South of the plateau of Shawa.

*economy. Reflecting values inherent in the gaada system, the Oromo structurally and successfully assimilated and integrated the conquered minorities'.... No doubt, when they come to write their own history, the Sidama will take a different view.*<sup>1149</sup>

Therefore, there is no shadow of doubt that the Oromo were dominant and hegemonic from the second half of sixteenth century up to the end of seventeenth century on the Shawan plateau. However, ensuing the emergence of the Shawan dynasty the balance of power started to shift as the burgeoning kingdom encroached into the Oromo territories steadily which continued up to the time of Menilek. Therefore, in the following sections we shall explore the final and epoch-making phase of the processes of incorporation of the Tulama into the kingdom of Shawa in which mainly the then Menilek's two foremost generals, *Ras Darge* and *Ras Gobana*, played leading roles.

### **Ras Darge Sahla Sellase and the Incorporation of Salale and Darra into the kingdom of Shawa**

In this section we shall shed light on how Salale and Darra, the northwestern parts of the Tulama territory, were incorporated into the kingdom of Shawa during the early years of King Menilek. Perhaps, it was in this direction that the Shawan kingdom made the earliest military expedition soon after the coronation of Menilek as king of Shawa in 1865. In this regard the contemporary Shawan historian Asma Gyorgis indicates that after the death of Bezzabeh, Menilek led an

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<sup>1149</sup> Markakis, *The Last Two Frontiers*, p. 37.



expedition to Salale in order to fulfill his initiation which he calls “ማተብ ለመስበር” which literally means 'to break the seal'.<sup>1150</sup>

Apparently, this was not the first campaign to be made by the Kingdom of Shawa in this direction. As we have seen in the previous chapters, the rulers of the neighbouring Amhara principalities of Morat and Marhabete like Tidu Abbisa and also the sovereigns of the kingdom of Shawa starting from the time of Asfa Wassan (1774-1808) made sporadic campaigns and some of them were able to establish relations with the Salale notables. Perhaps the last Shawan notable before Darge Sahla Sellase who had made concerted effort to incorporate Salale into the Kingdom of Shawa was his half-brother, Sayfu Sahla Sellase. It is fascinating that there has been dispute among our oral informants even pertaining to the founder of the capital of the Salale sub province, Fiche, which was the favourite seat of Darge Sahla Sellase and his descendants. Some informants indicate that Fiche was founded by Sayfu Sahla Sellase<sup>1151</sup> the memoir of Liqa Tabbabit Abebe indicates that it was founded by Sayfu<sup>1152</sup> and other dispute this and give credit for Darge.<sup>1153</sup> Anyhow as we shall see, most part of the Salale sub-province except districts like Yayyaa Gullaallee, Gumbichuu and Oborrii were

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<sup>1150</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 592-93.

<sup>1151</sup> Informant: Major Tilahun-Fayisaa –Sandafa –Agaa- Buchilloo (Fiche, April 21, 2018). An octogenarian and the descendant of one of the notables around the present-day Fiche .... Agaa Buchillo was said to have the contemporary of *Ras Darge*

<sup>1152</sup> Bairu Tafla, “The Historical Notes of "Liqa-Ṭäbbäbt" Abbäbä Yeräfu”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol. 50, No. 2 (1987), p. 271 but he made a serious timing error because he claims that Fiche was founded in 1857 EC ( 1864/65) by Sayfu Sahla Sellase but Sayfu was killed in 1860.

<sup>1153</sup> Informants: Girmaa Tufaa ( Fiche, April 21-22, 2018),

incorporated into the kingdom of Shawa by *Ras Darge Sahla Sellase*. Tradition has it that Darge has special affection for Fiche and when he campaigned to Arsi in 1880s he mobilized his troops at Fiche. The following Amharic couplet succinctly encapsulates this issue:

Amharic	Gloss
<i>የፈረሱን ኮቴ ከሩቁ ሰማሁት</i>	<i>I have heard a footstep of a horse from afar</i>
<i>ጋልቦ ከሜዳ ከፈቼ አየሁት</i>	<i>I have seen him galloping in the plane / Fiche</i> <sup>1154</sup>
<i>ባሩስ ገብቶ ማሩን የቀመሰ</i>	<i>He entered Arsi and tasted the honey</i> <sup>1155</sup>
<i>አጤሎ አግብቶ ዳርጌ ተመለሰ።</i> <sup>1156</sup>	<i>Darge returned [to Fiche] after making the [Arsi] get back to their home ( literally after defeating them).</i>

Meanwhile, as to why and how Menilek managed to incorporate the entire Tulama into the kingdom of Shawa which his forefathers had failed to execute for more than a century and half, one of our key informants encapsulates it using the following Afaan Oromo couplets:

Afaan Oromo	Gloss
<i>Sibillii Kan durii miti</i>	<i>A gun [the Shawans used] was not the one we knew;</i>
<i>lama iyyatuu dhufee</i>	<i>They have got which fires twice</i>
<i>Amaarii kan durii miti</i>	<i>The Amhara [Menilek's troops] were not the one we knew</i>
<i>Kana akka harree gangalatuttu dhufe.</i> <sup>1157</sup>	<i>The [Amhara] that rolled on to his back like donkey has come.</i>

<sup>1154</sup> It perhaps indicates that the topography of most parts of Salale, whose capital is/ was Fiche .

<sup>1155</sup> Perhaps plundered the resource of Arsi mainly cattle

<sup>1156</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 194.

<sup>1157</sup> Informants: Dubee Buttaa (June 29, 2017, Sabbataa)

From the above Afaan Oromo couplets we may discern that the guns which the Shawans used before this time were rudimentary and could not make huge difference in their encounter with the Tulama whose weapons were spears and shields. There is no doubt that the Shawans had always superiority in armament compared with the Oromo who were found to the west and south. For that matter, we are not even sure whether the Oromo had access to muskets as late as the time of Menilek except perhaps few notables who had relations with the sovereigns of the kingdom of Shawa. For instance, Darkwah claims that “Menilek succeeded in keeping the arms out of the reach of his [Oromo] enemy...travellers who wished to visit any part of Menilek's kingdom had to have his permission in order to carry firearms even for their own personal protection”.<sup>1158</sup>

Sources also indicate that by this time King Menilek recognized the significance of latest artillery and as early as 1872 he sent an Ethiopian priest, Abba Mikael, to Europe. However, Menilek's efforts bore fruits perhaps after the coming of the Italian Geographical Mission to Shawa in 1876 because ‘ from 1876 up to 1879 Menilek received a total of 447 shot-guns, rifles, pistols, cannon, and at least 12,000 cartridges from the Italian sources.’<sup>1159</sup>

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<sup>1158</sup> Darkwah, p. 207

<sup>1159</sup> Darkwah, p. 200; see also Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menelik*, pp. 42-43; Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, p. 75; Carmichael, p. 30

Moreover, in line with the above Afaan Oromo couplet, the contemporary written sources also confirm that the Shawan soldiers also started benefiting from the modern military drill. It is said that by this time king Menilek started employing Europeans who trained his soldiers. In this regard, Darkawh writes by citing the famous Catholic priest, G. Massaia as follows:

*Besides firearms, Menilek would employ any European willing to work for him on any aspect of development which contributed to the security of Shewa. Thus in 1877 a Frenchman named Pottier was employed in training a group of Shewan youths in European military techniques Another Frenchman, Pino, was a regular officer in the army which was commanded by Ras Gobana. Swiss engineers, Alfred Ilg and Zemmerman were employed on, among other things, building bridges across the Awash and other rivers to facilitate movement within the kingdom.<sup>1160</sup>*

There is no doubt that asymmetrical access to firearms could play a pivotal role in determining the outcome of a battle and it had played a decisive role in breaking the age-old resistance of the Tulama. Yet it is important to note that the nexus of diplomacy, the collaboration or cooption of the Tulama notables following the footsteps of Gobana, the fragmentation of the Tulama polity which was manifested by the rise of more than a dozen of petty chiefs who had already established relations with the kingdom of Shawa starting from the time of Sahla Sellase were also contributed to the subjugation of the Tulama. Moreover, the Shawans were able to win over to their side the Tulama notables in most cases

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<sup>1160</sup> G.I.Massaia, *Miei Trentacinque Anni di Missione neWAlta Etiopia* (Milano, 1885-95), vol. X, p. 193 ; C.F. Audon, ' *Voyage au Choa* in *Le Tour du Monde*, 2e Semestre 1889, also L. Traversi, 'Viaggio nei Guraghe' in BSGI, 1887, p. 277 cited in Darkwah, Pp. 58-59 ; see also IES MSS. 4614., አንድ ፈረንሳይኛ ሙሴ ፖቴ የሚባል ሰልፍ ማርሽ ያስተማራቸዋል ከ500 አይበልጡም ነበር; see also Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 656-57 indicates that Pottier had trained about 100 youths.

without resorting to warfare and in some cases it was tantamount to the renewal of the already commenced rapprochement or *modus vivendi* between the Tulama notables and the Shawan aristocracy. As we have seen, the Tulama notables like Jaarraa Gadaa of Mulo, descendants of Abbaa Maallee of Salale and the sons of Bunee of Ada'aa among others had established amicable relations with the kingdom of Shawa even during the time of crisis.

Yet this does not mean that the incorporation of the Tulama into the kingdom of Shawa was a walkover for Menilek and his commanders. Rather as we have seen and shall also see there were intermittent and localized resistances here and there in the Tulama country. Even it is said that Menilek's hold over his new seat Didila/Entoto and Finfinnee/ Addis Ababa was said to have been precarious at least during the first decade following its foundation and the incorporation did not sanction the end of resistance to the Shawan aristocracy's hegemony which of course by now included considerable numbers of the Tulama notables including *Ras Gobana Dachi* of Abichu as we shall see in the next section.

Moreover, what most scholars who dealt with this issue failed to understand is that unlike most part of the southern half of Ethiopia where resistance against the Shawan kingdom was a matter of several years and in some cases closer to a decade in areas like, Arsi and Kaffa among others where the Shawan forces

encountered stiff resistance, the resistance of the Tulama lasted for more than a century and a half, if not more. In this regards, the presumed chronicle of *Ras Gobana Dachi* encapsulates ““ እነዚህን የ[ኦሮሞ] አገሮች አንድ ወገን ሲያስገብሩ አንድ ወገን ይከዳል።ያን ወግተው ሲያስገብሩ ያ ይከዳል።የተረጋገጠ ግብር ሳይኖር..... ከመርዕድ አዝማች አስፋወሰን እስከ አጼ ምኒልክ ቆየ።<sup>1161</sup> (When they had tried to make the Oromo countries their tributaries, when they defeated one group in War another group rose against them. As a result they could not collect permanent tribute from the Oromo from the reign of Mared Azmach Asfa Wassan up to the time of King Menilek).

Moreover, what we have to underline at this juncture is that the resistance was not always along ethnic lines. Apparently, the Amharic speakers were the dominant force in the Shawan kingdom’s camp but, as we have seen throughout the thesis, right from the time of its inception the Oromo notables were also there not to speak of the later times when there were considerable number of Oromos within the regiments of the Shawan kingdom mainly during the times of Sahla Sellase, Bazzu Abbaa Dekker and of course Menilek. It is perplexing that during the later times with the exception of Salale , where *Ras Darge*, Menilek’s uncle played a pivotal role, it was *Ras Gobana* with his ostensibly mainly Tulama troops who played a pivotal role in the incorporation of the Tulama into the Kingdom of Shawa.

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<sup>1161</sup> IES MSS 4614

Meanwhile, the reaction of the Salale notables towards *Ras Darge's* territorial expansion was not uniform. In areas where the Oromo notables had already established relations with the kingdom of Shawa especially starting from the time of Menilek's grandfather, Sahla Sellase, the Shawans encountered little or no resistance but in some areas the Shawans encountered stiff resistance. To begin with, one of the first places where Menilek's force led by his uncle, Darge Sahla Sellase encountered resistance was in the area located immediately to the west of Fiche town, at a locality known as Ariiroo. It seems that a notable where Fiche town was founded, Sandafa Agaa Buchilloo seems to have submitted peacefully. But Ashee Ruufoo and his seven sons nicknamed *torban* Ashee put a stiff resistance against Darge Sahla Sellase stating that *torba taane Torba Ashee gannaa* ( how could we handover Torban Ashee [ to *Ras Darge*] being seven ( many)). Moreover oral tradition has it that Ashee cursed his sons saying: "If you handover Ariiroo to Darge without resistance bear a black dog."<sup>1162</sup>

But we have conflicting tradition concerning the nature of the resistance of Ashee Rufoo and his family against *Ras Darge*. One tradition indicates that when *Ras Darge* initially invaded the locality they were able to rally the local people and defeated and pursued Darge and his armies as far as Zegamal. Nevertheless, Darge was able to mobilize a superior force after a while and occupied the locality around Fiche. Hence, the term Fiche was chosen for Darge's new capital in order

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<sup>1162</sup>Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee,"pp. 54-55.

to connote his victory. "When Darge won the war and got control over the Oromo regions, he gave the Amharic name 'Fiche meaning "my (Darge's) military solution" to the resistance. <sup>1163</sup>

But another tradition indicates that the conflict between *Ras Darge* and the family of *Ashee Rufoo* came into being sometime after he founded his seat at *Fiche* and even built churches. It is said that when *Ras Darge* was on military expedition in another locality, *Ashee Rufoo's* family burned down the newly founded church at *Arata Maryam* and killed the representative of *Ras Darge*, who was stationed at *Fiche*. As a result, *Ras Darge* punished *Ashee Rufoo* and his sons by evicting them from their estate. But one of the sons of *Ashee*, *Abbayee* a proven warrior, was able to get land later in the present-day *Dagam* district as a reward following his irreplaceable role in the defeat of a certain bandit who challenged *Ras Darge* in the locality known as *Dubannaa* in *Kuyyuu* district. <sup>1164</sup>

Meanwhile, unlike the family of *Ashee Rufoo*, the most renowned notables in the district like *Gabruu Goobee* and *Taklu Maallee*, the son successor and of *Abbaa Maallee* respectively perhaps did not openly confront *Ras Darge*. It is said that when *Darge* came *Gabruu Goobee*, who was said to have been almost a king by his own standard, refused to recognize him and perhaps went to *Liche/ Ankobar*,

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<sup>1163</sup> Abarra, p.6; Tsegaye, "The Oromo of *Salaalee*", pp. 55-6. It seems the term *Fiche* is derived from the Amharic root word 'fichi', which means 'Solution' to the

<sup>1164</sup> Informants: *Abba Hayla Maryam Morodaa*, one of the descendants of *Ashee Rufoo* on his mother's side; *Asir Alaqa Fayisaa Jimaa* and *Major Tilahun Fayisaa* on the other hand indicate that *Ashee Rufoo's* family killed the servant of *Sayfu* not *Darge*, which is highly unlikely since *Sayfu* died around 1860, almost a decade before *Darge's* conquest of *Salale*.



since Entoto was founded almost a decade after Darge's foundation of Fiche, and entrusted his estate to king Menilek hoping that the king would be his protector. However, it is said that rather the representatives of the king came and grabbed Gabru's estate. It was in such a way that Gabruu Goobee's family became landless. This mischievous process was said to have been widely employed by the Shawan aristocracy in order to dispossess the Oromo notables in Salale and its environs. But it is said that one of the brothers of Gabruu, Loloo Goobee was said to have retained some plots to the family of Goobee Ochee when Menilek's representatives came to take over by employing comparable trickery by postulating fraudulent border between Gabruu and his territory.<sup>1165</sup>

Meanwhile, the occupation of the locality around Fiche did not sanction Darge's occupation of the whole Salale proper. Rather it is said that he used Fiche as his stronghold and made a series of military campaigns in the areas found to the west and south of Fiche. The Oromo who were found in the south and south-west were said to have been resilient and it took some time to control them. As Plowden describes:

*The south-east corner of the circle of the Nile is occupied by the countries of Jarso and [Tulama], inhabited by pagan [Oromo] all horsemen, and of renowned courage, against whom the Abyssinians make campaigns.... the warriors of the*

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<sup>1165</sup> Informant: Abba Hayla Maryam, an octogenarian and a direct descendant of Gabruu Goobee on his father's side. It was a result that the late Abraham Tesema Wami Loloo came to be one of the land lords in Salale area. It is said that latter on they were also able to buy land as well as took from the peasants adopting the mechanisms used by the Shawan aristocracy, that is the Oromo also entrusted their lands not only to the Shawan Amhara like Menilek and Darge but also to the Oromo notables.

[Tulama] are said to be most ferocious, brave and treacherous of all the [Oromo].<sup>1166</sup>

Darge also encountered resistance in the districts found west of his newly founded town of Fiche. One of the renowned notables who put stiff resistance against Darge's occupation of his domain was Goshuu Gissillaa of Darroo. Perhaps unlike most part of Salale, which is an open plain, the undulating topography of Darroo gave comparative advantage to Goshuu Gissillaa. It is said that Goshuu based himself at a proverbial cave found in the locality. Hence when Darge's regiments attempted to climb to the top of the cave, he decimated them using a stone avalanche.<sup>1167</sup> However, a tradition recorded by Wakene was slightly different from what we have got and he rather claims that Darge's combatants were put in and sent down the precipice in order to battle against Goshuu in apparently low lying milieu.<sup>1168</sup>

It is fascinating that oral tradition has it that Goshuu had guns unlike other notables in Salale. However, his matchlocks locally known as *mataqasha* did not win him battle against the more superior Darge's force. It seems that Goshu was forced to flee for his life to the adjoining locality known as Gendabarat, in the territory of Galaayee Badhasaa, whose daughter married Goshu's son named Birruu. Nonetheless, Goshu's son Birruu was said to have been arrested and

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<sup>1166</sup>Plowden, p.313.

<sup>1167</sup>Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee," pp.57-58

<sup>1168</sup>Wakene, p. 19

detained by Darge at Dabbis Washa, which is located several kilometers east of Fiche near the road that led to the monastery of Dabra Libanos.<sup>1169</sup>

Meanwhile, Goshu's escape to the territory under the domain of another Oromo notable might be one of the clear testimonies which compel us to suspect the nineteenth century European travellers notes which characterized the Oromo notables as mortal enemies. Rather the tradition we have got from the region indicates that many of the newly emerging notables were connected through nuptial relations and used the territory of another as a refuge during the times distress.<sup>1170</sup>

Likewise the grandsons of Gammadaa Bonayaa of Kuyyuu, Hawaas Nagawoo and Biraatuu Waaqee escaped to Darra when they were pressured by Darge where their aunt, Siddisuu Booruu, married Asanu Wadaj, the then prominent chief of Darra. When Darge requested Asanu to hand over to him Hawaas and Biraatuu, Siddisuu Boruu is said to have in turn pleaded her spouse as indicated by the following verse:

**Oromo**

*Ijoolen Korbeetidha ajaja hin jaalatuu,  
takka baranaa tanaa nu baasii jettee*

**Gloss**

*The boys [Hawaas and Biraatuu] are too  
young and do not like orders and*

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<sup>1169</sup>Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee,"p. 58.

<sup>1170</sup>Tsegaye, " The Oromo of Salaalee,"pp. 58-60.

Siddisuu Boruu<sup>1171</sup>

Siddisuu requested Asanu - save us once  
only this year.

It is said that Asanu Wadaj disregarded Darge's request and even said to have been boasted of his military prowess, which at that time was measured in terms the cavalry, as the poem written hereunder clearly discloses:

**Amharic**

**Gloss**

ከሁሉም ሰንጋን እመኑ

Put your trust in the horse,

ማን ሰጥቶት ነበር ደራን ለሰኑ::<sup>1172</sup>

who else would have given Darra to Asanu.

At this juncture, Asanu emerged as the most powerful chief of Darraa. Perhaps he inherited the position from his father Wadaj Duurii , the angafa of Ada'aa gosa, who as early as the end of the eighteenth century, had dominated certain parts of the district. Asnanu Wadaj in turn expanded his domain after he had defeated Alii Maaree, the *angafa* of Mettaa .<sup>1173</sup>

After Darge subjugated the notables of the Salale proper, it was the turn the Darraa notables where he relatively encountered tougher resistance in the region perhaps except Darroo as we have seen. Like Darroo here topography seems to have played a pivotal role. The strategic importance of Darraa is always indisputable in the wars fought in the region since it is enclosed by the Abbay,

<sup>1171</sup> Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee,"p.61; Wakene Frew, pp.20-21, However, the latter indicates that the name of Boruu's daughter was Yeshii.

<sup>1172</sup>Cited in Wakene, p.21; Informants: Abbaa Machal Borjaa (24/6/2001, Garba Gurrachaa) and Lemma Dastaa (23/6/2001, Garba Gurracha)

<sup>1173</sup> Arnesen, pp.227-28; Informant: Ababu Gizaw ( Ejere,May 8, 2018)

Wanchit and Jama rivers in the west, north and south respectively. Perhaps the only reachable part is around its present-day capital, Adaree/Gundo Masqal where Asanu had strong garrison at Wulicho. Asanu Wadaj, therefore, well known by his horse name Abbaa Kurara, is said to be weathered the onslaughts the forces of the Shawans several times and he is reminisced in the following couplet:

Amharic

Gloss

አሰኑ ወዳጅ አባ ኩራራ

*Asanu Wadaj Abbaa Kurara*

ገደል ከተተዉ ያን ሁሉ አማራ<sup>1174</sup>

*Sent all those Amhara down the cliff*

Apparently, the *status quo* vis-à-vis Asanu and the Shawan force did not last long. It is said that Darge left no stone unturned and employed several techniques in order to subjugate the impregnable district of Asanu Wadaj. It is said that he even ordered his combatants to hike the defensive wall at Wulicho and storm Asanu's garrison.<sup>1175</sup> Apparently it was at this juncture that, according to Cerulli, the people of Darraa uttered the following riddle.<sup>33</sup>

**Oromo**

**Gloss**

*Takke tarkke*

*Come on, divine*

*laften okkotet rakkate?*<sup>1176</sup>

*Is the bone distressed in the pot?*

According to Cerulli

*The bone was Hasan, desired by the dogs, i.e. the Amara; the pot was Darra, his tribe. As a pot protects a bone against the dogs who will not risk rushing into the*

<sup>1174</sup>Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee," p.61; Wakene, p. 22

<sup>1175</sup>Wakene, pp.22-23; Arnesen, pp.227-29.

<sup>1176</sup>Cerulli, p. 23.

*pot, and cannot get the bone except by breaking the pot, so Hasan was protected by the Darra against the Amara who would not risk their lives by coming into Darra's country and could not capture Hasan except by defeating the Darra. The Shoan expedition had not yet departed when Hasan died a natural death, after slaughtering his war-horse. "After my death," he said, "no one can ride Kurara!"<sup>1177</sup>*

Apparently in such a way, the war in Darraa was also concluded with the resounding victory of Darge Sahla Sellase although Asanu Wadaj resisted him for some time. Then in this regard one may ask that why Asanu Wadaj alone managed to do so when most of the neighbouring Tulama notables crumbled. This could perhaps be first, as we have seen the topography of Darraa immensely assisted Asanu Wadaj in his encounter with Darge; secondly, contrary to the Salale proper where dozens of rival notables were vying for dominance, Asanu Wadaj emerged as the only dominant force in Darraa and this helped him to unite different Oromo *gosa*, namely the Ada'aa, Wajjituu, Meettaa and Tuti against the common adversary. Finally, it is said that Asanu Wadaj was able to obtain matchlocks used by some of Darge's troop perhaps owing to Darraa's geographical proximity to Borana, where another Tulama subgroups lived and of course due to his contact with the wider Wallo Oromo found to the north. Even it is said that he had contacts with his Arab coreligionists who provided him with a cannon.<sup>1178</sup>

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<sup>1177</sup> Cerulli, p. 23.

<sup>1178</sup> Wakene, pp.23-24; Beke, pp. 385, 413; Arnesen, p 229.

It seems that when *Ras Darge* overwhelmed *Darraa*, some of the soldiers of *Asanu Wadaj* deserted him and sided with the *Shawans*. Hence, apparently *Asanu Wadaj's* men or subjects reproached them as follows:

**Amharic**

**Gloss**

እንዳልገደሉ እንዳልዘረፉ  
 የአሰኑ ሰዎች ለሌሎች አለፉ።<sup>1179</sup>

*As if they did not kill, did not loot,  
 Asanu's soldiers passed over to others.*

It is said that the poem was devised so as to dissuade further desertion by evoking their abysmal feats in the hope of reducing their credibility in the *Darge's* camp.

Be that as it may, the last years of *Asanu Wadaj* is shrouded in mystery and open to speculation. For instance, one kind of tradition indicates that by that time *Asanu Wadaj* created a united front with the neighboring Muslim Oromo notables against the kingdom *Shawa*. Hence it is said that in one of the encounters which took place near *Wara Iluu*, he was seriously wounded and later died on his way back to *Darraa*. But his death is said to have been kept secret and his wife<sup>1180</sup> and followers continued defending their domain against the *Shawans* but after three years *Ras Darge* prevailed, arrested and detained of *Asanu's* wife at *Dabra*

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<sup>1179</sup>Wakene, p.23; Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee", p. 64

<sup>1180</sup>It is said that *Asanu* had two wives, *Sidiisuu* and *Walalaa* and it was the later who took the responsibility of leadership. Informants: *Abbaa Macha Borjaa* ( *Garba Gurracha*, June 24, 2001) and *Lemma Dastaa* (23/6/2001, *Garba Gurracha*); see also *Bairu Tafia*, "*Ras Darge*," pp.25-26.

Libanos.<sup>1181</sup> Perhaps this event sanctioned the end of heroic resistance of the resolute people of Darraa and the districts incorporation into the kingdom of Shawa.

Concerning the fate of the Kuyyuu notables, Hawaas Nagawoo and Birratuu Waaqee, who took refuge in Darraa, our informants recount that by the following verse:

<b>Oromo</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
<i>Birratuu Waaqee shuwee Kenne galee, Kan itti beeku</i>	<i>Birratuu Waaqee, who is astute returned by giving Shuwee [salt bar] to [Darge],</i>
<i>Goshuu Gissillaa Bilbilla Dibbee gaate badee.<sup>1182</sup></i>	<i>Goshuu Gissilla has fled leaving Bilbilla Dibbee [for Darge].</i>

It is said that Birratuu Waaqee and Hawaas Nagawoo returned to Kuyyuu after paying salt bars and horses to Ras Darge Sahla Sellase as compensation for their transgression while the notable of Darroo, Goshuu Gissillaa, as we have seen above, perhaps did not return to his abode. The tradition further indicates that Birraatuu and Hawaas paid their dues thanks to the assistance they got from the people of Kuyyuu otherwise what Darge obligated them to pay was said to have been beyond what they could afford. Moreover, it is said that Qumme Nagii of Jaarsoo, whose daughter Birraatuu married and who established good relations

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<sup>1181</sup> Arnesen, p.229 foot note no.41; Inforamtns: Lemma Destaa, Shawalul Sanyii, Fayisaa Jimaa and Charee Zewalda Mariam; Bairu Tafia, "Ras Darge," pp.25-26 says that Asanu's wife and other notables defended Darraa for 8 years after the death of Asanu.

<sup>1182</sup> Informant: Abbaa Macha Borjaa ( Garba Gurracha, June 24, 2001), he was the grandson of Birratuu Waaqee



with Darge Sahla Sellase also played a pivotal role in the reconciliation of the Kuyyuu notables with Darge. Yet they were said to have been exonerated after Hawaas Nagawoo had been incarcerated in Fiche for about six months.<sup>1183</sup>

Meanwhile, the time of the incorporation of Salale into the Kingdom of Shawa and the year of Darge's appointment as its governor were open to debate. For instance, Bairu Tafia claims that Menilek designated Darge as a governor of Salale and conferred on him one of the honorific titles, *dajjasmach*, in 1871.<sup>1184</sup> Likewise, Dereje discloses that the first church at Fiche, Saint George, was founded in 1871, in the year Darge subjugated the area.<sup>1185</sup> Nevertheless, as we have seen above, it took Darge some years to subjugate the inhabitants of the districts found to the west and south of Fiche as for instance, Solomon Taye rightly argues that the inhabitants of the Warraa Jaarsoo district, the most westerly district of Salale proper incorporated around 1878, that is almost seven years after Darge had established his seat at Fiche<sup>1186</sup>.

This being the case for the Salale proper, ostensibly the neighboring district of Darraa might have even been incorporated at later time and perhaps according to

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<sup>1183</sup> Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Salaalee", pp.64-65.

<sup>1184</sup> Bariu, "Some Aspects of Land Tenure and Taxation in Salaalee under Ras Darge.-1871-1900," *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol.12. No.2, July 1974. p.5.

<sup>1185</sup> Dereje, p.25.

<sup>1186</sup> Solomon Taye, "A History of Washa Mikael Church" (B. A. Thesis, History, Addis Ababa University, 1989), p.7.

Arnesen by about 1880.<sup>1187</sup> However, Wakene came up with more convincing conjecture and indicates that after Emperor Tewodros II invaded Shawa, apparently for the second time, in 1860 Asanu emerged as an undisputed ruler of Darara at the expense of Ali Maree, another well-known notable of the district. It is said that the assassination of Sayfu Sahla Sellase in 1860 tilted the balance of power in favour of Asanu Wadaj because Sayfu married a sister of Ali Maree, Wagaye Maree, and his death no doubt was a great loss for Ali Maree and his family. As a result, Asanu became the principal ruler of Darraa for about twelve years and his wife for three years and hence Darraa was subjugated by Darge Sahla Sellase by about 1874/75.<sup>1188</sup>

However, Darge's appointment as a governor of Salale was made public in 1877.<sup>1189</sup> It seems that it was delayed so as not to offend Mashasha Sayfu, who apparently claimed the region as his fief,<sup>1190</sup> perhaps based on the fact that his father had managed to control some lowland sections of Salale below the present day Fiche town and even was said to have reached as far as the town itself sometimes before his death in 1860. Perhaps he might have also claimed the locality by the dint of his descent on his paternal grandmother side as a successor of the Morat and Marhabete rulers, who commenced encroaching into this part of

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<sup>1187</sup> Arnesen, p.229.

<sup>1188</sup> Wakene, p. 22

<sup>1189</sup> Gabra Sellase, pp. 80-81. It says that Emperor Menilek appointed *Dajjach* Darge as governor of Marhabete and its environs on *Tahsas* 12, 1870 E.C.

<sup>1190</sup> Bairu, "Some Aspects," p.5.

the Tulama territory before the sub-provinces incorporation into the kingdom of Shawa during the time of Asfa Wassan. But by about 1876/7 Mashasha Sayfu rebelled and this relieved Menilek from fear and induced him to entrust the governorship of Salale to one of his loyal entourage and uncle formally by this time.<sup>1191</sup> Hence, from the above discussion we may discern that *Ras Darge* managed to incorporate most parts of Salale and Darra into the kingdom of Shawa by the end of 1870s or the beginning of 1880s. For instance as Italian traveller who was in Salale in 1880 reported that it was peaceful and well cultivated.<sup>1192</sup>

Be that as it may, it seems that all parts of the Salale proper were not incorporated into the kingdom of Shawa under the charge of *Ras Darge*, rather another leading general of Menilek, *Ras Gobana* had a stake in the incorporation of districts like Gumbichuu, Gullaallee and Oborii almost at the same time. In this regard, the chronicle of Gobana indicates that initially there was rivalry between Gobana and Darge over the district of Yayyaa Gullaallee (ፈት ግን በሰላሌ ድንበር በያያ ብዙ ሙሰናክል ነበር ቀረ).<sup>1193</sup>

<sup>1191</sup> *Ibid.*; Evgenia Sokolinskaia, "Sayfu Sahla Sellase," *Encycloperia Aethiopica* , Vol . IV, pp. 568-569.

<sup>1192</sup> G. Bianchi, *Alla terra dei Galla* ( Roma, 1881), p . 499 cited in Bairu, "Land Tenure in Salale," p. 4.

<sup>1193</sup> Bairu Tafia, "Three portraits - Sahafe Tezaz Gabra Sellase, Ato Asma Gyorgis and Ras Gobana Daci. Abba Tegu," *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. V. No.2, 1967. p. 146. see also Cerulli. p.88; IES MSS, 4614.

Meanwhile, by about 1878 the Italian traveller, Cecchi, who was in the region reported that Gobana and his followers established their garrisons around Mount Entoto with relatively a large number of armed forces comprising of about four to five thousand cavalry and six to seven thousand infantry equipped with firearms and spears.<sup>1194</sup> Hence, in the following section we shall see the roles Gobana played in the incorporation of these and other parts of the Tulama territory into the kingdom of Shawa.

### **Ras Gobana Dachi and the Incorporation of the Tulama into the Kingdom of Shawa**

At this juncture, we are cognizant of the fact that several generations of the Shawan rulers allying with the Tulama notables extended the Shawan sphere of influence to the south and west. Especially the renowned Abichu notables like Matakoo Borjaa, as we have seen, and Gobana Dachi, as we shall see, played a pivotal role in this regard. Perhaps the major difference between the two was that the relation between Matakoo Borjaa and Sahla Sellase lasted for a short period of time and later deteriorated and concluded with an ignominious defeat of the former, whereas Gobana remained the loyal general of Menilek for more than two

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<sup>1194</sup> Cecchi cited in Bairu Tafia, "Three Portraits," p. 146.

decades, until his sudden and mysterious death in 1889. Hence, it is imperative to shed some light on how the relations between Menilek and Gobana started before delving into the roles that Gobana played in the process of incorporation of the Tulama into the Shawan kingdom.

Gobana's relations with the kingdom of Shawa, as we have seen in the previous chapter, commenced during interregnum period perhaps in the late 1850s or early 1860s when he served as the lieutenant (*Aggafari*) of Bazzu Abbaa Dekker. But it is enigmatic that Gobana also came to establish relations with King Menilek soon after the latter's return to Shawa and was said to have been the 'master of ceremonies' when Menilek and Bezzabeh were reconciled at Qundi in September 1865.<sup>1195</sup> But we do have conflicting information on how the relations between Gobana and Menilek had commenced. According to Enrico Cerruli, Gobana was the son of 'king' of the Tulama but was compelled to work as a labourer on Menilek's farm after his father's death. However, during the feast of *masqal* when a traditional horse race festival was held, he excelled all the jouster. As a result Menilek, who was one of the spectators, was impressed and made Gobana his *ligaba*.<sup>1196</sup>

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<sup>1195</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 588-89; Bairu, "Three Portraits", p. 145.

<sup>1196</sup> Enrico Cerulli, "The Folk-Literature of the Galla" p. 71; There is no doubt that Gobana descended from one of the notable families of the Tulama Oromo see Bairu, 'Three Portraitsa', p. 145; Yates, "Ras Gobana", p. 33.

However, Cerulli’s version of the story seems highly unlikely since as we have seen in the previous chapter, even during the interregnum period Gobana came to assume the honorific title of *aggafari* and also married the daughter of *Ato Abboye*, one of the renowned Shawan notables. He was also not a minor when Menilek rose to power in 1865 perhaps he was born around 1821 and the death of his father might not induce him to be a labourer as Cerulli claims. Therefore, a person of such caliber cannot be a labourer on the plantation of Menilek. Moreover, Gobana was said to have been introduced to Menilek soon after the latter’s escape from Maqdala by his father-in-law *Ato Abboye* and the god father of Menilek, *Alaqa Hasetu* as the following excerpt from the presumed Gobana’s chronicle encapsulates.

...አለቃ ሐሴቱ አሉ”ይህ ጎበና ዳጪ ለንተ የተመረጠ ዉድ እቃህ ነዉ። እግዚአብሔር የሰጠህ ጠንካራ ሰዉ ነዉ። የታመነ ምሎ የማይከዳ ለወዳጅ ሙት ሰዉ ነዉ። ለጉብዝናዉም ምን ይነገራል አሁን ታየዋለህ ወደፊትህ ነዉ “ አልዋቸዉ። አጼ ምኒልክም ባለብዙ አሽከር ነዉ በምን እናሳድረ ምክሩኝ አሉ። ቆቅማሪ አቶ አበዬ ሕመምተኛ ነበሩና ከአለቃ ሐሴቱ ጋር መከሩና ... የኔን አገር ቅምብብትን ስጠዉ ብለዉ መከሩዋቸዉና በ15 ቀናቸዉ ቅምብብት የሸለቅነት ተሾሙ።<sup>1197</sup> ( *Alaqa Hassetu* said to King Menilek, “This is Gobana Dachi, a precious tool chosen for you. He is a strong man which God gives you. He is a dependable person who keeps a promise and loves his friends very much. No need to speak about his bravery as you will see soon.” Then King Menilek requested them to advise him what to give to Gobana as maintenance since he has many servants. Mr. Abboye, who was sick, deliberated with *Alaqa Hassetu* and advised the King to give to him *Kimbibit*, Mr Abboye’s fief. As a result Gobana was appointed as a governor of the locality within fifteen days.

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<sup>1197</sup> IES MSS 4614; Bairu, *Asma Gyorgjis andfd His Works* , pp. 668-69 on the other hand indicate that the priest who was based at Mitaq was *Alaqa ሰሱቱ* ( *Esatu*) not *Hassetu* perhaps both sources must have referred to the same individual. According to tradition the adjective ቆቅማሪ (literally who has mercy on partridge )signifies his compassionate acts .

It seems that initially the senior Shawan notables like *Dajjach Garmame*<sup>1198</sup> and *Dajjach Walda Gabriel*<sup>1199</sup> were unhappy when Menilek appointed Gobana as his lieutenant. Hence, they were quoted as saying,

ይህን ሻጉራ [ኦሮሞ] ተቆናጥ አይናገር መሾምስ ሾምኸው ማን ይሻርልህ” አልዋቸው። “ለጅሬ ለባ ደክር ያስቸገረ” ... ምን ይበጅ እንሻረው ቢልዋቸው ትላንት ሾማችሁ ዛሬ መሻር የት ይሆናል “አሽከሮችን ይዘህ ከ[ኦሮሞ] ተቃላቀል” ማለት ነውና ፊት ያቶ በዘብህን ዕርቅ እንጨርስ ተባለና በዚህ ቆየ። ያም ከነጥቅንጥቁ ካለቀ በኋላ ዳጃች ገርማሜና ደጃች ወልደገብርኤል አወጡ አወረዱና ለአጼ ምኒልክ አሉ የኸን [ኦሮሞ] አየነው አጋፋር ያርጉት ለ[ኦሮሞ]ውም ለአብቹና ለገላን ለድፍን [ኦሮሞ] ለጌታውም ይመክር ነበር አሉ። እኛም አመሉንና መላውን ሁሉ እናውቀዋለን አልዋቸውና መከሩ በሹመት ላይ ሹመት አጋፋር ሁን አልዋቸው። በዚህ ጊዜ አጋፋር ጎበና በጣም ተጨነቁ።  
.....<sup>1200</sup>

They said to him, “You have appointed this militant Oromo, please reprimand him and do not give him the chance to speak a lot. You have promoted him but who will help you to demote him.” They were bewildered and said that he even challenged Bezzabeh, [who was the renowned warrior] and contemplated to demote him but feared to do so because if they demote him, he will go to the Oromo country with his followers and challenge them. Then they decided to postpone this issue and decided to settle first their case with Bezzabeh. After they settled their scores with Bezzabeh, *Dajjach Garmame* and *Dajjach Walda Gabriel* deliberated on this issue and told King Menilek, we have watched this Oromo, make him your *Aggafari*, he has been consulting with the Oromo, the Galan, the Abichu and the whole Oromo as well as with his boss. Then [Menilek] told them we have known his behaviour and he is a renowned strategist and hence after this he conferred on him promotion after promotion and told him to be an *aggafari*. At this time *Aggafari Gobana* was troubled very much ...

By citing the late 1870s Italian traveller, Antonio Cecchi, Bairu maintains that when Gobana saw the universal acceptance that the young Menilek received in Shawa, he “came to Menilek with all his treasure and threw himself at his feet, as a result of which the sovereign received the treasure, praised him for his conduct

<sup>1198</sup> According Gabra Sellase, p. 72, *Dajjach Garmame* was appointed as Menilek’s regent of Shawa.

<sup>1199</sup> Gabra Sellase, p. 141 indicates that *Dajjach Walda Gabriel* was appointed as governor of Charchar and Ituu perhaps later on in 1880s.

<sup>1200</sup> IES MSS 4614

and gave him a high rank in his army.”<sup>1201</sup> Similarly, Gobana’s chronicle also indicates that Gobana and the Abichu notables were also in favour of establishing relations with Menilek soon after they heard his coronation as king of Shawa.<sup>1202</sup>

Although there is a grain of truth in Cecchi’s account and what is mentioned in Gobana’s chronicle, we should also underline that at this juncture, Menilek needed Gobana more than Gobana needed him. As we have seen, it was with the advice of the Shawan notables like *Ato Abboye*, *Alaqa Hassetu* or *Esetu*, *Dajjach Garmame* and others, Menilek appointed Gobana as his lieutenant. Moreover, the tradition has it that Menilek was advised to win Gobana to his side through nuptial relations so that he would control the Oromo through him.<sup>1203</sup> In the same token, *Sergew* also indicates that in order to strengthen his relations with Gobana, King Menilek arranged marriage for his daughter *Shawaraga* and Gobana’s son, *Wodajo*, albeit their marriage lasted for short period of time. Yet the following couplet is said to have been composed by Menilek in order to show his affection for Gobana.

Amharic

Gloss

ጎበና ጎበና ጎበና የኔ

Gobana Gobana Gobana my darling

<sup>1201</sup>A. Cecchi, *Da Zeila alle frontiere Del Caffa* (Roma, 1886), 1, 161 cited in Bairu, “Three portraits”, P. 145.

<sup>1202</sup>IES MSS, 4614 ; See also Yates, “ Invisible Actors,” p. 163 , footnote, 56 who indicates that ‘Menilek gave Gobana Many horses and mules as a friendship to endear the Oromo general’.

<sup>1203</sup>*Abbaa Gadaa* Babsaa Badhaasoo, Roobaa Bune, and Shuraa Badhaadhaa( Adaamaa, July 6, 2017)



የጦር ንጉሥ አንተ ያገር ንጉሥ እኔ።<sup>1204</sup>

You are a king of war and I am king of the country

Another well-known presumed chronicle of *Ras Gobana* authored perhaps by Nagada also indicates that at the outset king Menilek made Gobana his deputy *Aggafari* to *Dajjach Walda Gabriel*. But after a while *Dajjach Walda Gabriel* was demoted and assigned as the governor of Barakat, Washil and Karrayyuu. It was by this time that Gobana became the *aggafari* of Menilek.<sup>1205</sup> However, it is important to note that this is not the highest post that Gobana assumed. Rather by this time, according to Asma Gyorgis, Menilek gave the post of *abgaz* of Oromo formerly held by Bezzabeh to a certain Abbaa Walloo, who in turn was replaced by a certain *Ato Nadaw*.<sup>1206</sup> But it seems that soon Gobana was nominated to be *abagaz* because at that time his chronicle indicates የጦር አለቃ አበጋዝነቱን የሚይዝ የሚችል ሰው ጠፋ ታጣ ጎበዛዝት ሐያላን ስንኳ ቢኖሩ ድፍረት እንጅ የጦር መላና ...በዙ ዘዴ ስላለበት... አጋፋር ጎበና ለአበጋዝነት ታጩ.<sup>1207</sup> (*Aggafari* Gobana was nominated to be war leader or *abagaz*. He was nominated because at that time although there were ingenious and influential men but no one was comparable to Gobana in terms of military tactic and strategy).

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<sup>1204</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 186; Dechass, *Gobana*, p. 234. However, it was said to have been a tactical move employed by astute king of Shawa in order to distance Gobana from politics. It is said that after mid 1880s some people started to question as to who was the King of Shawa , namely Menilek or Gobana in view of the territories controlled and pacified by the latter. Apparently almost all of the country of Macha Oromo and most of the Tulama country except some parts of Salale were incorporated into the Kingdom of Shawa by *Ras Gobana* and his lieutenants like his son-in-law Birruu Nagawoo among others.

<sup>1205</sup> Nagada, “Ya *Ras Gobana Tarik*”, P. 3.

<sup>1206</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 590-91; Bairu, “Land Tenure in Salale”, p. 4.

<sup>1207</sup> IES MSS 4614.

Moreover, the Shawan aristocracy understood that it was difficult, if not impossible, to conquer and pacify the vast Oromo territory unless they made alliance and/or collaborated with the Oromo notables in general and appointed an Oromo speaking *agafari* who would administrator the dependent Oromo territories in particular. In this regard, one of the then Menilek's right hand man, Dajjach Garmame quoted as saying,

... የኦሮሞ አፍ የማያወቅ አጋፋሪ አለን አይባልም። እኛ ጥቅቶች ነን ስንት ባለባት እየመጣ በስማ በለዉ ሲያነጋግሩኝ ተቸግሬአለሁ። ግዛታችንን ለማስፋት የምናስበዉ ወደ ኦሮሞ ቤት ነዉ።..... ጎበና ይሁን ብለዉ ተናገሩ። ነገሩም በዚህ ተቆርጦ ጎበና ተሾሙ። በእዉነትም የኦሮሞ ቤት ሁሉ ደስ አለዉ። ባለባቶችም እየመጡ ንጉሡን መረቁ።<sup>1208</sup>

An *agafari* who do not speak Afaan Oromo is of no use. We are minority, when the Oromo notables come to the court; I have been tired off using translators. We want to expand our territory towards the Oromo country.... Gobana was proposed to be an *agafari* [on the meeting held by the Shawan aristocracy]. As a result Gobana became *agafari*. The Oromo became very happy. The Oromo notables came and thanked the king [Menilek].

From the above passage we may discern that the Shawan aristocracy clearly understood the importance of the support and backing of the Oromo notables. Moreover the Oromo language was widely used in the court along with Amharic and for that matter even some of the high ranking Shawan aristocracies including some of the kings like Sahla Sellase were fluent speakers of Afaan Oromo as we have seen elsewhere. It is also fascinating that the Shawan aristocracy also

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<sup>1208</sup> Qagnazmach Hayla Zalaqqa, Ya Dajjazmach Garmame Heywot Tarik, 1937, IES MS 2478; See also see also Dechasa Abebe, *Gobana: Watadarawena poetikawi Hiwot (1810-1881 E.C) Gobena: A Military and Political Life* ( Los Angeles: Tsehay Publishers, 2020), pp.74-75.

unequivocally realized that since the Oromo were numerous making alliances with their notables were imperative so as to materize their project.

So far we have tried to shed some light on the genesis of relations between Gobana and Menilek. However, henceforth we shall focus on the roles the former played in the incorporation of the Shawan Oromo ostensibly starting from late 1860s.<sup>1209</sup> In this regard, Sergew indicates that Gobana's initial role in the incorporation of mainly the neighbouring Oromo into the Kingdom of Shawa took place in the decade that ranged from 1860 up to 1870 E.C ( 1867/68-1875/76 GC). The territories that were incorporated under the leadership of Gobana stretched up to the Gudar valley of course including areas located on both banks of the Mugar and Awash rivers. Perhaps by this time apart from the Tulama, the neighboring eastern Macha Oromo (commonly known as Sadeen Liibaan, the three Liban, namely Ammayyaa, Kuttaayee and Waliisoo) who inhabited west and South west Shawa were also incorporated.<sup>1210</sup>

Perhaps Gobana initially became popular among the Shawan aristocracy following his irreplaceable role in thwarting the upsurge of the Tulama under the

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<sup>1209</sup> Darkwah, p. 98. Like most part of the Tulama Oromo territory the conquest of the neighbouring Macha Oromo territory was almost exclusively the work of Gobana. It is said that after Gobana conquered the Macha Oromo who inhabited the areas enclosed by the Muger and the source of the Awash and the Guder rivers in the east and the west respectively between 1868 and 1878. Therefore, most parts of the Tulama Oromo might have been conquered by Gobana at least by early 1870s.

<sup>1210</sup> Sergew, *Dagmawi Menilek*, p. 186.

leadership of the famous notable known as Akkaa Buttaa, a notable of Oborii and Galan subgroups of the Tulama. As to the cause of the uprising of Akkaa Buttaa, Gobana’s chronicle indicates that when King Menilek was campaigning to Wallo perhaps starting from 1867/68, he told his lieutenant to order the Abichu , Galan, Oborii and Jidda Oromo who were found north of the Siblu river to campaign to Wallo . But it seems that the Oromo notables made a meeting (ለለባ አሉ ማለት አዋጅ አረጉ) and agreed to defy the order. When Menilek heard this, he requested them to send him at least their horses and mules. The Oromo notables again summoned in order to discuss this issue and it is said that they had deliberated for two days and on the third day, Akkaa Buttaa, vented his rage mounting his horse “Akkaa Buttaa firdii hin beekku gombisaa maale (Akkaa Buttaa does not know compromise but fighting with his horse) and he left with his servants singing ሆኔ (hoo hee). Then he attempted to organize a pan Oromo resistance against the Shawan kingdom pleading for help to his Oromo kins who were found as far as Macha , Chaboo and Arsi. It is said that he managed to burn Angolala, the capital of the great King, Sahla Sellase (ከዚህ በኋላ አካ ቡታ ወደ [አሮሞ] አገሮች አወራጆች እስከ ሜጫ ጫቦ አሩስ የራቀን በማሊማ የቀረበን በፈረስ መላላክ አረገና ተነሣ... የትልቅ ንጉሥ ከተማ አንጎላላን አቃጠለ.<sup>1211</sup>

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<sup>1211</sup> IES MSS 4614, however it seems that the Oromo who were found in far off areas , for instance around the Awash river did not respond properly; See Gabra Sellase , p. 68 ; Darkawah, p. 88, who indicates that King Menilek’s campaign to Wallo started in 1868; Henry Blanc , *A Narrative of Captivity in Abyssinia With Some Account of the Late Emperor Theodore , His Country and People*( London: F. Cass, 1970), PP. 269-71 indicates that Menilek’s initial campaign to Wallo took place in 1867.

Almost a similar story has also been recorded by Gobana's more known chronicler. It indicates that when king Menilek made campaign to Wallo, an Oromo notable known as Akkaa Buttaa rose against the kingdom of Shawa uniting the people who inhabited different sub-provinces and 'had burnt and galloped over the locality up to Angolala'. It seems that the king feared that he would also burn his newly founded town of Liche. Hence, Menilek contemplated to order his *Abagaz Dajjach* Nadew to preempt Akkaa Buttaa. But his *abagaz*, who is said to have been a well experience person advised king Menilek stating that if they tried to confront Akkaa Buttaa, the neighbouring Oromo would form a united front against them, as a result he demanded the king to summon the Shawan aristocracy to deliberate on this issue. It seems that after they deliberated on it they agreed to send Gobana to Akkaa Buttaa hoping that 'Jirruu, Wayyuu, Abdallaa, Wagda will help him up to Warana and Abichu Galan will not fight against him'.<sup>1212</sup> Hence, it was at this juncture that perhaps for the first time during the time of Menilek, his future general, Gobana came to play indispensable role in pacifying the Oromo upsurge against the kingdom of Shawa. In this regard, Bryan James Yates indicates, "Gobäna as an Oromo is the preferred candidate, because he would divide Oromo strength."<sup>1213</sup> Similarly Asma Gyorgis also notes that Menilek appointed Gobana over Oromo and made the Oromo fight among themselves እስ [እርስ] በሱ [በርሱ] ሥጋ በኩብት ይጠብሱ እንደሚሉ (As the saying goes:

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<sup>1212</sup> Nagada, p. 3; Bairu, "Land Tenure in Salale,"p. 4.

<sup>1213</sup> Yates, "Gobana", p. 35.

Making them fight one another, [is like] frying beef in the dry dung).<sup>1214</sup> However, the above Yates and Asma Gyorgis's conjectures are not convincing. Perhaps it was not Gobana rather it was Sahla Sellase who employed the divide and rule tactic to weaken the Oromo as we have seen earlier in the thesis in conjunction to conflict between the Abichu and Galan. Rather it seems that Gobana tried to unite the Oromo and even tried to form what is known as the Tulama Confederacy.

The anonymous author of another chronicle of Gobana recorded a slightly different version of this story and states that

አፄ ምኒልክ ወሎ ወረይሎ ነበሩና ትልቅ ስጋት ሆነ። በጅሩ ወደ ሸዋ ለመመለስ ችግር ሆነ። በመንዝ እንመለስ ለማለት ታሰቦ ይልቁንም ወሎ ደግሞ አብሮ ይነሣብናል የሚል ስጋት ገባቸዋል። ምክር አጠረ። አጋፋር ጎበናን ጠርተው ለብቻ በምስጢር ለዚህ ነገር ምን ይበጃል ብለው ጠየቁ አፄ ምኒልክ። አጋፋር ጎበናንም አይስጉ ሰውየው ወዳጄ ነው እኔን ብቻ ይላኩኝ አስታርቀዋለሁ። እርስዎም በኃላ እምብ ብለው እርቁን በየምክንያት አያፍርሡብኝ ዎበርና ጅዳን የአባቱን አገር አይንኩቡት። የዓመት ግብርዎን ፈረስ ሰንጋ ከመቀበል በቀር .... እሱባቸው ሲመጡም በዚህ በጅሩ መንገድ ይምጡ እኔ እልክበታለሁ አልዋቸው። እኚ መልካም ምን ጦር ልጨምርልህ ብልዋቸው እኔው ከአሽከሮቼ ጋራ እበቃለሁ ነገሩ ወጊያ አይደለ በሐዩ በቦኩ በሉብ ነውና ብለው በምስጢር ተናግረው ወጡ።<sup>1215</sup>

When King Menilek was at Warra Iluu, there was apprehension in his camp. Returning to Shawa through Jirru became dangerous. They wanted to return through Manz but they feared that the Wallo Oromo would also join the uprising. They were bewildered. King Menilek conferred this issue with Gobana clandestinely. Then Gobana assured the King, 'there is no need to worry a man is my friend,' rather he requested the king, 'send me to the man I would reconcile him to you'. Gobana also warned Menilek not to reject reconciling with Akkaa Buttaa and also requested him to give to Akkaa Buttaa Oborii and Jiddaa, his forefathers' county and do not interfere in his internal affairs except receiving annual tribute in horse and ox ....When you return to Shawa come through Jirruu, I will send message to him. Then Menilek appreciated Gobana's idea and told him to give him additional soldiers. Then Gobana in turn told him, there is no need for additional troops rather he and his soldiers are enough, the issue is not war rather

<sup>1214</sup> Bairu, Asma Gyorgis and His Work, pp, 482-85.

<sup>1215</sup> IES MSS 4614.

it is by *Hayyuu*, *Bokkuu* and *Luba* [ through indigenous Oromo conflict reconciliation mechanisms]

Therefore, from the above excerpts we may discern that right from the outset Gobana came to play quintessential role in weathering the Oromo upsurge against the young Menilek led by Akkaa Buttaa. It is fascinating that Akkaa Buttaa, a man who was perhaps able to galvanize a pan Tulama uprising against the kingdom of Shawa and perhaps burnt the capital of Menilek's grandfather, Angolala was controlled by Gobana who apparently invoked the Oromo tradition in order to reconcile Akkaa Buttaa and Menilek. But there is a slight difference between the two excerpts pertaining to how and why Gobana decided to quell the uprising of Akkaa Buttaa. The first excerpt indicates that Menilek was urged by the Shawan aristocracy whereas the latter one encapsulates that Gobana himself took initiative following his clandestine discussion with king Menilek.

As he promised to king Menilek, Gobana was said to have been conferred with Akkaa Buttaa and persuaded him to stop resisting Menilek and told him that if he stopped resisting Menilek, he would only be requested to pay annual tribute in horse and ox and continue to rule Oborri and Jiddaa like his forefathers. But he also informed him that he should pay to Menilek as reparation one thousand oxen, five hundred cows, one hundred horses and fifteen mules among others for burning his grandfather's house at Angolala. But initially this offended Akkaa Buttaa who angrily told Gobana ለኔ አልመጣህም መጣህብኝ እንጂ (You came not to help but to harm me). Gobana, however, requested Akkaa Buttaa for patience

and informed him that this did not mean that he would pay his own cattle and horses and mules rather he informed him that they would make campaign together against the Macha, Ada'aa and Mulo and plunder their cattle and pay reparation to Menilek.<sup>1216</sup> It seems that Gobana used similar mechanism in order to win to his side the Oromo notables in Shawa by allowing them to keep their lands and just pay annual tribute to King Menilek.<sup>1217</sup>

But contrary to the above story, another chronicler of Gobana indicates that when Akkaa Buttaa rebelled, Gobana made campaigns against him and defeated him and also many people who inhabited an area that stretched from Jirru up to Gurane/ Dabra Libanos were annihilated and their homes were burnt. Initially Akkaa Buttaa refused to submit and fled to other area, however later on he was reconciled with Gobana through a mediator.<sup>1218</sup> Although we have a slightly different story pertaining to Gobana's role in quelling the uprising of the famous Oromo notable known as Akkaa Buttaa, there is no shadow of doubt that he had played irreplaceable role in this endeavour either through negotiation or by warfare.

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<sup>1216</sup> IES MSS 4614; See also Yates "Gobana," p. 35 indicates that Gobana managed "to obtain some peaceful Submissions by allowing many Oromo *balabats* (landowners) to keep theirlands and just pay tribute to Menilek".

<sup>1217</sup> Yates, "Gobana,"P. 35.

<sup>1218</sup> Nagada , p. 3; Bairu, " Land Tenure", p. 4



Therefore, the Tulama *gosa* who inhabited on the then margins of the heartland of the kingdom especially those who inhabited areas like Jirruu and on the banks of the Chacha river were the first to be subjugated after the suppression of the uprising of Akkaa Buttaa. Meanwhile, as we have seen in the previous section, Gobana was one of the two generals of King Menilek who played indispensable roles in the incorporation of the Tulama into the kingdom of Shawa. Gobana's chronicle, therefore, succinctly encapsulates the Tulama territories subjugated by the kingdom of Shawa under his leadership as follows:

ወደ ግምባር ያለውን አገር ኝሀን ገላን ወበረን ጊዳን እስከ ሰላሌ ድረስ ... ጎርፎን ያያ ጉላሌን በፍጥነት አስገብሩ ይህ ሲቢሉ ከሚባለው ወንዝ በላይ ነው። ሁለተኛ ግምብቹን ሙሉን አደአ በርጋን ሜታ በዲን መነአብቹን ጉላሌ ገጃን በቸን የነቢራቱን ... እሺ ያለው በፍቃድ ገበረ እምቢ ያለውን በጦርነት እየወጉ አስገብሩ። ሜታ ሆለታንም የነ ያኢ ጋለዳስን የነጭን አንጋሬ ሰክሊን አገር በጦርነት እየወጉ አስገብሩ።<sup>1219</sup>

*The countries found on the front, Nyaa, Galan, Oborii, Jiddaa, up to Salale ... Gorfoo Yayyaa Gullaallee became tributary very soon; this is above the Siblu river. Next Gumbichuu, Mulo, Ada'a Bargaa, Meettaa, Badii, Mana Abichu, Gullaallee, Gejjaa, and Bachoo of Birraatuu were ... those who submitted peacefully became tributary voluntarily; those who refused to submit became tributary by warfare. Mettaa, Holaataa the country of Yaa'ii Galdasii and Caangaree Sokiilee became tributary by warfare.*

From the above quotation, we may discern that most of the Tulama *gosa* were incorporated into the Kingdom of Shawa under the leadership of Gobana either through diplomatic manoeuvring or by gun power. It is said that the areas incorporated by Gobana were so vast and stretched as far as the source of the Awash river and the people of Shawa at that time used the following Amharic

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<sup>1219</sup>Nagada, p. 3.

phraseology to indicate the extent of Gobana’s territorial expansion: አቶ ጎበና እምድር ዳርቻ ደረሱ (Mr. Gobana has reached the margin of the earth). Moreover, it is said that the Shawan aristocracy including the king were pleased by the deeds of Gobana Dachi and the following Amharic song was also said to have been composed in order to praise his achievements and express their affection for him.

Amharic	Gloss
ፈረሱ ደስታ በቅሎዉ አረጋሽ	His horse is named Dasta and his mule Aregash
አሳመኖት ገባ መጫን እስከ አዋሽ <sup>1220</sup>	He has subdued Macha up to the Awash River
የነማምዬ አባት የነብርቅነሽ:: <sup>1221</sup>	The father of Mamyé and Berknash

Meanwhile, Gobana success in warfare might have been manifested by his meticulous preparations before each and every military expedition. His chronicler notes that he gathered enough information pertaining to the areas where he contemplated to make campaigns. It is fascinating that in order to gather information he employed spies who were disguised as Warjih traders, *malima* (Oromo pilgrims, who had the privilege to travel from one locality to another without incurring danger) and in some cases he used rival notables to spy on each other. Therefore, in such a way he got pertinent information pertaining to , for instance, the roads that led to the area, about a major river found in that locality, whether the area was convenient for encampment, about the notables or

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<sup>1220</sup> Actually the source of the Awash river is traditionally considered as a boundary between the Tulama and Macha Oromo and it should rather be Tulama up to Awash since the Awash river in this direction marks the eastern border of Macha .

<sup>1221</sup> Nagada , p. 4 see also Heruy , *Biography*, p. 96 where almost similarly verse is recorded.

wealthy individuals found in that locality and so on. After this they approach the notable of the locality and persuade him by either giving him money or by lobbying him that they would make him *angafa* (senior) and his children would not be slaves and so on.<sup>1222</sup>

Perhaps one of the Tulama notables who submitted to Gobana in this way was Birraatuu Goolee of Meettaa. It is fascinating that Birraatuu gave his son, Garasuu, to Gobana and the he became his godfather. The Chronicle explicates ገረሁ ቢራቱን ክርስትና አንስተህ ልጅ አድርገው ብሎ ሰጥቶ ወስዶ ክርስትና አንስቶ ወልደሚካኤል ተብሎ እንደ ልጆቻቸው ተምሮ .... ፊታውራሪ ወልደሚካኤል ብለው ተሹሞ በአድዋ ጦርነት ሞተ<sup>1223</sup>:: ([Gobana] became Garasuu Birraatuu's godfather and the latter was renamed Walda Mikael and educated like the sons of Gobana ... later he was invested with title of *fitawurari* and died during the battle of Adwa).Meanwhile, oral tradition has it that Birraatuu Goolee was persuaded by Birruu Nagawoo (son-in-law of Gobana) to submit to Gobana.<sup>1224</sup>

It seems that the deeds of Birraatuu were abhorred by the local people including his close friends. The chronicle contains how one of Birraatuu's close friends ridiculed him for his ignominious submission to Gobana.

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<sup>1222</sup> IES MSS 4614

<sup>1223</sup> IES MSS 4614

<sup>1224</sup> Informant: Alemayehu Hayle (Addis Ababa, July 4, 2017).

ኤ ያቢራቱ ጎሌ ጋምናጃ ጎታጃ ካንስንጂዳን ዱጋዳ ሞ ዳራ? Is it true that people say that you, Birraatuu Goolee, is wise and hero? Birraatuu responded, ጋሩ አና ቢቲ ናን ጄቲ (Yes, people characterize me that). Then his friend told him unpalatable fact, ሲቲ ፋካቴ ማሌ ሂኒ ሰባኒ (they were insincere).

Then when Birraatuu enquired him what evidence he had for this, he continued telling him in Afaan Oromo how Gobana and his entourages looked down on him: ‘ኢሊማኬ ናኬንቴ ሰዓፍ ፋርዳኬ ስራ ፋዴ ካናፍ ላቹ ሂንቃብዱ ሲንጂዱ which meant literally since you gave me your son, cattle and horses, you are not both wise and hero or you do own both”. Moreover, the chronicle sums up by underling the blunder committed by Birraatuu as follows:

ጎበዘ በሆንህ ሜጫን ጨቦን ጨምረህ አንድ ሆናችሁ ትወጉኝ ነበር። ብልህም ብትሆን እነሁን ለቀህ ልጅህን እንደሰጠኸኝ ለኔ ሆንህ ውስጥ ቁጥራቸውን ጎሮቦትህ ነዉና ታዉቀዋለህና ከፈረስህ ከከብትህ ሳትዘረፍ የጨቦ እርስት ለአንተም ለልጅህም ነበር ። ስለዚህ ጎበዝም ብልህም አይደለህም። ሁለቱም የለህም ያልሁህ ይህ ነዉ አሉ ማለት ነዉና።<sup>1225</sup>(If you were astute you would ally with Macha and Chaboo and resist me. If you were wise, you would ally with me and fight against them and the resource of Chaboo would be at the disposal of you and your son and we would not have plundered your horse and cattle).

Apparently after Gobana subjugated the Tulama, it was the turn of the neighbouring Macha Oromo often known as the Sadeen Liibaan (the three Liban), namely Ammaayyaa, Kuttaayee and Walisoo, who are found in the present-day west and southwest Shawa. Almost they were incorporated immediately after the incorporation of the Tulama or even overlapping campaigns were made against them. It seems that when they were attacked by Gobana, they regretted for not

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<sup>1225</sup> IES MS 4614

responding to the request of Akkaa Buttaa' the aforementioned Tulama notable who initially attempted to defy the hegemony of the Kingdom of Shawa. The following excerpt taken from Gobana's chronicle unequivocally explicate this issue:

*ከዚህ ቀደም የገላን አንጋፋ ጅዳ የዎበር ባላባት የአንጋፋ ወገን አካቡታ የሚባል አንድ እንሁን አማራን እናባር ብሎ ቢልክ ... ነገሩን አቅላችሁ ሳይዋጥላት ቀረ። እሱም ነገራችንን አይቷልና ብልህ ገምና ነዉና ዛሬ ከጎበና ዳጩ ጋራ ሆኖ ይወጋናል። እስኪ እንመልከት ከጩጩ በታች ድፍን ገላን አዋሽ ከዎዳ ናቢ ጩጩ የሚሰበሰቡ እኛን ሺህ ጊዜ የሚበልጥ ከአሩሲ እንኳን ግጥም የለን ከግቤ ማዶ አይመጣልን...ላሩሲ እንኳን ለመጋጠም መሃሉ ዉራጌ የነሁ ነዉ። ሆነም ቀረ ላሩሲ ጩፈና ለአዳ ናቢ ጩጩ ልከን ተስማምተን ለማሊሞች አሰታዉቀን ለጉባኤዎች ላላባ ነግረዉ በዚህ ነገር ከልፀናን ከጎበና ዳጩ እግር አላመለጥንም በከንቱ ህግ እንመረምራለን ይልቅ ያማራን ህግ እንደ አካ ቡታ እናጥና አለ። ሁሉም ባንድነት ኤ ዱጋ ኤ ዱጋ አ ቡልቱ ላጳት ሁብና አዎን መልካም መልካም ልብ አድርገን እናስተዉላለን ተባለ።<sup>1226</sup>*

*Sometimes ago when a notable of the Jiddaa Oborii of Galan known as Akkaa Buttaa requested us to form a united front and resist the Amhara ... you undermined his plea and as a result he was offended. He had lost hope on us and he is astute and is nowadays attacking us in collaboration with Gobana Dachi. Imagine all the Galan Oromo who inhabit the area south of the Chacha river and who assemble at Odaa Nabii and who are thousands times numerous than us, Arsi and those who are found on the other side of the Gibe river do not come and help us, even to form a united front with Arsi it is impossible since the Gurage who are found between Arsi and us are theirs. Anyway we have to appeal to the Arsi and Odaa Nabii assemblies, informing the Malimas and let them make lalaba to the assemblies, otherwise no one saves us from the hands of Gobana Dachi. He told them rather than wasting our time examining laws, let's study the Amhara custom like Akkaa Buttaa. The assembly unanimously approved his speech saying it is true and let's take time and think over it,*

From the passage we may grasp that the Macha Oromo perhaps to be specific, the Waliso/ Chaboo did not respond to the plea of Akkaa Buttaa, when he attempted to form a pan Oromo coalition against the young Menilek, perhaps as

early as 1867, two years after his escape from Maqdala. We may also comprehend that the Chaboo Oromo were invaded by the force of Gobana after most of the Tulama, if not all, and perhaps the northern Gurage were also subjugated by Gobana and his Oromo allies including Akkaa Buttaa himself. Moreover, it indicates the Chaboo Oromo in turn attempted to form a united front against Gobana and his entourage and had been contemplating to plea for help to the assembly of the Arsi and the Tulama.

It is interesting that in line with the above passage, the oral tradition collected by Enrico Cerulli few decades after the subjugation of the Oromo also indicates that Gobana was very much feared among the Oromo and perhaps he dealt ruthlessly with those who resisted him.

Yaa sorressa koruma korri	O rich, be proud
Yaa hiyyessa bohuma bohii	O poor shed your tears
Qabbanessa Daaccii	The cold son of Dachi
Goobana Farda qilleenssa	Gobana whose horse is the wind
Innumtu dhufaa wal nuqixxeessa	No doubt will make us all equals. <sup>1227</sup>

The last line of the above couplets literally means that if they continued to resist, the pitiless Gobana would eliminate them. Oral tradition also has it that Gobana treated excessively a certain notable known as Illaansoo Dummessaa, in the

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<sup>1227</sup>Cerulli, *Folk-Literature*, PP. 73, 82–86; Dechasa, *Gobana*, p. 128. It seems that Gobana dealt ruthlessly with his opponents after the death of his confidant and son-in-law Birruu Nagawoo in the hands of the Chaboo Oromo.

present-day west Shawa perhaps around the town of Ginchii. It is said that after Gobana defeated Illansoo and his entourage, he ordered them to make a fence and imprisoned them there so that they were obliged to stay in the blistering heat and cold weather in the day and at night respectively. As a result, it is said that Illaanso Dummessaa articulated their helplessness as follows:

Afaan Oromo	Gloss
Baraa Goobana Daaccii	During the time of Gobana Dachi
Firii nama hin butaatuu	Relatives do not help you
Beekkaan nama hin dubbatuu	The wise man does not speak for you
Yaa cuufanaa balbalaa	Oh a door of entrance
Maali dubbini akkanaa? <sup>1228</sup>	What kind of challenge we have faced?

In addition to Illaansoo Dummessaa there were also well known Tulama notables like Caangaree Sookiilee of Dhaamootuu, Yaa'ii Galdasiis and Buttaa Boxoraa of Subbaa, in the areas not far from the present-day Addis Ababa, who initially resisted Gobana's encroachment towards their domains as we shall see in the following chapter.

Moreover, it seems that Gobana also encountered resistance in the locality inhabited by the southern Tulama splinter group known as Saddeen Soddo as well as Southern Bachoo. Tradition has it that the Soddo Oromo resisted the

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<sup>1228</sup> Informants: Hayla Maryam Araarsaa and Birruu ( Sabbataa July 1, 2017)

Shawans ' encroachment on their territory for about four to five years. But they accepted the suzerainty of the Shawans after the Shawans took a notable Soddoo known as Turee Galatee to Ankobar, where he is said to have b stayed for about six months. During his stay at Ankobar, Turee was said to have been baptized and learnt Amharic and when he returned to Soddoo he persuaded the Soddoo Oromo to accept the overlordship of Gobana.<sup>1229</sup>

So far, in the chapter, we have attempted to explore how Menilek's two foremost generals, Darge and Gobana, played a pivotal role in the incorporation of most of the Tulama into the kingdom of Shawa. However, there were Tulama inhabited territories where these generals played little or no role during their incorporations. In this respect, Gobana's chronicle indicates that the Shawan aristocracy by the request of Gobana including Menilek himself agreed to make territorial campaigns in different directions as follows:

በበረከት ጨርጮር ምሥራቁን ሁሉ ለዳጃች ወልደ ገብርኤል... ልዑል እራስ ዳርጌ ጃርሶ እስከ አባይ ሙገር ... አርሲን በባሌ በምሥራቁ ክፍል ... ደጃች ገርማሜ ግራ መሬትን ውራጌን ይዘዉ እስከ ቦረና ... ምዕራቡ ከሶዶ ከዉራጌ በመለስ ከዚህ ከሙገር በመለስ ደጃች ጉብና እቻሉ ድረስ አሉና እኔ ግን ወሎን አቀናለዉ አሉ:::<sup>1230</sup> ( Hence King Menilek allocated the direction of Barakat up to Charchar, all the east to Dajjach Walda Gabrel; Jarso up to Abbay and Mugar confluence ...Arsi and Bale in the eastern direction to Prince Ras Darge; the territory on the left including Gurage up to Borana to Dajjach Garmame; in the west up to but not including Soddoo Gurage, from here up to Muger to Dajjach Gobana. But he indicated that "I would make a campaign to Wallo).

<sup>1229</sup> Informants: Birruu (July 1, 2017, Sabbataa) Dubee Buttaa (June 29, 2017, Sabbataa).  
<sup>1230</sup> IES MSS 4614.



Perhaps the reason why Menilek chose to campaign to Wallo was that his ambition of becoming king of Kings was not thwarted. It seems that Menilek started to participate personally in the campaigns made in the south especially after he was compelled by Emperor Yohannes IV to recognize him as his overlord following the Council of Liche. He also knew the province and also came to establish amicable relations with some of the hereditary rulers of Wallo like Warqituu who assisted him when he escaped from Maqdala.

From the above passage, one may deduce that one of the Tulama inhabited localities where Gobana and Darge did not make a campaign was around some parts of east Shawa, especially around the present-day Adama district. It is said that Dajjach Garmame, one of the most prominent courtiers in Shawa during the times of Hayla Malakot and Menilek, played a pivotal role in the incorporation of this locality<sup>1231</sup> According to Bairu, Dajjach Garmame's connection with east Shawa even predates the reign of King Menilek. A fabulous tradition which connects Dajjach Garmame to the region was recorded by Bairu as follows:

*He [Garmame] began his career as a servant of Haylä-Mäläkot, while Sahlä-Sellasé was still alive. On the death of the latter, the [Oromo] of Shoa rebelled and this was perhaps the first time that Gârmamé had the opportunity to play a major role both at the court and in the field. It is said that he advised the young king not to lead a military expedition himself, but if he was charged with the task he (Gârmamé) himself would successfully accomplish his mission. And indeed, so it happened. Ato Gârmamé, as he was then known, instructed one of his servants*

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<sup>1231</sup> Informants: *Abbaa Gadaa* Babsaa Badhaaso, , Lammaa Tumsaa, Bokonaa Cuqaalaa and Roobaa Bune ( Adaamaa, July 6, 2017); Bairu Tafla, " Four Ethiopian Biographies: Däjjazmač Gârmamé, Däjjazmač Gäbrä-Egzi'abehér Moroda, Däjjazmač Balča and Kântiba Gäbru Dästa" , *Journal of Ethiopian Studiers*, Vol. 7 , No. 2 ( July 1969), p. 1.

*who spoke [Afaan Oromo] fluently to go to the [Oromo] chiefs in at least three different regions and to give them" the message of God". The disguised servant announced to the [Oromo] chiefs that he was sent by God to tell them that if the Christian King marched into their regions, they should not touch him lest a drop of his blood burnt their land. A few days later, Gârmamé led a military expedition and met with little resistance from the [Oromo]. He marched as far as Qäcäma (Nazrét) and made his seat at Däbbä Gojjo (Täbba Gojjo). He governed the region of the Awash Valley from this seat till his death with the exception of a few years' break during the reign of Asé Téwodros.<sup>1232</sup>*

Like their Torban Oboo counterparts, the Jiille Oromo, who were found in Adama and the neighbouring districts of Dugda and Bora seems to have been incorporated peacefully into the Kingdom of Shawa in the 1870s. But tradition has it that soon after their incorporation, the Masqan and Maraqqo notable known as Shan Warragee encroached upon the Jiillee Oromo territory, especially on the territory of Goona. Nevertheless, the Goona Oromo force led by Qufa Qabato defeated Shan Warragee's force and apparently chased them away from their territory. Moreover, motivated by their easy victory over the force of Shan Warragee, the Goona Oromo revolted against their Shawan overlords.<sup>1233</sup> Perhaps it was in order to quell the Goona uprising that King Menilek ordered Ras Mikael Ali of Warra Himano to make campaigns in this locality. In this regard, Gabra Sellase notes that አጼ ምኒልክም የወሎን ጦር ራስ ሚካኤልን አዘዉ ... ደምበል ዘምተዉ የዚያን የባህሩን ዳር ሁሉ መቱት<sup>1234</sup> (King Menilek ordered the commander of the Wallo force Ras Mikael... they campaigned to Dambal and

<sup>1232</sup> Bairu, "Four Ethiopian Biographies," p. 3.

<sup>1233</sup> Naol, pp. 32-38.

<sup>1234</sup> Gabra Seallse, p. 99.

attacked the coastal areas of Lake Zway). Apparently, the northern and western shore of the lake has been inhabited by the Jiillee.

As one expects, the Shawans were able to put under control the Goona uprising. Tradition has it that the Shawans annihilated the Jiillee Oromo in general and the Goona in particular, burning their hats and looting tens of thousands of their cattle. As a result, the Goona Oromo were compelled to take refuge among other Jiillee Oromo subgroups as well as among the Zay community, who inhabited the islands found in the Lake Dambal, Zway. This incident has been recounted among the Jiillee Oromo as *Bara badii Goona* (which means the era of the annihilation of the Goona).<sup>1235</sup>

Meanwhile, of the Tulama inhabited territories, the one which was not incorporated into the Kingdom of Shawa during the period under discussion was the Borana sub-province of Wallo inhabited by the northern Tulama splinter group. Rather, by dint of its geographical location, it has been influenced by developments in northern Ethiopia, in general, and Wallo in particular. For instance, unlike the Tulama territories located to the south of the kingdom of Shawa, Emperor Tewodros made campaigns here when he was striving to create a unified empire state. It is said that at that time, the renowned notable of Borana,

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<sup>1235</sup>Naol, pp. 32-38.

Ali Wadaje resisted Tewodros. However, he was defeated and imprisoned at Maqdala along with other Wallo notables, where he was said to have been severely beaten up which resulted in the damage to his kidney. It seems that Ali died of the torture soon after he was released from prison and buried near Kalala town, the place which has been serving as the rendezvous for the local community to commemorate their ancestral leaders, including Ali Wodaje<sup>1236</sup>



Tomb of Ali Wadaje under the shade of big tree, photo taken by Yemiamrew, p. 97.

Ali Wadaje was said to have been succeeded by his son, Omeru, who was said to have been instrumental in the expansion of the use of the Amharic language in Borana. It is said that Omeru was obliged by Emperor Tewodros to use the Amharic language. It is fascinating that initially Omeru himself was not proficient in Amharic and used translators in order to run the day to day activities. Likewise, by this time the process of coercing the indigenous Oromo religion followers and Muslims to accept Christianity also commenced, which of course was exacerbated later on during the reign of Yohannes IV (1872-1889).<sup>1237</sup>

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<sup>1236</sup> Yemiamrew, pp. 95-7

<sup>1237</sup> Ibid. pp. 97-101.

Later on, Borana fell under the influence of the Mohammadoch / Warra Himanu dynasty after the rise of Mohammed Ali, who himself was an Oromo and baptized as Mikael. By this time the son of Omeru, Shifaw, was at the helm of power in Borana and *Ras Mikael* recognized him as the governor of Borana. Moreover, in order to cement his alliance with the Borana dynasty *Ras Mikael* arranged marriage for his sister and Shifaw. Meanwhile, other notables of Borana sub-parts among others Ayena, Chaketa, Lemi, Mettaa and Dembi were, in turn, said to have been administering their respective localities under the discretion of Shifaw..<sup>1238</sup>

In the Chapter, we have tried to shed light on how the process of incorporation of the entire Tulama into the kingdom of Shawa was concluded during the reign of King Menilek in the 1870s. Perhaps compared with the previous times, the Shawan kingdom's campaign in most parts of the Tulama territory by this time was less destructive and violent. This might have been mainly because first Gobana, Menilek's foremost general, who himself was an Oromo played indispensable roles in winning over to his side the renowned Tualama Oromo notables including Akkaa Buttaa; secondly, *Ras Darge* and *Dajjach Garmame* also played a key role and succeeded in winning over to their side most of the Oromo notables who already had established relations with the kingdom of

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<sup>1238</sup> Ibid, p. 103.

Shawa starting from the time of Sahla Sellase. Perhaps the mushrooming of quasi-independent local notables who were sometimes in conflict with each other and who also sought external support on the one hand and the diplomatic activities are undertaken especially during the time of Sahla Sellase on the other made resistance against the Shawan Kingdom impolitic especially among the Tulama notables which include among others the Ada'aa notables, descendants of Bunee and his brother Jiloo; Chammee and her son Jaarraa of Mulo Faldaa/ Falle, Abbaa Maallee and his descendants of Salale. But it should be noted that the years around the 1870s did not sanction the end of the Tulama resistance rather as we shall see in the next and final chapter of the thesis, king Menilek encountered stiff resistance when he moved his seat of power from Lichee/ Ankobar to Entoto / Finfinnee starting from early 1880s. Therefore, in the next chapter, we shall explore why and how Menilek shifted his headquarters from northern to the centre of the Shawan plateau on the one hand and how the Tulama who inhabited around the present-day Addis Ababa reacted and how they were affected by this move on the other.

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **FROM FINFINNEE/ SHAGAR TO ADDIS ABABA: THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE TULAMA TERRITORY FROM PERIPHERY TO THE HUB CA. 1880S**

In the thesis, we have attempted to explore how the Nagasi's successors starting at least from the beginning of the eighteenth century, encroached on the Shawan Oromo territory. As a result, a considerable portion of the Shawan Oromo territory was incorporated into the Kingdom of Shawa before the second half of the nineteenth century. It is also fascinating that all the capitals of the Shawan kingdom from Aya Bar, Nagasi Krestos' capital, up to Liche, the capital of Menilek, were founded on the territories of the Shawan Oromo. In this regard, Finfinnee/Shagar,<sup>1239</sup> aka Entoto / Addis Ababa, is also not an exception. The earlier Shawan capitals were established closer to or on the outskirts of the core region of the kingdom. However, Addis Ababa was founded in the heartland of Tulama, separated from the core region by at least a hundred kilometres. Here, the phrase core region needs qualification. Areas like Manz, Marhabete, Morat, etc., which have been traditionally considered the core of the burgeoning kingdom were backwaters right from the outset, as we have expounded throughout the thesis. Rather Karraayyuu and Tulama inhabited territories transformed into the core region, and this was executed either by expelling or assimilating them. But

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<sup>1239</sup> The Tulama Oromo mostly use and prefer the name Shagar, whereas Finfinnee became more popular, in recent decades, especially after 1991. There is a popular Afaan Oromo song that compares Shagar with the town of Fiche: Shaggaar ya hangafaa Fiichee, which meant Shagar, a senior of Fiche).

unlike its precursors, Addis Ababa has not been able to assimilate the Tulama, who have inhabited most of its hinterlands though it sanctioned, on the one hand, the end of the centuries-old rivalry between the Oromo and the Amhara on the Shawan plateau and perhaps marked the climax of rapprochement between the Amhara and Oromo notables on the other. There is no doubt that Menilek's foundation of his seat in the heartland of the Tulama became possible as a result of his alliance with the Tulama notables like Gobana Dachi, Tufaa Munaa Jiloo of Gumbichu, and Birruu Nagawoo, the son-in-law of Gobana Dachi among others.

In this final chapter of the thesis, we shall explore how the present capital of the modern Ethiopian Empire, known as Finfinnee / Shagar by the local Oromo, and more popularly Addis Ababa, was founded in the heartland of the Tulama and its impacts on them mainly during the period under discussion. We have a plethora of studies on the history of Addis Ababa, but most of them give much attention to how Emperor Menilek and Empress Taytu founded the town and the development of the city.<sup>1240</sup> They mentioned the Tulama *gosa* that inhabited the locality where the city was founded in passing, if any, except perhaps very few ones.<sup>1241</sup>

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<sup>1240</sup> Right from the beginning, Menilek's chronicler and the contemporary Shawan writers gave little attention to the interaction between the Tulama notables and king Meniek and his courtiers during this eventful era on the one hand, and to the history of the Tulama *gosa* who inhabited this locality. However, they wasted much time and left no stone unturned to justify the so-called, the grand project of 'Reconquista', and the saga which connects the area around the present city with medieval kings like Dawit.

<sup>1241</sup> Ronald J. Horvath, "Around Addis Ababa: A Geographical Study of the Impact of a City on Its Surroundings" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, 1966); Tekalign Wolde Mariam, "Notes on Entoto: The Precursor of Addis Ababa (1881-1892)," *Proceedings of the Fourth Seminar of the Department of History* (Addis Ababa, 1989), pp. 133-52; Tekalign, "A City and Its Hinterlands";



Apparently, one of the major reasons why they glossed over the issue might be lack of written sources.<sup>1242</sup> Right from the beginning Menilek's chronicler and the contemporary Shawan writers gave little attention to the interaction between the Tulama notables and king Meniek and his courtiers during this eventful era on the one hand and to the history of the Tulama *gosa* who inhabited this locality for at least several centuries even as per the hegemonic narrative. However, they rather wasted much time and left no stone unturned to justify the so-called, the grand project of 'Reconquista', and the saga which connects the area around the present city with medieval kings like Dawit. Therefore, in the chapter, we have made the utmost efforts, to redress this imbalance by critically examining the rich corpus of oral tradition. In doing so, we have cross-checked it with scanty written sources to shed some light on the history of the Tulama, who inhabited the area around the present-day Addis Ababa, and how its foundation affected them during the time under review.

## **The Tulama of Shagar / Finfinnee on the Eve and during the Foundation of Entoto / Addis Ababa**

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Getahun Benti, *Addis Ababa: Migration and the Making of a Multi-Ethnic Metropolis 1941-1974* (Trenton, NJ: The Red Sea Press, Inc., 2007); Getahun Benti, "A Blind Person Without a Cane, a Nation Without a City: The Struggle of the Oromo People for Addis Ababa" *Journal of Northeast African Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2. 2002; Biratu, "The Oromo in and Around Finfinnee" are among the scholarly works which attempted to shed some light on the impacts of the city on the local Oromo.

<sup>1242</sup>See Bairu, "Land Tenure in Salale", p. 1, who indicates that 'the absence of adequate historical source material forbids the establishment with the certainty of the development of the relations between the Sâlalé [ Oromo] and their neighboring Christians in the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries. We have also encountered a similar problem in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Like other parts of the Tulama inhabited localities, well-known notables who had started defying the egalitarian *Gada* system during the last quarter of the nineteenth century also mushroomed around Finfinnee. As we have indicated above, it is disheartening that the Shawan writers, including Menilek's chronicler, were silent about the Tulama and these notables with whom king Menilek negotiated and in some cases, fought to establish his new seat deep inside their territory. However, according to oral tradition, Tufaa Munaa Jiloo of Gumbichuu, Tufaa Araddoo Jaarraa and his son, Habeebee Tufaa of Eekkaa, Duulaa Ara'ee of Gullaallee, Tiksee Jimaa Sanbaroo of Ada'aa / Galan and Ya'ii Galdasiis, Changaree Sokiilee, and Buttaa Boxoraa of Meettaa/ Subbaa were among the principal Tulama notables on the eve, and during the foundation of Entoto and Addis Ababa.<sup>1243</sup> Similarly, the major Tulama *gosa* who inhabited around the present-day Addis Ababa on the eve of Menilek's conquest belonged to Torban Oboo which includes Eekkaa, Gullaallee, and Gumbichuu, who settled in the north, west, and central parts, and the Galan, who were mainly found in the south and east, and the Meettaa in the southwest and west.

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<sup>1243</sup> Informants: Tadlaa Odaa Tuffaa ( Addis Ababa, July 2018, interviewed and aired on OBS), Birbirsa Hey'ii ( Sabbataa, June 28, 2017), Alemayehu Haile ( Addis Ababa, July 3-4, 2017), Ejersa Yadate and Kebede Goodana ( Sululta April 22, 2018), Walda Yohannes Warqina( Addis Ababa, July 17, 2107); See also Alemayehu, *Seenaa Oromoo Hanga Jaarraa 20ffaa*, pp. 377-79; Biratu, " The Oromo in and Around Finfinnee", p. 16 and Dechasa, *Gobana*, p.119. We have a long list of notables in the area around Finfinnee/ Addis Ababa in addition to the ones we have indicated, namely, Qajeelaa Dambii / Doyyoo??? of Birbiirsaa around the present-day Arada St. George, Guddaataa Araddoo around the locality nowadays identified as Addisu Gabayaa on the way to Salale / Gojjam road, Shabuu Ejeersaa of Boolee Bulbulaa, Sora Lumee of Qallitii and Jatoo, Dammoo Dadhii from south of Boolee up to Aqaaqii, Galatee Ashaatee around Dabbasoo( the present-day Mashalokyaa), Waarii Gololee and Daadhii Giimbii of Eekkaa ( after whom the famous river east of Addis Laga Daadhii was named), Jamoo Dabaalee of Dalatii ( Qaranyoo), Tufaa Obaa and Badhaadhha Obaa of Sululta, Goobanaa Buttaa of Aqaaqii among others. They were overshadowed and perhaps even dominated by the well-known notables like Tufaa Munaa, Tufaa Araddoo, and Tiksee Jimaa among others because they were not as popular and well-remembered by most of our informants, unlike the latter ones.

Among the above-mentioned notables, the most famous, and the one who is often erroneously considered, the notable of Gullaallee of Finfinnee was Tufaa Munaa Jiloo of Gumbichu.<sup>1244</sup> To be specific, it is said that he belonged to the Guutoo Wasarbii subgroup of Gumbichuu and was born at a particular place known as Tajjab, located at a distance of about an hour walk on foot to the west of the present-day town of Sululta. However, his seat was said to have been around a locality known as Fiichee, on the northern flank of the Entoto mountain range overlooking the town of Sululta. Initially, he rose as a notable of Gumbichu Oromo, whose territory extended in the south up to and including most parts of the Entoto Mountain, including the locality where St. Raguel Church was later founded.<sup>1245</sup>

The rise of Tufaa Munaa is said to have been traced back to the period of interregnum, as we have discussed earlier. Especially, his alliance and political marriage with the family of Wadaay Miinoo of Muloo might have boosted his power and helped him expand his domain as far as Keeku (Bachoo) in the west.<sup>1246</sup> Tradition has it that at the apex of his power, he was able to subdue the renowned Oromo notables like Changaree Sokiilee and Dachaasaa Baqsaa of the

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<sup>1244</sup> See Greenfield, p. 90, who characterizes Tufaa Munaa as the Oromo notable from Gullallee, a neighborhood which is a suburb of Addis Ababa. Currently, Gullaallee is one of the major sub-cities of the town, which encompasses some parts of the territory of Gullaallee Oromo of Finfinnee.

<sup>1245</sup> Informants: Ejersa Yadate and Kebede Goodana (Sululta April 22, 2018). They also claim that it extended up to around Shiro Meda Kidane Mehret Church.

<sup>1246</sup> Informant: Tufaa Mekonnen( 06/05/ 2017 Mulo)

Dhamootu area. Furthermore, it is said, in the south, Tufaa Munaa was able to dominate considerable parts of the present-day Addis Ababa as far south as the Aqaaqii river, according to some informants,<sup>1247</sup> and up to Furiu according to others.<sup>1248</sup> Similarly, Ashenafi Hailu, who also collected oral tradition almost a decade ago notes that Tufaa Munaa ruled the area that stretched from the locality nowadays called Shinkuru Mikael, encompassing Wasarbi, Suluta, and the Sibilu river, up to Ada'aa Bargaa.<sup>1249</sup> Hence, based on the information at our disposal, it is difficult to demarcate the areas which were under the domain of Tufaa Munaa on the eve of the Shawans encroachment to this locality. But there is no doubt that the area around Sululta and the Entoto Mountain, which overlooks Sululta, was his initial political power base and his seat, Fiichee, is located here. There is a famous song that perhaps ascertains this when the abode of Gullaallee was said to have been attacked by the force of Menilek.

Afaan Oromo  
 Gullaallee iyyatti jiraa  
 Fiicheen nagumaa yaa Tufaa Munaa<sup>1250</sup>

Gloss  
 There is yelling in Gullaallee  
 Oh Tufaa Munaa, is there peace at Fichee?

Tufaa Munaa was identified as the notable of the Gullaallee of Finfinnee, perhaps due to his domination of the area around present-day Addis Ababa. It is perplexing that we have a song that makes Tufaa Muanaa the protector of Gullaallee.

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<sup>1247</sup> Informants: Birbirsa Hey'ii ( Sabbataa, June 28, 2017) and Dubee Buttaa (June 29, 2017, Sabbataa)

<sup>1248</sup> Informants : Tufaa Mekonnen( 06/05/ 2017 Muloo), Kebede Goodana ( Sululta April 22, 2018)

<sup>1249</sup> Ashenafi, p. 35

<sup>1250</sup> Informant: Alemayehu Haile (Addis Ababa, July 3-4, 2017).

Afaan Oromo	Gloss
cufaakoo cufaakoo	My barricade, my barricade,
cufaa jalan bulaa	I live under your protection.
yaa lenca Gullaallee	The shield of Gullaallee,
dur sumayyuu badnee	the sustainer of our hope
Tufaakoo Fufaakoo	My barricade, mu barricade
Tufaa yalma Munaa	Tufaa, the son of Munaa <sup>1251</sup>

But another tradition contradicts this and hints that up until the time of Menilek's conquest, the Gullaallee notables like Duulaa Ara'ee were autonomous. It rather indicates that even the *Gada* system itself was vibrant among the Gullaallee, as we shall see briefly in relation to the laws passed by their *Gada* assembly defying Menilek's encroachment onto their territory.

Be that as it may, Tufaa Munaa's relationship with Menilek is enigmatic. According to Paulos Gnogno, he resisted Menilek's conquest and died on the battlefield.<sup>1252</sup> Similarly, Richard Greenfield claims that Tufaa Muna refused to ally with Gobana Dachi, who was the architect of the so-called Tulama confederation and was killed in battle perhaps fighting against Gobana.<sup>1253</sup> However, Paulos and

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<sup>1251</sup> Tamene Bitima, "On Some Oromo Historical Poems," *Paideuma: Mitteilungen zur Kulturkunde*, Bd. 29 (1983), p. 319.

<sup>1252</sup> Paulos Gnogno, *Dagmawi Ate Menilek/ Emperor Menilek II* (Addis Ababa, 1984 EC), p. 27.

<sup>1253</sup> Greenfield, p. 98, Greenfield claims that the Abichu and the Meettaa Oromo represented by Gobana and Birraaruu Goolee were the architects of the Tulama confederation while Tufaa

Greenfield's version of the story is not supported by oral tradition as well as by the scanty written sources that we have at our disposal. For instance, one of our leading oral informants and who was the descendant of Wadaay Minoos of Muloo indicates that Tufaa Munaa had amicable relations with Menilek and Gobana and even blames him for being instrumental in their coming and conquest of their territory.<sup>1254</sup> Similarly, another tradition indicates that Tufaa Munaa of Gumbichuu and Birraatuu Goolee of Meettaa were among the first Oromo notables to be baptized during the time of Menilek going as far as Liche, the then Menilek's capital.<sup>1255</sup>

Similarly, Ashenafi Hailu also indicates that Tufaa Munaa was one of the few Oromo notables who had had amicable relations with king Menilek and positively responded to his presence at Entoto. He claims that Tufaa Munaa's alliance with Menilek and Gobana was to improve his position in the conflict that he had against Warraa Hetto Ilmaan Laali, an Oromo notable perhaps at the foot of the Entoto Mountain, on the Finfinnee side. It is said that Tufaa Munaa played an indispensable role in his allegiance to King Menilek and Gobana by providing information about those who resisted them.<sup>1256</sup>

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Munaa Opposed the confederation. Greenfield claims that the Tulama Confederation was instrumental in the incorporation of the Tulama Oromo into the kingdom of Shawa.

<sup>1254</sup> Informant: Tufaa Mekonnen (06/05/ 2017 Mulo). He even indicates that Tufaa's relation with the kingdom of Shawa dates back to the time before Tewodros's conquest of Shawa and Menilek's imprisonment at Maqdala; he even claims that Tufaa Munaa was imprisoned at Maqdala along with Menilek which of course is highly unlikely.

<sup>1255</sup> Informant : Alemayehu Haile ( Addis Ababa, July 3-4, 2017).

<sup>1256</sup> Ashenafi, pp. 35-36.

Tradition has it that Gobana Dachi and his son-in-law, Birruu Nagawoo Gaarii, played a pivotal role in winning over Tufaa Munaa to the Shawan's side. We have a fascinating tradition about the family of Birruu Nagawoo, who was the descendant of one of the Tulama notables, Garii Duufaa, a contemporary of King Sahla Sellase. He was a notable of the area around the present-day Mandida, whose residence was around a locality known as Changee near the town of Angolala. Perhaps, the family of Gaarii Duufaa was one of the Oromo notables who initially bitterly resisted and later on came to establish amicable relations with King Sahla Sellase. It is said that Sahla Sellase even married a daughter of Gaarii Duufaa known as Hikkee, who presumably was one of his many concubines, as we have seen earlier in the thesis. A son of Gaarii, Nagawoo was in turn became one of the confidants of Gobana. Menilek was also said to have been the godparent of Birruu Nagawoo, who married Manna Gobana. As a result, both Nagawoo and his sons, Birruu and Maallee, took part in the territorial expansion and played a pivotal role in the submission of Tulama notables to Menilek, perhaps from Dubar up to Meettaa. For instance, it is said that the people of the Dubar area were said to have been submitted to Nagawoo or they became *Koluu*<sup>1257</sup> Nagawoo Gaarii. His second son, Maallee Nagawoo, was settled at Dubar, a locality closer to the Gaaraa Gorfoo. As a result, the people of Dubar were not attacked by Gobana, and they did not encamp in their territory. It

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<sup>1257</sup> According to tradition, when a certain group of people became *Koluu* of a notable, they would not encounter devastation, and soldiers would settle in their territory.

is said that if Menilek and Gobana's force camped in a territory, they would destroy that locality like the swarm of locusts.<sup>1258</sup>

The IES manuscript, the presumed chronicle of Gobana, also further enlightens us that in addition to Birruu Nagawo, Gobana's other son-in-law, *Ato Argannoo Jiree*, was also one of his entourages.

የደጃዝማች ጎበና ዋና ሹማምንቶች ትልቅ የሚባሉት ሁለት አማቶቻቸው ናቸው። የአንጋፋ ልጃቸው የወይዘሮ ብርቄ ባል የደጃች ተክላጊርጊስ አባት አቶ አርጋኖ ጅሬ የዋዩ ባለ ቡርቃ የነቡታ በክሣ አዋሳኝ ግዛቱም ዋዩ ደነባ ጉራኔ .... 2ኛው አማቶቸው የወይዘሮ እማማ ባል ብሩ ነገዎ ነገዎ ጋሪ የሙጢ ገላን ባለ ቡርቃ ባላበት በልጅነታቸው አጼ ምኒልክ ክርስቲና ያነሱት ... በድፍን አብቸና ገላን አያቱ ጋሪ ተፈሪ .....ደጃዝማች ጎበናም እጅግ ይወዱት ነበርና በአጼ ምኒልክ ፊቃድ ፊታውራር ብሩ ብለውት ነበር። ግዛቱም ሙጢ ገላን ኘአን ከሲቢሉ በታች አድአና ሙሉን...<sup>1259</sup> The two principal lieutenants of Dajjazmach Gobana were his son-in-laws. A husband of his elder daughter , Mrs. Birqe, the father of Dajjach Takla Gyorgis, Mr. Argano Jiree, the notable of Wayyuu , neighbour of Buttaa Bokkisaa, whose dominion were Wayyuu, Danaba and Gurrannee... The second son-in-law, the husband of Mrs. Emama, Birruu Nagawoo Gaarii , the notable of Muti Galan, whose godparent was king Menilek ... His grandfather, Gaarii, was respected among all the Abichu and Galan... Since *Dajjazmach* Gobana loved him, with the permission of King Menilek, he named him *fitawurai* ... His dominions were Galan and Gna and below Sibilu Ada'aa and Muloo..

Tradition indicates that Birruu Nagawo played a preponderant role in persuading Tufaa Munaa to submit peacefully to Menilek. Then when Birruu tried to speak to Tufaa Munaa in Amharic, Tufaa was offended and enquired Birruu in Afaan Oromo, “Yaa Birruu anatu Sidaama ta’e moo sittu Sidaama ta’ee Afaan Amaaraan ergaa kana natti himta?” (Oh Birruu, why do you tell me the message in Amharic, is it you who become Sidaama[ Amhara ] or me?). Then it is said, Birruu replied, “ *Gooftaa Koo jarri na wajjin deeman Kun Akka dhaga’aniifan malee Afaan*

<sup>1258</sup> Informant: Alemayehu Haile (Addis Ababa, July 3-4, 2017). Alemayehu claims that Gaarii Duufaa was reconciled to Sahla Sellase by Dachi Wade, father of Gobana Dachi.

<sup>1259</sup> IES MSS 4614.



*Oromoo wallaaleen miti*” ( My lord, I spoke in Amharic because the people who accompanied me do not speak Afaan Oromo). In such a way, Tufaa Munaa peacefully submitted and went to Liche and was baptized. It was after this that Menilek came and first settled in Sululta and then, of course, at the Dildilaa or Entoto Mountain as we shall see in the following section of the chapter.<sup>1260</sup> If the above tradition is credible, and if both Tufaa Munaa and Birruu Nagawo did speak Amharic, this compels us to suspect that the relations between Tufaa Munaa, whose domain was at a distance of more than a hundred kilometers from the then Amharic speaking core region of the kingdom of Shawa, did not commence at this juncture. Perhaps this might not be the first encounter between Tufaa Munaa and the Shawan notables or both Afaan Oromo and Amharic were widely spoken, at least in the north and central Shawa, during this time and even before.

We do have contradictory information about the baptism of Tufaa Munaa. As we have seen in the above paragraph, some of our informants indicate that Tufaa Muna went as far as Liche and was baptized. Other informants contradict this and claim that Tufaa was not baptized at all. They, rather, claim that the first to be baptized from the family of Tufaa Munaa was his son Daadhii Tufaa, whose godparent was said to have been king Menilek. Similarly, Birruu Nagawoo made a relentless effort, as we have seen tangentially in the previous chapter, in the

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<sup>1260</sup> Informants: Alemayehu Haile ( Addis Ababa, July 3-4, 2017) and Kebede Goodana ( Sululta April 22, 2018 ); Alemayehu, *Seenaa Oromoo Hanga Jaarraa 20ffaa*, pp. 382-83; See also “The Oromo in and Around Finfinnee”, p. 28, who also recorded similar misunderstanding between Gobana and Waamii Gaaroo of Macha.

submission of Birraatuu Goolee of Meettaa. Birruu was appointed as the administrator of Mettaa and its environs like Ada’aa Bargaa, Muloo, and Macha and was also named *fitawurari*(commander of the vanguard).In this regard Gobana’s chronicle indicates, እሚመቻቸውን ብሩ ነገዎን ፊታውራሪነት ሾመው ፊታውራሪ ብሩ መጥተው በአድአ በርጋ አዉራጃ ወይዘሮ የሚባል ኮረምታ ላይ ከተማ ሠሩ። ... ፊታውራሪ ብሩም ብርቱ ኃይለኛ ነበሩ ጎላ ማርያም ባለቸበት ቦታ ሜጫ ላይ ከተማ አደረጉ ። ጎላ ማርያምን የተከሉ ብሩ ናቸው<sup>1261</sup>:: [ Gobana] conferred the title of *fitawurari* on his confidant Birruu Nagawwo, who founded a town called Wayzaro in Ada’aa Barga... Fitawurai Birruu was a strong man, and he also founded a town in Macha around Gola Maryam, a church founded by Birruu Nagawwo.

Similarly, Alemayehu Haile indicates that Birruu Nagawo had also a stake in the submission of Cangaree Sokilee of Dhaamotuu and Ejeree, Shabbuu Bordee of Bachoo, Turee Galatee of Soddo, Moojoo Boxoraa of Ada’aa and Lumee among others.<sup>1262</sup> Similarly, Tekalign claims that the southern Bachoo had submitted to Gobana in 1879, unlike their northern neighbours, the Meettaa, who resisted the Shawans, as we shall see after a while. Citing Cecchi Tekalign further indicates, “the Bachoo chiefs came to make their submission to the *Ras* and Mashasha in the wake of another confrontation between the Shoans and the Meta....The chiefs made themselves available to declare their neutrality and peaceful disposition

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<sup>1261</sup> Nagada , p. 4.

<sup>1262</sup> Alemayehu, *Seenaa Oromoo Hanga Jaarraa 20ffaa*, p. 383.

towards the Shoans".<sup>1263</sup> Therefore, based on what we have seen above, Nagawoo Gaarii and his sons were among the Tulama notables who played indispensable roles in the incorporation of the Tulama who inhabited areas that stretched at least from Gaaraa Gorfoo up to the Awash river and beyond which of course includes Bachoo and Soddoo, who inhabited on both sides of the Awash River.

However, this does not mean that it was a walkover for the Shawans. Indeed, there were resistances here and there both before and after the conquest. Perhaps, one of the Oromo *gosa* who resisted the Shawan's conquest of Finfinnee was the Guallallee, who undoubtedly put a heroic resistance and, as a result, paid dearly, although some scholars downplayed the resistance of the Shawan/Tulama and often magnify their lack of unity.<sup>1264</sup>

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<sup>1263</sup> Tekalign, "A City and Its Hinterlands," p. 98.

<sup>1264</sup> See, for instance, Abbas, *Conquest, and Resistance in the Ethiopian Empire*, p. 140; Professor Abbas, who is one of the leading Oromo historians, seems to fail to comprehend the history of Oromo resistance against the Kingdom of Shawa in general and that of Shawa in particular. There is no doubt that the Arsi Oromo paid dearly for their implacable resistance against the Shawans, but the Tulama also suffered equally if not more in the hands of the Shawans. If the Arsi Oromo resistance against the Shawans commenced as he claims during the time of Hayla Malakot (1847-1855), the Shawan Oromo resistance predates this by at least a century. Perhaps, this is one of the reasons that we have argued in the introductory part of the thesis that both the Ethiopianise and Oromo-centric scholars de-emphasized the history of the Shawan Oromo. In this regard, one may see, for instance, Darkawh, pp. 194-95, who compares the atrocities committed against the Tulama and Arsi Oromo: "the campaign conducted in the Finfinni district in 1844 (which has been cited already) the invaders were said to have killed 4,600 of the invaded [Oromo]. During the Arussi campaign of 1886, a single battle fought on 6 September terminated with 6,000 and more of the Arussi left dead on the battlefield".

Addis Ababa was founded on the territory mainly inhabited by the Gullaallee gosa of the Tulama and the earliest safars (neighborhoods) and landmarks were established in this locality, as we shall see in the next section. Tradition has it that the Gullaallee were bordered by the Gumbichuu in the north, by the Galan in the South, by the Eekkaa valley in the east, and by different Bachoo gosa like Subbaa and Meettaa in the west.<sup>1265</sup>

According to Cerulli, the Shawans campaign against the Gullaallee Oromo of Finfinnee was led by a certain *Dajjach* Walda Baseyum which compelled the assembly of Gullaallee to pass the following mobilization call to counter them.

**Oromo**

*luggama fardatti nbasin  
addu addarra nbufatin  
miediċċa rakkarra nbufatin  
mure sierra  
tume sierra  
siera abba lubbati  
bokkuda  
caffieda  
chaffie abba [Oromooti]  
akka caffiekiena balliesi  
Amara agabusa olca<sup>1266</sup>*

**Gloss**

*Do not take away the harness from the horse!  
Do not take away the addu away from your head!  
Do not take away the miedicca from your hand!  
I have struck the law!  
I have cut the law!  
The law of the fathers lubba!  
This is the sceptre!  
This is the parliament of the  
[Oromo] fathers!  
As he destroyed our parliament  
Force the Amara to fast this day.*

We have conflicting information concerning the notable(s) of the Gullaallee, who presided over the assembly that struck this famous law enacted to defy the Shawans encroachment on their territory once and for all though they failed to do so. Our oral informants, as we have seen, claim that the renowned Gullaallee

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<sup>1265</sup> Informants: Birruu Tsegaye ( Addis Ababa, May 4, 2018); Walda Yohannes Warinah ( Addis Ababa, October 5, 2017); See also Ahmed Hassen Omer “ Gullallee” in *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, Volume II, p. 910.

<sup>1266</sup> Cerulli, pp. 70-71.

Oromo leader during this time was Duulaa Ara'ee, whereas Cerulli indicates that the notable Galan, Abichu, and Gullaallee against whom Gobana made expedition was Tufaa Obaa.<sup>1267</sup> Contrary to Cerulli's claim and in line with the views of our informants, Endale Djirata who was able to interview the grandson of Duulaa Ara'ee thirty years ago indicates that Duulaa was the leader of the Finfinnee Oromo when Menilek invaded their territory and further indicates that at that time his residence was around the present-day locality known as Tamanja Yazh and /or Mashewalekiya.<sup>1268</sup> It is interesting that if Endale's claim is credible, the residence of Duulaa Ara'ee was near Hooraa Finfinnee (Finfinnee hot spring and Tulluu Dallatti (where Menilek's palace was built), localities where the Oromo Irrechaa (thanksgiving) ceremony conducted and the Gullaallee *Gada* assembly met respectively. This further hints that Duulaa might have been the leader of the Gullaallee Oromo of Finfinnee when Menilek's forces overrun the locality.

Again Cerulli's view about a person, Walda Baseyum, who led the Shawan force in their campaign against the Gullaallee Oromo, is highly a suspect since both oral and written sources do not help us to verify it. Moreover, this locality was the preserve of Gobana and his entourages like Birruu Nagawoo and also Menilek

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<sup>1267</sup> Cerulli, p. 72; See also Biratu, " The Oromo in and around Finfinnee, "p. 17, who claims Tufaa Obaa was the most well-known notable of Gullaallee of Finfinnee further indicates that his seat was around the present-day Askoo neighborhood of Addis Ababa, formerly known as Qaalee.

<sup>1268</sup> Endalew Djirata Fayisa, "Foundation of Addis Ababa and the Emergence of Safars, " in *Asian Journal of Agricultural Extension, Economics & Sociology*, vol .38, No.8 ( 2020), P. 107. Endale further indicates that Alamu Ya'ii Duulaa Ara'ee, his informants, owned a small plot of land south of the St.Charqos church during the interview, almost near or at the presumed residence of his grandfather, Duulaa Ara'ee.

himself, and they might not allow the unknown figures like Walda Baseyum to conquer such an important locality solely. For instance, Bairu Tafla indicates that by about 1878 the Shawans started to establish their strongholds in the vicinity of the Entoto Mountain and from there made campaigns against the nearby localities like Gullaallee, Eekkaa, Wachacha, Gumbichu, Meettaa, Ada'aa, Macha, Bakkoo, and Chabo.<sup>1269</sup> Most of these localities except the last three have been either part or suburb of the city of Addis Ababa.

Similarly, Cerulli's explanation about the territory, to use his term, "Kingdom" of Tufaa Obaa, is also confusing. He claims that Tufaa Obaa was the 'king' of Abichu, Galan and Gullaallee. These three major Tulama subgroups did not occupy adjacent territory, at least in the locality where the present-day Addis was founded. Perhaps some traditions indicate that the domain of Tufaa Obaa and his brother Badhaadhaa Obaa was to the north of Addis Ababa, around the locality known as Sululta..<sup>1270</sup>

Meanwhile, the Gullaallee Oromo were also not the only Tulama *gosa* around the present-day Addis Ababa to resist the Shawan conquest. For instance, we have popular tradition pertaining to the resistance of the Subbaa/ Meettaa Oromo led

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<sup>1269</sup> Bairu, "Three Portraits," p. 146; Tsegaye, "The Oromo of Saalaale," pp. 66-67.

<sup>1270</sup> One of our informants: Ejersaa Yadaate Badhaadhaa Obaa Cullee (Sululta, April 22, 2018), an octogenarian indicates that Obaa, the father of Tufaa and Badhaadhaa, was his great grandfather. But it is not clear whether Cerulli refers to this Tufaa or not. Again we do not have contiguous Gullaallee, Galan, and Abichu Oromo clans settlements in Sullulta,

by a certain Buttaa Botoraa, whose residence was said to have been around the Boolee locality of the present-day Sabbataa town. Perhaps, tradition has it that Menilek himself personally participated in the campaign that the Shawan's made against the Subbaa. Apparently the following verse recited by our informants' recounts Buttaa Botoraa's heroic deeds to rescue the cattle that were plundered by the Shawans during one of their campaigns to the locality.

### Afaan Oromo

*Loon Ganjii badaanii miillashii takkitti*  
*Buttaatti ol eerganii*  
*Buttaa yaa abbaa Bulloo*  
*Bulloo isa fe'atte*  
*Bahee dhangalasee*  
*Oggaa Sabbee gahuu sadii raraa godhe*  
*Oggaa Hurbee gahuu sadii raara godhe*  
*Dhecheen gala jedhee isaa galmaa deemuu*  
*Sababamtuun nama karratti itti dhuftee*  
*Meqaa ajjefte jenaan*  
*sinu torbaa jedheen*  
*Eeboon goffaa'e*  
*Kunoo akkana godha*  
*Diimaan abaabyoo*  
*Laqamsiise biyyoo.<sup>1271</sup>*

### Gloss

*The cattle of Ganjii disappeared without any trace;*

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<sup>1271</sup> Informants: Dubee Buttaa (June 29, 2017 and Birbirsa Hey'ii (Sabbataa, June 28, 2017).

*They sent Buttaa to look for the cattle;*  
*Buttaa, the rider of a Bullo horse;*  
*He saddled his Bulloo horse;*  
*He galloped his horse;*  
*When he arrived at Sabbee, he killed three;*  
*When he reached Hurbee, he also killed three;*  
*When he was fleeing and returning to his Home;*  
*On the way, he met a certain treacherous person;*  
*A man asked him, how many people he had Killed;*  
*He replied, 'I killed seven including you';*  
*He fought with a spear;*  
*He did like this;*  
*The beautiful (brown coloured ) son of my Father;*  
*He killed them.*

In line with the above tradition, Gustavo Bianchi, an Italian traveler, in turn, witnessed that confrontation between the Oromo, who inhabited both banks of the Awash River, and the kingdom of Shawa was exacerbated in 1880 by the desire of Ras Gobana and his entourage to plunder the cattle which they needed for the Easter festivity.<sup>1272</sup> He further witnessed that this resulted not only in the plunder of cattle and foodstuffs but also in the ruin and devastation of the Bachoo country. He wrote, "...here and there along our passage we saw grayish [piles of] ashes and torched woods which were remains of devastated and burnt villages." However, he qualified it by stating that only larger hamlets were remained intact

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<sup>1272</sup> Gustavo Bianchi, *Alla terra dei Galla* (Milano, 1884), pp. 287-88 cited in Tekalign, "A City and Its Hinterlands," p. 97.



because: first, they could defend themselves better compared to smaller villages, and second, they might also provide what the Shawans needed.<sup>1273</sup>

Similarly, Cecchi also witnessed that since the Shawans encountered stiff resistance from the Meettaa Oromo they made incessant pounding on them. It is said that Mashasha Sayfu, who campaigned in this area along with Gobana, was baffled by the courage and determination of the Mettaa and bewildered about how to deal with them. “He had used his guns unsparingly to make a real massacre of the Meta,” writes Cecchi, but “far from bowing down, all [the Meta clans] have sworn on the graves of their ancestors to die all or avenge the massacre” perpetrated by the Shawans.<sup>1274</sup>

Meettaa’s confrontation with the kingdom of Shawa might have also been exacerbated by the latter’s encampment on the territory of the former. As we shall see in the next section, tradition has it that before their shift to the Entoto range to the north, the Shawans camped at the Hochocha/ Wachacha Mountain, where the Mettaa have inhabited. Tekalign further explicates this issue as follows:

The problem sprung as much from the predatory practices of the Shoan army and court as from the refusal of the Oromo to live under the latter’s overlordship...unregulated pillaging by the soldiery and repeated and unlawful demands for tribute by the chiefs were thus bound frequently to push the

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<sup>1273</sup> Gustavo Bianchi, *Alla terra dei Galla* (Milano, 1884), pp. 287-88 cited in Tekalign, “A City and Its Hinterlands,” pp. 97, 106.

<sup>1274</sup> Cecchi, *Da Zeila*, I, p. 498 cited in Tekalign, “A City and Its Hinterlands,” pp. 96-97. .

neighbouring communities over the edge. Refusal to accommodate these capricious demands triggered clashes which sometimes grew into major conflicts. The Shoans tended to be harsh in punishing the 'culprits' in order 'to set an example,' bringing about the further alienation of the people at large. Some desperately fought back, while others simply fled.<sup>1275</sup>

Other major Tulama *gosa* that inhabited the southern and southeastern parts of the locality were the Ada'aa /Galan. The most renowned notable of Galan was Tiksee Jimaa, who had a seat at the foot of the Furi Mountain, one of the hills which overlook the picturesque Finfinnee Valley, along with the Entoto range of hills in the north, Wachacha in the southwest. Oral tradition indicates that the territory of the Galan Oromo extended in the north up to the center of the present-day Addis Ababa, and Horaa Finfinnee (literally the Finfinnee lake), but they were pushed to the south by their northern neighbours, the Gullaallee Oromo, who dominated the locality. on the eve of the conquest of the area by the force of King Menilek. Tradition has it that the Gullaallee Oromo moved to this locality from Yayyaa Gullaallee<sup>1276</sup> This claim is highly unlikely since we have pockets of the Gullaallee *gosa* of the Torban Oboo in different parts of the Tulama country that stretched from east Shawa around Adama up to the center of Salale which includes Dagam, Yayyaa Gullaallee and Graar Jaarsoo among others.<sup>1277</sup> On the other hand, it is claimed that the Gullaallee Oromo were dispersed from Finfinnee following Menilek's conquest to different parts of Tulama territory especially to

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<sup>1275</sup> Teakalign, "A City and Its Hinterlands," p. 97.

<sup>1276</sup> Informants: Tufaa Mekonnen ( Mulo, May 2, 2017); Kebede Goodana ( Sululta, April 22, 2018); see also Biratu, "The Oromo in and around Finfinnee," p. 12, who also recorded the same tradition almost a decade ago.

<sup>1277</sup> Ahmed, "Gullaallee", p. 910 .

east Shawa around the present-day Adama / Nazareth town and even beyond to Arsi as we shall in the next section.

As to how the Ada'aa / Galan Oromo reacted to the conquest of Menilek, oral tradition is silent. Rather the oral tradition, as we have seen in the previous chapters, gave much emphasis to the rivalry between the family of Tiksee Jimaa of Ada'aa / Galan and Ya'ii Galdasiis of Subbaa/ Mettaa, and how the latter encroached on the territory of the former. It further recounts how king Menilek settled the Warjih amid the Ada'aa / Galan, near the Furi mountain, which was also closer to the residence of the family of Tiksee Jimaa. We do not have information about a serious confrontation between the Ada'aa/ Galan of south and Southeast Finfinnee, and the Shawan forces. But why Menilek settled the Warjih traders among them is mysterious. One tradition claims that they were settled around the locality known as Dalatii by King Menilek to balkanize the Oromo resistance. It is said that about seven hundred Warjih households came from the area around the Chacha river, north Shawa and settled in the locality. The leader of the Warjih settlers was a notable known as Turoo Wariyoo.<sup>1278</sup>

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<sup>1278</sup> Informants: Nigusu Ahmad (Sabbata, June 30, 2017), Hayla Maryam Araarsaa (Sabbata, July 1, 2017). Especially, our first informant, a septuagenarian, himself a Warjih, indicates that the Warjih who settled in the locality came from the area around the Chacha river, north Shawa during the time of Menilek. He recounts his genealogy as follows: Nugusu Ahmad Muse Turee Abbaa Michu Asqare Jaalee. He further claims that Dalttii, Sandafa, Shano, Chafee Doonsa, Boolaa, Ejere/ Rogee, and Muka Turrii are among the abodes of the Warjih people. As usual, we have got another jigsaw vis-à-vis the origin and history of the Warjih people. For instance, our informant's family names are a hybrid of Islamic, Oromo, and Amhara names which compels us to suspect the interaction and integration of these communities on the Shawan plateau for centuries. Moreover, the aforementioned abodes of the Warjih are found in central, north, and east Shawa and this also

Similarly, the northeastern part of the present-day Addis Ababa, including parts of the eastern section of the Entoto mountain ranges, was the abode of the famous Eekkaa (often imprecisely identified as Yeka) gosa of Torban Oboo. Eekkaa territory was separated from the Gullaallee territory by the Qabbannaa river and its eastern boundary stretched up to Laga Tafoo.<sup>1279</sup> However, as we have also seen earlier in the thesis, Harris, by the early 1840s almost forty years before the time under discussion, indicates that the Eekkaa inhabited the area between Finfinnee and the Garmama River.<sup>1280</sup> Anyhow, there is no doubt that the Eekkaa has inhabited the northeastern part of the present-day Addis Ababa and its outskirts.

It was also among the localities where prominent notables came into being on the eve of Menilek's transfer of his seat to this locality in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Some of the well-known notables of the area were: Tufaa Araddoo Jaarraa and his famous son Abeebie Tufaa, Waarii Gololee and his son Jimaa Waarii and Dadhii Gimbii, who belonged to the Dallee, Madarooand Ukkoo

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compels us to suspect that they might have been one of the inhabitants of the Shawan plateau and its environs for centuries if not millennia. Perhaps, we do not have other places in the Ethiopian region where this community lived within a distance of less than a hundred kilometers apart and of course spread in several localities.

<sup>1279</sup> Informant: Tadla Odaa Tufaa Araddoo, Bezzabeh Odaa Tufaa, and Zawduu Mammoo Abeebie (Interviewed by OBS and aired in July 2018).

<sup>1280</sup> Harris, vol. II, pp. 196-98; See Ege, p. 46, the map which indicates the rough pattern of settlement of the Tulama gosa, including the Eekkaa.

subgroups of Eekkaa respectively.<sup>1281</sup> Of these notables tradition indicates that Tufaa Araddoo initially resisted Menilek. But later on, Menilek became the godparent of one of the prominent sons of Tufaa, Abeebbee, who was seven at the time of his baptism. He was said to have been raised at the court,<sup>1282</sup> According to Paulos Gnogno, this tradition was not new since the children of Tulama notables, including Gobana sons, were raised at the royal court along with the children of the Shawan aristocracy.<sup>1283</sup>

So far in this section, we have tried to identify the major Tulama *gosa*, who inhabited the picturesque Finfinnee valley on the eve and during the foundation of Entoto and Addis Ababa as the capital of the kingdom of Shawa. We have explored that it was the abode of the Gullaallee, Eekkaa, Galan, Gumbichu, and different Meettaa subgroups. We may also discern from the previous discussion that these Tulama subgroups have engaged in sedentary agriculture and the European travelers who visited the locality witnessed the valley of Finfinnee and

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<sup>1281</sup> Informant: Walda Yohannes Warqina( Addis Ababa, July 17, 2107); Biratu, “ The Oromo in and Around Finfinnee,”p. 16.

<sup>1282</sup> Informant: Tadla Odaa Tufaa Araddoo , Bezzabe.h Odaa Tufaa and Zawduu Mammoo Abeebbee(Interviewed by OBS and aired in July 2018/ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kos7WP7Zopc>). They were the descendants of Tufaa Araddoo and his son Abeebbee Tufaa. The first informant, who was a nonagenarian,passed away immediately after the interview was aired. There were also other notables among the Eekkaa like Daadhii Gimbii of Laga Dadhii area, a ceratin Xafoo of Xafoo locality, Karraa Aloo Bunee of Karraa Aloo locality, and Waarii Goloollee, among others. The family of Tufaa Araddoo was among the prominent families of Tulama who joined the Shawan aristocracy. It is said that later on, Abeebbee served as administrator of parts of Wallagga during the period of Menilek and later Arsi. However, soon after his transfer to Arsi, he was demoted, and Dajjach Walda Tsadik was appointed as governor of Arsi. It seems that Tafari and Zawditu did this because Abeebbee was the ardent supporter of Lij lyyassu.

<sup>1283</sup> Paulos Gnogno, *Dagmawi Ate Menilek*, p. 26.

Eekka had been richly cultivated. Moreover, we have seen that petty chiefs who vied for supremacy also mushroomed in this locality, which was one of the markers of the beginning of the process of state formation among the Tulama.

### **The Foundation of Entoto / Addis Ababa and the Dispersal of the Gullaallee Oromo**

The exact time of relocation of the seat of the kingdom of Shawa from the northern to the central part of the eponymous plateau is still conjectural. Similarly, we have confusing information about the place where Menilek and his entourages camped before their relocation to Entoto and after a while to Finfinnee/ Addis Ababa. For instance, the oral tradition that we have got from around Sululta indicates that the Shawans initially camped at Urane, near the present-day town of Suluta, for some time before their move to the nearby mountain range called Dildiilaa aka Entoto.<sup>1284</sup> Likewise, Menilek's chronicle also indicates that the king and his cohorts were settled at Sululta (ሱሉልታ ሰፍረዉ ሳሉ) and, when they were there, the king Menilek heard the news about the discovery of traces of the ruins of the town of King Dawit. As a result, he ascended the Entoto hill and visited the ruins, and this became one of the factors which motivated him to set up his camp at Entoto.<sup>1285</sup>

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<sup>1284</sup> Informants: Ejersa Yadate and Kebede Goodana ( Sululta April 22, 2018).

<sup>1285</sup> Gabra Sellase, pp. 100-101.

From the above Gabra Sellase description, we might not discern when King Menilek shifted his camp to Entoto. Rather once again, we owe a lot to Asma Gyorgis, who meticulously writes, ንጉሥ ምኒልክ የደብረ ሊባኖስን ኃይማኖት ይመልሱልናል ብሎ የሸዋ ሰዉ ሲያስብ በእንደርታ ሰዉ በአጼ ዮሐንስ ግቡ ብለዉ አሳዘኑት። ህዝቡ ከልቼ ሔደ። ከዚህ በኋላ በዚሁ ወራት እንጦጦ ከተማ ሆነ ወጩጩ በሚባል ሥፍራ ።<sup>1286</sup> While the people of Shawa had been anticipating King Menilek would restore the Dabra Libanos doctrine of [Orthodox Christianity], they were offended when he ordered them to accept the doctrine favored by a man of Enderta, Emperor Yohannes. As a result, the people deserted the town of Liche. In the same months, Entoto became a town at a place known as Wachacha). From Asma Gyorgis exposition, we may construe that the time of the relocation of Menilek’s camp from Liche, one of his seats in north Shawa to Entoto coincides with the religious council convened by Emperor Yohannes at Boru Meda in May 1878.<sup>1287</sup> But Asma Gyorgis complicates this issue and claims that King Menilek camped and founded the town of Entoto at a place known as Wachacha and was silent about his initial encampment at Sululta, contrary to Gabra Sellase and the oral tradition as we have seen in the preceding paragraph. It is fascinating that famous European traveler, Krapf, who visited this locality some forty years before Menilek’s encampment in this location indicates that Mount Entoto (‘which the Oromos call Wotsheta’[Wachacha] is

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<sup>1286</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 696.

<sup>1287</sup> Donald Crummey, “Orthodoxy and Imperial Reconstruction in Ethiopia 1854—1878,” *The Journal of Theological Studies*, October 1978, New Series, Vol. 29, No. 2 (October 1978), p. 440; Eloi Ficquet, “Boru Meda’ in *Encyclopaedia Aethiopia*, Vol. I, p. 609.

located in the territory of Meettaa.<sup>1288</sup> Therefore, it seems that the names Entoto and Wachacha were used interchangeably even before King Menilek encamped in central Shawa. Moreover, the term Entoto might have been used to refer to the hills found to the southwest and north of the Finfinnee Valley or modern Addis Ababa.

Similarly, scholars who recently have dealt with this issue so far have been silent or oblivious about Menilek's initial encampment at Sululta, rather they claim that his camp in central Shawa was set up initially on Wachacha (1879-1881)<sup>1289</sup> to the southwest of the present-day capital facing Furi hill whereas the second at Dildila aka Entoto (1881) to the north.<sup>1290</sup> However, from the above discussion we may discern that Menilek established his camp at Dildila / Entoto, a mountain range overlooking Finfinnee and Sululta valleys in the south and north respectively by about 1881 after roaming for a couple of years in the nearby districts.

Concerning the etymological origin of the term Entoto, we do have a mere conjecture. According to one of our informants, Entoto is a corrupt form of Afaan Oromoo term, Gaara Xuxxoo / Inxooxoo/, which means Mount Xuxxoo, allegedly

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<sup>1288</sup> Isenberg and Krapf, p. 214

<sup>1289</sup> According to Tekalign, "Notes on Intoto," p. 135, King Menilek Camped on the Wachacha mountain, which is found the opposite the Furi hill, in 1878 and hence presumably used it as his camp up until he shifted to the north, the present-day Entoto.

<sup>1290</sup> Peter Garretson, "Entoto" in *Encyclopedia Aethiopia*, Vol. II. P. 320; Tekalign, "A City and Its Hinterlands," P. 130.



named after a plant that grew on the hill which is used as a toothbrush.<sup>1291</sup> Similarly, Tekalign Wolde Mariam indicates, the area that later came to be called Entoto by king Menilek and his followers was identified by different local names by the local inhabitants. For instance, ‘ the particular spot on which the Shoan king later put up his palace and the Raguel church was covered with the kosso ( Oromo, Heto tree), ” Tekalign writes, ‘and belonged to the descendants of a certain Lali, hence the reference to it as Heto Ilman Lali ( Kosso of the children of Lali)”. He further indicates that the second name used by the local peoples to identify the area around the present-day St. Mary Church of Entoto was Dildilaa. Interestingly, the third name was said to have been Shagar Chanaq, but in this case, Tekalign purports that we are not sure whether it was the name employed by the Gullaallee Oromo to identify the locality now known as Entoto or the whole region.<sup>1292</sup>

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<sup>1291</sup> Informant: Alemayehu Haile (Addis Ababa, July 3-4, 2017); Alemayehu, *Seenaa Oromoo Hanga Jaarraa 20ffaa*, pp. 382-83.

<sup>1292</sup> Tekalign, “Notes on Intoto”, p. 136.



Figure 4. Antoto / Entoto village during the first decade of its foundation, Vue Prise de l'ouest ( View taken from the West ) adopted from *Jules Borelli, Éthiopie méridionale: journal de mon voyage aux pays Amhara, Oromo et Sidama, septembre 1885 à novembre 1888* ( Paris, 1890), p. 107

Names like Xuxxoo, Heexxoo Ilmaan Laali, Dildila, and Shagar might have been appellations of either part of or all of the area around the present-day Entoto. But the use of the term Entoto by Krapf and Harris to identify the hill near the territory of the Eekkaa Oromo ca. 1840 complicates this issue and may compel us to suspect the popular view which indicates that the mountain range which overlooks the Finfinnee and Eekkaa valleys has been christened Entoto after Menilek established his seat there in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In other words, the term Entoto must have been in use for a long period than we have imagined, although it is difficult to specify its etymological origin. Concerning the term Shagar, as we shall see after a while, contrary to Tekalign's claims, it is a

popular name by which the neighboring Oromo identify the present-day Addis Ababa.

As to why King Menilek transferred his camp from Wachacha to the present-day Entoto by about 1881, Tekalign rightly argues, the former was very much susceptible to the Oromo attack than the latter, which is 'more compact in structure and easily defensible.'<sup>1293</sup> Moreover, the amicable relations that Menilek and *Ras Gobana* established with the Oromo notables who were found around Entoto like *Tufaa Munaa* and *Tufaa Araddoo* of *Gumbichuu* and *Eekkaa* respectively, as we have seen above, compared with the tenuous relations that they had with the *Meettaa/ Subbaa* notables might also have been another motivating factor for the transfer of Menilek's camp to this locality. In other words, the *Meettaa / Subbaa* Oromo, who inhabited the Wachacha Mountain, said to have been resisted Menilek's conquest and continued attacking Menilek and his entourages hitherto.

We also have a fascinating tradition of how Menilek solicited information from the neighbouring Oromo notables during his encampment at Entoto. Tradition has it that when King Menilek requested a certain notable about the presence of drinking water on the Entoto hill, the chief told him that there was no water there,

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<sup>1293</sup> Tekalign , " Notes on intoto", p. 136.

and they drew from the Sibilu River,<sup>1294</sup> a tributary of the Mugar river located north of the Entoto hill in the present district of Sululta. But, according to Tekalign, the Gullaallee Oromo ‘who had already struck an alliance with Menilek’ is said to have informed him that there were several streams on both sides of the hill, and the chief misinformed him to prevent him from settling on their territory,<sup>1295</sup> However, Tekalign’s claim about the alliance of the Gullaallee with king Menilek was highly a suspect. Rather, as we shall see, they were among the Oromo *gosa* who had continued resisting Menilek and were adversely affected by the establishment of the royal seat in the central Shawa.

The Gullaalle Oromo were among the Oromo *gosa* who tried to dislodge Menilek from central Shawa. We have a widespread tradition about the uprising of the Gullaallee against the Shawans, perhaps on the eve or during the foundation of the royal capital at Entoto. We have a slightly different story concerning the cause of the Gullaallee uprising. “In 1878 a rebellion broke out against...Ménilék,” writes Ahmed, “triggered by an Amhara soldier, who was quartered in the house of a [Gullaallee] family and injured one of the cows of the latter.”<sup>1296</sup> Similarly, the oral tradition that we have got from our informants indicate that billeting of the notorious ‘Gondoree’ troops, as they were known by the local people, was the major cause of the uprising. Tradition further indicates that when most of the

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<sup>1294</sup> Informants: Ejersaa Yadaate and Kebede Goodana ( Sululta April 22, 2018); See also Tekalign, “ Notes on Intoto,”pp. 136 , who also collected similar tradition .

<sup>1295</sup> Tekalign, “Notes on Intoto,”p. 137.

<sup>1296</sup> Ahmed Hassen Omer, “Gullaallee,” Vol. II, p. 910.

Oromo male adults went to Odaa Nabee to witness the transfer of power from one *Gada* class to the other, the soldiers who were billeted on the Gullaallee, Eekkaa, Gumbichuu, Galan, and other Oromo *gosa* found around Entoto, raped their wives, and slaughtered their cattle including heifers. Infuriated by the deed of the soldiers, the Oromo ladies sent messengers to their husbands. As a result, the well-known notables like Duulaa Ara'ee, Tufaa Munaa, Tufaa Araddoo, and Tikse Jima, among others, are said to have been summoned at Chaffee of Gullaallee and took an oath to decimate the Gondare soldiers overnight simultaneously. But it said that since Tufaa Munaa knew very well the military superiority of the Shawans, he changed his mind and sent envoys to Tufaa Araddoo of Eekkaa and Tiksee Jimaa of Ada'aa/ Galan and warned them not to execute the soldiers. Yet tradition further indicates that the message did not reach Duulaa Ara'ee of Guullallee, and the latter executed the billeted soldiers.<sup>1297</sup> According to Ashenafi Hailu, Tufaa Munaa and some local notables even supported Menilek, and this was one of the reasons for the defeat of the Oromo people around Entoto.<sup>1298</sup>

The same tradition indicates that the persecution of the billeted soldiers by the Gullaallee is said to have been used as a pretext to evict them from the Finfinnee

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<sup>1297</sup> Informants: Ejersaa Yadaate and Kebede Goodana (Sululta April 22, 2018), Alemayehu Haile ( Addis Ababa, July 3-4, 2017); Alemayehu, *Seenaa Oromoo Hanga Jaarraa 20ffaa*, pp. 360-61. We have a conflicting tradition about the location and the name of the Gullaallee Chaffee, one tradition indicates that it was named Chaffee Tumaa and located around the present-day Tafari Mekonnen School (TMS), whereas another tradition indicates that it was located at a place known as Dalattii, where Emperor Menilek founded his palace.

<sup>1298</sup> Ashenafi, p. 36.

valley, where Menilek established his capital by about 1886. This, therefore, marked the beginning of the eviction, migration, and dispersal of the Tulama from central and northern Shawa initially into the rift valley section of east Shawa, around the present-day Adama district, and after a while to Arsi, Bale, Hararge, and the Gibe region among others. Perhaps, it was by this time that the Tulama composed the following poem to lament the annihilation of their beautiful abode of Finfinnee valley, the disruption of their social institution, and their loss of the means of livelihood.

#### Afaan Oromoo

Inxooxxoo dhaabataniif caffee gallaaluun hafe  
Finfinnee loon geessanii hora obaasuun hafe.  
Tulluu Daalattiirratti yaa'iin Gullaallee hafe.  
Gafarsatti dabranii, qoraan cabsuunis hafe.  
Hurufa Boobiirratti jabbilee yaasuun hafe.  
Bara jarri dhufanii loon teenyas indhumanii.  
Idda Mashashaan dhufee birmadummaan is hafe<sup>1299</sup>

#### Gloss

No more standing on Entoto, to look down at the pasture below,  
No more taking cattle to Finfinnee, to water at the mineral spring.  
No more gathering on Tulluu Daalattii, where the Gullaallee assembly used to meet.  
No more going beyond Gafarsa to chop firewood.  
No more taking calves to the meadow of Hurufa Boombii.  
The year the enemy came, our cattle were consumed.  
Since Mashasha came, freedom has vanished.

Therefore, the poem explicitly indicates the beginning of the eviction and dispossession of the Oromo from where their forefathers lived as a result of the foundation of the Shawan kingdom's headquarters in this locality. The localities

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<sup>1299</sup> Tamene , pp. 318-19.

mentioned in the poem had had symbolic significance in the socio-cultural life of the Oromo of Finfinnee. For instance, Entoto is the mountain chain that overlooks Finfinnee, while the latter refers to the area around the hot spring where not only the inhabitants of Finfinnee but also those who inhabited as far west as Meettaa and Ada'aa Bargaa took their cattle to water at mineral spring. Tulluu Dallatti (the Dallatti hill), the meeting place of the Gullaallee Chaffee (assembly) was the hill where Emperor Menilek founded his palace. Last but not least, Hurufa Boombii (the locality that is nowadays called Janhoy meda) was the large open meadow where the Gullaallee's cattle had grazed.

Perhaps, it was the eviction of some, alienation, and the gradual pacification of most of the nearby Oromo in general and the Gullaallee in particular that motivated Empress Taytu, Menilek's consort, to descend from the Entoto hill and encamp on Tulluu Dallati, which overlooks Hora Finfinnee by about 1886.<sup>1300</sup> According to Menilek's chronicler, Empress Taytu was attracted by the mild temperature of the locality compared with Entoto and the beauty of the area around the hot spring. ከእንጦጦ በታች በላዉ ፍል ዉሀ ለመታጠብ አጼ ምኒልክም ወይዘሮ ጣይቱም ወርደዉ ነበር። በዚያ ጊዜ ወይዘሮ ጣይቱ ከድንኳኑ ደጃፍ ሁነዉ ሙቀቱን ማማሩን

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<sup>1300</sup> Concerning the date of the foundation of the town, see Shimelis, "Urbanizing a Nation", p. 152, who indicates that the exact date of the foundation of Addis Ababa, if not the circumstances of its foundation, is difficult to establish as most writers indicate that it was founded in 1886. whereas for Tekalign, it was in 1887. See also Ahmed Zekaria, Bahru Zewde, and Taddese Beyene, eds., *Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Centenary of Addis Ababa, November 24-25, 1986* (Addis Ababa, 1987); Bahru, *A History of Modern Ethiopia*; Bairu, *Asma Giyorgis and His Work* pp. 774-777; Garretson, pp. 6-7; Richard Pankhurst, *Economic History of Ethiopia, 1800-1935* (Addis Ababa, 1968), p. 696ff.

ሀገሪቱን ተመለከቱ ። ከዚህች ሀገር ቤት ልሥራ ብለዉ ለመኑ።<sup>1301</sup> ( Emperor Menilek and Empress Taytu descended to the hot spring which is found at the foot of the Entoto in order to take bath. At that time, the empress observed the comfortable temperature and beauty of the area. Hence she requested the emperor to give her the land in the vicinity of the hot spring where she would build a house).

Land alienation in this region perhaps started immediately after the relocation of the Shawan headquarters from north to central Shawa in the late 1870s. “We know, for instance, that in the early 1880s,” Tekalign writes, “a fairly large number of Gullaalle Oromo in and around the settlement of Dildila were removed ... in order to make room for the new town of Intoto.” Perhaps the land measurement was carried out in the region in 1887 to revise the previous allocation to accommodate more followers and also solicit more revenue.<sup>1302</sup>

Meanwhile, other very much interrelated factors led to the birth and the thriving of the Shawan kingdom’s headquarters deep inside the abode of the Tulama. We can divide these factors into two broad categories, namely geographical and political. Among the geographical factors, the most important ones were ‘the presence of hot springs, the abundance of firewood, and the suitability of the

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<sup>1301</sup> Gabra Sellase, p. 138.

<sup>1302</sup> Tekalign, “A city and Its Hinterlands,”p. 130; Shimelis, “Urbanizing a Nation”, p. 162.

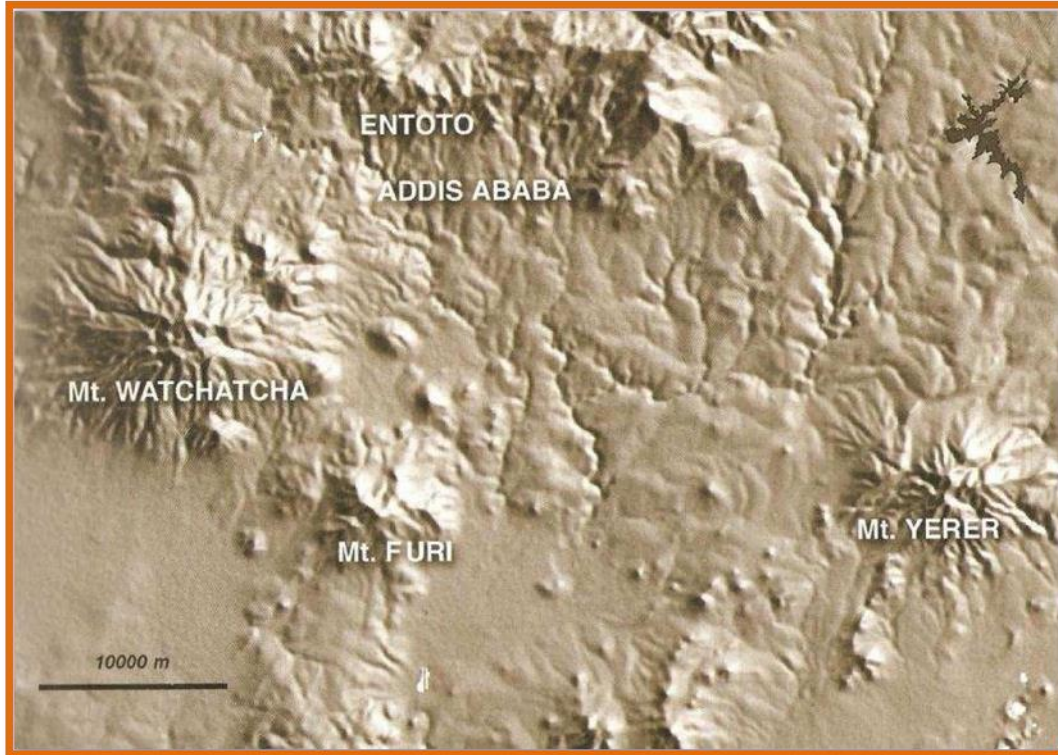


climate.”<sup>1303</sup> Moreover, location also played a vital role in the establishment of the capital and also impacted its development. As we have seen elsewhere in the chapter and can be seen from the topographic map on the following page, Addis Ababa is a valley overlooked by hills like Entoto, Wachacha, Yarar, and Furii, among others, in the north, west, east, and south, respectively. It is also located closer to the watershed, which divides the basins of two major rivers, the Abbay and Awash, in the north and south, respectively. Similarly, Addis Ababa is founded on the dividing line between the *daga* and the *wayna daga*. Therefore, from this, we may discern that the locality has been the source of several rivers like Qabbannaa, Qachaanee, Qurtumee, and Aqaaqii Qaala, on the one hand, Sibiluu and its tributaries which flow to the Awash and Abbay, respectively and as well as hot springs like Horaa Finfinnee. Similarly, due to the convergence of *daga* and *woina daga* climate zones, the locality and its hinterlands were ideal for crop production and animal husbandry, which supplied food crops and animal products to the steadily growing inhabitants of the town. To put it in a nutshell, the hinterlands of the city have been serving as its bread baskets ever since its foundation.<sup>1304</sup>

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<sup>1303</sup> How climate became the cause for the shift of Menilek seat from the Entoto hill to Finfinni Valley, see Gabra Sellase, p. 138, “የእንጦሮ ከተማ .... ብርዱ እጅግ የበረታ ነዉ (The town of Entoto is very cold).

<sup>1304</sup> Shimelis, “Urbanizing a Nation,” pp. 153-54; see also Garretson, p. 1; Ronald J. Horvath, “Around Addis Ababa: A Geographical Study of the Impact of a City on Its Surroundings”, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1966; For issues related to the food supply to the city inhabitants, see Tekalign, “A city and Its Hinterlands”.



Map 10<sup>1305</sup>, Topographic map for the location of Addis Ababa adopted from Mikiyas Tesfaye Aragaw, "Urban Open Space Use in Addis Ababa: The case of Meskel Square" (Master Thesis in Landscape Planning, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, 2011), p. 6.

As we have seen above, the defeat and the eviction of the Oromo gosa like the Gullaallee necessitated the foundation of the city in the low-lying place, reducing the strategic importance of the nearby hills like Entoto. Moreover, by dint of the coronation of Menilek in 1889, the nascent Shewan capital has been transformed into the political, economic, and cultural center of the Ethiopian Empire. However, during the first decade after its foundation, the city was mainly inhabited by

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<sup>1305</sup> The map indicates the Finfinne and Eekkaa Valleys overlooked by Mt Entoto, Mt. Watchatcha, Mt. Furi and Mt. Yerer.

soldiers. The flocking of a large number of famished civilians during the time of the Great Ethiopian Famine (1888-1892) and the influx of foreigners and nationals after the battle of Adwa (1896) substantially increased the number of civilian inhabitants of the city. “The Chiefs of the *sefers* (encampments) *had* the responsibility of,” Eshetu writes, ‘administration, security, and justice in areas allotted to them.’<sup>1306</sup>

Be that as it may, there is no doubt that this locality was named Finfinnee for a long time. For instance, almost forty years before the foundation of the town, Krapf writes, the locality was known as Finfinni (which means bubbling/ hot spring) and is more appropriate than Finfinnee. Therefore, names like Finfinni and Entoto have been used longer than we have imagined. Moreover, by about 1840, Ludwig Krapf meticulously noted the pattern of settlements of the Tulama subgroups when he passed through their territories during King Sahla Sellase's military expedition. “The first campaign which I thus made, in January and February 1840, led me into the territories of the tribes [sic] of”, writes Krapf, “the Abeju[Abichu], Woberi [Oborii], Gelan[Galan], Dembichu[Gumbichuu], Finfinni, where there are hot springs with much sulphur in them, and of the Mulofalada, Metta Robi, Wogidi, Metta and Kuttai, all [Oromos]”<sup>1307</sup>. According to Krapf the term Finfinni refers to the Oromo *gosa*, who inhabited the area around the hot

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<sup>1306</sup> Eshetu Assen, “ The Growth of Municipal Administration and Some Aspects of Daily Life in Addis Ababa, 1901-1930,” in *Proceedings of the International Symposium on the centenary of Addis Ababa (Nov.24-25, 1986)*, p. 79.

<sup>1307</sup> Krapf, p. 23

spring, located almost roughly in the centre of the present-day Addis Ababa. It is striking that when one travels from the then Shawan capital, Angolala to the present-day Addis Ababa area and beyond to the west, one crosses these Tulama *gosa* abodes in the orders stated by Krapf. For instance, we have seen time and again in the thesis that Gumbichuu were the northern neighbors of Gullaallee, whom Krapf identified as Finfinni Oromo. Similarly, Muloo and Meettaa are found west of Finfinni. From this, we may construe that the term Finfinni refers to the much larger area and is not simply refers to the hot spring as some people perceive to date. As we have seen, Entoto was also in use by about the 1840s. But the origins of the term Finfinni / Finfinnee and Entoto are open to polemical debates as sources at our disposal do not help us to disentangle these issues clearly although there are assumptions as we have seen above.

The term Shagar has also been used by the local people to denote the present-day capital of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa. It is captivating that among the Oromo who have inhabited the hinterlands of the city, the term Shagar is more popular than both Finfinnee and Addis Ababa.<sup>1308</sup> In the same token, Alemayehu Haile also specifies that Shagar is more popular among the nearby Oromo. He claims that the term Shagar is the corrupt form of Shaggiituu, which meant beautiful and refers both to the beauty of the land and its inhabitants.<sup>1309</sup> However, Habtamu Mengistie claims that the term Shagar is derived from an Amharic phrase, Shaga

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<sup>1308</sup> Informants: Teka Fayee , Fayisaa Birruu ( Dagam, May 7-8, 2018)

<sup>1309</sup> Alemayehu, *Seenaa Oromo Hanga Jaarraa 20ffaa*, p. 365.

Agar ሸጋ አገር, which meant beautiful country). This being the case, Habtamu precisely warns us sources at our disposal do not help us to specify when and how it has started to be used as an alternative appellation for the current capital of Ethiopia.<sup>1310</sup>

However, arguably no one is more helpful in this regard than the French traveler, Jules Borelli, who was in Shawa by the period under discussion. Interestingly, he mentions the appellations like Finfinni, Entoto, Dildila, and Shagar, which have been used in one way or another to denote localities in and around the present-day Addis Ababa. To use Borelli's words,

Le roi a fait sa residence d'Antoto ( Dildila pour les Oromo, et -Tchagher - Tchanak pour les Amhara), parce que les anciens rois d'Ethiopie y ont habite; il tient a la denomination d'Antoto, parce qu'il demeurait precedemment dans un de ce nom. Il veut meme faire disparaitre l'ancienne appellation. Le veritable Antoto est situe a deux heures au dela. de Finefini , la ou s'elevaient l'eglise et la maison que Monseigneur Thorins avait fait batir dans le genre des constructions Oromo, occupees main tenant parles fileuses de la reine.<sup>1311</sup>

The king made his residence at Entoto (Dildila for the Oromo, and -Tchagher – Tchanak [ Shagar Chanaqi] for the Amhara) because it had served as the capital of the Ethiopian Kings. King [Menilek] wanted the old Entoto to disappear. The First Entoto is located at a walking distance of two hours from Finefini, where Monsignor Thorins had built a house in the style of the Oromo constructions, now occupied by the queen's spinners.

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<sup>1310</sup> Habtamu Mengistie, *Barara*, pp. 433-36

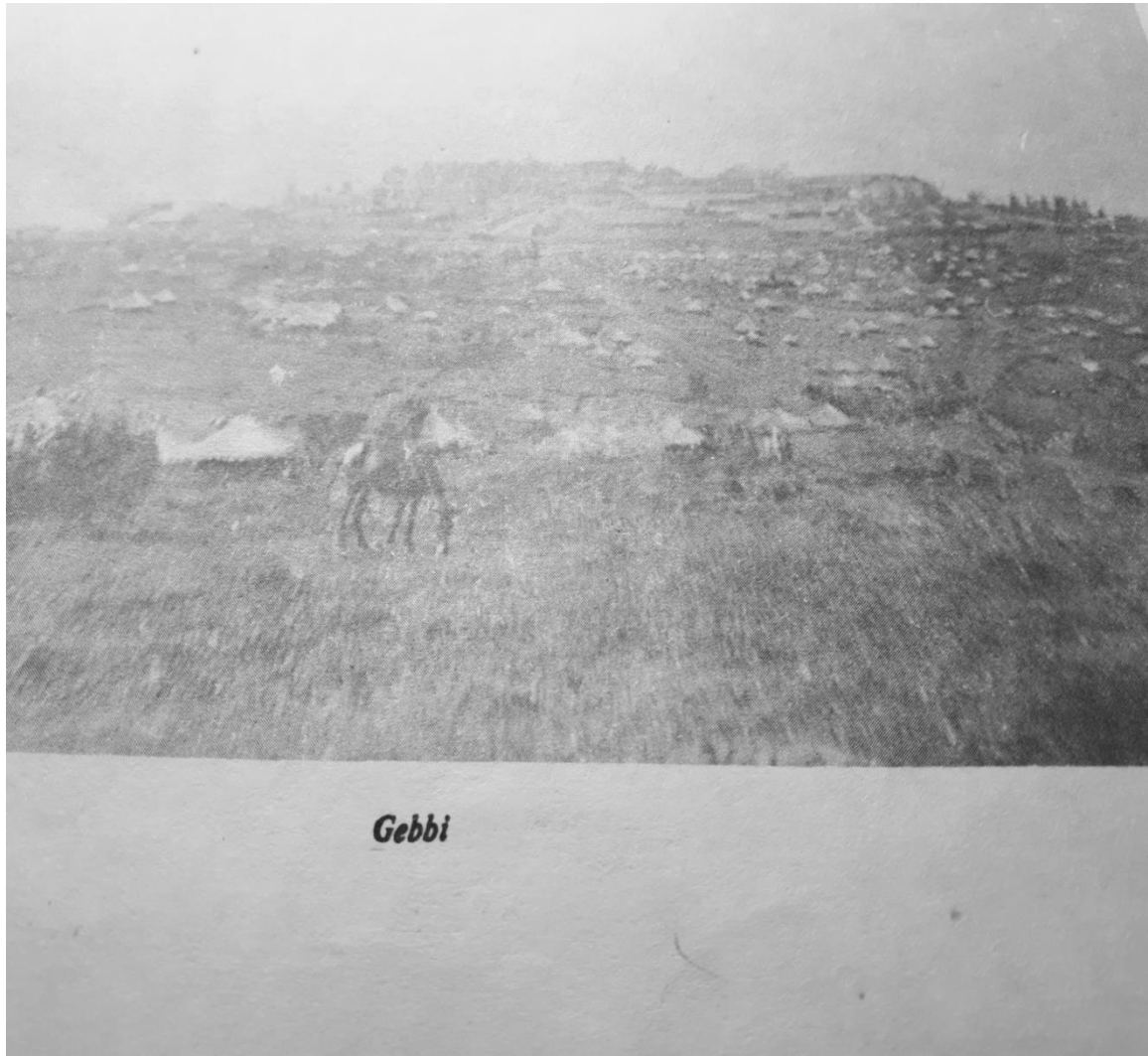
<sup>1311</sup> Jules Borelli, *Éthiopie méridionale: journal de mon voyage aux pays Amhara, Oromo et Sidama, septembre 1885 à novembre 1888 / Southern Ethiopia: diary of my trip to Amhara, Oromo and Sidama countries, September 1885 to November 1888* ( Paris, 1890), p.110

From the above passage, we may discern that Entoto Dildila and Shagar were used to denote the hill located to the north of Finfinni when he was in Shawa. Finfinni, in turn, presumably refers to the low-lying area found between the hills. Yet Borelli claims that Menilek wanted the old Entoto, which was located to the south of Finfinni, to disappear and the name be used for the hill found to the north of Finfinni valley.

Be that as it may, Entoto was soon overshadowed by Addis Ababa less than a decade after its foundation. The term Addis Ababa is said to have been coined by Empress Taytu. “The name is significantly more as a declaration of imperial power and confidence and a statement of intent,” Shimelis writes, “than as a characterization of the condition of the city. There are at least two ways of interpreting the nomenclature and the politics behind it, one that harkens back to the past and the other that looks to the future.”<sup>1312</sup> The foundation of Addis Ababa and its nomenclature, therefore, signify the culmination point of the ascendancy of the Shawan dynasty and the conclusion of the so-called great project of ‘Reconquista’.

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<sup>1312</sup> Shimelis, “Urbanizing a Nation,” P. 156.



**Figure 5. Menilek's Palace of Addis Ababa and Its Environs soon after its foundation** (adopted from Alessandro Triulzi, "Photographic Records of Nineteenth Century Ethiopian Towns in Italian Archives," *Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Centenary of Addis Ababa, November 24-25, 1986*)

The naming of Addis Ababa has been an issue of intense debate among politicians and scholars of various persuasions. For some, it was Finfinni or Finfinnee which evolved into the present-day metropolitan city of Addis Ababa, whereas for others, the term Finfinnee is not in their vocabulary even as far back

as the 1830s and 1840s,<sup>1313</sup> they claimed that the area was the seat of the medieval rulers like Dawit and hence the foundation of the town was the ‘restoration of the lost territory.’ Despite such vociferous claims, Asma Gyorgis, who witnessed the foundation of Entoto and Addis Ababa as capitals of Menilek indicates, “ ከሸማግሎች አፍ የረረ እንጦጦ መርኅቤቴ ደብረ ብርሃን የነገስታት ከተማ ነበረ ይላሉ የቤት ፍራሽ ምልክት አይገኝበትም።<sup>1314</sup> ( Tradition recited by elders indicates that Yarar, Entoto, Marhabete, and Dabra Berhan were the cities of Kings, [but] no ruins of buildings is found in these localities). Pertaining to the naming of Addis Ababa and its implication, Shimelis Bonsa rightly argues as follows:

*አዲስ አበባ የሁለት ቃላት ጥምር ውጤት ነው። አዲስ እና አበባ። የቦታውን ልምላሜና ውበት ከሚወክለው አበባ ከሚለው ስያሜ ይልቅ እንደገና መጀመርን፣ መታደስን፣ መነሳትን የሚያሳዩው አዲስ የሚለው ቃል የተለየ ትርጉም የተሸከመ ስም ይመስላል። ባንድ በኩል ስያሜው የውጭ ወራሪ ጠላትን በማሸነፍ ከመጣው መረጋጋትና እርግጠኝነት በተጨማሪ ስለወደፊት የነበረውን ብሩህ ተስፋን፣ ወደፊት ማደግን መመንደግን፣ በአለም ማህበረሰብ ውስጥ ተገቢውን ቦታ አግኝቶ መከበርን ሲያመለክት በሌላ በኩል ደግሞ ወደ ሁዋላ ተመልሶ ማስታወስን፣ የጠፋን መመለስን ፣ የፈረሰ መገንባትን፣ እንደገና መታደስን ያሳያል። እዚህ ላይ እንደገና መታደስ ሲባል ምን አይነት መታደስ፣ የማንስ መታደስ፣ መታደሱ የሚያመጣው ጥቅም ብቻ ሳይሆን መከራስ ...ብለን መጠየቅ ይኖርብናል። የአዲስ አበባ ታሪክ ሲነሳ የጠፋውን መመለስ ፣ የፈረሰውን መገንባት ከሚለው ትርክት ጎን የመንቀል፣ የማፈናቀል ታሪክም ፣ ትርክትም እንዳለ መገንዘብ ይኖርብናል።<sup>1315</sup>*

*Addis Ababa is derived from two Amharic terms: Addis and Ababa (New and Flower). The term New is more imperative than Flower- since it indicates rebirth, renewal, and revival. It perhaps reveals the stability prevailed in the country*

<sup>1313</sup> See Harris Vol.III, pp. 373-74, who claims as early as the 1840s, the area around Entoto had been formerly the seat of Ethiopian rulers and even designated it ‘the ancient capital of Ethiopia, and also Gabra Sellase, p. 138, who indicates Sahla Sellase’s prophecy about this locality. Harris was influenced by the Shawans and wrote what he heard from them. Similarly, in his recently published monograph, Habtamu Menistie left no stone unturned to associate the Medieval town of Barara with the present-day Addis Ababa, See Habtamu Mengistie, *Barara – Qadamit Addis Ababa: Wudmat ena Dagim Lidat ( Barara- Addis Ababa’s Predecessor: Foundation, Destruction and Rebirth, 1400 – 1887*, Trenton, New Jersey: The Red Sea Press, 2020.

<sup>1314</sup> Bairu, *Asma Gyorgis and His Works*, pp. 362-63.

<sup>1315</sup> <http://www.addisadmassnews.com/Saturday, 23 December 2017 15:33>



*following victory over foreigners and a bright future, growth, development, and having a respectable place among the world community on the one hand and recapping the past, restoring the lost, rebuilding the demolished, and renewal on the other. But when we say renewal, we have to probe: What kind of renewal, whose renewal, what benefits and challenges the renewal would bring... When the history of Addis Ababa is discussed side by side with restoring the lost and rebuilding the demolished, we have to be also cognizant of a history of annexation and eviction.*



Figure 6. Hora Finfinnee (Finfine Hot Spring) ca. 1900 adopted from Mikiyas Tesfaye, p.7, see also <http://ayyaantuu.org/wpcontent/uploads/2018/07/filwuha.jpg>

As a result of their incorporation into the kingdom of Shawa and the foundation of the Shawan capital, Finfinnee /Addis Ababa/, which by dint of Menilek's

coronation as emperor of Ethiopia also been the capital of modern Ethiopia, the Tulama abode has been transformed not only into the hub of the kingdom of Shawa but also of the modern Ethiopian Empire. Henceforth, the Tulama country in general, and areas like Ada'aa, Bachoo, and Salale in particular have been transformed from the fringe zones prone to the perennial raids of the Shawan kingdom to the breadbasket of the imperial court.<sup>1316</sup> Therefore, this unmistakably marked the shift of the geopolitical centre of the kingdom of Shawa from north to central Shawa. Concomitantly, the geopolitical centre of the modern Ethiopian Empire has shifted from northern Ethiopia to central Ethiopia or the Shawan plateau.

However, from the point of view of the Tulama, this development undercut the political and socio-economic changes that came into being on the eve of their incorporation into the kingdom of Shawa and the foundation of the capital in their heartland and therefore marked the beginning a new trajectory in their history. Henceforth, competition for the domination of the whole Shawan plateau was concluded by the victory of the Shawa Kingdom of course with the Oromo notables like Gobana Dachi, Birruu Nagawoo and Akkaa Buttaa playing leading roles. It is perplexing that except for some parts of Salale and east Shawa, where *Ras Darge* and *Dajjasmach* Germame respectively played a pivotal role in their incorporation into the kingdom of Shawa, most parts of the Tulama country were

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<sup>1316</sup> See Tekalign, "A city and Its Hinterlands," p. 92

incorporated under the leadership of generals of Oromo origin. This further confirms that the Nagasi dynasty had strong ties with the Oromo, and the Amhara and Oromo elites played a pivotal role in its inception. It also saw the culmination point with the alliance of the Oromo and the Amhara elites.<sup>1317</sup>

But this does not mean that the ordinary inhabitants and even elites who had divergent voices were beneficiaries of the new political economy that unfolded as a result of these processes. Rather the agony of the Shawan peasants in general and those of Tulama in particular under the heterogeneous aristocratic elite was palpable and even allegedly unprecedented in the history of modern Ethiopia. Eviction, dispossession, over-taxation, and forced migration were some of the issues that Tulama in general and those around Addis Ababa, in particular, have been grappling with ever since.

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<sup>1317</sup> See Gabra Sellase, p. 86 who indicates that Dajjach Mashasha campaigned with Dajjach Gobana as far west as Guduru.

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## LIST OF INFORMANTS

*Ababu Gizaw*, age ca. 100, Ejere (May 8, 2018)

He is arguably the most knowledgeable oral historian in Hidhaabuu Abbotee and its environs. He is the son Amhara mother and Oromo father and was a patriot based in Marhabete and Salale during the Italian occupation of Ethiopia.

*Abbaa Gadaa Bayyanaa Sanbatoo*, Age 56, Biishooftuu (July 7, 2017).

He was the *Abbaa Gadaa* of Tulama and also the president of the Council of Oromo *Abaaa Gadaa*. He is the descendant of Bune Boorii (the notable of Ada'aa). He provided information on the history of the Ada'aa notables and the *Gada* Sysytem.

*Abba Emru Mekonnen* , age 81, Goha Tsyon ( June 27, 2001)

He provided information on the interaction between the Amhara and the Oromo in the across the Abbay river as well as the relation between the Gafat and the Oromo in Warraa Jarsoo district.

*Abba Hayla Maryam Morodaa*, age 92, Fichee (June 7, /2001 and July, 2018).

He is the descendant of Gabruu Gobee on his father's side and Ashe Rufoo of Salale on his mother's side. Arguably he is the best living informant that we have on the history of both notable families of Salale.

*Abbaa Gadaa Babsaa Badhaasoo*, age 74, Adama (July 6, 2017).

He is the *Abbaa Gadaa* of the Adaamaa district. He is one of our key informants on the history of the Tulama in general and around Adaamaa district in particular.

*Abbaa Gadaa Nagasaa Nagawoo*, ca. 60, Adulaalaa (July 10, 2017).

He belongs to the Galan *gosa* who have inhabited the area not far from the Tulama *Gada* center located at Odaa Nabee. He served as *Abbaa Gadaa* of the Tulama and president of the Oromo *Abbaa Gadaa* Council. He is one of our key informants on the history of the Tulama in general and the *Gada* System in particular.

*Abbaa Gadaa Tashooma Kabtimar*, age 64, Biishooftuu, July 8, 2017.

He is the *Abbaa Gadaa* of the Ada'aa district during the time of interview. His insight on the history of the Ada'aa Oromo of the eponymous district is useful.

*Abbaa Machal Borja*, age 76, Garba Gurrachaa (July 24, 2001)

He is a retired teacher and one of the descendants of Gammadaa Bonayyaa of Salale. He is well informed about this family.

*Abraham Tesema*, age 76, Fiche (June 10, 2001)

He is the distant relative of both Abbaa Maallee and Gabruu Gobee of Salale. He was one of the Salale notable families who were able to retain their forefathers land and came to be one of the most prosperous land lords in Salale. His insight on the history of the aforementioned Salale notables is helpful.

*Akililee Teklu* , age 82, Bishooftuu ( July 10, 2017)

She is the granddaughter of the Buloo Jiloo of the Ada'aa Oromo. She provided information on the history of this notable family.

*Alemayehu Haile*, age ca. 55, Addis Ababa (July 3-4, 2017)

He is arguably the most prolific public historian on the history of the Oromo. His insight on a wide variety issues on the history of Oromo in general and the Tulama in particular is fascinating.

*Alemayehu Zegeye*, age 71, Goha Tsyon (June 27, 2001)

His insight on the Oromo-Amhara interaction in Warra Jaarsoo district is helpful.

*Asebe Zanabach Zeleke*, age 45 (*Shinkurti Mikael*)

He is the descendant of Abbaa Maallee on his mother's side. He is well informed on the history of this family.

*Aster Akililee Teklu*, age 45, Biishoftuu (July 10, 2017).

She is the descendant of Buloo Jiloo Boorii on her mother's side.

*Ayyele Qanaanii, age 64, Gabra Gurracha (June 21, 2001).*

He is the distant relative of Jaallee Maasoo of Kuyyuu and is a resourceful person on the history of this family,

*Badhaadha kiloolee, age 101, Hiddi/Ada'aa ( May 20, 2000)*

One of the well-informed informants on a wide variety of issues, i.e, land tenure, Amhara-Oromo interaction in Ada'aa among others. He is reputed to be one of the best oral historians in the locality.

*Beqele Dammuu, age Fiche (June 9, 2001)*

One of the magnificent informants on the history of Salale in general and Graar Jaarsoo district in particular.

*Beqele Simee, age 81, Saggoo Ganda Ujubaa and Fiichee( June 6, 2001).*

A relative of Abbaa Maallee of Salale.He was our Key informant on the period of Abbaa Maallee and Gabruu Goobee, the notables of Salale in the nineteenth century.

*Birbirsa Hey'ii, age ca . 80, Sabbataa (June 28 - 29, 2017).*

He belongs to the Ada'aa gosa who settled in the area around present-day Sabbataa town. He is one of our key informants on the history of the Oromo who are found in and around Addis Ababa.

*Birru Tsegaye*, age ca. 50, Addis Ababa (May 4, 2018)

He is journalist by profession and also authored a book on the history of the Oromo. His forefather abode was near the Finfinnee hot spring . He provided information on the history of the Oromo of Finfinnee area.

*Chare Za Walda Mariam*, age 84, Fiche, (June 13, 2001)

His insight on the Amhara-Oromo interaction in the Jamaa Valley is helpful.

Riise Debir Demitse Amare , age 78, Fiche( May 15, 2018).

He is a monk at Fiche Ganata Gyorgis church and provided information on the Oromo Amhara relations in Salale.

*Dabtara Hayal Masqal Wondimu*, age 75, Qajiima/ Biishooftuu (May 18, 2000)

He is an Amhara whose parents were also born and raised in Qajima. He arguably considered an unofficial historian of Qajima Gyorgis Church and is indispensable informant on issues like church history and Amhara-Oromo interaction among others.



*Dabtara Marso Hiruy, age 71, Goha Tsyon (June 28, 2001)*

A knowledgeable informant on the introduction and expansion of Christianity in Warra Jaarsoo district and how the district was administered during the time of Ras Darge .

*Dinqee Jamamaa, age 70, Dagam (June 17, 2001).*

Her father, Jamamaa Abbaa Turee was a *malkgna* during Ras Kassa's administration in Salale and provided valuable information on the land tenure system Salale.

*Dubee Buttaa, age 77, Sabbataa (June 29, 2017).*

He belongs to the Subbaa /Meettaa *gosa* of the Tulama. His information on the relations between the Ada'aa/ Galan and Subbaa/ Meettaa on the one hand and the Oromo and the kingdom of Shawa around Finfinnee/ Addis Ababa is useful.

*Ejersa Yadate, age 82, Sululta (April 22, 2018)*

He provided information on the history of Sululta area.

*Eshetu Ariti, age 70, Sabbataa (June 20, 2017)*

He is from the Ada'aa / Galan *gosa* of the Mount Furi area. He provides information on the interaction between the Ada'aa / Galan and Mettaa Oromo subgroups around Sabbataa town.

*Eshetu Taddesse*, age 85, Addis Ababa (June 3, 2017)

He is a descendant of Bazzu Abbaa Dekker on his mother's side. He was educated at the American University of Beirut and is a retired fellow of the World Bank. He was one of the founding members of Macha and Tulama Self Help Association. He is well informed about the families of Bazzu Abbaa Dekker, Janka Nagawoo and Wosenu Dubarro and of course *Ras Tasama Nadaw*.

*Fayisaa Birruu*, age 79, Dagam (May 8, 2018 and June 19, 2001)

He provided information on some of the tradition pertaining to a history of the locality around Dagam district.

*Fayee Dabalee*, age 69, Dagam (June 18, 2001).

He was a *chiqa shum* during the reign of Hayla Sellase. He provided information on the land tenure system in Dagam district.

Asir Alaqa Fayyisaa Jimaa, age 85 Fiche (April 20, 2018).

He is a descendant of Ashee Rufoo on his mother's side. His insight on the history of the family of Ashee Rufoo and their relations with *Ras Darge* is helpful.

*Gabra Hiwct Gabre*, age 104, Dagam, (21/7/95)

He was the servant of *Ras Kassa* during the early twentieth century and participated in the 1935/ 36 Italo Ethiopian war. He is our invaluable informant pertaining to the Shawan kingdom's expansion.

*Gadaa Tolaa*, age 78 Wuccaaalee ( June 7, 2001)

His insight on the history of the Tulama Gada system is helpful.

*Girmaa Tufaa*, age 65, Fiche (April 21-22, 2018),

He is a distant relative of Gabruu Goobee on his father's side. He provided information on the history of notables in Salale.

*Hirphaa Aradaa*, age 67, Sabbataa (June 20, 2017)

He provided information on the interaction between the Galan and other Tulama subgroups found around the present-day Sabbataa town.

*Humne Lataa*, age 75, Jiddaa (May 1-2, 2017)

He was a member of Imperial Body Guard during the reign of Emperor Hayla Sellase. He is from the Jiddaa/Galan gosa of the Tulama. His information on the Gada System is valuable. He also claims that the present-day Sirti town in Jidda woreda named after of his great great great great grandfather (Humne-Lata-Wataru-Ayanu-Taklu-Bune-Migru-Sirti-Abdala-Siibaa-Coorqi-Walab...)

*Ifaa Taaliiaa*, age 73, Adaamaa (July 6, 2017)

He provided information on the relations between the Arsi and the Torban Oboo of east Shawa.

*Jira Mekonnen (PhD) age 45, Jimma (November 20, 2019)*

He is an anthropologist by training and well informed on the Oromo culture and history.

*Kebede Goodana , age 76, Sululta ( April 22, 2018).*

He is the distant relative of Tufaa Munaa . He is our resourceful person on the history of Sululta area in general and the family of Tufaa Munaa in particular.

*Kidane Dabalaa , age 45 , Dabra Tsige ( April 20, 2018)*

He is a relative of Jankaa Nagawoo of Kurfaa/ Dabra Libanos. He provided information on the history of the family of Janka Nagawoo especially their relations with Bazzu Abbaa Dekker.

*Lij Daniel Joote Mesfin , age ca. 70 , Addis Ababa (July 15, 2017).*

He is the great great great grandson of Matakoo Borjaa of the first half of the nineteenth century, contemporary of Sahla Sellase. He provided information on the history of this notable family of the Tulama. Currently he is the president of the Ethiopian Patriot's Association.

*Mabree Goofee, age ca. 90, Anoo Qaaree/ Dagam (May 7, 2018)*

He is one of the acclaimed oral historians of the Oromo history in general and the Tulama in particular. He is the distant relative of the pioneering family ( angafa) of Salale.

*Liqa Kahnat Qalehiwot Habtewold* (interviewed by Journalist Yonas Kebede, *Tizetachi Be EBS*, Sept 21, 2021), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mbK9CTFNA>. A clergy at Ankobar Madhanalam Church and resident of Ankobar town.

*Roobaa Bunee*, age 70, Adaamaa (July 6, 2017)

He provided information on the settlement of the Torban Oboo subgroups like Gumbichuu and Gullaallee in and around the Adaamaa district.

*Shawalul Sagni* , age 60, Garba Gurracha (June 24, 2001).

*A very resourceful informant on the history Kuyyuu district .*

*Shawaa Nagash* (Fiche, May 2017)

He is a retired soldier with the title major. He is well informed on the history of Salale.

*Shuraa Badhaadhaa*, age 63, Adaamaa (July 6, 2017) .

He shed light on the process of the settlement of the Torban Oboo in the districts like Adaamaa, Lumee and Booset .

*Tadlaa Odaa Tuffaa, Addis Ababa ( July 2018*

Interviewed and aired on Oromia Brocating Service (OBS). He was the grandson of Tufaa Arraddoo of Eekkaa gosa.

*Takkaa Begnaa, age 84, Sabbataa (June 30, 2017)*

He belongs to the Galan/Maruu / subgroup of the Tulama. His insight on the history of the Oromo who settled in and around the present-day Addis Ababa is valuable. Especially his information on the history of the conflict between the Ada'aa/ Galan notables ( Jimaa Sanbarroo ) and Mettaa notables ( Ya'ii Galdaasiis ) is helpful.

*Takkaa Fayyee age, 55 Dagam (May 7-8, 2018).*

He provided information on various issues concerning the history of the district of Dagam and Graar Jaarsoo.

*Tekle Ferede( PhD), age 40, Jimma ( July 23, 2017).*

He was born and grew in Manz and is source of information on some of the toponyms of the Shawan sub province of Manz.

*Takle Yemane Birhan*, age 62, Arata Maryam (August 25, 1995)

He was the priest of Fiche Arata Maryam church. He is invaluable informant on the history of Christianity and the Amhara and Oromo interaction in Graar Jaarso district.

*Major Tilahun Fayyisaa*, age 81, Fiche (April 21, 2018)

An octogenarian retired soldier and the descendant of one of the notables around the present-day Fiche, Aгаа Buchillo , who was contemporary of *Ras Darge*. He is valuable informant on the history of the area around the present-day Fiche Town.

*Tirunesh Badhaanee*, age 77, Goha Tsyon (June 28, 2001)

She is a descendant of both Fuursaa Dabboo and Daadhii Maanyuu. She provided useful information on the history of these notable families of Salale.

*Tufaa Mekonnen*, age 87, Mulo Fallee (May 2, 2017 )

He is the descendant of the well-known nineteenth century notable of Muloo, Wadaay Minoo. His insight on the history of this family is helpful.

*Tufaa Washaaree*, age 81, Kootichoo Goobboollaa / Fichee (July 2001)

He is a well informed elder on the history of Graar Jaarsoo distict.

*Waaqshum Badhaanee*, age 78, Dagm (June 16, 2001)

He provided information on the early history of the Oromo in general and Tulama in particular.

*Waaqtolaa Balchaa*, age 78, Garbaa Gurracha ( 25/06/ 2001)

He is one of the reliable informants on the history of Kuyyuu district.

Walda Yohannes Warinah , age ca. 70 , Addis Ababa ( October 5, 2017)

He is a retired journalist and nowadays he has been conducting research on the history of the Oromo in general and Shawa in particular.

*Warquu Mettaa*, age 71, Sabbataa (June 20, 2017).

He belongs to the Mettaa subgroup of the Tulama . He provided information on the history of the area around Sabbtaa.

*Wolde Mariam Ararasa*, age 61, Sabbataa, (July 1, 2017)

He is from the Bachoo gosa of the Tulama Oromo. He is one of the key informants on the history of the Tulama Oromo in general and the Bachoo subgroup in particular.

*Yigezu Dana*, age 33, Jimma (December 2016).

He is from Walyata and provided information on the toponyms and the title of the rulers of Walayta.



*Zanabach Zeleke*, age 62, Shinkurti Michael/ Fiche (May 2017)

She is the direct descendant of Abbaa Maallee of Saggoo gosa of Salale. She is one of the few reliable informants on the history of this family.