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**SOME ASPECTS OF THE MONARCHS OF THE SHANAN
GIBEE OROMO KINGDOMS (SOUTHWESTERN ETHIOPIA):
A HISTORY TO THE 1880S**

BY

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Abstract

Historians, anthropologists and other social scientists have written many works on Oromo kingdoms of the Gibe valley and various aspects related to these states or the Maccaa Oromo in the region. However, the focus of (all or at least most) these materials have not been to investigate the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe Oromo states as a group to the 1880s. Moreover, in some cases various works have reflected misinterpretations, misconceptions, distortions, etc. on these monarchs or a number of issues relevant to them. In an attempt to fill these gaps and reconstruct a history of the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe Oromo kingdoms to 1880s, my study has employed qualitative technique of research and used oral information, tradition, various written sources and in a few cases linguistic evidences. There are legends that claim the founders of most or all ruling descent groups of the Shanan Gibe states were non-Oromo new comers. Unlike this view and in line with the argument that challenge it, the thesis based on additional sources has concluded that the ancestors of the founding fathers of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms were parts of the pastoralist Oromo groups who had moved to the wider region from Baalee and its neighbors since the end of the sixteenth century as pioneers. In addition, the research has come up with new evidence that underlines a qaalluu or his descendant formed a kingdom and a ruling dynasty in Gommaa, one of the Oromo monarchies in the Gibe region, besides gadaa officials like abbaa duulaa and others or their off spring who set up monarchical states in Jimmaa, Limmuu-Innaariyaa, Guumaa and Geeraa. Moreover, the work points out monarchical mentality in the region developed naming tradition, “language” or speech, words, sayings, customs, etc. that fit to its institution, norm and system and which disseminated into the mass of the population mainly through internal agents. Beside these, the study present additional evidences that underline Mnilik’s conquest, which brought to end the existence of most Oromo states of the Gibe valley in the 1880s except the kingdom of Jimmaa that lasted until 1932 with autonomy, had profound impacts on relevant monarchs and the region. The list of the findings of this work goes on. In short, the study presents fresh views, interpretations, explanations, details etc. on some historical phenomena revolved around the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states, and it occasionally challenges or questions a number of relevant misconceptions, misinterpretations, distortions, etc. appeared in various works. The research is a part of study in progress and thus a lot has to be investigated yet. Researchers should conduct further studies on various aspects of the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe Oromo kingdoms, especially on list and reigns of most rulers of the five dynasties as their history has not only political significance but also social, cultural, economic and other importance even for the wide Oromo society and others elsewhere.

Preface

The desire for this research at first has emerged partly from various works I read on a history of the Oromo in the Gibe region ever since I completed my undergraduate class at Addis Ababa University. In addition, my long time service especially at Jimmaa Zone Culture and Information/Tourism Office has given me a chance to be acquainted with many elders most of whom usually in one-way or the other like to mention about the monarchs of different Oromo kingdoms in the region. The Oromo monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states had been in power independently from a part of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the 1880s. When these monarchs ruled their states, many significant historical developments took place in terms of political, administrative, cultural, religious, social, economic, etc. aspects. The aim of this study is to reconstruct a history of the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe Oromo states to the 1880s.

To meet my objective I have used qualitative method of research. The sources I have employed for this research can be categorized into two groups. The first is written sources, which include books, journal articles, magazines, manuscripts, newspaper, archives etc. To consult written sources, I have visited various libraries such as IES, Kennedy Library, NALA, Library of Oromo Cultural Center, Social Science Library of Jimmaa University, Library of Jimmaa Teachers' Training College, Jimmaa Public Library, etc. As far as archival materials especially of historical letters that were relevant to different monarchs of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms were concerned, my attempt to get them was not that much successful. I found only a few copies of the original historical letters all that are addressed to Abbaa Jifaar II of the kingdom of Jimmaa. The main reasons behind the relative availability of historical letters relevant to Abbaa Jifaar II of Jimmaa unlike the other monarchs of the neighboring Oromo kingdoms of the Gibe region have been outlined in the initial page of the Appendices part of this thesis. The second one is oral information and tradition. When I collected oral data, many informants were cooperative and eager to share what they knew while small numbers of informants were not willing for various reasons. Also, there were occasions when my informants had suspicion for the motive of the study and/or reservation on some issues. Moreover, the views of a number of my informants have been influenced by past and/or recent political, social, cultural, religious etc. developments that took place or still going on in the country and the world. Here, I want to note two things.

Firstly, in addition to the ones I have gathered for this study, I have used oral information that was already collected by me at the zonal cultural office I have been serving, etc. Secondly, under very limited circumstances. I was forced to use friends and relatives for collecting, especially of oral information.

One of the dilemmas I have faced in this MA study is challenging sometimes the views and/or arguments of wonderful works produced by various researchers and writers especially of authorities on the subject and famous scholars. These authorities and celebrated scholars include Professor Mohammed Hassen, Professor Guluma Gameda, Antonio Cecchi (explorer), Dr. Enrico Cerulli, Professor Ignazio Guidi, Professor John Spencer Trimingham, Professor George Wynn Brereton Huntingford, Professor Ulrich Braukämper and others. Their excellent works have played a great role in widening the horizon of knowledge on the topic and in the field. I have learnt a lot from their studies. I share the same or similar views with the works of these scholars on the majority of issues in relation to the study area. Nevertheless, sometimes I disagree with their versions on certain issues and challenge them. This is not because of my personal selfish interest or any other motive but for the sack of academic honesty.

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is the introductory one, which gives context to the study. It includes the physical and human setting of the Gibe valley, historical background of the study area and the later administrative reorganizations in the region. The second chapter focuses on emergence of kingship, and legends and arguments on the ruling groups of the Oromo states in the Gibe region. It also gives the list of monarchs of these kingdoms. The third chapter deals briefly with tradition and religions in relation to the monarchs of these states. The fourth chapter investigates some administrative aspects and the interactions of the monarchs of the Shanan Gibee states. The last chapter covers succession affairs and the annexation of these states in the 1880s in relation to their monarchs. This study is important due to the following factors. First, we have few works that fully dedicated to the monarchs of Shanan Gibee as a group. Secondly, there are some misconceptions, misinterpretations, distortions and lack of information on part of a number of literature about these Oromo monarchs. Thus, filling some of these gaps through such study is essential.

Acronyms

CTO	Culture and Tourism Office
EC	Ethiopian Calendar
EPRDF	Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front
IES	Institute of Ethiopian Studies
JZCTO	Jimmaa Zone Culture and Tourism Office
NALA	National Archive and Library Agency
OCTB	Oromia Culture and Tourism Bureau

Transliteration

I. Afaan Oromoo Terms

1. Words of Afaan Oromoo (the Oromo people's language) origin or adopted by it are spelled according to the standardized system of Oromo alphabet known as *Qubee* Afaan Oromoo. The language basically has five short and five long vowels.

Short vowels	Long Vowels	Examples	Meanings in English
a	aa	<i>Magaalaa</i>	City, town; market place
e	ee	<i>Eelee</i>	Baking pan
i	ii	<i>Miira</i>	Emotion, feeling
o	oo	<i>Boroo</i>	Backyard
u	uu	<i>Gurmuu</i>	Shoulder

2. The length of a vowel in a word may result in a change of meaning.

Example: *Garaa*---Stomach

Gaara---Hill, mountain

3. A series of more than two vowels is possible only if separated by glottal (‘).

Example: *Re’ee*-----Goat

Finca’aa--Waterfall

4. Afaan Oromoo consonants are stressed (geminated) by doubling similar consonants

Example: *Jaarraa*- Century

Caffee- Assembly

5. There are five paired phonemes that are formed by two different consonants. These are *ch*, *dh*, *ny*, *ph* and *sh*. Among these *dh*, *ny* and *ph* have sounds different from the English consonants.

Dh: voiceless, dental, implosive as in ‘*dhaala*’ (inheritance) or ‘*haadha*’ (mother).

Ny: voiceless, palatal, nasal as in ‘*nyaara*’ (eyebrow) or ‘*funyaan*’ (nose).

Ph: voiceless, bilabial, ejective, stop as in ‘*tapha*’ (game) or ‘*qophii*’ (preparation, program).

6. Moreover, *c*, *q* and *x* have different sounds from the English consonants,

C: as in ‘*carraa*’ (luck) or ‘*leenca*’ (loin).

Q: as in ‘*qaanqee*’ (spark) or ‘*qeeqa*’ (critics).

II. Amharic Words

1. The seven sounds of the Sabeian alphabet are represented as follows:

1 st ቦ = Ba	5 th ቤ = Be
2 nd ቦጉ = Bu	6 th ብ = B
3 rd ቢ = Bi	7 th ቦ = Bo
4 th ባ = Bā	

2. Palatalized Sounds are represented as follows:

ቸ = Sh
ቸ = Ch
ኘ = Gn
ጀ = J

3. Goltalized sounds are represented as follows:

ቀ = Q
ጠ = T
ጮ = Ch
ጸ / ፀ = Ts
ጰ = Ph

4. Gemination should be indicated by doubling consonant

Example: አለ - *Alla*

አበበ - *Abbaba*

5. General examples

ፀደደ - *Tsaday*

አወረጃ - *Awrājjā*

ግራኝ - *Grāgn*

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to reconstruct a history of the monarchs of Shanan Gibe Oromo states to the 1880s. The focus of this study is not a biography of kings and queens. Rather, the work treats the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms as a group. This thesis is a history work that deals with some aspects of the Oromo rulers of the Gibe valley to the 1880s.

The Gibe region is found in today's Oromiyaa National Regional State, southwestern part of Ethiopia. Sources indicate that the five Maccaa Oromo monarchical states were bounded by the Rivers Gibe in the east, Gojeb in the south and Dhidheessaa-Waamaa in the north.¹ They flourished in this part of Africa in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.² Shanan Gibe is a term derived from Afaan Oromoo (the language of the Oromo people) and represents the five Gibe Oromo states of Geeraa, Gommaa, Guumaa, Jimmaa and Limmuu-Innaariyaa.³ The name Shanan Gibe also denotes the territories of these states.⁴ The Shanan Gibe Oromo are the part of the Maccaa Oromo who have lived in the territories of the historical five Gibe kingdoms.

The years 1880s marked a watershed in the history of the Maccaa Oromo of the Gibe valley in general and that of their monarchs in particular. It was during this time that Mnilik's army annexed the kingdoms of the Shanan Gibe Oromo and the rest Maccaalands. It was in this decade that monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states of the time except Abbaa Jifaar II removed from their power and lost their kingdoms.

This study is significant for the following reasons. First, we have no or few historical work/s that fully dedicated only to these monarchs (of the Shanan Gibe states) as a group. Secondly, there are number misconceptions, misinterpretations, distortions and lack of information on part of

¹ See Guluma Gemed, "Land, Agriculture and Society in the Gibe Region: Southwestern Ethiopia, c. 1850-1974," PhD Dissertation (Michigan State University, History, 1996), p. 66 and Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo of Ethiopia: A History 1570-1860* (Trenton, 1994), p. 87; Alamaayyoo Hayilee, *Seenaa Oromoo Hanga Jaarraa 20th* (A History of the Oromo to the Twentieth Century'), (Finfinnee, 2016), p. 201.

² Guluma, Gemed, "Land, Agriculture and Society..."-pp. 38-39, 78-80.

³ See Ketebo Abdiyo, *Abba Jifar II of Jimma Kingdom 1861-1934: A Biography* (Addis Ababa, 2012), pp. 23-25; Temesgen Lemessa, "A History of Limmu-Ennarya, Ca.1800-1910," MA Thesis (Jimma University, History, 2013), p. 3. This is also a common tradition in the region.

⁴ Informants: Abdulkерim Abbaa Garoo, Abbaa Naga Abbaa Mukaa, Sabit Jemal and others.

some literature about these Oromo monarchs. Thus, filling a part of such gaps through the study is necessary.

1.1. Physical and Human Setting

The Gibe region is overwhelmingly mountainous though there are also inconsistent plains among mountains and alongside river valleys. Ecologically, the region is categorized into highland (*baddaa, dagā*), semi highland (*baddaa daree, woinā dagā*) and lowland (*gommojjii, qollaa*) areas. The altitude of the area above sea level shapes the volume of yearly rainfall and thus the flora range between a tropical thick forest of the highlands and savanna grasslands of the lowland zones.⁵

As we have already indicated, the region is bordered by the River Gibe in the east and the Gojeb River in the south while it is crossed by River Dhidheessaa in the western part.⁶ The environment of the region had influence on history, settlement and economy of people. For instance, the areas near the Gojeb River were comparatively poorly cultivated and sparsely inhabited due to the existence of deadly diseases. Somewhat inhospitable lowland of its valley became a natural border between the Maccaa Oromo of the Gibe region and the neighboring peoples of Kaffa and Dawuro.⁷

It is believed that *Coffea arabica* originated particularly in the highlands of southwestern Ethiopia (to which Shanan Gibee, Kaffa proper, etc. belong).⁸ The Gibe region and the rest of wild coffee growing areas of southwestern Ethiopia are found within the same ecological belt which is ideal for Arabica coffee plant.⁹ It was from this part of Africa that *Coffea arabica* could spread to different parts of the world. Thus, the people of the Gibe region grew coffee for home and trading purposes.¹⁰

Travelers and other scholars have tried to estimate the population of the Gibe region and /or its parts. Massaja (a Catholic missionary who was in the region in the 1850s) stated that at the end

⁵ Guluma Gameda, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 38-39.

⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 38 and 82.

⁷ *Ibid*, p. 40.

⁸ A. E. Haarak, *Modern Coffee Production* (London, 1962), PP. 5-6; Gordon Wringley, *Coffee* (New York, 1968), pp. 1 and 4.

⁹ Guluma Gameda, "Some Notes on Food Crop and Coffee Cultivation in Jimma and Limmu Awrajas, Kafa Administrative Region (1950 to 1970s)" in *Proceedings of the Third Annual Seminar of the Department of History* (Addis Ababa, 1986), pp. 20-21. See also Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 92.

¹⁰ Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 91-98.

of 1850s the population of Jimmaa numbered at about 150,000 which put the kingdom as the most populous in the Gibe region.¹¹ Also, it is claimed that at the peak of the power of Abbaa Bogiboo I (r. 1825-1861) Limmuu-Innaariyaa's population exceeded 100,000.¹² But, at the end of 1870s and the beginning of 1890s disastrous epidemic diseases like typhoid fever and typhus affected the entire region and as a result many of its inhabitants lost their lives.¹³

According to Antonio Cecchi (an Italian explorer who visited the region between 1879 and 1880) in 1880 the population of the Gibe states numbered between about 150, 000 and 157,000 with Guumaa 50,000, Limmuu-Innariya 40,000, Jimmaa 30,000-35,000, Gommaa 15,000-16,000 and Geeraa 15,000-16,000 inhabitants respectively. To Cecchi, Guumaa was a state with the largest population in the region followed by Limmuu-Innariyaa and then by Jimmaa.¹⁴ Undoubtedly, the epidemic diseases of the late 1870s had effect on reducing the population size of the Gibe region. For example, it is stated that the epidemic took the lives of around fifty percent of the inhabitants of Gommaa.¹⁵ On the other hand, sources indicated that Jimmaa was the most populous state in the Gibe region in the 18th and the 19th centuries.¹⁶ As estimated by Tekalign around the middle of 1920s Jimmaa's population numbered from about 300,000 to 350,000.¹⁷ Therefore, we can conclude Cecchi's claim that Guumaa was with the largest population in the Gibe region in 1880 appears unconvincing; and it seems his figure of the time on the population of the entire Gibe region and its parts was underestimation.¹⁸

1.2. Historical Background

The Oromo are the Cushitic people who have lived in the Horn of Africa ever since the time immemorial.¹⁹ Sources indicate that some sedentary Oromo groups inhabited in Shawa in

¹¹Cited in Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p 116. From now, onwards when the paper cites this work it refers to it as Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*.

¹² Mordechai Abir, *Ethiopia: The Era of the Princes* (London, 1968), p. 80.

¹³ Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 136.

¹⁴ See G.W.B. Huntingford, "The Ethnology and History of South-West Ethiopia" in *History of the [Oromo] of Ethiopia* (Oakland, 1993), pp. 30-31.

¹⁵ Guluma "Land, Agriculture and Society," p. 136

¹⁶ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 116-117 and Ketebo, p. 2.

¹⁷ Takalign Wolde Mariam, "Slavery and Slave Trade in the Kingdom of Jimma (ca. 1800-1935)," MA Thesis (AAU, History, 1984), p. 30; see also Ketebo, p. 1.

¹⁸ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 116-117 and Ketebo, pp. 1-2.

¹⁹ Tesema Ta'a, "The Oromo of Wallaga: A Historical Survey to 1910," MA Thesis (Addis Ababa University, History, 1980), p.1; Alemayehu Haile *et al*, *History of the Oromo to the Sixteenth Century*, Second Edition (Finfinne/Addis Ababa, 2006), p.17; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia...*, p. xiii.

thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.²⁰ As articulated by Mohammed Hassen in one of his milestone works:

...the evidence...has clearly established the pre-sixteenth-century Oromo presence within the medieval Christian kingdom of Ethiopia. *The Hagara [Oromo] of Amda Siyon's Chronicle*, the [Oromo] River and the [Oromo] Forest of the local Christian literature, the [Oromo] River of Fra Mauro's map point to a long contact between the Amhara and some Oromo groups. The Galan, Yaya, Liban, Lalo and Waji Oromo, were putative descent groups that lived in and around the region of Shawa long before the sixteenth century. Arab Faqih refers to a number of sedentary Oromo groups, including the large Warra Qaalluu group, who lived under Christian administration. This further confirms the pre-sixteenth-century Oromo presence in the kingdom.²¹

Mohammed has added:

The sedentary agricultural Oromo communities who lived in and to the south of the present region of Shawa in the pre-sixteenth-century period were under the control of Christian administration. However, the pastoral Oromo groups who lived in some parts of what are today the regions of Bale, Sidamo and Gamu Gofa lived beyond the boundaries and outside the control of the Christian kingdom. It was these pastoral groups who launched the massive sixteenth century population movement that changed the history of the Oromo and radically altered the political landscape of the region....²²

Driven by internal and external factors, these pastoralist Oromo groups made a great movement in this part of Africa in the sixteenth century.²³ Accordingly, the Maccaa and Tuulamaa groups of the Booranaa, Oromo moved towards western direction from their center of Haroo Walaabuu in and around southwest side of the source and lower part of the River Genale Doria, and established their common assembly (*caffee*) of Odaa Nabii in historical Fatajar or the present day of Duukam.²⁴ After spending sometime under a common *gadaa* (age based political, socio-economies, military and religious institution of the Oromo) government at Odaa Nabii, by agreement or disagreement the Maccaa left Odaa Nabii for the Tuulamaa and established their own independent assembly at Odaa Bisil in the area of the upper River Gibe. It seems that Odaa Bisil was attractive to the Maccaa Oromo because it was situated in a very suitable environment

²⁰ Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia 1300-1700* (2015), pp. 63-86 and also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. xii.; Mekuria Bulcha, *Contours of the Emergent and Ancient Oromo Nation* (Cape Town, 2011), p. 191. See also Negaso Gidada, *History of the Sayyoo Oromoo of Southwestern Wallaga, Ethiopia from about 1730 to 1886* (Addis Ababa, 2001), pp. 28-30, 38-39.

²¹ Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom...*, p. 104.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Tesema Ta'a, "The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia: From the Mid 16th to the Early 20th Centuries," PhD Dissertation (Michigan State University, History, 1986), pp. 16-17.

²⁴ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 18-19.

gifted with rich grazing land and adequate water. Also, it was not easily exposed to unexpected onslaught of an enemy. As stated by Bahrey, the Maccaa grouped themselves into the Afree and the Sadachaa confederacies. The Afree included the Hoko, Calliyaa, Guduru and Liban while the Sadachaa made up of the Oboo, Suba and Akaakoo. It was from Odaa Bisil that the two Maccaa confederacies launched their inroads and wars of expansion in the southwestern and western south-central parts of today's Ethiopia and also in Gojjam to the north.²⁵

Here, there is a tendency among some historians to associate and demarcate the expansion and settlement areas of the Maccaa groups in line with these two confederacies. Accordingly, the Sadachaa wing of the Maccaa Oromo directed their expansion chiefly to the Gibe region or to the south and southeast direction whereas the Afree confederacy focused to the control of the East and southwest wide territories or the present-day parts of Iluabbaaboor, Wallaggaa etc..²⁶ However, this generalization lacks consistency. Hence there were members of a confederacy who settled across the Maccaaland regardless of geographical or/and administrative boundaries.²⁷ For example, it is widely claimed that the Sadachaa confederacy to which the Oboo and the other two groups belong²⁸ moved and expanded primarily in the Gibe region.²⁹ But some sources indicate that many sub-groups of the Oboo also found in Wallaggaa and Iluabbaaboor.³⁰

Until the sixteenth century, the "Omotic" states were dominant in the Gibe region. The main ones were Innaariyaa, Bosha (Gaaroo) and Yam ('Janjero') out which Innaariyaa was the biggest and the most powerful kingdom in the sixteenth century. Also, there were minor principalities such as Konch, Gumar and Shonkora north of Yam and Gaaroo,³¹ and a small kingdom called "Seka" between River Gojeb and Innaariyaa.³² These states' which had various strength and territorial coverage vanished or were reduced in size following the Oromo movement and expansion to the region in the sixteenth century. The powerful state of Innaariyaa put up stiff

²⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 41-4.

²⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 48, 81-82; Alemayehu *et al*, *History of the Oromo...*, p. 164; Ketebo, p. 8 among others.

²⁷ This generalization should be reconsidered and/or modified.

²⁸ Bahrey, "History of the [Oromo]," in *Some Records of Ethiopia 1539-1646*, eds. and trans. Buckingham and G.W. Huntingford (London, 1954), pp.112-113; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 42 and 48; Ketebo, p. 8 among others

²⁹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 48-49 and 81; Ketebo, p. 8. See also Alemayehu *et al*, p. 164 among others.

³⁰ Negaso, p. 36; see also Alemayehu *et al*, *History of the Oromo...*, pp. 172-173 and 158-159.

³¹ Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 42-43.

³² Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 80.

resistance to this expansion of the Oromo until 1710.³³ Unable to stop the onslaught of the Maccaa Oromo, the rulers of Innaariyaa and most other states of the region ran away to the neighboring monarchy of Kaffa while the masses remained in their homelands, which facilitated intermingling and assimilation to take place between the two communities. The pastoralist Oromo established themselves amid the settled agriculturalist pre-Oromo peoples who at first were greater in number than them, but because of wide inter-ethnic marriages, assimilation and continuous flow of fresh arrivals in to the region, the Maccaa gradually balanced and perhaps reversed their proportion. The situation paved the way for the transition of the Maccaa Oromo from a chiefly nomadic community to that of predominantly agrarian society in the region. “This in turn set in motion a dynamic political process that eventually culminated in the formation of the five Oromo Gibe states”³⁴ or the Shanan Gibe kingdoms.

It seems at least some or most components that make up the Shanan Gibe had their roots from the names of sub-groups or clans of the Oromo. Sources agree that Limmuu and Jimmaa are names for the sub-branches (‘tribes’ or ‘clans’) of the Maccaa Oromo.³⁵ In relation to Geeraa there are two views. The first one claims that the term Geeraa as a name of land in the Gibe region was derived from a long spear called *geeraa* (according to the work of Ibsa Hurrisa also was known as *geerawoo*) which was popularly used by the warlike people of the area.³⁶ The second view says that Geeraa was the name of fifteen persons in general and one man in particular who settled down as pioneer/s in the land to which their/his name was given.³⁷ It seems the first view that claims the term Geeraa comes from the name of the traditional spear held by ancestors of the Oromo people of the territory is not convincing. Because, at least since fourteenth century the name Geeraa was used to refer to a people, a territory and/or a person

³³ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 43.

³⁴ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 79-83

³⁵ Alemayehu *et al.*, *History of the Oromo...*, pp. 150, 155-157, 173; Fekede Sleshi Fufa, “A Historical Survey of Limmu Oromoo of East Wallaga, Ca. 1880s-1974,” MA Thesis (Jimma University, History, 2013), pp. 18-21; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 45-46, 50. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Abbaa Nagaa and Abdulkereim among others.

³⁶ Abreham Alemu, “Narrating Local Identity among the Southwestern Oromo of Ethiopia: Case of Jimma and Gera,” *African Study Monographs*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (2012), pp. 23, 35, 37; Ibsa Hurrisa, “A History of Geeraa Oromoo (Jimma Zone) Southwest Ethiopia (1830s-1974),” MA Thesis (Jimma University, History, 2014), p. 2.

³⁷ See Abreham, pp. 35-36.

outside the Gibe region in Manz of north Shawa.³⁸

It appears by the time when the five Gibe states were formed in the eighteenth century³⁹ and from that time onward terms (components) such as Limmuu, Jimmaa, Gommaa, Geeraa and Guumaa (that together make up the Shanan Gibe) became names for the five Maccaa Oromo territorial states in the region.⁴⁰ To each of these independent entities, besides groups directly or indirectly related to such names, numerous other clans and sub-clans of various backgrounds (some of whom were trans-boundaries) identified themselves historically. Thus, it is common to hear in the Gibe region the various Maccaa Oromo groups identifying themselves as Geeraa or Guumaa or Gommaa Oromo in addition to (just as) Limmuu or Jimmaa Oromo.⁴¹ In relation to the content of the identity narratives of the Maccaa in general and the Shanan Gibe Oromo in particular, Abreham Alemu states:

The content of the identity narratives of southwestern Oromo varies from group to group, depending upon the specific social contexts and communicative situations in which they are performed. Generally speaking, however, they are constructed on the bases of three interrelated and commonly shared elements that are recognized as important distinguishing features of each group. These are elements related to selectively (re-)constructed (remembered) local history, ancestral territory, and moral values or character traits.⁴²

During the first part of their movement to the Gibe region, generally the Oromo were pastoralists without class stratification. Their social, political, military and religious activities were centered on the *gadaa* system.⁴³ According to Asmarom Legesse, “The gada system is a system of classes (*luba*) that succeed each other every eight years in assuming military, economic, political and

³⁸ Mekuria, pp. 191-192. See also Kofi R.H. Darkwah, *Shewa, Menilik and the Ethiopian Empire 1813-1889* (London, 1975), pp. 6-8. Personal experience shows that like some part of the world, in Ethiopia in general and in Oromia, in particular there are many places whose origin associated with the names of descent groups or sub-groups, for example, Arsii, Jaarsoo, Booranaa, Ogaden etc.

³⁹ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 78-80.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 80; J. S. Trimingham, *Islam in Ethiopia* (London, 1965), p. 199; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp.86-87, 100-113, 153-161, 200 among others. Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Abbaa Madad Sheekotaa and others.

⁴¹ See for example, Ibsa, pp. 2, 15-17; Deressa Bayisa, “A Historical Survey of the Guumaa Oromo Kingdom, ca. 1800-1880s,” MA Thesis (Jimma University, History, 2013), pp. 15, 20-22; Husein A[bbaa] Gojjam, “Barreeffama Aadaafi Seenaa A[anaa] Gommaa” (‘A Paper on History and Culture of Gommaa District’,) a manuscript prepared at Gommaa District CTO (2004 EC), pp. 9, 14, 18, 20, 23 and others. Informants: Abbaa Biyya Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Nagaa, Abbaa Madad among others.

⁴² Abreham, p. 26.

⁴³ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 57.

ritual responsibilities.”⁴⁴ Weighty decisions were taken by senior leaders of various clans at the *caffee* assembly⁴⁵ (‘the Oromo parliament’)⁴⁶ whose meeting took place in the *caffee* (the meadow) under the shade of the *odaa* or the sycamore tree.⁴⁷

Initially the Oromo had one national *caffee* (“meadow”) assembly. But, due to their expansion and/or movement to different directions this common national assembly lost its importance and various confederacies and clan *caffee* (“meadow”) assemblies emerged.⁴⁸ In the Gibe region, different Oromo groups and subgroups developed their own separate assemblies.⁴⁹ For example, one important *caffee* assembly in the region was Odaa Hullee, which was located in the present day district of Omoo-Naaddaa.⁵⁰ According to some sources nine groups and sub-groups such as Abbukaakoo, Agaloo (Hagaloo), Badii, Biloo, Diggoo, Harsuu, Sadachaa /Abbulluu,* Laaloo and Qoree convened at Odaa Hullee and formed a confederacy.⁵¹ Ketebo has been told that the nine clans (*gosa*) that had assembled for the first time at Odaa Hullee were Diggoo, Badii, Qoree, Laaloo, Hagaloo, Biloo, Bitoo, Sadachaa and Harsuu.⁵² Some sources indicate that Odaa Hullee was the center of the *gadaa* council for groups of/in Jimmaa (proper).⁵³ Whatever it was, Odaa Hullee was a significant site of *gadaa* assembly in the region. According to Ketebo, it seems the first meeting took place here in around the last decades of the seventeenth or the beginning of the eighteenth century.⁵⁴

On the other hand, sources mention that Odaa Tinjoo that was found in the current district of

⁴⁴ Asmarom Legesse, *Gada: Three Approaches to the Study of African Society* (New York, 1973), p. 8.

⁴⁵ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and society...”, p.57; see also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 93-94.

⁴⁶ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. viii.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, pp.14 and 93

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 12-14, 44. Informants: Jemal Abbbaa Foggii, Abdulkerim and Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa among others.

⁴⁹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 93-94; see *Odaa Hullee Sirna Gadaa Jimmaa* (‘Odaa Hullee: the Gadaa System of Jimmaa,’) an Oromo language special edition magazine (January 2010 EC), pp. 39-41. Informants: Abbbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa and Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu.

⁵⁰ Deressa Debu, “Agro-Ecological History of Omo-Naaddaa in Jimmaa Zone of Oromia from 1900 to 2007,” MA Thesis (Addis Ababa University, History, 2008), pp.11-12; Ketebo, p. 9; Abdulkerim Abbaa Garoo, Abdo Adem *et al*, “Ya Jimmā Katamā Ammasarārat ennā Edgat” (‘Establishment and Development of Jimma Town.’) A paper presented at a panel discussion (Jimmaa, 1995 EC), p. 3; Alemayehu *et al*, *History of the Oromo...*, pp. 14 7-148.

* According to a work entitled *History of the Oromo to the Sixteenth Century*, Abbulluu is/was one of the branches of Sadachaa group in the Gibe region (see Alemayehu *et al*, *History of the Oromo...*, p. 159).

⁵¹ See Deressa Debu, “Agro-Ecological History of Omo-Naaddaa...,” p. 55; *Odaa Hullee Sirna Gadaa Jimmaa*, pp. 39, 41-42. Informants: Abbaa Diggaa Abbaa Duulaa, Abbaa Biyyaa Kabir.

⁵² Ketebo, pp. 9 and 105.

⁵³ *Ibid*, pp. 9-12; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 47 and 72; Alemayehu *et al*, *History of the Oromo...*, p. 160.

⁵⁴ See Ketebo, p. 9.

Limmu-Saqqaa was another center of *gadaa* assembly for the Limmuu Oromo (Shanan Limmuu) of the Gibe region.⁵⁵ Moreover, it is believed that some clans of Geeraa had a center of *gadaa* assembly whose law was known as Tumaa Maayee.⁵⁶ In addition, sources indicate that in Gommaa before/during the monarchical state was about to emerge the council of nine groups and subgroups that constituted Awaalini, Jiddaa, Bedinaa, Jaarsoo, Dagooyyee, Innaanigiyyaa, Waachoo, Arfeetii and Naggaadee Abbaa Chaassoo met and then elected a leader.⁵⁷ Guluma was told that the heads of the nine main groups of Gommaa were given responsibility of electing one leader for all clans in the territory “by the general assembly of the whole community.”⁵⁸ Beside these, there were other *gadaa* meeting centers of various Oromo groups between the Gibe and the Waamaa Rivers.⁵⁹

In *gadaa* system, key political leaders were chosen to serve only for eight years at the end of which they were forced to transfer their posts to those who would succeed them. Therefore, “no man could build up a position of permanent power and authority”.⁶⁰ The main officials of the *gadaa* government include the following. *Abbaa gadaa* (‘the father of the *gadaa* in powers’) or *abbaa bokkuu* (the father of scepter) who was the most senior leader in the government. *Abbaa duulaa* (‘the father of war’) who was the head of the army; *abbaa seeraa* (‘the father of the law’) who was “an expert on traditional law” etc.⁶¹ Once elected by general agreement *abbaa bokkuu* (*abbaa gadaa*) was obliged to preserve “peace and order and to administer justice during an eight year-term of office.” His major activities were to lead the *gadaa* council as a chairperson to declare the laws, to oversee the process of voting for other chief office holders of the *gadaa*

⁵⁵ See *Odaa Hulle Sirna Gadaa Jimmaa*, p. 41; Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Abbaa Biyyaa Kabir, Sheikh Hasan Nasir and others

⁵⁶ See Ibsa, p. 71; *Odaa Hulle Sirna Gadaa Jimmaa*, p. 41. Iddoosaa Wadaajoo, “Seenaafi Aadaa Ummata Oromoo Aanaa Geeraa” (‘A History and Culture of Oromo People in Geeraa District.’) A manuscript prepared at Geeraa CTO (Ciiraa, 2008 EC), pp. 4 and 13; Fira’ol Phawuloos, “Seena Gadaa Oromoo Geeraafi Caffee Tumaa Maayee” (A History of *Gadaa* of the Geeraa Oromo and the Assembly of Tumaa Maayee.” A manuscript prepared at Geeraa CTO (Ciiraa, 2014 EC).

⁵⁷ See Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 69-70; Aman Seifedin, “Islam and the Muslim Community of Gomma: A Historical Survey (1886-1974),” MA Thesis (Addis Ababa University, History, 2006), p. 13; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 109-110. Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Sadii, Sheikh Nasir and others.

⁵⁸ See Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 69.

⁵⁹ *Odaa Hulle Sirna Gadaa Jimmaa*, p. 41. See also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 93-94; Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Abbaa Diggaa Abbaa Duulaa, Abbaa Biyyaa Kebir, Miliyon Tigist and others.

⁶⁰ Jan Hultin, “Political Structure and the Development of Inequality among the Mecha Oromo,” *Pastoral Production and Society* (London, 1979), p. 284 cited in Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” p. 18.

⁶¹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 14-16.

government etc.⁶²

But gradually, the *gadaa* system in general and the authority and power of the *caffee* assembly and the *gadaa* officials in particular were weakened in the Gibe region. Finally states were emerged and a new type of social order prevailed in which the rule of a monarch became a reality.⁶³ A monarch is a head of a monarchy which is a type of government (or state) led by one person who usually inherited this post. A monarch can be a king or a queen, an emperor or an empress etc. In the past, the majority monarchs were absolute monarchs who had unrestricted and all right, and authority to reign over the people of their states.⁶⁴ As it is pointed out by Richard C. Remy, “state precisely identifies a political community that occupies a definite territory and has an organized government with the power to make and enforce laws without approval from any higher authority.” Its basic elements are people, a land with distinct boundaries, government and sovereignty.⁶⁵

The Maccaa Oromo monarchical states were Geeraa, Gommaa, Guumaa, Jimmaa and Limmuu-Innaariyaa and formed (as Guluma Gemedaa argues) in the eighteenth century.⁶⁶ According to some scholars, the emergence of states in the Gibe region attributed to one or the other external factors such as borrowing of institution from non-Oromo neighbors or effects of Islamization or impact of the long distance trade on chiefs.⁶⁷ Indeed, in the Gibe region (as elsewhere) the Oromo were influenced by the peoples they lived with side by side. However, they did not copy completely the monarchical institution from their neighbors for these Oromo kingdoms had their own peculiarities.⁶⁸ The following quote from Mohammed Hassen’s famous work on the region clarify this argument very well.

Despite the common origin of the symbols of kingship, a comparison of the institution of monarchy in the Gibe region and in Kaffa shows that there were some striking differences between the two institutions... [The Shanana] Gibe kings had absolute power while the power of a king of Kaffa was limited by the power of the councilors of the state. While the [Shanana] Gibe kings appointed and dismissed their councilors,

⁶² Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” p. 20.

⁶³ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 93-94.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 30-31 and Mary Jane Turner *et al*, *American Government: Principles and Practices* (Glencoe, 1996), p. 14.

⁶⁵ Richard C. Remy, *United States Government* (Glencoe, 1994), pp. 18-20.

⁶⁶ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” PP. 45 and 78-80.

⁶⁷ Cited in Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” p. 77; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 86; Ketebo, pp. 10-11.

⁶⁸ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 86-87, 91-92.

in Kaffa the seven councilors (*mikrecho*) made and unmade kings. In the [Shanan] Gibe states all government officials were appointed by the kings and offices were not hereditary. The political structure of Kaffa was composed of a series of hierarchically organized clans, at the apex of which stood the royal clan, the Minjo, and under it were the seven most important clans in the kingdom, and the seven councilors of the state were the representatives of the seven clans. As a result, a king of Kaffa did not enjoy a constitutional prerogative which would allow him to decide on the important matters of the state without the consent of the seven councilors. The [Shanan] Gibe kings were accessible to their subjects. They sat in the court of justice in public, received and entertained foreign and local dignitaries both in public and in private, and the range of their daily activities was not limited by taboos. A king of Kaffa was subjected to all sorts of restrictions.⁶⁹

Also, the revival of the long distance trade especially with the north and the propagation of Islam in the Gibe region consolidated the emerging ruling elites and favored the creation of kingdoms.⁷⁰ As far as the role of trade was concerned Mohammed indicated:

...wherever traders found a strong leader who guaranteed safety and security for their persons and property, they traveled frequently, harvesting rich profits for themselves and diffusing substantial benefits to their protector in the form of taxes for protections, customs-dues, and gifts. The protector, who controlled both caravan routes and market places, were themselves extensive landowners...⁷¹

Regarding the contribution of Islam to the new institution, Guluma has said that through conversion to Islam the Oromo kings of the Shanan Gibe states strengthened their grip on power and economic links with long-distance traders.⁷² Similarly, Mohammed Hassen has stated:

...Islam helped the Oromo kings to consolidate their power and authority...Without doubt, when agricultural mode of production was breaking up the traditional political system, Islam not only provided an ideology for the new rulers, but also served as a focus of tribal loyalties...⁷³

He has also added:

...all five Gibe states had kings before Islam became their official religion. However, once Islam became the religion of the [most] kings, each found in the other what they wanted Islam found. Islam found champions and propagators in the kings, while the kings found a powerful ideology, a literature class, and a writing system in Islam, all of which contributed to the consolidation of monarchic power in the Gibe region. In other words, the old religion was incapable of strengthening the new rulers. There remained only Islam with its literature, business-minded preachers, teachers, and traders, and their writing system, which enabled rulers to engage in correspondence

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 91-92.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 86, 89-91 and 134-161; Ketebo, p. 11.

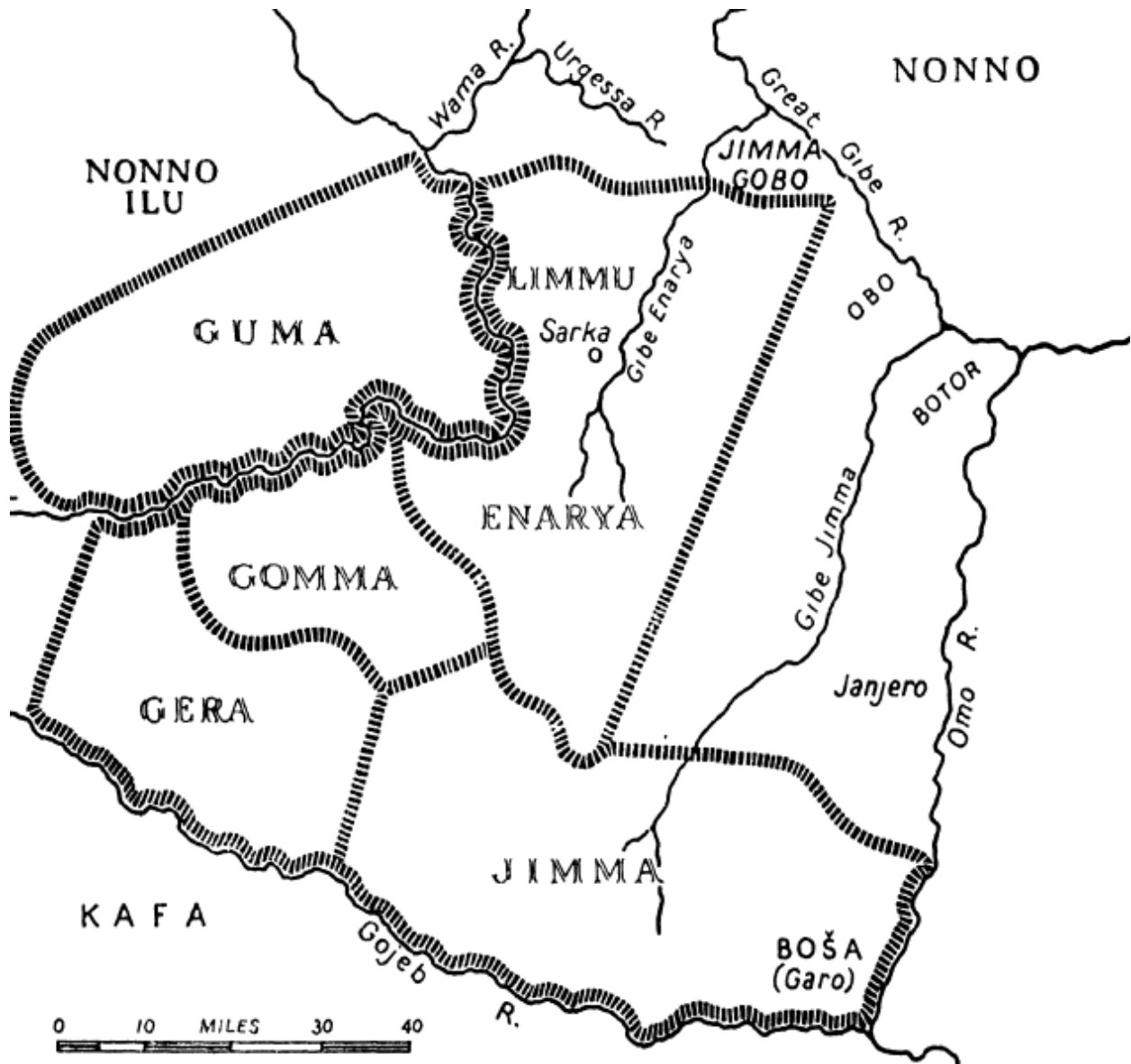
⁷¹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 89.

⁷² Guluma Gameda, "The Islamization of the Gibe Region, Southwestern Ethiopia from c. 1830s to the Early Twentieth Century." *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, vol. 26, No 2 (1993), p. 67.

⁷³ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 90.

with their neighbors. What is more, Islam provided the new rulers with a powerful ideology, one which justified absolute power.⁷⁴

Fig.1. The Shanan Gibe Oromo states in the first half of the nineteenth century



Source: G. W. B. Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia, The Kingdoms of Kafa and [Yam]* (London, 1955), p. 14 B.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 91.

All external impacts were accelerators than decisive for the emergence of Oromo kingdoms or monarchs in the Gibe region. Rather, internal developments that took place within the Maccaa Oromo society played a key role for this transformation.⁷⁵ The Oromo were predominantly pastoralists during their movement and expansion in the sixteenth century. After they moved and settled in the lands between the Gojeb, the Gibe and the Abbay Rivers, most of the Maccaa Oromo were transformed from dominantly nomadic way of life to mainly sedentary agriculture.⁷⁶ The change was deeper among the Oromo of the Gibe region than the rest of their Maccaa counterparts.⁷⁷ This development introduced social differences and classes into the Maccaa of the Gibe valley. It transformed the economic foundation of this society and weakened the egalitarian form of the *gadaa* system creating social stratification and class interaction. Slowly, some successful individuals and groups overshadowed the *gadaa* officials.⁷⁸ How the transformation from the *gadaa* office holders to kings occurred among the Oromo of the Gibe region will be discussed briefly in the next chapter. Here it is appropriate to underline that the basic reason behind this transformation that led to the formation of the Shanan Gibee (the five Gibe) Oromo states was internal development that took place within the Maccaa Oromo society in the region.

1.3. Later Administrative Reorganizations in the Gibe Region

After the incorporation of the Shanan Gibee states into the imperial rule in the 1880s in addition to the ensuing administrative adjustment that had taken place in Limmuu-Innaariyaa, Gommaa, Geeraa and Guumaa (except Jimmaa that had internal autonomy)⁷⁹ later administrative reorganizations were made by successive Ethiopian regimes in the whole of the country. In 1942, through the Decree No. 1/1942 the administrative structure of Ethiopia was reorganized into different provinces.⁸⁰ These provinces or administrative regions of the country were known as

⁷⁵ Tesema, "The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...", pp. 77-78 and 81-82; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 86-93; Ketebo, pp. 10-11 and others.

⁷⁶ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 87-89; Ketebo, p. 10; See also Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855-1991*, (Addis Ababa, 2002), p. 18 and Guluma, "Land, Agriculture Society...", p. 80 among others.

⁷⁷ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 87-88.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 89.

⁷⁹ See chapter 5 part 2 of this work.

⁸⁰ See Jemal Abagisa, "The Financial Management of Jimma Town," MA Thesis (AAU, 2000), p. 24; Zemelak Ayele, "Local Government in Ethiopia: Adequately Empowered?" LLM Thesis (University of the Western Cape, Law, 2008), pp. 20-21.

taqlāy gizāt during most part of the reign of Emperor Hāyla Sillāse⁸¹ and *kifla hāgar* when the regime led by Colonel Mangistu Hāyila Māriyām popularly known as the *Darg* was in power.⁸²

The territory of the historical kingdom of Jimmaa became one of the sub-provinces (*awrājjā*) of Kaffa administrative region (*taqlāy gizāt/ kifla hāgar*). The town of Jimmaa served as the capital for the province of Kaffa (i.e. Kaffa *taqlāy gizāt/ kifla hāgar*) and the sub-province of Jimmaa (i.e. Jimmaa *Awrājjā*). The territories of the historical kingdoms of Gommaa, Geeraa, Limmuu-Innaariyaa and a small section of Guumaa included into this administrative region as another sub-province (*awrājjā*) under the general name of Limmuu *awrājjā* with its capital in Aggaaroo.⁸³ The six sub-provinces (*awrājjās*) of Kaffaa province (*taqlāy gizāt/ kifla hāgar*) were Jimmaa, Limmuu, Kaffa, Maji and “Dawuro”-Konta, “Bench”.⁸⁴ The rest territory of Guumaa proper became part of Iluabbaaboor province.⁸⁵ This administrative structure remained until the end of 1980s.⁸⁶ After that, Limmuu and Jimmaa sub-provinces (*awrājjās*) were included into Iluabbaaboor province for a short time up to the demise of the *Darg* regime or the beginning of the Ethiopian Peoples’ Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) government.⁸⁷

⁸¹ See Faculty of Law of Hāyla Sillāse University, *Ya Tataqāllalu Ya Itiyophya Hggoch* (‘A Consoludated Laws of Ethiopia,’) Vol. I, Part 2 (Addis Ababa, 1965 EC), pp. 136-177.

⁸² Informants: Abdulkерim, Mangistu Gabra Mikāel, Kāsāye Daggife, Abbaa Zinaab Abbaa Waarrii and others.

⁸³ Kāsāhun Dhunfaa, Abraham Niguse *et al*, “Ya Jimmā Zon Ya Invastmant Potenishālnnā Ammārāchoch Tnāt” (‘A Study of Investment Potential and Options of Jimmaa Zone’), a manuscript possessed by Jimmaa Zone Administrative Office (Jimmaa, Hidar 1991 EC), p. 5. Informants: Abdulkерim, Mangistu, Sabit and Abbaa Zinaab.

⁸⁴ Ethiopian Central Statistical Office, *Ethiopia[n] Statistical Abstract* (Addis Ababa, 1982), p. 36; *Ya Kafā [Taqlāy Gizāt] Lmāt*, one of its cover pages. Informants: Abdulkерim, Mangistu, Kāsāye, Abbaa Zinaab and others. Out of the six *awrājjās* of Kaffa province, the names of two sub provinces such as “Kullo” and “Gimira” that were widely used in the older documents (including the above-cited sources) considered as offensive terms currently. Thus, the names “Kullo” and “Gimira” have been replaced by Dawuro and Bench respectively, following the regime change in Ethiopia in 1991. Similarly, the researcher uses the names accepted by the peoples directly related to these terms in the map of Kaffa province indicated in page 15 under figure 3, here and wherever these names are mentioned in the main body of this paper.

⁸⁵ Kāsāhun Dhunfaa, Abraham Niguse *et al*, p. 5. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Garoo, Sabit, Miliyon and others.

⁸⁶ Bekele Woldemariam, *The History of the Kingdom of Kaffa: The Birthplace of Coffee 1390-1935* (Hawassa, 2010), p. 14; Kāsāhun Dhunfaa, Abraham Niguse *et al*, p. 5.

⁸⁷ Kāsāhun Dhunfaa, Abraham Niguse *et al*, p. 5. Informants: Abdulkерim, Mingistu, Ababa Zinaab, Sabit and others.

Fig.2. Fourteen provinces of Ethiopia during most part of Emperor Hāyla Sillāse's rule and the *Darg* regime



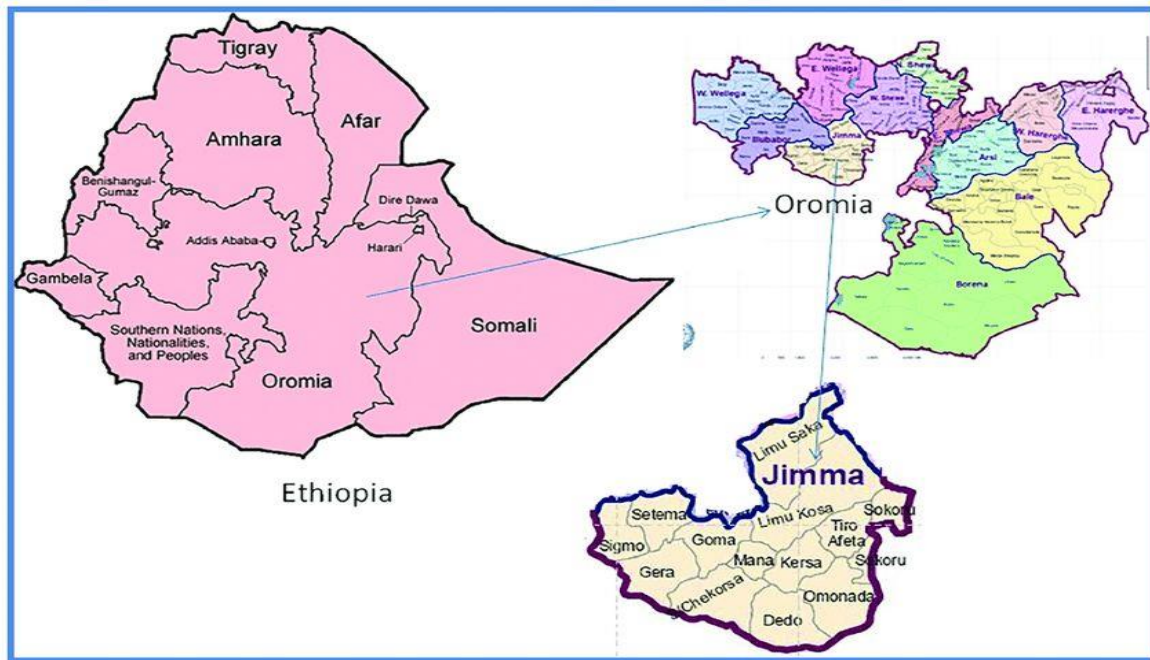
Source: Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia...*, p. 190

Fig.3. Kaffa Administrative Region between 1942 and ca. 1987



This map has been adapted from *Ya Kafā [Taqḷāy Gizāt] Lmāt* ('Development of Kaffa [Administrative Region]'), a magazine published by Development Organizations of Kaffa Administrative Region and Jimma Municipality in collaboration with Ministry of Information (1965 EC).

Fig.4. Administrative map of Ethiopia, Oromia Regional State and Jimmaa Zone during the EPRDF government



Source: www.researchgate.net

Under the EPRDF regime, most territories of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms were made parts of the Jimmaa Administrative Zone of the Oromia Regional State. The administrative capital of Jimmaa zone has been the town/city of Jimmaa. Within this administrative zone, Gommaa and Geeraa became districts (*aanaa or waradā*). On the other hand, parts of Jimmaa proper, Limmuu and some section of Guumaa were divided into various numbers of districts within Jimmaa zone; it appears one on the main reasons for this was due to their relative big size.⁸⁸ It is obvious that most areas of the five Gibe states were became parts of a zonal administration named after Jimmaa proper or the kingdom of Jimmaa.⁸⁹ On the other hand, districts like Dhidheessaa and Gachii that had been parts of the kingdom of Guumaa remained in Iluabbaaboor and then have been reorganized under Buunnoo-Beddellee Administrative Zone recently.⁹⁰ In the next chapter, the emergence of kingship, and legends and arguments on the ruling groups of the Maccaa Oromo kingdoms in the Gibe valley will be the subject of our discussion.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ After the second half of the nineteenth century the kingdom of Jimmaa was more popular than the rest of the Gibe Oromo states. See Bahru, *A History of Modern Ethiopia...*, p. 19.

⁹⁰ Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Garoo, Miliyon and Sabit.

CHAPTER TWO

II. EMERGENCE OF KINGSHIP, AND LEGENDS AND DEBATES ON THE DYNASTIES OF THE SHANAN GIBEE STATES

The Maccaa Oromo first developed as full-fledged monarchical states in the Gibe region. As we have indicated in the previous chapter, the five Oromo kingdom which in Afaan Oromo popularly known as Mootummoota Shanana Gibee (the Five Gibe States) were Geeraa, Gommaa, Guumaa, Jimmaa and Limmuu-Innaariyaa. Their first kings were the founding fathers of these monarchies and the new Oromo dynasties. With this unfamiliar phenomenon at least to the Maccaa Oromo, the groups (“clans” or *gosa*) from whom these kings came became dominant and popular than ever.

In relation to the origin of these ruling groups, there are different controversial legends some of which were circulated in the works of authors who wrote on the histories of the Oromo of the region. This chapter attempts to deal with briefly why and how kings or kingship emerged among the Maccaa Oromo. Moreover, the chapter analyzes the existing legends on a few clans related to competing leaders and the five ruling groups of Shanana Gibee kingdoms; and argues how valid these myths are. Besides these, here the paper sketches a list of monarchs of the five Oromo dynasties of the Shanana Gibee kingdoms.

2.1. Emergence of Monarchs among the Oromo of the Gibe Region

It seems the Afaan Oromoo words of *mootii* (“king”) and *mootummaa* (“kingship”, “kingdom”, “state”) stem from the verb *moo’uu* which has the meaning “to win” in English.¹ Among the Maccaa Oromo, the emergence of *mootii* (“king”) or *mootummaa* (“kingship”, “kingdom”, “state”) was the culmination of various interlinked developments. As it has already been mentioned the main factor for the emergence of monarchs among the Maccaa Oromo in general and that of the Gibe region in particular was the shift from chiefly pastoralist to settled agrarian way of life. This resulted in the creation of social stratification and the birth of a new aristocratic class that amassed its wealth in the form of land, cattle,

¹ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 88.

slaves etc. It also weakened the egalitarian *gadaa* system. Some respected and prominent wealthy families and individuals came to the top in the social, economic and political hierarchy of the Maccaa Oromo community making irrelevant the power and influence of the traditional *gadaa* offices.² It was by individuals and families who came out of this rich and dominant class that the Gibe Oromo dynasties were formed later.³ But, how did this group accumulated wealth?

The first was the *qabiyyee* land and other resources ownership system. During the expansion of the Maccaa to the region, the first people who controlled or conquered a new land had the right to claim it for their clans regardless of the system of landownership existed before. Therefore, “a *qabiyyee* was a piece of land/territory that was claimed during the original conquest by lineage leaders on behalf of their followers.”⁴ The claim and right of the initial settlers on the *qabiyyee* land was completely accepted by other clans or groups. If other group had a desire to get additional land, the option was to go beyond the already occupied *qabiyyee* and control a new unclaimed territory.⁵ Among some or all western Oromo, the initial Maccaa occupants of the newly controlled land /territory were called *dagal saaqii* (“forest openers”).⁶

At first, the heads of the pioneers did not have special privilege on the land and other resources.⁷ Individuals, families and others had the right to share land from their *qabiyyee* in accordance with “the biological or socially constructed seniority”. For instance, an elder son got more land than his younger siblings did.⁸ In addition, oral tradition indicate that during the Oromo movement usually the senior members (*angafa*) of families stayed at or near their

² Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 89.

³ *Ibid*, pp. 88-90, 92-93; Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” p. 60 and 83.

⁴ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 62. See also Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia ...,” pp. 44-45.

⁵ Guluma Gemed, “The Process of State Formation in the Gibe Region: The Case of Gomma and Jimma,” *Proceedings of the Second Annual Seminar of the Department of History (AAU)*, Vol. I (Addis Ababa, 1984), p. 134.

⁶ See Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 87; Tasama, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” p. 55

⁷ Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” p. 55.

⁸ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society ...,” p. 62.

fathers houses inheriting their families *qabiyyee* but junior members (*quxisu*) would go further afield.⁹

Gradually, with the sever scarcity of land due to growing of the existing population and fresh wave of Oromo arrivals and groups the initial occupants in general and their leaders and other influential personalities of the pioneers' community in particular began to enjoy special privilege over the control and use of land and the labor of the late comers. The late comers had to render services in labor to settle on *qabiyyee* land. Thus, this phenomenon played important role for "the development of hierarchy of land rights and an incipient stratification of society into less and more favored classes" among the Maccaa Oromo.¹⁰

Moreover, according to a law passed at Odaa Hulle in the seventeenth century artisans, females and "*naggāde*" ("Muslim long-distance merchants and strangers") were forbidden to enjoy equal rights on *qabiyyee* land unlike those descended from the pioneers who had "opened up" the forestland for settlement and use.¹¹ Also, particularly in pre-monarchy Gommaa there had been similar (but not exactly the same) ban on *naggāde* and other occupational groups. Among these occupational groups, the status of the *naggāde* enhanced later on,¹² about which we mention briefly in chapter four under the section dealing with commercial relation of the monarchs of Shanan Gibee kingdoms.

The other factor that contributed to accession of wealth especially of land by a certain group was the Oromo tradition of primogeniture. This custom benefited the eldest son ('*angafa*') unlike the rest of his siblings. Based on Antoine d'Abbadie's observation of this tradition among the western Oromo in 1850s, Guluma states, "the first born (*angafa*), retained two-third's of the father's land and cattle; the second-born, the remaining two-third's, and so on, until there was no property left to other."¹³

Moreover, the existence of conflicts and wars seemed to have favored the traditional war leaders (*abbaa duulaa*) and adventurers and helped them in accumulating wealth and

⁹ Tesema, "The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...", p. 46. See also Guluma, "The Process of State Formation...", pp. 134-135.

¹⁰ Tesema, "Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...", pp. 56-57.

¹¹ Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 63.

¹² See Aman, pp. 11.

¹³ Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society..." pp. 63-64.

gathering followers behind them.¹⁴ Following their expansion, wars among various Oromo groups were common. The main reason behind these wars was the conflict between the first arriving clans, groups who controlled rich grazing and agricultural lands on one side and the late comers and/or those were not the first-born, both of who had very strong desire to possess these resources, on the other side. Such and similar wars paved the way for the traditional war leaders (*abbaa duulaa*) to make their posts hereditary and for the rise of military adventurers. Out of these conflicts, war leaders usually became rich and surrounded themselves with many retainers by weakening the authority and influence of the *gadaa* office holders.¹⁵

Also sometimes, when there was acute shortage of land due to population growth, some ambitious Oromo war leaders attacked the areas of the neighboring non-Oromo peoples (with whom their clans were at war) and they took captives as slaves. Through such raids and incursions, these individuals attracted many followers behind them and piled up riches consisted of land, slaves and cattle that were inheritable by their descents.¹⁶

Therefore, wealth was acquired by a certain small section of the Maccaa Oromo through the ways mentioned in the above. In short, these sources of wealth were the special right of the first male occupants to the *qabiyyee* land, the practice of primogeniture and war or adventure.¹⁷ This concentration of wealth brought about politically ambitious group, families and individuals who attain dominance, power and respect at the expense of the *gadaa* system and its official.¹⁸

As Tesema stated, usually the founding fathers of the new dynasties among the Maccaa descended from known pioneers (*dagal saaqii*) who earned their reputation in the initial years of the Oromo movement to the region.¹⁹ Also sources claim that most of the ancestors of the founding fathers Maccaa Oromo ruling houses or the founders of these dynasties themselves

¹⁴ Guluma, "The Process of State Formation...", pp. 136-137; Tesema, "The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...", p. 58.

¹⁵ Guluma, "The Process of State Formation...", pp. 136-137.

¹⁶ Tesema, "The political Economy of Western Control Ethiopia...", p. 58

¹⁷ Guluma, "The Process of State Formation...", pp. 134-137; see also Guluma, "Land Agriculture and Society...", pp. 62-65.

¹⁸ Tesema, "The Political Economy of western Central Ethiopia...", pp. 60, 82-84; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 89-90, 92-94; Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 59-60, 65.

¹⁹ Tesema, "The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...", p. 83.

had been *gadaa* officials like *abbaa duulaa* (“war leader”), *abbaa bokkuu* (“father of the scepter”) etc.²⁰ Thus, it appears at least a number of *gadaa* office holders used their posts to acquire wealth and attract followers.²¹ Moreover, according to the tradition “the attempt to subvert the egalitarian *gadaa* system and to capture absolute power was often made by rival families within the same locality” or/and group.²² In the Gibe valley, besides *gadaa* officials or their after-bears, a *qaalluu* a priest of the Oromo indigenous belief (about whom we treat briefly somewhere in the next section and chapter) or his descendant became a founding father of a dynasty in Gommaa one of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms.²³

Mohammed Hassen states, “all the Gibe states were the creation of war leaders.”²⁴ But, Guluma Gameda argues that in the Gibe region states were formed (in two ways) as a result of “a voluntary association of clans” in cases of Gommaa and Jimmaa, and by those war leaders who “usurp the power of the traditional *gada* officials” in Limmuu-Innaariyaa²⁵ and possibly the other two Gibe states. By whatsoever means the Shanan Gibe states were created, the founding fathers of these kingdoms were either very influential personalities or their descendants/sons.

In the Gibe region, the transformation to monarchical rule took place in the eighteenth century. The following names are usually regarded as the founders of the Maccaa Oromo dynasties created in the Gibe valley or associated with the initial phase of the emergence of states in the region. Guluma says that in Gommaa Abbaa Manoo (Odaa Allayoo) who was the son of Abbaa Bokkee a famous and respected spiritual person and a descendant of Waarukkoo was the founder of the Awaalini dynasty.²⁶ But, Mohammed Hassen states that Abbaa Bokkee was the first Oromo leader who initialed the process of state formation in Gommaa while his son Abbaa Manoo was the succeeding king who finalized the process that had been

²⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 60, 83.

²¹ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 65.

²² Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” p. 83.

²³ See chapter 2 section 2 2.2. ii, and chapter 3 section 3.2.1.

²⁴ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 93.

²⁵ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 67.

²⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 69-71.

started by his father.²⁷ It appears the first king of Gommaa came to power in about between 1730s and 1750s.²⁸

In Jimmaa, Abbaa Faaroo laid the foundation for the process of state formation under the Diggoo dynasty about the middle of the eighteenth century while Abbaa Jifaar I (Sanaa) completed it in 1830.²⁹ Because of the role of Abbaa Jifaar I the kingdom sometimes called Jimmaa Abbaa Jifaar.³⁰ It seems the similarity of the name and the fame of the last king, Abbaa Jifaar II (Tulluu)³¹ cemented and popularized the phrase Jimmaa Abbaa Jifaar. According to a tradition documented by Cerulli, a certain ‘Adam’ (Adamii) a great legendary hunter created the Adamii dynasty in Guumaa.³² Mohammed Hassen states that in Guumaa “the nucleus of the state was formed during the second half of the eighteenth century. However, the process of stated formation was completed only around 1810” during the reign of Onchoo Jiilchaa (c.1810-1830s). He has also added that Jiilchaa who was the father of Onchoo was the first king to rule a unified kingdom of Guumaa and the founder of the Adamii dynasty.³³ In Limmuu-Innaariyaa, Bofoo (Abbaa Gommol) who came to power in about 1780s was the founding father of the Sapheeraa dynasty and the kingdom.³⁴ In Geeraa, Gunjii a popular warlord started the process of state formation of the Sayyoo dynasty by appointing himself a king but Tuulluu Gunjii who was his successor son finalized the process he initiated.³⁵

2.2. Legends and Debates Related to Rulers of the Shanan Gibe States

This section deals with the legends and arguments in relation to the origin of groups from whom the five dynasties of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms emerged. Before we embark on this discussion let us mention briefly about the groups (clans or *gosa*) connected to leaders that

²⁷ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 109-110, 11. See also Aman, pp. 13-15.

²⁸ Aman, p. 16. See also Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 79.

²⁹ See Ketebo, vii-viii, 16-19; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 72-73, 79; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp.111-112.

³⁰ Abir, p. 89; Lewis, p. 41; Bahru, *A History of Modern Ethiopia...*, p. 18 among others.

³¹ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 185.

³² See Enrico Cerulli, *The Folk-Literature of the Oromo of Southern Abyssinia*. Later edition (2003), pp. 283-289.

³³ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 107-108.

³⁴ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 80.

³⁵ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 112-113.

had been either in power or were competing for it in Jimmaa, Guumaa and Limmuu-Innaariyaa.

2.2.1. Groups Related to Competing Leaders

Before the Shanan Gibe Oromo dynasties that were either toppled by or submitted to Mnilik's army had come to power, it is believed that two groups such as that of the Badii and the Dagooyyee had been dominant in some part of the Gibe region i.e. the Badii in Jimmaa and Guumaa and the the Dagooyyee in Guumaa. A leader of a Sigaroo was also engaged in power struggle against the Sapheeraa during the emergence of the monarchy in an attempt to be a *mootii* (king) in Limmuu-Innaariyaa.

i. The Badii

Oral and written sources indicate that the Badii had been influential until they lost their power to the Diggoo in Jimmaa³⁶ and to the Adamii probably in (a section of) Guumaa.³⁷ In Jimmaa, during³⁸ and even after the formation of the kingdom the Badii were the strongest and leading contenders against the rulers of the Diggoo clan.³⁹ The famous leader of the Badii in Jimmaa was Abbaa Qiriphee who lost his power to Abbaa Faaroo, the founding father of the Diggoo dynasty.⁴⁰ In Guumaa as we shall treat briefly in relation to the Adamii, a chief from Badii had ruled (at least a part of) it. This ruler was called Hooraa Waarraa who eventually lost power struggle against a leader from Adamii group.⁴¹

There are various views on the origin of the Badii group. Guluma, without reading his all works understanding the history of the Oromo in the Gibe region would be incomplete, says in his dissertation, "the origin of the Badi clan is not clear... It is possible that the clan represented the remnants of the pre-Oromo population in the [Gibe] region."⁴² Moreover, as Huntingford has pointed out, there was an attempt to relate the Badii clan by some religious

³⁶ Herbert S. Lewis, *Jimma Abba Jifar: An Oromo Monarchy Ethiopia 1830-1932*. Later Edition (Lawrenceville and Asmara, 2001), p. 39; see also Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 131-132. Informants: Yahya, Abdulkarim and Miliyon among others.

³⁷ See Deressa Bayisa, pp. 19-20. Informants: Ahmed Abbaa Foggii and Miliyon.

³⁸ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 112; Ketebo, pp. 14 and 17.

³⁹ See Ketebo, p. 19 and Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 111.

⁴⁰ Ketebo, p. 14. Informants: Abbaa Zinaab, Yahya, Abdulkarim among others.

⁴¹ See Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, pp. 230-233; Gaalii Abbaa Boor, *Seenaa Shanan Gibe (A History of Shanan Gibe)* (2013 EC), pp. 132-133; Deressa Bayisa, pp. 19-20.

⁴² Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 131-132.

men “with the Muslim holy man Ahmad al Badawi who died in Egypt in 1276.”⁴³ Nevertheless, it appears the Badii had Oromo root.⁴⁴ Firstly, the name Badii is an Afaan Oromoo (Oromo’s language) term.⁴⁵ Secondly, sources indicate that in addition to the Gibe region there are clans/groups with the name Badii among the Siibuu Oromo in Wallaggaa⁴⁶ and more importantly among the Barentumaa Oromo branches of the Arsii,⁴⁷ and the Afran Qalloo in the east⁴⁸ etc. All these show the connection of the Badii group to the Oromo background from the very beginning. In addition, as other historical cases confirm,⁴⁹ it appears the legend that attempts to link the clan to Islamic root was created only after conversion to this religion. It seems the sound similarity between the name Badii and that of Badawii has favored or facilitated this fabrication.

On the other hand, one source based on oral tradition claims that the descent group of Badii assumed this name because the clan was the first to abolish the *gadaa* system and form a one man (*mootii*) rule in the Gibe region.⁵⁰ This source also states that oral tradition has not mentioned the name of the group before the clan assumed the term Badii.⁵¹ The argument that the group was given the name Badii due to it had dismantled the *gadaa* system and formed a rule of one strong man called *mootii* ahead of others in the Gibe region does not hold water. To begin with, contrary to this view, as it has already been indicated the *gadaa* system was first weekend and then replaced by monarchical rule in most parts of the Maccaaland in general and the Gibe valley in particular mainly because of the socio-economic transformation that took place among the Oromo of the region.⁵²

⁴³ Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History of Southwest...,” p. 35.

⁴⁴ Alemayehu *et al*, *History of the Oromo...*, pp. 150, 159 and 160. Infomats: Abbaa Biyyaa Kebir, Miliyon, Yahya among others.

⁴⁵ See *Odaa Galmee Jechootaa Afaan Oromoo-Ingiliizi-Amaaraa /Odaa-Afan Oromoo-English-Amharic Dictionary* (Finfinee/ Addis Ababa, 2007 EC), p. 60; *Galmee Jechootaa Afaan Oromoo-Amaaraa-Ingilizii/Afan Oromo-Amharic-English Dictionary* (Finfinnee, 2005 EC), p. 58.

⁴⁶ Negaso, p. 266.

⁴⁷ Alemayehu *et al*, *History of the Oromo...*, pp. 210 and 220.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 250 and 257.

⁴⁹ See Cerulli, pp. 293-299; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p.108; Ulrich Braukamper, *Islamic History and Culture in Southern Ethiopia: Collected Essays* (2004), pp.132-133.

⁵⁰ Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, pp. 220-221 and 230.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 220.

⁵² See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 87-89; Bahru Zewde, *Society, State and History: Selected Essays* (Addis Ababa 2008), pp. 326-327; Bahru, *A History of Modern Ethiopia*, pp.18-19; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 57-65. See also this paper, chapter 1.2 and chapter 2.1.

Also, as we have mentioned above, the Badii descent group found not only in the Gibe region but also in different areas of the Oromo land. This in turn leads us to the conclusion that a certain clan or tribe had had this name before the great expansion of the pastoralist Oromo groups into different directions and regions in the sixteenth century. It appears the most likely explanation for the existence of clans that had the same names among the Oromo of various localities is one of the following phenomena. Either the result of the dispersion of different sections of a group (with the same name) from one center to other regions during this population movement, or due to dissemination of shared naming tradition of the Oromo from legendary national birth place into wider parts of North East Africa with this great expansion of the people. As far as the origin of the name Badii is concerned, the term might or might not have something to do with the violation of elements of the *gadaa* system by initial members of the group(s).

ii. The Dagooyyee

Dagooyyee was one of the three groups from whom leaders that ruled a part or all of Guumaa came from.⁵³ Sources indicate that a ruler called Sarbooraadoo/Sarbaaroodaa from the Dagooyyee group had been on power before he was removed and replaced by the founding father of the Adamii dynasty.⁵⁴ Informants point out that in addition to Guumaa, the Dagooyyee were found in neighboring kingdoms of the Gibe region in different proportion.⁵⁵ It is also stated that descent branches by the name of Dagooyyee also found among the Leeqaa Oromo.⁵⁶ According to Anteneh's work the Dagooyyee of Guumaa are branched out into four descent lines such as Ramso, Baabboo, Masa and Mamoo.⁵⁷

iii. The Sigaroo

The Sigaroo were one of the groups to whom fascinating legends were related to their origin. We are going to see briefly the myth on the origin of the Sigaroo in section which deals with the Sapheeraa group for the legend that revolved around the two groups was the same.⁵⁸ On the other hand, according to one tradition before Bofoo (Abbaa Gommol I) the founding

⁵³ See Anteneh Wasihun, "A Religious History of the Kingdom of Guma, Southwest Ethiopia (Ca. 1855-1970s)" MA Thesis (Jimmaa University, History, 2018), p. 14; and see also this paper, chapter 2 section 2.2.2.i.

⁵⁴ See Cerulli, pp. 283-286 and 286-289. Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 108.

⁵⁵ Informants: Nasir Abbaa Dikoo, Hasan Kalifa, *Sheik Kalifa* and others.

⁵⁶ See Negaso, pp. 263 and 267.

⁵⁷ Anteneh, p. 7.

⁵⁸ See chapter 2 section 2.2.2.iv.

father of the Sapheeraa dynasty formed the kingdom of Limmuu-Innaariyaa, he had to confront for power against Abbaa Reebuu (Odaa Anniyyee) who was the head of the Sigaroo group from the surrounding area of Saqqaa. The Sigaroo were influential in eastern Limmuu-Innaariyaa including around Saqqaa while the Sapheeraa were dominant in and around Saaphaa in south western Limmuu Innaariyaa. Bofoo's bravery at battle fields willingly or unwillingly convinced the competing Abbaa Reebuu (Odaa Anniyyee) to involve into political marriage with the Sapheeraa and its leader. The latter gave his daughter to the former and thus, Bofoo (Abbaa Gommol I) became the first king of Limmuu-Innaariyaa by uniting territories controlled by these two dominant groups and others. It was out of this political marriage that comparatively brought together the Sigaroo of around Saqqaa and the Sapheeraa of the surrounding areas of Saaphaa, the great Abbaa Bogiboo I (Ibsaa) the famous king of Limmuu-Innaariyaa between 1825 and 1861 was born.⁵⁹

2.2.2. Legends and Arguments on Five Oromo Dynasties of the Gibe States

The dynasties that ruled the Shanan Gibee monarchies until the annexation of the region by Minilik came mainly from five different Maccaa Oromoo clans (*gosa*). Sources show that the clans from whom the monarchs of the five Oromo kingdoms of the Gibe region emerged were the Adamii in Guumaa,⁶⁰ the Awaalinii in Gommaa,⁶¹ the Diggoo in Jimmaa,⁶² the Sapheeraa in Limmuu-Innaariyaa⁶³ and the Sayyoo in Geeraa.⁶⁴ There are contradictory views on the origin of many of these ruling clans. Even attempts are made by some to link most of these ruling groups of the Maccaa Oromo of the Gibe region to non-Oromo background.⁶⁵ Such claims are chiefly based on legends a lot of which were invented to meet one or the other motive. As it has been indicated and we shall revisit in the following sub-section, they were also against the existing context of the Oromo culture. Plenty of them have been circulated

⁵⁹ Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society....," pp. 74-76. See also Abir, pp. 78-79 and Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 162-163

⁶⁰ Cerulli, pp. 285, 288-289 and 285-296; Deressa Bayisa, pp. 15 and 19-21. Informants: Abdulkereim, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Sabit and others.

⁶¹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*..., pp. 109-110 and 155-156; Cerulli, p. 294; Trimmingham, p. 200; Aman, pp.10,13-16, and 53.

⁶² Lewis, pp. 76-77; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 111 and 122; Ketebo, pp. 14-16 and others

⁶³ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*..., pp. 162-163; Temesgen, pp. 22-23 and 27-28; Huntingford, "Ethnology and History....," p. 35 among others

⁶⁴ Ibsa, pp. 16, 20. Informants: Abbaa Madad, Shamsiyya Abbaa Garoo, Tijani Abbaa Olii and others.

⁶⁵ See Huntingford, "Ethnology and History," pp. 12, 31, 36-37 and 40; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp.107-110,155-156, 162-163.

through literature. Here we will treat briefly and analyze legends that are related mainly (not fully) to the major ruling houses such as the Adamii (of Guumaa), the Awaalinii (of Gommaa), the Diggoo (of Jimmaa), Sapheeraa (of Limmuu-Innaariyaa) and the Sayyoo (of Geeraa) that lasted with sovereign power in their kingdoms up to the beginning of 1880s.

i. The Adamii of the Kingdom of Guumaa

In relation to the founding father of the Adamii dynasty of Guumaa and the group itself there are various legends. Some are inter-related; a few are not. Among them, one tradition which was initially published by Enrico Cerulli and circulated in various works states that the Dagooyyee had been ruling Guumaa till their leader Sarbooraadaa/ Sarbaaroodaa was killed by a popular hunter from the jungle called ‘Adam’ who initiated the rule of the Adamii dynasty there.⁶⁶ Mohammed Hassen, analyzing this legend, has come up with a (little bit variant) conclusion. According to him, Jiilchaa of Adamii clan killed Sarbaaroodaa the chief from Dagooyyee group in a conflict for supremacy. In the words of Mohammed:

...The power struggle was between Sarbaaroda of Dagoye and Jilcha [from Adamii clan]. In the [‘Chronicle of the Kingdom of Guma’] Jilcha is presented as the ‘son’ of Adam. But this should not be taken at face value. In the tradition, a Muslim called Adam is made the ‘father’ of Jilcha, so as to Islamize and exalt the origin of the dynasty founded by Jilcha...In the battle [between the two rival opponents] Sarbaaroda was killed and Jilcha became the first king of Gumma...⁶⁷

The other version of the story in short claims that the Badii clan was in power in Guumaa until their famous leader Horaa Waarraa was killed by Dalle Abungee of the Adamii clan that emerged there as a new ruling group.⁶⁸ There is also a little different version of the story. The only significant variation of this story with the aforementioned legend is that here the Adamii man who killed Horaa Waarraa of the Badii clan was not Dalle Abungee but Jiilchaa a son or a grandson of the founding father of the Adamii dynasty.⁶⁹

As we have already indicated, the stories about the power struggle among the rival contenders in Guumaa more or less seem similar. However, they have also differences. Firstly, in various versions of the legend the names of the founding fathers of the Adamii dynasty who

⁶⁶ See Cerulli, pp. 283-289, 294; Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History...,” p. 37; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 108 among others.

⁶⁷ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 108.

⁶⁸ See Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, pp. 230-233; Gaalii, pp. 132-133.

⁶⁹ Deressa Bayisa, pp. 19-20 and Gaalii, pp. 132-133.

overthrew their opponents were not the same. The first view claims that he was “Adam” while the other version says that he was Dalle Abungee. Also, a partially similar version of the story states that it was Jiilchaa who removed his adversary.. Secondly, in these different versions of story rival leaders who fought against the founder of the new Adamii dynasty were not the same. One of these says that the contending leader was Sarbaaroodaa/Sarbooraadaa while others claim that he was Horaa Waarraa. Thirdly, in these legends the clans from whom the rival leaders to the Adamii came from were not the same. One version maintains that it was from the Dagooyee group while the other states that it was from the Badii clan.

As it has been indicated earlier, sources state that in Guumaa the Dagooyee had been the dominant ruling clan prior to the emergence of the Adamii dynasty.⁷⁰ However, others claim that the Badii had been ruling Guumaa before their leader was toppled by the Adamii ruler.⁷¹ It seems both the Dagooyee and the Badii were ruling various parts of Guumaa prior they lost their power to two different leaders of the Adamii clan one after the other. Because, according to Cerulli’s “Chronicle of the Kingdom of Guma” and a work of Huntingford, Sarbooraadaa (Sarbaaroodaa) who was the leader from the Dagooyee clan, lost his power to the so called “Adam” the legendary founding father of the Adamii dynasty.⁷² However, another tradition indicates that Horaa Waarraa who was the leader of a part of Guumaa from Badii group lost his power to Jiilchaa, a brave man from the family of the founding father of the Adamii dynasty.⁷³ This explanation also contradicts the claim that Sarbooraadaa (Sarbaaroodaa) and Horaa Waarraa were not different persons but the same individual with two names.⁷⁴ It seems they were two personalities from different clans such as the Dagooyee and the Badii, and both lost their powers to different rulers of the Adamii dynasty at various times.

There is also another different legend that put the origin of the founder of the Adamii dynasty outside of the region. According to Cecchi, d’Abbadie and others, the founding father of the Adamii ruling house of Guumaa was a person called ‘Adam’, a *jabarti* (a Muslim long

⁷⁰ Cerulli, 283-289, 294; Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History of southwest...,” p. 37; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 108 among others ,

⁷¹ See Dressa Bayisa, pp. 19-20; Gaalii, p. 133. Informants: Ahmed and Miliyon.

⁷² Cerulli, pp. 283-288; Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History of Southwest...,” p. 37.

⁷³ Deressa Bayisa, pp. 19-20; Gaalii, p. 133.

⁷⁴ See Deressa Bayisa, p. 22.

distance merchant) who came from Tigray.⁷⁵ Based on this legend, Huntingford speculates, “Tigre does not necessary mean the northern part of Abyssinia, for...there was a Tigrean colony in nearby Gurage, and Adam may have come from there.”⁷⁶ Another legend relates the origin of “Adam” to Harar or Yemen.⁷⁷ It is also claimed that from the name “Adam” the ruling clan of Guumaa, the Adamii got its name.⁷⁸ However, unlike these legends, Adamii the group from whom the ruling dynasty of Guumaa emerged was an Oromo clan from the region, and the term Adamii was not derived from the personal name “Adam”.⁷⁹

It seems, these legends are mere fabrications for the following reasons. First, sources indicate that especially prior to the emergence of monarchical states among the Oromo of the Gibe valley, Muslim merchants of long distance trade were one of the groups who were denied, for example, to have land right etc. let alone to assume the top political power by whatsoever means.⁸⁰ Secondly, tradition has underlined that ‘Adam’ the legendary founding father of the Adamii dynasty was a great hunter from the nearby jungle of Ibicha Taaloo.⁸¹ Thirdly, there are Afaan Oromoo (the Oromo’s language) terms such as *adamoo* and *adamsaa* that have meaning relation with hunting and hunter⁸² and to some extent that have sound similarity with the names “Adam” and Adamii. In Afaan Oromoo *adamsaa* and *adamoo* refer to the hunter and hunting respectively. The fame in hunting that has been attributed in the tradition to the legendary founding father of the Adamii dynasty and thus the Afaan Oromoo word such as *adamsaa* (the hunter) might have had some sort of connection with the name “Adam”. Because this term could be easily twisted into the name “Adam” later after conversion to Islam. Fourthly, Adamii the name of the group is an Afaan Oromoo term, which according to various sources, refers to a cactus tree.⁸³ Moreover, sources indicate that the Adamii, as an

⁷⁵ See Cecchi, *Da Zeila Alle Frontiere Del Caffa...*, p. 541; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 107; Huntingford, “Ethnology and History ...,” pp. 37; Cerulli, p. 293

⁷⁶ Huntingford, “Ethnology and History...” p. 37.

⁷⁷ Dresessa Bayisa, p. 21.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 15.

⁷⁹ See the following two paragraphs.

⁸⁰ Aman, pp.11-12; see also Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 63.

⁸¹ Cerulli, pp. 283, 286 and 292. See also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 108 and Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History...,” p. 37.

⁸² Tilahun Gamta, *Oromo-English Dictionary* (1989), p. 8.

⁸³ See *Ibid* and Salviac, p. 114. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Sabit, Miliyon and others.

Oromo group, is linked genealogically to Tummee of the Maccaa Oromo.⁸⁴ In addition to these, there is another clan by the name of Adamii among the Arsii Oromo far away from the Gibe region.⁸⁵

Lastly not the least, as it has been already mentioned earlier, Cerulli and Mohammed Hassen have stated very well that the tradition which claim the Adamii were descendants of a Muslim ancestor was fabricated later on in order to Islamize the founding father of the ruling house.⁸⁶ It appears this argument is very convincing. Mohammed Hassen believes, it was only in the second quarter of the nineteenth century that Islam won the heart and mind of the ruling house of Guumaa.⁸⁷ The name Adam was not the real name of the legendary founder of the Adamii dynasty. According to one work, the name of the founding father of the Adamii dynasty was Adamii, which was named after his clan.⁸⁸ Cerulli's work occasionally⁸⁹ and some of my informants at times mention alternatively the founder of this ruling line by the name of Adamii.⁹⁰ Thus, it is plausible that the name Adam was a manipulated alteration of the clan name (of the founder of the dynasty), Adamii or the Afaan Ormoo term *adamsaa* (hunter). Nevertheless, excluding the name Adam, the other name/s of this legendary figure might or might not be only one. In short, the Adamii clan in general and the legendary founding father of the Adamii dynasty in particular were not 'outsiders'. Rather, they were from the Maccaa Oromo of the region.

ii. The Awaalinii of the Kingdom of Gommaa

The Awaalinii the ruling house of the kingdom of Gommaa were the main center of various legends among the Shanan Gibe Oromo dynasties. Different European, Ethiopian etc. writers

⁸⁴ Alemayehu *et al*, *History of the Oromo...*, p. 157 and Alamaayyoo, *Seena Oromoo...*, p. 234.

⁸⁵ Alemayehu *et al*, *History of the Oromo...*, p. 215. Informants: Adam Hussien, Kedijja Ahmed and Aman Abdurahman.

⁸⁶ Cerulli, pp. 293-294 and Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 108. See also Braukamper, pp. 32-133 for similar pattern in other areas.

⁸⁷ Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 108 and 159. See also Charles T. Beke, "On the Countries of Southern Abyssinia," *The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, Vol. 13 (1843), pp. 258-259.

⁸⁸ Anteneh, pp. 5, 14-15.

⁸⁹ See Cerulli, *The Folk Literature...*, pp. 284-285. The Afaan Oromoo version of this source from which translated into English refers to the founder of the new dynasty as Adamii alternatively unlike to the English one.

⁹⁰ Informants: Ahmed Abbaa Foggii and Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Garoo.

mentioned these legends on their works.⁹¹ In addition, the group attracted various speculations. In Gommaa (and in Guumaa) the Awaalinii had two branches. These were the Caree and the Yasnaahoo. The kings who ruled the monarchy of Gommaa derived from Caree wing of the Awaalinii group.⁹²

A work claims that it was because of Abbaa Manoo's contribution to expansion of Islam in the Gibe region in general and that of Gommaa in particular he "was recognized as '*waliyi*' ('the holy') and his dynasty gained the immortal name of Awuliani [Awaalinii] ('the holy one')."⁹³ However, considerable sources confirm that a group with the name Awaalinii had existed prior to the emergence of the monarchs/monarchy* in Gommaa.⁹⁴ Moreover, the origin of the name Awaalinii for the descent group of the ruling house of this kingdom had nothing to do with Abbaa Manoo or/and his special contribution to spread of Islam in Gommaa or in the region.⁹⁵

Among various legends on the origin of the group, one version claims that the Awaalinii were descended from a Somali Muslim cleric known as Nur Hussein who is said to have immigrated to the Gibe region from Mogadishu. According to Cecchi this *sheik* left Mogadishu in around 1780.⁹⁶ Historically this legend is incorrect because the Awaalinii clan was well established in the Gibe region much earlier than 1780.⁹⁷

As Huntingford, Guluma Gameda and Mohammed Hassen have stated this legend in general and the name Nur Hussein in particular came out of a confusion with the story of *Sheik Hussein*⁹⁸ the highly popular Muslim cleric of the thirteenth century of Baalee in the present

⁹¹ See Cerulli, p. 294; Trimmingham, p. 200; Huntingford, "The Ethnology and History ...," p. 40; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 109-110 and 155-156 among others.

⁹² See Aman, p. 44-46. Informants: *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Sadii, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu and others.

⁹³ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 110.

* Elders contradict this claim of Mohammed Hassen and argue that the Awaalinii group had existed in Gommaa and its neighbors long before Abbaa Manoo was born. Informants: *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Sadii, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu and many others.

⁹⁴ See Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society..." , pp. 68-69; Aman, pp. 13-15, 20-21. Informants: *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Sadii, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu and others.

⁹⁵ Informants: *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Sadii, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu and others.

⁹⁶ Antonio Cecchi, *Da Zeila Alle Frontiere Del Caffa: Viaggi di Antonio Cecchi*, Vol. II (Roma, 1886), p. 239.

⁹⁷ See Guluma Gameda, "Gomma and Limmu: The Process of State Formation among the Oromo in the Gibe Region, c. 1750-1889," MA Thesis (Addis Ababa University, History, 1984), pp. 51-52, 55, 66-67. Informants: *Sheik* Nasir, Ahmed Abbaa Garoo, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu.

⁹⁸ Huntingford, "The Ethnology and History..." , p. 40; Guluma, "Gomma and Limmu..." , p. 52; and Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 109, 155.

day of southern Ethiopia.⁹⁹ Sources indicate that Cecchi appears to have mixed up it with the tradition of a Somali *Sheik*, who about the beginning of the nineteenth century was the custodian of *Sheik Hussein's* shrine.¹⁰⁰

This takes us to the following related version of the story. According to this tradition, the Awaalini were descendants of *Sheik Hussein* (Nur Hussein) of Baalee.¹⁰¹ As it has been mentioned, *Sheik Hussein* was a legendary Muslim saint whose shrine at Anaajinaa in Baalee was and is the center of pilgrimage for his followers.¹⁰² Concerning descendants of this famous saint of the thirteenth century, a work said that there was a Somali clan (from around Merca on the Somali part of the Indian Ocean coast) that claimed they had a direct lineage link with *Sheik Hussein* (Nur-Hussein) of Baalee.¹⁰³ According to this work far away from Merca especially among the Oromo no clan claim a direct genealogical connection with *Sheik Hussein* except “in the oral traditions there is only a vague reference to a [marginalized] group called Migo [of Arsii] to whom a descent from Nur Husayn is attributed.”¹⁰⁴ Contrary to what this work stated, as it has already been indicated, among members of the Awaalini of the Maccaa Oromo in the Gibee region there is a tradition that claim the clan descended from *Sheik Hussein* of Baalee.¹⁰⁵

Some proponents of the legend that the Awaalini were distant past progeny of *Sheik Hussein* (Nur Hussein) of Baalee even claim that the clan had also relation to the family of Prophet Mohammed through this famous saint.¹⁰⁶ Based on this or other similar legend another work whose writer's positive contribution to the Oromo study is considerable says that the kings of Gommaa trace their ancestors to what it calls ‘Awuliyans’ (to mean Awaalini) whom it regards (not as Oromo but) as Arabs. In the words of this work, “Wanti mootummaa Gommaa adda taasisu mootonni Gommaa hedduun isaanii gosa Oromoo utuu hin ta’iin Awauliyaanoota

⁹⁹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 109 and 155 and Braukamper, p.131

¹⁰⁰ See Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History...,” p. 40; Guluma, “Gomma and Limmu...,” p. 52; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 155

¹⁰¹ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 155; Aman, pp. 20-22 and 45. Informants: Abbaa Jebel Abbaa Bulguu, Biyyaatu Abbaa Garoo, Abbaa Sadii among others.

¹⁰² Braukamper, pp. 129-146, See also Trimmingham, pp. 253-256.

¹⁰³ Braukamper, pp. 133-134.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, pp.123-134.

¹⁰⁵ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 155; Aman, pp. 20-22 and 45. See also Guluma, “Gomma and Limmu...,” p.52. Informants: *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Sadii, Biyyaatu among others.

¹⁰⁶ See Aman, pp. 45 and 53.

lakkaawwachuun eenyummaa Arabaatti of maxxansu. Yaata'u malee kun dhugaa hin fakkaatu.”¹⁰⁷ A rough translation of this may be, “What makes the kingdom of Gommaa different is that instead of the Oromo clan many of its kings trace their ancestors back to the Awuliyaans through that link themselves to the Arab identity. However, this does not seem true.”

Regarding this extract of the work, we can say at least the following. First, sources indicate that the Awaalinii clan was and is an Oromo group.¹⁰⁸ Secondly, ample sources show that the name of the ruling house of Gommaa is not “Awuliyaan” (Awulian or Awlihan) but Awaalinii.¹⁰⁹ There is a derence between the two. The Awaalinii clan is one of the Maccaa Oromo groups in the Gibe region. On the other hand, sources state that the Awulian (Awlihan) is one of the Somali clans that live in eastern Ethiopia¹¹⁰ and its bordering neighboring countries. Perhaps before the sixteenth century when the Awaalinii were in Baalee the two groups might or might not have direct relation.

In addition, the generalization of this work on the issue is not convincing. Relied on insufficient information and without proper analysis and crosschecking of it with comprehensive oral tradition and written sources, the work has equated a myth on the ruling house of Gommaa to truth. Moreover, to explain this and other similar cases and make generalization about the issues, the social dynamics that build the Oromo nation, and/or changes and continuities that took place throughout the history of the Oromo people need to be considered. Besides these, unlike the work's claim, sources indicate that such tradition is not limited only to the Awaalinii dynasty of the kingdom of Gommaa. For instance, some ruling houses or clans of a number the adjacent non-Oromo states had legends that link their origin to elements from other peoples or areas.¹¹¹ As we see in various parts of this chapter, such trend is also common among most ruling houses of the Shanan Gibee Oromo

¹⁰⁷ Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, p. 246.

¹⁰⁸ See Guluma, “Gomma and Limmu...,” pp. 52-53; Aman, pp. 20-22 and 28. See also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p.150; Gaalii, p. 143. Informants: Abbaa Sadii, *Skeik* Nasir, Abbaa Jebel Abbaa Bulguu and others.

¹⁰⁹See Aman, pp. 10, 13-15, 20-21, 25 and 45; Anteneh, p. 13; Huntingford, p. 40 among others. Informants: *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Sadii and others. See also the last paragraph of this section.

¹¹⁰ Brakumper, p. 136 and Trimmingham, p. 129.

¹¹¹ See Guluma, “Gomma and Limmu...,” pp. 53; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 88; Nigusu Adem, “A History of Yām People, Southwest Ethiopia, ca.1843-1974” MA Thesis (JU, History, 2015), pp. 4-7.

kingdoms.¹¹² Contrary to this work's view, what makes the ruling house of Gommaa different from other Shanan Gibe dynasties was not this myth rather the link its ancestors had with spiritual or religious tradition. Furthermore, this work's argument is contradictory. According to this work the Awaalini (what it calls the 'Awulians') are not Oromo. Then it claims that this does not seem true. The statement completely contradicts its aforementioned argument, which indicates that the work's view on issue is not clear and consistent. In short, the view of this work on the ruling house and kings of Gommaa is misleading.

Still another version to which many authors have referred to P. Ignazio Guidi's work as their source links the origin of this group to a Muslim from Gojjam.¹¹³ This claim was documented in the final quarter of the nineteenth century.¹¹⁴ In general, in the Gibe region there is a tendency to regard any clan with Muslim background as *naggāde/jabartii* (long-distance Muslim traders from northern Ethiopia of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries).¹¹⁵ It seems due to their long time connection with Islam, some claim that the Awaalini were one of these *naggāde* groups. According to Huntingford, in the light of the legend of Waarukoo or "Nur Husain" it seems the term Gojjam is to mean the River Gojeb.¹¹⁶ For example a tradition claims that Waarukoo* (who was sometimes mistakenly called Nur Husain on literature) crossed the Gojeb River miraculously from Kaffa to Gommaa.¹¹⁷

The claim that the Awaalini were descendants of a Muslim trader came from Gojjam (like the legend on the origin of the Adamii of Guumaa) is incorrect. Because, as it has already been mentioned, particularly prior to the emergence of the Oromo kingdoms in the Gibe valley, Muslim merchants of long distance or the '*naggāde*' were among the occupational groups who were forbidden to have equal right with other Oromo clans in this region¹¹⁸ let alone to

¹¹² See chapter 2. 2.

¹¹³ Per Ignazio Guidi, "Strofe e brevi testi amarici," in *Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen*, Vol. X (1907), pp. 181,183. See also Cerulli, p. 294; Huntingford, "The Ethnology and History...", p. 40; Trimmingham, p. 200; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 109 and others.

¹¹⁴ See Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 68.

¹¹⁵ Informants: Abbaa Nagaa, Abbaa Jebel Abbaa Bulguu, Jemal Abbaa Foggii among others.

¹¹⁶ See Huntingford, "The Ethnology and History ...," p. 40.

*Sources indicate that 'Nur Husain' and Waarukoo are not two names of the same person. Evidences point out that the Muslim name of Waarukoo who was a popular Muslim saint from Awaalini clan and ancestor of kings of Gommaa was not 'Nur Husain' but Muhammed Anwar (see Aman, pp.10, 21-22 and 45. Informants: *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Sadii, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu among many others).

¹¹⁷ See Huntingford, "The Ethnology and History...", p. 40; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 155

¹¹⁸ See chapter 2.1 and chapter 2 section 2.2.2.i.

enjoy the highest political privilege by whatever means. The prevalence of this and additional restrictions on traders and other occupational groups in Gommaa, Jimmaa and the rest of the Gibe states have been mentioned in the works of Aman, Guluma¹¹⁹ etc. Indeed, in Gomma the Awaalini were among the clans who denied merchants and artisans to have equal right like them.¹²⁰ Sources indicate that the Awaalini were Muslims when they were in Baalee prior to their movement with other (pastoralist) Oromo groups in to the Gibe region in the sixteenth century.¹²¹ In addition, they “were one of the Oromo clans who first occupied Gomma.”¹²²

Aman Seifedin, in his thesis of 2006 has stated “Awaalini’s claim of saintly origin is probably a later invention so as to exalt its position among the local community and to monopolize power”.¹²³ Also, Guluma maintains, “the association of the founder of the kingdom [of Gommaa] with a spiritual leader was apparently intended to give political legitimacy to the ruling dynasty.”¹²⁴ However, a considerable number of oral information coupled with a written material contradicts this view.¹²⁵ In addition to its top political position during and after the formation of the kingdom in Gommaa, it seems the clan or leaders from the group had a very important spiritual or religious role and high respect in the community even (long) before the emergence of monarchical states in the Gibe region.

This argument can be substantiated with the following evidence. First, some sources associate the group or the name of the group with *awliya* (singular *wali*),* i.e. Muslim holy men or

¹¹⁹ Aman, pp. 11-12 and Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 63.

¹²⁰ See Aman, pp. 10-12. Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, *Sheik* Nasir and Abbaa Sadii.

¹²¹ Aman, pp. 20-22 and 28. See also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p.150. Informants: *Sheik* Nasir and Abbaa Sadii.

¹²² Guluma, “Gomma and Limmu...,” p. 52. Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Jebel Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Sadii and others.

¹²³ Aman, p. 21.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 68.

¹²⁵ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 109 and 155. See also Aman, pp. 10, 21-22, 45-47, 52-54 and Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 67-71; Gemechu Dadi, “The Historical Nature of Gomma Statehood” in *Gadaa Journal/Barruulee Gadaa*, Vol. 3 No. 1 (2020), PP. 114-116 and 121-122 among others. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Jebel Abbaa Bulguu and others.

*M. Taqiuddin Al-Hilali and M. Muhsin Khan, define *wali* (plural *awliya*) as “Protector, guardian, supporter, helper, friend” (see M. Taqiuddin Al-Hilali and M. Muhsin Khan, *Interpretation of the Meaning of the Noble Qur'an in the English Language*, 1996, p. 1136).

saints.¹²⁶ Secondly, written works and oral informants claim that the Awaalini was a *qalluu* clan or descended from a *qaalluu*.¹²⁷ For example, Gemechu Dadi's recent paper whose main finding sheds some light on the origin of the Awaalini (what writer of the work calls "Uwallani") dynasty clearly indicates that a *qaalluu* formed the kingdom of Gommaa.¹²⁸ Thirdly, in a tradition of the Shanan Gibe Maccaa Oromo names of respect in which the females assume their feminine clan identity, unlike other groups, women of the Awaalini clan were and are called *qaallittii*¹²⁹ which usually is a title given to a female hereditary spiritual leader in the indigenous Oromo religion (Waaqeffannaa) and/or in the *gadaa* system.¹³⁰ While, according to this custom of nomenclature the women of, for instance, the Diggoo, Sapheeraa, Adamii, Sayyoo, Badii, Dagooyyee etc groups take the title *Diggittii*, *Sapheerittiittii*, *Adamtittii*, *Sayyittii*, *Badittii*, *Dagooyittii* etc respectively.¹³¹ This clearly indicates that besides the existence of the claim for Islamic sainthood tradition, it appears the clan had initially, the position of *qaalluu* (for male), *qaallittii* (for female) the hereditary ritual and religious leadership status in indigenous Oromo religion (Waaqeffannaa).

Thus, unlike the view of Aman and Guluma, the belief in the "sainthood" of the Awaalini or a leader from the group among the local people was not a later invention. Rather it had existed for some time prior to the emergence of kingship in the region. It seems the long existence of this belief among the people somehow favored the Awaalini's ascendance to the top political ladder during monarchical state formation in Gommaa. Even after that, perhaps it was used to legitimize the rule and power of this dynasty.

¹²⁶ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 109, 155; Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 71; Aman, pp. 10, 21-22, 45-47, 52-54; Gemechu, p. 115. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Jebel Abbaa Bulguu, Biyyaatu among many others.

¹²⁷ See Gemechu pp. 114 -116 and 121-122; Cecchi, *Da Zeila Alle Frontiere Del Caffa...*, p. 239; Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 67 - 68. Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Biyyaatu and *Sheik* Nasir and others.

¹²⁸ Gemechu, pp. 114 - 116 and 121 - 122.

¹²⁹ See Husein, p. 27. Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Sadii, Biyyaatu among many others.

¹³⁰ K.E. Knutsson, *Authority and Change: A study of the Kallu Insituation among the Matcha Galla of Ethiopia* (Gothenburg, 1967), pp. 65 and 94; Gadaa Melbaa, *Oromia: A Brief Introduction* (Finfinne, 1980), p. 19, Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christina Kingdom...*, pp. 8, 39-40 and others.

¹³¹ Informants: Abbaa Nagaa, Abdulkerim, Shamsiyyaa among many others.

Regarding the name of the ruling house of Gommaa different authors stated various things. For example, Huntingford's work claims that the term Awaalini means "the ancients".¹³² Mohammed Hassen states that the real name of the ruling family of Gommaa is "Awuliani" that means "the holy one".¹³³ Alemayehu Haile also calls this clan Awuliyaans.¹³⁴ As Guluma Gemeda comments on this claim of Mohammed Hassen the name of the ruling family of the kingdom of Gommaa might be originated from the term Awuliani "the holy one".¹³⁵ Both written and oral sources indicate that nowadays members of the group in Gommaa call themselves Awaalini.¹³⁶ Based on their names, spiritual or religious role and some oral tradition, it is possible that groups like the Awaalini of the Maccaa, the Awlijaan of the Arsii Oromo, the Awulihan of the Somali and other similar clans might have been real or fictitious descendants of certain distant past *awliya* (singular *wali*) or saints.

iii. The Diggoo of the Kingdom of Jimmaa

One work claims that the kings of Jimmaa such as Abbaa Magaal, Abbaa Jifaar etc. were from the Badii group.¹³⁷ This view also has been shared by another work, which has stated, "The family of Abbaa Jifaar claimed descent from a tribe called Badi..."¹³⁸ However, both oral and written sources confirm beyond any doubt that the aforementioned kings of Jimmaa and the founding father of their dynasty were from Diggoo group.¹³⁹

As we have indicated earlier, it is believed that before the Diggoo, the Badii had been politically dominant in Jimmaa (and in some part of Guumaa). Mohammed Hassen says that Jimmaa was one of the Gibe Oromo states where myths were fabricated to exalt the origin of the ruling houses.¹⁴⁰ According to a small number of informants, in the twentieth century there was an attempt by a personality to link the origin of the Diggoo to the Arabs. It seems this claim of connecting the origin of the group to outside element is not upheld by most of

¹³² Huntingford, "The Ethnology and History...", p. 40.

¹³³ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 109-110, and 155.

¹³⁴ Alamaayoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, pp. 245-246.

¹³⁵ Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 71.

¹³⁶ See Aman, pp. 10, 13-15, 20-21, 25 and 45; Anteneh, p. 13; Huntingford, p. 40 among others. Informants: *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Sadii and others.

¹³⁷ See Guidi, pp. 182, 184.

¹³⁸ See Huntingford, "The Ethnology and History of Southwest...", p. 35.

¹³⁹ See Lewis, pp. 38, 50, 76, 83-84; Ketebo, pp. 14-17, 26, 89; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 111 among many others. This is also known among the Oromo of the Shanan Gibe states in general and that of the kingdom of Jimmaa in particular.

¹⁴⁰ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 227.

the clan members.¹⁴¹ Some of my informants even question the existence of this claim. Probably the story has influenced only insignificant number of individuals. Thus, it was not only the least circulated through oral and written sources but also was not as old as the legends related to the other four Oromo dynasties of the Gibe states. Indeed, the story was invented just to fulfill a motive. According to the claim of a traditional Maccaa genealogical chart of the Akaakoo had four branches (“sons”) such as Jimmaa, Badii, Harsuu and Sadachaa¹⁴² Based on tradition different sources link the genealogical ancestral line of the Diggoo group to Jimmaa Akaakoo Maccaa after certain steps.¹⁴³

In the oral tradition of most or at least some peoples of northeast Africa in general and the Oromo in particular sometimes there is a tendency to regard a name of a certain clan as a name of one person or to assume a name in genealogical table of a group would represent one ancestral man. It appears, most of the time this was not the case. Sources indicate that according to a tradition from some part of the historical kingdom of Jimmaa, there was a man/leader called Diggoo Jaarsoo during the expansion and settlement of the Maccaa Oromo groups to a part of the Gibe region.¹⁴⁴ It appears, the period was from the seventeenth century onwards, during the movement of various Oromo clans to region.¹⁴⁵ If we accept this narrative then there was no a Diggoo group at that time except an ancestral father called Diggoo. The name Diggoo might or might not be initially assumed by one founding father of the clan. However, given the group’s dominant role in or during the formation of the kingdom of Jimmaa to reduce the Diggoo to a single man in this formative stage and time was not correct. Because, the former assumption paves the way for some to conclude that the clan was formed following its “founder” arrived in the areas of Jimmaa proper after the seventeenth century. This is historically unconvincing. It seems, during and after the sixteenth century, like various Maccaa and other Oromo groups Diggoo was the name of a group whose members in one way

¹⁴¹ Informants: Abbaa Nagaa and Abbaa Zinaab.

¹⁴² See Alemayehu *et al*, *History of the Oromo...*, pp. 150 and 159.

¹⁴³ See Ketebo, p. 89 and Alemayehu *et al*, *History of the Oromo...*, p. 160. Informants: Abdulkereim, Abbaa Zinaab, Abbaa Foggii and others.

¹⁴⁴ See Tekalign Wolde Mariam, “Slavery and Slave Trade in the Kingdom of Jimma (ca. 1800-1935).” MA Thesis (AAU, History, 1984), p. 34; Ketebo, pp. 9, 11-13.

¹⁴⁵ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 48; Ketebo, pp. 9 and 105.

or the other were closely related. Indeed, sources indicate that the Diggoo was one of the first clans that arrived to Jimmaa areas of the Gibe region during this period of expansion.¹⁴⁶

According to *History of the Sayyoo Oromo of Southern Wallaga...*, there is also a group that assumes the name Diggoo outside the Gibe region in Wallaggaa.¹⁴⁷ Negaso explains similar incidents in the following way:

One should, of course, not accept the genealogies given by oral informants or the “Macca Genealogy” at face-value. It seems more probable that various segments of the different branches of the Oromoo, due to their being scattered, adopted different genealogies in [different] places of settlement. Thus one finds Tumme segments both in Iluu Abbaa Bor and in Wallaga (in this case north...of the Leeqaa).¹⁴⁸

Likewise, the group known by the name Diggoo found in Wallaggaa might have been the detachment of the Diggoo clan of the kingdom of Jimmaa. Alternatively, the Diggoo in Wallaggaa could have shared the same name without having direct genealogical link to the one in the Gibe region. It appears, this explanation work for Oromo and non-Oromo groups/sub-groups that share the same names but found in different regions being sub-branches of another separate group.

Like the rest of the Oromo clans, the Diggoo had and has sub branches within the group. Sometimes, my informants are not unanimous on numbers and even seldom on a few names of the sub-groups of the Diggoo.¹⁴⁹ It appears the main sub-branches of the group are Horroo, Gabaabee, Godduu, Gumarii and Meettaa. All of my informants on the issue agree that the kings who ruled the monarchy of Jimmaa came from the Horroo line of the Diggoo Group.¹⁵⁰

iv. The Sapheeraa of the Kingdom of Limmuu-Innaariyaa

Like at least most of the rest of the dynasties of the five Gibe states, there is also a legend that relates the Sapheeraa the ruling house of the kingdom of Limmuu-Inariyaa to foreign root. Based on myth some claim that the Sapheeraa were descendants of the Portuguese. According to this legend, Sapheeraa and Sigaroo were among the Portuguese who came alongside

¹⁴⁶ See Ketebo, pp. 9 and 105. Informants: Abdulkerim, Abbaa Nagaa, Abbaa Foggii and others.

¹⁴⁷ See Negaso, pp. 54, 257 and 263.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹⁴⁹ Informants: Abbaa Zinaab, Abbaa Jebel Abbaa Fiixaa, Yahya, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa among many others.

¹⁵⁰ Informants: Abdulkerim, Abbaa Foggii, Yahya and others.

Cristovrao da Gama to assist Galāwdewos in his war against the Muslim force of Imam Ahmed (*Grāgn*) in the sixteenth century. This myth claims that later on these two men left the court of Galāwdewos for Innaariyaa where finally descendants of Sapheeraa established their dynasty.¹⁵¹ For instance, marital de Salviac a French Catholic missionary in the region in the late nineteenth century reported King Abbaa Bogiboo I of Limmuu-Innaariyaa “had...Portuguese blood” in his vein.¹⁵² Huntingford also says Abbaa Bogiboo I (Ibsaa) is depicted in tradition “as light in colour and like a European, possibility to confirm his supposed Portuguese ancestry, possibly because of it.”¹⁵³

Nevertheless, it seems the legend from which the aforementioned and other similar claims arose was a sheer fabrication. As well observed by Mohammed Hassen:

Abba Bogibo [the most famous king of Limmuu-Innaariyaa between 1825 and 1861] was generally described both in oral tradition and by foreign travelers as ‘white’ a notion which gives credibility to the legend of the ‘Portuguese’ origin of his dynastic line. The dynasty founded by his father was known as Saphera, based on a famous historic name. Saphera was the name of the mystical father of the Borana. Even towards the end of the sixteenth century, when the Tulama and the Matcha fought together against a common enemy, they called themselves Saphera in memory of their mythical ancestry. In order to glorify the origin of the family, a legend was invented, probably during the reign of Abba Gomol, and later elaborated under his successor, in order to connect the dynasty with two ‘white men’ named Saperera and Sigaro. As Saperera was a historic name, so was Sigaro when the legend was recorded by European travelers and missionaries, who knew about the Portuguese assistance to the Ethiopian Christian kingdom in the 1540s, the two ‘white men’ became Portuguese, adding additional credibility to the legend...¹⁵⁴

In addition to this analysis of Mohammed Hassen, tradition collected from many elders do not accept the myth that link the Sapheera (and the Sigaroo) clans to Portuguese ancestry.¹⁵⁵ In fact, in the genealogy of these two groups we do not find any European traces except the Oromo ones.¹⁵⁶ Moreover, as indicated earlier in the tradition of the Booranaa (in relation to

¹⁵¹ See Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History...,” pp. 12, 31-32; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 162-163; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 89; Guidi, pp. 180 – 181 and others.

¹⁵² Martial de Salviac, *An Ancient People Great African Nation: The Oromo*. Trans-Ayalew Kanno (Paris, 1909), p. 221.

¹⁵³ Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History ...,” p. 32.

¹⁵⁴ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 162.

¹⁵⁵ See Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 89. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Abbaa Nagaa, *Sheik* Hasan and others.

¹⁵⁶ See Temesgen, pp.27-28. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Abbaa Nagaa, *Sheik* Hasan and others

the Barentumaa) Sapheeraa was the genealogical “father” of the Booranaa.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, beyond the Shanan Gibee region we find Oromo sub-groups with the name Sapheeraa in Iluabbaaboor¹⁵⁸ and in Wallaggaa of Maccaaland¹⁵⁹ and among the Galaan of the Tulamaa Oromoo.¹⁶⁰ Indeed, the existences of Oromo clans that assume the name of Sapheeraa outside the Gibee region invalidate the legend and/or make it irrelevant.

A work has claimed that the nineteenth century monarchs of Limmuu-Innaariyaa because of their Portuguese descent used not the Oromo term *mootii* (“king”) as their title rather the word *supera*.¹⁶¹ This view is improbable, because according to my informants the kings of Limmuu-Innaariyaa like the rest rulers of the Gibe states of the time assumed as their main title the Oromo word of *mootii*, not the terms *supera*.¹⁶² And, Sapheeraa was the general name of a group from that the kings of this monarchy came from,¹⁶³ It is likely that the word *supera* was the result of either the mispronunciation of the term Sapheeraa or an attempt to justify the legend based on sound similarity of the name of the ruling dynasty of Limmuu-Innaariyaa.

According to informants, the Limmuu Oromo branch of the Gibe region was divided into five groups known as Shanan Limmuu (the Five Limmuu). These include Beeroo, Igguu, Burayaa, Anuu and Diimaa. Out of these five, Beeroo is said to be the “eldest” (“*angafa*”). Informants have added that sometimes Beeroo in general and the senior branch (“son”) of Beeroo in particular was known as Sapheeraa; and, the name Sapheeraa does not appear in genealogically tracing of the kings of Limmuu-Innaariyaa. For example, it is said that, the following is the ancestral line of Bofoo (Abbaa Gommol I) the founding father of the kingdom of Limmuu-Innaariyaa- Bofoo (Abbaa Gommol), Bokkuu, Qacanee, Amboo, Irreelee, Kuyyuu, Aleeluu, Beeroo, Limmuu, Maccaa etc. We have seen here no reference to the term

¹⁵⁷ See Negaso, p. 45; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 4 and 162; Alemayehu *et al*, p. 100 among others.

¹⁵⁸ Alemayehu *et al*, *History of the Oromo...*, pp. 157 and 173.

¹⁵⁹ Fekede, pp.20-21

¹⁶⁰ Alemayehu *et al*, *History of the Oromo...*, p. 122

¹⁶¹ Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History ...,” P.12

¹⁶² Informants: Abbaa Jihad, Abbaa Nagaa, *Sheik* Hasan and others.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.* Guluma, “Land, Agriculture, and Society...” pp.74-76, 80; Temesgen, pp. 23, 26-27.

Sapheeraa. Thus, in Limmuu-Innaariyaa Sapheeraa from whom the kings came was a general name unmentioned in genealogy.¹⁶⁴

v. The Sayyoo of the Kingdom of Geeraa

The ruling dynasty in the kingdom of Geeraa was the Sayyoo group.¹⁶⁵ In the long list of kings of Geeraa collected by Cecchi in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, some of the names informed to him represented groups not kings.¹⁶⁶ In this list, one of the names referred to as a king was Gurage.¹⁶⁷ Though sources indicate that there was no a king who held this name in Geeraa.¹⁶⁸

Huntingford states, here Gurage could not be the name of a king rather it was a name of a people or place. According to him, Tullu Ganjii an Oromo leader who came from Gurage might have founded the ruling dynasty of Geeraa. As Huntingford claims, indeed an Oromo leader formed the dynasty of the kingdom of Geeraa.¹⁶⁹ Whatsoever the case, it seems the founding father of the Sayyoo dynasty was from one of the local Maccaa Oromo groups who settled to the region after the great population movement of the sixteenth century.¹⁷⁰ Oral information collected by the researcher indicates that the Sayyoo a Maccaa Oromo group from whom the kings of Geeraa came from has four branches or “sons”. These include Uraagee, Oolee, Gurroo and Nyawwee. Out of these four branches of the Sayyoo clan, the kings of Geeraa including the founding father of this dynasty came from the Uraagee line of descent.¹⁷¹

It is obvious that the name “Gurage” referred by Cecchi and Huntingford¹⁷² and the term, “Uraagee” mentioned by the researcher’s informants,¹⁷³ have difference of initial letters. In

¹⁶⁴ Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa and *Sheik* Hassen.

¹⁶⁵ Ibsa, pp. 16 and 20; Jafar, pp. 24-25. Informants: Ferid Abbaa Boor, *Sheik* Ahmed Abbaa Dikoo, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Duraa and others.

¹⁶⁶ Cecchi, *Da Zeila Alle Frontiere Del Caffa...*, pp. 266-267. Also cited in Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History...,” pp. 35-36.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 112-113; Ibsa, pp. 24-28; Jafar, pp. 24-28 among others. Informants: Ferid, *Sheik* Ahmed Abbaa Dikoo, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Duraa and others.

¹⁶⁹ See Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History...,” pp. 35-36.

¹⁷⁰ See Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” p. 83.

¹⁷¹ Informants: Ferid, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Duraa, *Sheik* Ahmed among many others.

¹⁷² See Cecchi, *Da Zeila Alle Frontiere Del Caffa...*, p. 266; Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History...,” pp. 35-36.

¹⁷³ Informants: Ferid, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Duraa, *Sheik* Ahmed and others.

Geeraa of the Gibe region, informants and members of this Oromo sub clan use the name “Uraagee” not “Gurage” to refer to the branch of the Sayyoo.¹⁷⁴ Indeed, the origin of the name Uraagee might or might not have connection with the term Gurage.

A source indicates that there is an Oromo group by the name of Uraagaa¹⁷⁵ or Uraagoo among the Gujii Oromo.¹⁷⁶ Like some other peoples, the Oromo have a tradition in their language to pronounce a name by changing the last vowel letter/s often with the same or a little different meaning and may be seldom with a shift in sense.¹⁷⁷ It appears the terms “Uraagee” of Sayyoo of the Shanan Gibe Oromo and the “Uraagaa” or “Uraagoo” of Gujii Oromo might have been close terms that followed this pattern of naming tradition.

To conclude this section, almost all of the ruling groups of the five Gibe Oromo states had legends that link their origin to “outside elements”. It seems most of these stories were invented just to meet certain desired motives: political or religious (or other) reasons. Whatsoever the case, as Mohammed Hassen articulates:

...there was no such things as a “pure” Oromo tribe derived from a single founding father...the history of the Oromo people is not a collection of histories of individual tribes or group of tribes, but a story of fusion and interaction by which all tribes and groups had altered and been transformed constantly. This was made possible by a dynamic Oromo institution (the *gada* system), the process of adoption, continual [movement], conquest, assimilation, and interaction with other groups...¹⁷⁸

2.3. A List of Monarchs of the Five Oromo Dynasties of the Gibe States

Usually, written sources and oral informants do not give us consistent list of monarchs for at least some Shanan Gibe states especially of Geeraa, Guumaa and Gommaa. Moreover, in relation to this, one of the main problems we face is that the exact periods these rulers were in power. Overwhelming works that enumerate the monarchs who ruled the kingdoms of Jimmaa and Limmuu-Innaariyaa to some extent mention consistent names but sometimes with

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ See Alemayehu *et al*, *History of the Oromo...*, pp. 184-186 and 188-189.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p. 190.

¹⁷⁷ For instance, Badhaasaa-Badhaasoo-Badhaasee; Nagaasaa-Nagaasoo-Nagaasee; Doyyaa-Doyyee-Doyyoo-Doyyuu; Tumaa-Tumoo-Tumee; Waaqa-Waaqoo-Waaqee etc.

¹⁷⁸ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 4-5.

inconsistent reigns. Until a refined version of overall list that fills these gaps is presented through further studies, we can at least give a rough of it.

Based on some literary materials (and occasionally informants) this paper here under try to give a sketchy list of the monarchs from five dynasties that ruled each Shanan Gibe Oromo states sometime with approximate period of their reigns.

2.3.1. Monarchs of the Kingdom of Gommaa

The following is a sketch list of kings of the Awaalini daynasty that reigned in the kingdom of Gommaa from some part of the eighteenth century to 1880s. This list of monarchs of Gommaa was adapted particularly from one of Guluma's work.

- i. Abbaa Bokkee (Allayoo)
- ii. Abbaa Manoo (Oddaa) Abbaa Bokkee (ca. 1735-1775)
- iii. Abbaa Bogiboo Abbaa Manoo (ca. 1775-1805)
- iv. Abbaa Raagoo Abbaa Bogiboo (ca. 1805-1830)
- v. Abbaa Reebuu Abbaa Bogiboo (ca. 1830-1856)
- vi. Abbaa Duulaa Abbaa Reebuu (ca.1856-1864)
- vii. Abbaa Jifaar Abbaa Morkii Abbaa Bogiboo (ca. 1864-1877)
- viii. Abbaa Booqaa Abbaa Jifaar (ca. 1877-1882/3)*
- ix. Abbaa Duulaa Abbaa Qiriphee (ca. 1882/3-1886)¹⁷⁹

Different sources put forward various versions of list for monarchs of the kingdom of Gommaa.¹⁸⁰ Out of these, one work has reduced the number of kings of Gommaa only to four.¹⁸¹ Similarly, another work has decreased the number of the monarchs of this kingdom to

* The date given by Guluma's MA work of 1984 (p. 55) and Aman Seifedin (p. 51) when Abbaa Booqaa dethroned and Abbaa Duulaa Abbaa Qiriphee enthroned was 1883. However, Guluma's later works (such as "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 142 and "Conquest and Resistance in the Gibe Region...", p. 55) state that the aforementioned incident took place in about 1882.

¹⁷⁹ Guluma, "Gomma and Limmu...", p. 55. See also Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 79.

¹⁸⁰ See Cecchi, *Da Zeila Alle Frontiere Del Caffa...*, pp. 239-240; Huntingford, "The Ethnology and History...", p. 40; Gulum, "Gomma and Limmu...", p. 55; Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 79; Gemechu, p. 116; Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, p. 246. See Gaalii, pp. 202-203, 206-207 and others.

¹⁸¹ See Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, p. 246.

five.¹⁸² However, various other written and oral sources indicate that the kings who ruled the kingdom of Gommaa were more than these two authors have claimed in number.¹⁸³

2.3.2. Monarchs of the Kingdom of Jimmaa

The following is a list of kings of the Diggoo dynasty that ruled of the monarchical state of Jimmaa from some part of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the fourth decade of the twentieth century which is beyond the time scope of this study.

- i. Abbaa Faaroo (ca. 1742-1782)
- ii. Abbaa Magaal Abbaa Faaroo (ca.1782-1824)
- iii. Abbaa Raagoo Abbaa Magaal (ca.1824-1830)
- iv. Abbaa Jifaar I (Sanaa) Abbaa Magaal (ca. 1830-1855)
- v. Abbaa Reebuu Abbaa Jifaar I (ca. 1855-1858)
- vi. Abbaa Booqaa Abbaa Magaal (ca. 1858-1864)
- vii. Abbaa Gommol Abbaa Booqaa (ca.1864-1878)
- viii. Abbaa Jifaar II (Tulluu) Abbaa Gommol (ca.1878-1932)¹⁸⁴

As we have already indicated, oral and written sources give somewhat similar list of monarchs of the kingdom of Jimmaa,¹⁸⁵ but infrequently consistent.¹⁸⁶

2.3.3. Monarchs of the Kingdom of Limmuu-Innaariyaa

The following is a list of the kings of the Sapheeraa dynasty that ruled the kingdom of Limmuu-Inaariyaa between the last quarter of the eighteenth century and 1880s.

- i. Abbaa Gommol I (Bofoo) (ca. 1785-1825)
- ii. Abbaa Bogiboo I (Ibsaa) (ca. 1825-1861)
- iii. Abbaa Gommol II (Abbaa Bulguu) (ca. 1861-1882)

¹⁸² See Gaalii, pp. 142, 196-207.

¹⁸³ See Cecchi, *Da Zeila Alle Frontiere Del Caffa...*, pp. 239-240; Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and society..." p. 79; Guluma Gameda, "Gomma and Limmu..." p. 55; Gemechu, p. 116; Huntingford, "The Ethnology and History..." p. 40 and others. Informants: *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Sadii and many others.

¹⁸⁴ Cited in Ketebo, p. 16, but adapted with minor modification. However, my informants like Yahya Abbaa Gissaa and *Haji* Abbaa Milkii Abbaa Billoo contradict dates of reigns for many of these rulers in the list.

¹⁸⁵ See Ketebo, p. 16; Tekalign, "Slavery and Slave Trade in the Kingdom of Jimma," p. 38; Gaalii, p. 213 and others. Informants: Abdulkarim, Abbaa Foggii, Abbaa Zinaab among many others.

¹⁸⁶ See for example Cecchi, *Da Zeila Alle Frontiere Del Caffa...*, pp. 540-541. See also Huntingford, "The Ethnology and History..." p. 34.

iv. Abbaa Bogiboo II (ca.1882-1886)¹⁸⁷

2.3.4. Monarchs of the Kingdom of Guumaa

As it has already been indicated, it appears the leaders of the Dagooyyee and the Badii groups had ruled parts or most of Guumaa separately before the rulers of the Adamii group one after the other replaced them. Various sources enumerate different lists of kings for the Adamii dynasty of the kingdom of Guumaa.¹⁸⁸ The hereunder kings' sketchy list of the Adamii dynasty for the kingdom of Guumaa is adapted from a work of Cerulli.

- i. "Adam", Adamii
- ii. Jiilchaa (ca. 1795-1810)
- iii. Onchoo Jiilchaa (ca. 1810-1840)
- iv. Jawwee (Abbaa Duulaa) Onchoo (ca. 1840-1879)
- v. Abbaa Joobir Abbaa Duulaa (ca. 1879-1881)
- vi. Abbaa Foggii Abbaa Duulaa (ca. 1881-1886)¹⁸⁹

2.3.5. Monarchs of the Kingdom of Geeraa

The following is a rough list of monarchs of the Sayyoo dynasty of the kingdom of Geeraa.

- i. Gunjii
- ii. Tulluu Gunjii (ca. 1835-1838)
- iii. Abbaa Bosoo (ca. 1838-1842)
- iv. Abbaa Raagoo I (ca. 1842-1848)
- v. Abbaa Magaal I (ca. 1848-1870)
- vii. *Gennee* Dagooyyittii/Guumayittii/Artittii (ca. 1870-1887)¹⁹⁰

Like most list of monarchs of the kingdoms of the Shanan Gibee states, there is also irregularity in the case of Geeraa. For instance, one version which is shared by many works say that after the death of Abbaa Magaal (I), *Gennee* Dagooyyittii (Guumayittii or Artittii) the

¹⁸⁷ Guluma, "Gomma and Limmu...", p. 66. See also Gaalii, p. 123-131, Temesgen, pp. 23, 26-17. There are sources that present a list of kings of Limmuu-Innaariyaa with a little or some difference (see for instance Huntingford, "The Ethnology and History...", P. 33, Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, pp. 206-207 etc.)

¹⁸⁸ See Cecchi, *Da Zeila Alle Frontiere Del Caffa...*, pp. 541-542; Huntingford, "The Ethnology and History...", pp. 37-38; Cerulli, p. 297; Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, p. 235.

¹⁸⁹ See Cerulli, p. 297

¹⁹⁰ This rough list of rulers for the kingdom of Geeraa in one way or the other is based on the inconsistent information I get from the works of Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia...*, pp.112-113; Cecchi, *Da Zeila Alle Frontiere Del Caffa...*, pp. 266-267; Jafer, pp. 24-30; Trimmingham, p. 202 and others.

king's wife and the mother of Abbaa Raagoo II became a regent for the legitimate successor and, ruled as a despot the monarchical state of Geeraa.¹⁹¹ However, the other version claims that following the passing away of Abbaa Raagoo II (who according to one of these sources ruled between 1870 and 1878) even though his baby son Abbaa Magaal II succeeded him, *Gennee* Dagooyittii (Guumayittii or Artittii) the Queen Mother was given regency for her son and became the *de facto* ruler of the kingdom.¹⁹²

In short, various sources were not consistent in the lists of the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states particularly for the kingdoms of Geeraa, Gommaa and Guumaa. Most sources give us more or less uniform lists for the kings of the monarchies of Jimmaa and Limmuu-Innaariyaa. Except for some monarchs of the Shanan Gibe Oromo dynasties, the reigns for most of them show irregularities in various sources. In fact, this calls for further study on the issue.

To conclude this chapter, generally the founding fathers of the dynasties of the Maccaa descended from known pioneers (*dagal saaqii*) who earned their reputation in the initial years of the Oromo movement to the region. Most of the ancestors of the founding fathers of new dynasties or the founders themselves had been *gadaa* officials like *abbaa duulaa* (“war leader”), *abbaa bokkuu* (“father of the scepter”) etc. In the Gibe valley, in addition to *gadaa* officials or their offspring, the *qaalluu* (the priest of the Oromo indigenous belief) or his descendant became a founding father of a dynasty in Gommaa one of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms. Usually, the groups from whom the monarchs of the five Gibe Oromo states came from had legends which associate their origin to “outside elements” that in most cases, had no relation with the movement of the pastoralist Oromo groups in the sixteenth century. It appears the majority of these legends were fabricated to fulfill a certain motive that could be political or religious. Indeed, more than thirty monarchs of various dynasties reigned over the five Maccaa Oromo kingdoms of the Gibe valley. Generally, lists and reigns of monarchs of most these Oromo dynasties had a various degree of inconsistency. The next chapter will deal with the tradition and religions in relation to the Shanan Gibe Oromo monarchs.

¹⁹¹ Trimingham, p. 202; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 141; Cecchi, *Da Zeila Alle Frontiere Del Caffa...*, pp. 259, 266-267; Jafer, p. 28 among others.

¹⁹² Ibsa, p. 28; see also Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History...,” p. 36.

CHAPTER THREE

III. TRADITION, RELIGIONS AND MONARCHS OF THE SHANAN GIBEE STATES

Though the five Oromo kingdoms that flourished in the Gibe region were politically independent from each other and had their own separate ruling houses, they were more or less culturally alike. The Maccaa Oromo of these states share almost similar tradition and religion. As Mohammed Hassen states, Shanana Gibe is “a single cultural unit”.¹ The cultural change that had taken place in the region like the rest of the people affected the monarchs of these kingdoms but to a certain extent with some peculiarity. This chapter deals briefly with some aspects of tradition and religious transformation among the Oromo of the region in general and that of the monarchs of Shanana Gibe states in particular.

3.1. Royal Tradition

The Monarchs of the Shanana Gibe states, like other dynasties and ruling classes had tradition. Great deals of their tradition were shared with common people while others were not. Under this section, we see the naming tradition in relation to the monarchs, titles and symbols of royalty, a linguistic aspect and customs common in and around the royal palaces of the Shanana Gibe kingdoms.

3.1.1. Naming Tradition

Among the Oromo of the Gibe region, there is a special naming practice. According to this tradition, names were given for a person at least twice first at birth and then at weeding. This first/birth name may be Raayyaa, Mohommed, Biyyaatuu, Fatuma etc while the second name bestowed to a person when he/she gets married can be Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Raagoo, Haadha Biyyaa, Haadha Maccaa etc.² Before conversion to Islam, the first/birth name of people in the region were Oromo names like Ibsaa, Tulluu, Raagoo etc. Based on accounts of oral informants and inference from a written source, that after the propagation of Islam to the region, it seems the Shanana Gibe monarchs and the people started to use both first names of

¹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 99.

² See Ketebo, pp. 84-86; Hussein, p. 27; *Kallacha Oromiyaa* ('Forehead of Oromia'), an Oromo language newspaper issued twice a month, Vol. IV, No 7 (1989 E.C.), p. 3. Informants: Abdulkerim, *Sheik* Hassen, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu and others.

the Oromo and the “Islamic” one for some time.³ However, gradually even most Oromo birth/first names gave way to “Islamic” names,⁴ while the compound Oromo names generally transcended this ideological transformation.⁵ Here we see both change and continuity of the past.

The kings of Shanan Gibe states were renowned by the compound names that began with *abbaa* than their first names.⁶ A number of written sources claim that in the Gibe region compound names that began with *abbaa* are horse names.⁷ A quote from one of Herbert Lewis’s wonderful works illustrates this view very well.

...[such] names are generally compound of a word *abba*, “father,” “owner of” plus a word descriptive of a horse. For example, Abba Jifar means “owner of the Dappled Horse”; Abbaa Magal, “Owner of the Bay”; Abba Digga, “Owner of the Demolisher.” In order to identify a person more certainly the [Oromo] refer to him by his own “horse name” followed by that of his father: Abba Garo-Abba Bok’a, Abba Jifar-Abba Gommol, and so on...⁸

In addition to not taking into attention to the change the regional naming tradition experienced,⁹ such view has come out of trying to explain the naming practice of the Oromo of the Gibe valley by the horse name tradition of the Central and Northern Ethiopia. Sources have indicated that in Central and Northern Ethiopia the compound name that began with *abbaa* was a horse name used by rulers and other important personalities.¹⁰ The culture of giving names of horses to influential individuals transferred into the Northern and Central

³ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 216; Ketebo, pp. 27. Informants: Abdulkarim, Abbaa Nagaa, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa and others.

⁴ Ketebo, p. 84. Informants: Abdulkarim, Abbaa Zinaab, Abbaa Nagaa and others

⁵ Informants: Abdulkarim, Abbaa Zinaab, Abbaa Nagaa and others.

⁶ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 99 and 216; Beke, P. 259; G. W. B. Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia, The Kingdoms of Kafa and [Yam]* (London, 1955), p. 40 and others.

⁷ See Lewis, pp. xviii, xix; Trimmingham, p. 201; Abir, p. 78; Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia...*, pp. 40, 56 among many others.

⁸ Lewis, pp. xvii-xix.

⁹ Ketebo, pp. 85-86.

¹⁰ Rita Pankhurst, “Personal Names in Ge’ez and Amharic: A Categorization.” *Ethiopian Studies at the End of the Second Millennium*, eds. Baye Yimam *et al* (Addis Ababa, 2000), pp. 956-958; Richard Pankhurst, “The Early History of Ethiopian Horse-names,” *R. Prutiky’s Travels in Ethiopia and Other Countries*, ed. R. Pruticky (1989), pp. 197-206.

Ethiopia from the Oromo. This tradition of naming strengthened in the eighteenth century at the time the Oromo became dominant in Gondar.¹¹

However, a work of Ketebo, extensive oral information and my personal observation confirm that in the Gibe region such names are not horse names. Rather, they have been just personal names of respect usually used by monarchs and most people alike.¹² Among many, works of Richard and Rita Pankhurst show that in Central and Northern Ethiopia the compound horse names start with *abbaa* (“father, owner, master of”)¹³ but in the Gibe region such compound respect names begin either with *abbaa* (“father, owner, master of”) or with *haadha* (“mother, owner, master of”). Also in the Gibe region, monarchs and people could assume such compound names of respect without having horses or horses known by similar names with their owners.¹⁴

It is likely that at first most compound names that began with *abbaa* could have been stated as horse names even in the Gibe region. However, from sometime onward in the past such horse names turned in to personal names of respect.¹⁵ Here also we see change and continuity. It appears, initially the great admiration the Oromo had to the horsemen warriors and war-horses, and the weakening of the *gadaa* system coupled with the creation of classes where the importance of honor increased were among the main factors that contributed a lot to the shift of the meaning from compound horse name to that of name of respect. It seems that the emergence of monarchical states in the Gibe region sealed this process of change in meaning and makes such practice of personal name of respect more popular and mass culture as time went on.

It is plausible that some names of respect found their roots from *gadaa* tradition. According to Ketebo:

This type of nomenclature has its origin likely in Oromo tradition, particularly, the *gadaa* system. This can be demonstrated by the titles of the *gadaa* officials which started with Abba followed by a particular duty of the official. For example, Abba

¹¹ Pankhurst, “Personal Names...,” p. 956.

¹² See Ketebo, pp. 84-86. Informants: Abdulkerim, Abbaa Foggii, Abbaa Sadii among many others

¹³ Richard Pankhurst, pp. 197-206 and Rita Pankhurst, pp. 956-958.

¹⁴ Informants: Abdulkerim, Abbaa Foggii, Abbaa Sadii and many others.

¹⁵ See Ketebo, p. 85.

Dula ‘(father of war or in charge of defense), *Abba Boku* (father of the scepter)...¹⁶

Most of monarchs of the five Oromo Gibe states including at least more than half founding fathers of these kingdoms used compound names in addition to their first ones. As we have indicated earlier, they were more popular by such names than their first names. Usually both written and oral sources were mentioned their names of respect. For instance, Bofoo (of Limmuu-Innaariyaa) Oddaa (of Gommaa) and Sanaa (of Jimmaa) were Abbaa Gommol, Abbaa Manoo and Abbaa Jifaar I respectively.¹⁷

Moreover, there is another kind of names of respect among the Oromo of the Gibe region. Next to the compound name given to a person when he/she gets married, the other popular related tradition is sometimes calling women especially mothers by their feminine name of clan origin. As we have mentioned earlier, for example women from Badii, Dagooyyee, Sigaroo, Adamii, Awaalini, Diggoo, Sapheeraa and Sayyoo were called *Badittii*, *Dagooyyittii*, *Sigartittii*, *Adamtittii*, *Qaallittii*, *Diggittii*, *Sapheertittii* and *Sayyittii* respectively.¹⁸ Usually, wives and/or mothers of the Shanan Gibee kings were formally known /called by such clan (or sometimes state) based feminine names of honor preceded by title *gennee* (“queen”)¹⁹ the compound respect names that begin with *haadha*. Sources show that sometimes there were occasions when queens were called by the feminine names of the kingdoms they came from rather than or in addition to that of their clan origin. For example, even if the mother of Abbaa Jifaar II was from Adamii clan of Guumaa she was usually known as Guumayittii rather than Adamtittii.²⁰ This was a patterns in relation to the clan (or

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 103-113, 153-161; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 69-80, 89; Abir, pp. 79-84, 88-93 among many others. Informants: Abdulkarim, *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Nagaa and others.

¹⁸ See *Kallacha Oromiyaa*, p. 3; Hussein, p. 27. Informants: Abdulkarim, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, *Sheik* Nasir among many others.

¹⁹ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 99. Ketabo, pp. 26-27,86-87, 89; Guluma “Land, Agriculture and Scoiety...,” p.142; Jafar Abba Gidi, “A History of Agrarian Development in Gera (Ca 1887-1990s),” MA Thesis (Jimma University, History, 2016), p. 28 and others. Informants: Abdulkarim, Abbaa Jihad, *Sheik* Nasir among many others.

²⁰ See Ketabo, pp. 26-27, 29. Informants: Abbaa Zinaab, Abdulkarim, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Abbaa Garoo and others. Here, the information from informants is more directly related to the issue than the cited written source.

state) based feminine respect names (preceded by the title *gennee*) in which the Shanan Gibee Oromoo queens were addressed.

There is also an exception to this pattern. Sources indicate that *Gennee* Dagooyittii or *Gennee* Guumayittii of the kingdom of Geeraa (1870-1887) sometimes was called by the name (*Gennee*) Artittii.²¹ One work claims that the name Artittii was the queen's first name.²² Nevertheless, we do not know exactly (for sure) whether this was her nickname given to her after sometime or her first Oromo name. Besides the women's names of honors discussed above, sources indicate that indeed the queens of the Shanan Gibee Oromo in certain cases were addressed by their first names (preceded by the title *gennee*). For example, the daughter of Abbaa Foggii Abbaa Duulaa of Guumaa and the later wife of *Ras* Tasammā was *Gennee* Alima.²³

Cecchi whose excellent work gives us ample information on various aspects of the Oromo kingdoms of the Gibe region and the neighboring states claims that the queen who ruled the kingdom of Geeraa of his time was *Gennee* Faa.²⁴ Also, Huntingford states that among the Shanan Gibee Oromo states the main wife of a king was called *Gennee* Faa which, according to him, means 'the lady.'²⁵ However, my informants have not associated any queen of the Shanan Gibee Oromo kingdoms in general and that of Geeraa in particular with aforementioned name. Indeed, they remember the queen of Geeraa not by *Gennee Faa* rather, as we have mentioned above, by the names *Gennee* Dagooyittii or *Gennee* Artittii or *Gennee* Guumayittii.²⁶ It is probable that Cecchi might have been mistaken by the limited knowledge of Afaan Oromoo he had which could led him to believe the queen's name was *Gennee* Faa. Because from experience, first among the Oromo in general and the Maccaa in particular there was no the tradition assuming the term *Faa* as a personal name. Second, in Afaan Oromo the word *faa* does not stand alone to have meaning. To be a meaningful it should be a suffix of a word especially of a name. In such a way it can have a near meaning or implication of 'the person/thing mentioned and other/s'. For instance, the personal name Ibsaa plus the suffix *faa* (i.e. Ibsaafaa) has the near meaning or implication of: 'Ibsaa and other/s'. And, the title

²¹ See Ibsa, p. 29. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Duraa, *Sheik* Ahmed, Ferid and others.

²² Ibsa, p. 29.

²³ See Cerulli, pp. 63, 183-185, 297; Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, p. 238; Gaalii, p. 140.

²⁴ See Cecchi, *Da Zeila Alle Frontiere Dell Caffa*, pp. 259-260, 267.

²⁵ Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia ...*, p. 56.

²⁶ Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Duraa, *Sheik* Ahmed, Ferid and others.

gennee plus faa together implies ‘the queen (or the lady) and other/s’. Therefore, it appears what Cecchi has claimed that the name of the ruling queen of Geeraa during his stay in the region was *Gennee Faa* is unlikely and unconvincing. Informants also reject Huntingford’s claim that the main wife of an Oromo king of the Shanan Gibe states was known as *Gennee Faa*.²⁷

Here it is appropriate to mention a few observations on compound names that start with *Abbaa* in relation to the Shanan Gibe monarchs. First, it seems usually a few such names like *Abbaa Jifaar*,²⁸ *Abbaa Manoo*, *Abbaa Booqaa* etc. were assumed exclusively or mostly by monarchs. Second, more than one monarch of a dynasty or kingdoms held some compound names. For instance, the name *Abbaa Jifaar* was given to two kings of Jimmaa and one king of Gommaa. The same is true for the name *Abbaa Bogiboo* that was assumed by two kings of Limmuu-Innaariyaa and one king of Gommaa; and *Abbaa Booqaa* that at least had been held by one monarch of Jimmaa and a king of Gommaa. The list goes on.

As it has been indicated earlier, the monarchs of the Gibe states like the rest of the people had childhood names that could be Oromo or/and ‘Islamic’. For instance, Muslim name of King *Abbaa Gommol* (1864-1878) of Jimmaa was Da’ud.²⁹ In addition, *Abbaa Jifaar II*’s first Oromo name was Tulluu while his Muslim name Muhammed.³⁰ Rarely, *Abbaa Jifaar II* also was called by the name (*Abbaa*) *Diimaa*.³¹ Moreover, according to my informants, the Oromo and the Muslim names of *Abbaa Booqaa* (ca. 1877-1882) of the kingdom of Gommaa were *Agamsoo* and *Da’ud* respectively.³²

Sources indicate that there was occasion when a monarch assumed more than one names of respect (or compound names). For example, *Abbaa Bulguu* was the name of respect given to the famous last king of Jimmaa when he got married and *Abbaa Jifaar (II)* was the name bestowed to him during his coronation.³³ Also, various literary works state that the successor

²⁷ Informants: *Abbaa Zinab*, *Abbaa Jihad* *Abbaa Maccaa*, *Sheik Nasir* and others.

²⁸ It is claimed that in the kingdom of Jimmaa except the king no other person was permitted to hold the name *Abbaa Jifaar* (see Ketebo, p. 86).

²⁹ See Trmingham, p. 203 and Ketebo, p. 27.

³⁰ Ketebo, p. 27. Informants: *Abbaa Zinaab*, *Abdulkerim*, *Abbaa Foggii* and others.

³¹ Informants: *Abdulkerim*, *Abbaa Zinaab*, *Abbaa Foggii* and others.

³² Informants: *Mohammed Abbaa Joobir*, *Asna Abbaa Garoo*, *Sultan Abbaa Joobir*.

³³ See Ketebo, pp. 27-28. Informants: *Abdulkerim Abbaa Zinaab* and *Abbaa Foggii*.

of King Abbaa Bagiboo I of Limmuu-Innaariyaa was Abbaa Bulguu (1861-1882)³⁴ while others mention that the former was succeeded by Abbaa Gommol II.³⁵ As sources have confirmed that, the successor of Abbaa Bogiboo I (Ibsaa) had two names of respect. The first one was Abbaa Bulguu and the second was Abbaa Gommol.³⁶ It seems that Abbaa Bulguu was the name of respect the successor of Abbaa Bogiboo I assumed by the time he got married while Abbaa Gommol was the compound name he was given during his coronation.³⁷ Because, firstly, the name of honor for Bofoo, the founding father of the kingdom of Limmuu-Innaariyaa was Abbaa Gommol; and thus like his successor and some other kings of Shanan Gibee states the third monarch of this kingdom took the same name of his grandfather. And secondly unlike to the compound name Abbaa Gomol, Abbaa Buluguu was also predominantly assumed by common or other people than kings.

Guluma has said that King Abbaa Manoo of Gommaa had at least three names. In the words of Guluma, “The three names-Odda, Allayo, and Abba Mano- that Cecchi thought represented three persons referred only to one person. According to the recently collected tradition, Odda Allayo was the child name of Abba Mano, who took another name when he became king...”³⁸ It seems this claim is partially correct and partially is not. In a sense that in line with Guluma Gameda’s assertion, as my informants say that Oddaa was the first (the childhood) name of Abbaa Manoo whereas contrary to Guluma’s claim Allayoo was not the extension of Abbaa Manoo’s (Oddaa’s) childhood name rather it was the first name of Abbaa Bokkee (Oddaa’s or Abbaa Manoo’s father).³⁹ Guluma was told by his informant that Abbaa Bokkee had sixteen male children.⁴⁰ Cecchi also reported that Allayoo and Odddaa were a father and a son respectively, and the latter succeeded the former as a king of Gommaa.⁴¹ In addition,

³⁴ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 143, 191-192, 195, 197; Salviac, pp. 387-388; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 142 among others.

³⁵ Huntingford, “The Ethnology and Histor ...,” p.33; Guluma, “Gomma and Limmu...,” p. 66; Trimmingham, p. 201 among many others.

³⁶ See Temesgen, p. 73. Informants: Abbaa Nagaa and *Sheik* Hasen.

³⁷ See Guluma, *Limmu and Gomma...*, pp. 139-140; Temesgen, p. 73.

³⁸ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 89.

³⁹ Informants: *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Jebel Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Sadii and others.

⁴⁰ See Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 69.

⁴¹ See Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History...,” p. 40 and Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 54.

informants said that one of the sons of Allayyoo (Abbaa Bokkee) was Bantii and his full name was Bantii Allayoo.⁴²

In the kingdom of Guumaa there was a tradition to call most of their kings as Abbaa Baaloo which could have been a name of respect or a title for these monarchs. A tradition published by Enrico Cerulli has mentioned that kings of Guumaa such as the so called legendary “Adam” the founding father of the Adami dynasty, Onchoo and Jawwee were known as Abbaa Baaloo which means father of “lance”.⁴³ According to this source, such “custom prevails among the Oromo of assuming as a battle name the name given to the warrior’s own lance...”⁴⁴ Some of my informants sometimes mention interchangeable or indiscriminately most or all kings of Guumaa as Abbaa Baaloo.⁴⁵ It appears the compound name by which the first kings of Guumaa from Adami dynasty were known later on became the general name or title used by the people to mean the king of Guumaa from this ruling house.

3.1.2. Titles and Symbols of Royalty

In the Oromo monarchies of the Gibe region kings, queens and princes had royal titles and/or symbols. The male rulers of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms used the title *mootii* which means “king or conqueror” in Afaan Oromoo.⁴⁶ Sometimes, sources called a few kings of the Gibe states (for instance Abbaa Jifaar I and Abbaa Jifaar II of Jimmaa and Abbaa Bogiboo II of Limmuu-Innaariyaa) by the title sultan,⁴⁷ whose origin was Arabic and which meant “a Muslim ruler” in certain countries.⁴⁸ “With the spread of Islam into sub-Saharan Africa, some of the Muslim local rulers assumed the title of sultan”.⁴⁹

A literary source states the kings of Guumaa “reserved for themselves the former elective title of Abba Dūla (Father of War)” and the neighboring peoples’ “royal title of *donacho*.”⁵⁰

⁴²Informants: Habib Abbaa Simal and Halima Abbaa Simal .

⁴³ “Cerulli, pp. 285-286, 288-290, 294.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 292.

⁴⁵ Informants: Ahmed, Abbaa Nagaa, Abbaa Biyyaa *Sheik* Abubeker among others

⁴⁶ See Mohammad, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 99. Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Foggii, Abbaa Nagaa and others.

⁴⁷ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 181; Trimmingham, pp. 128-130, 184, 192 and 203; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 144-146; Temesgen, p. 74.

⁴⁸ *Oxford Dictionary of Current English* (Oxford, 2006), p. 914.

⁴⁹ *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World*, editor Richard C. Martin (2004, New York), p. 475.

⁵⁰ See Trimmingham, p.202.

Again, another work has said that in the kingdom of Guumaa some monarchs till the final one, were known by the title of *abbaa duulaa*.⁵¹ These claims could be true though it seems they were against the general tradition or trend of titles of royalty at least in the majority of the five Gibe states.⁵² In the hierarchy of most of the Shanan Gibe Oromo states, under the *mootii* (the king), *abbaa duulaa* (father of war) was the general who lead the army of a kingdom in the eventuality of war while *doonachoo* was a crown prince. The office of *abbaa duulaa* was inherited from the *gadaa* system.⁵³

As it has been mentioned earlier, a wife of the king or a female ruler of the Gibe states were called by the title *gennee* (“the lady” or “the queen”) usually followed by clan or sometimes state based feminine names of respect or first name. Married princes were usually known by their compound names of respect whilst as indicated above “the crown princes” had the title of *donachoo* that preceded their compound names of honor. As soon as a prince was selected to be a crown prince, “he was authorized to wear one of the golden bracelets.”⁵⁴

In relation to symbols of royalty used by the kings of Shanan Gibe states, the following quote give us a good illustration.

...The Gibe kings has gold rings as the insignia of royal power and gold earrings, silver bracelets, and an umbrella as symbols of royal authority. As the symbol their Muslim faith, the kings wore black caps made of goat leather, and on special occasions they put an ostrich feather in their hair and held an *alanga* or *lichu* (a whip made of hippopotamus’s hide) in their right hand, both of these being the symbols of traditional gada leaders. Other symbols of royal authority were the crown, the throne, double-bladed spears, which also served as the seal of the king, and two gold arm bracelets.⁵⁵

3.1.3. Palace Language and Customs

The emergence of kingdoms in the Gibe region has impacts on the culture of the people in general and the palace community and its surrounding in particular. Monarchical states had their own institutions that fit to their need. Titles of royalty, monarchical bureaucratic hierarchies and others were concomitant to kingdoms. Moreover, unlike to the *gadaa* system

⁵¹ Cerulli, pp. 14, 289 and 292.

⁵² See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 99.

⁵³ Informants: Abbaa Zinaab, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu and *Sheik* Hasan among many others.

⁵⁴ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 99. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, *Sheik* Nasir, Abdulkerim and others.

⁵⁵ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 99

under monarchial rule people were also divided in to the higher, the middle and the lower classes, the wealthy and the poor etc. Normally such and similar developments and differences were reflected in various aspects of culture of the ruling group and the rest of the people in the Gibe valley.

We see one such phenomenon in relation to the language, which is an aspect of a culture. According to informants, in the Gibe region there was what we call in Afaan Oromoo *hasaa masaraa* (“speech/language of palace”). For example, according to informants Afaan Oromoo phrases like *mootummaa baachuu* (to rule a country as a monarch or a head of state/government), *boroo bahuu* (to go to the toilet) and some other “polite” and diplomatic expressions were initially frequented mainly at palaces and their surroundings in the region.⁵⁶ Also, among the Maccaa of the Gibe valley there were terms that came into use with the emergence of the Oromo kingdoms in the region; and some of which were related to one or the other form of monarchial institution. These include words like *masaraa* (palace), *mootii* (king), *gennee* (queen or lady), *doonachoo* (crown prince), *naahoo* (body guards), *qoroo* (a subdivision or a province within the Shanan Gibee Oromo kingdoms), *abbaa qoroo* (governor of a province within Shanan Gibee Oromo states), *geppoo* (boundary), *moggaa* (no man’s land between kingdoms) etc. A number of such words were incorporated from the languages of other peoples of the region and beyond that.⁵⁷ Others were Afaan Oromoo terms that were modified or expanded in their meanings to fit elements of the emerged monarchial phenomenon.

Moreover, based on my personal experience and interviews with many informants, in the Gibe region there was a secret language known as in Oromo language Afaan Simbirroo (“the language of bird”).⁵⁸ According to few informants, in the Gibe valley such language had been used initially at palaces (*masaraa*) as a means to convey secret message before it spread beyond these political and administrative centers across the region.⁵⁹ However, other

⁵⁶Informants: Abdulkerim, Abbaa Foggii, Abbaa Zinaab and others

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Informants: Abbaa Nagaa, *Haji* Mohammednur Abbaa Jemal, Yisehak Qannoo, Jemal Abbaa Foggii among many others.

⁵⁹ Informants: Abdulkerim and Abbaa Foggii.

informants challenge this view saying that from the very beginning Afaan Simbirroo was mostly used outside the palace environment* especially by the children and youngsters.⁶⁰

In addition to these, under monarchical rule of the Shanan Gibe kings, various sayings, proverbs, jokes, stories etc. that reflect the conditions, mentality, norm wisdom, beliefs and others of the time appeared. According to my informants, for instance, one saying of the time goes like this: “*Mootiin gurra malee ija hinqabu*” which literally means the king has ears but not eyes. This was to mean that the king had information about what going on in his kingdom through his agents even if he did not see these with his own eyes.⁶¹ Like other royal families of the region and different parts of the world, the palaces of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms had some customs and norms that were not frequented among the common people. It is said that such and similar royal tradition were usually manifested on how to approach the king and/or queen, receive orders from the monarch, host guests, wear costume, dine at palaces, and others.⁶²

Besides their crucial political and administrative roles, palaces of the monarchs were centers of royal culture of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms. However, according to informants, gradually some aspects of the royal tradition spread to the people mainly through *abbaa qoroos* (governors of sub-divisions of a kingdom). These *abbaa qoroos* regularly came to or visit palaces of the monarchs for various reasons; for example to take order form or give information to. When they returned to where they had come from they brought with them some aspects of language, custom, norm etc. of the royal palaces. Often, thus, some aspects of the tradition of royal palaces were partly reflected at residences of *abbaa qoroos* (and dignitaries) of the Gibe states than the houses of the ordinary people. Furthermore, the researcher has been told that in most kingdoms of the Gibe states these royal palace related language and customs were to a lesser extent propagated into the people temporarily during and after the conquest of the region by Mnilik’s army when the existence of most of these

*Even until the 1960s and the 1970s, for instance, in the territory of the historical kingdom of Jimmaa what the people called Afaan Simbirroo was popular mainly among some children and youngsters who usually used it to keep their conversation secret from others with them.

⁶⁰ Informants: Yisehak, Abbaa Biyyaa Kabir.

⁶¹ Informants: Abbaa Zinaab and Abbaa Jebel Abbaa Cabsaa.

⁶² Informants: Abdulkerim, Ababa Foggii and Abbaa Temam Abbaa Bulguu.

Oromo monarchies came to an end.⁶³ It seems chiefly the first factor was responsible for the spread of part of the royal tradition into especially some section of the mass of the people in the region.

3.2. Universal Religions and Monarchs of the Shanan Gibe States

Before their great movement of the sixteenth century, most of the different Oromo groups had been followers of Waaqeffannaa, which was the indigenous Oromo religion. According to this traditional Oromo belief, everything was and is created by only one God called Waaqa.⁶⁴ One of the features that the Oromo attributed to Waaqa is the concept of “the Unique One”. Bartels is informed, “Waaqa [is] ‘the Unique one’ (*Waaqa tokicha*)... ‘Waaqa is one; man is many. *Waaqa* has no equals. He is above all things. Nothing is above Him.’” The concept is highly linked to “the one of the Most High.”⁶⁵ A *qaalluu* was a spiritual and ritual head of the Waaqeffannaa religion. He or she executed rites, translated laws of Waaqa and served as intermediary between the followers of the religion and the Waaqa.⁶⁶ A *qaalluu* could be a male or a female, though the latter was less usual. Such female ritual leaders were called both *qaalluu* (masculine) and *qaallittii* (feminine) alternatively.⁶⁷ Mohammed Hassen states:

...the Qaalluu were ‘holy men’ and men of peace and, hence, they were greatly honoured and showered with gifts by the pilgrims. The national myths about the finding of the first Qaalluu, though varied in form, are very similar in content. According to these myths, the the first Qaalluu was of divine origin. Some say he ‘fell from the sky itself’. Others say that he was found with the first black heifer, and still others say that he was the ‘eldest son of Ilma Orma’, (or the Oromo). Because of the myth of origin of the first Qaalluu and his successors’ role in ritual ceremonies, the Qaalluu were the center of traditional Oromo religion. As the ‘eldest son’ of Ilma Orma (the Oromo), the national myth confers upon him the title of the father, the source of all traditions. In this role, a Qaalluu was ‘the prophet of the nation’ who guarded the law of Waaqa and its interpretation...⁶⁸

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ See Guluma, “The Islamization of the Gibe Region...,” pp. 65-66; see also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 150-152.

⁶⁵ Lambert Bartels, *Oromo Religion: Myth and Rites of the Western Oromo of Ethiopia - An Attempt to Understand* (Berlin, 1983), pp. 100-101.

⁶⁶ Asmarom, *Gada...*, p. 282.

⁶⁷ Knutsson, p. 65.

⁶⁸ Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom...*, p. 48.

The aforementioned legends of the Oromo relate the origin of the *qaalluu* to either heavenly miracle or the the first son of the Oromo. However, there are tradition among the Barentumaa and Boranaa Oromo that link the origin of the *qaalluu* to off comer background.⁶⁹

Moreover, in the words of Asmarom Legesse:

The [great or common] Qallu were the ritual leaders of the Oromo, representing the two great societal haves of the nation, whose shrines were historically associated with the cradlelands of the Borana and the Baretumma Oromo. They are honored, every eight years, by Oromo pilgrims [*jila*] who come from far and wide, to take part in the ritual called *Muda*, “the anointing.” The Qallu are showered with gifts and, in return, they give their blessings. They are empowered to oversee the election of Gada leaders but they and their kin are barred from holding such office. They may not bear arms or shed blood.⁷⁰

He also adds, “the Qallu and the Abba Muda are one and the same.” *Muudaa* is the ritual of anointing; *qaalluu* or *abbaa muudaa* is the head of such and other similar rituals. The position of the *qaalluu* found among most Oromo groups, occasionally “taking on ‘spirit possession’ cult.”⁷¹ Trimmingham states, “pilgrimages to [*abbaa muudaa* or *qaalluu*] were a prominent feature of [the Oromo] religion. Some [*abbaa muudaa* or *qaalluu*] are peculiar to certain tribes, others common to all the tribes.”⁷²

In Waaqeffannaa, there are numerous deities or heavenly “agents” of different forms called *ayyaana*. All *ayyaana* are incarnations of Waaqa (the Creator) or from Him.⁷³ The main practice of the traditional Oromo religion was “the family or communal prayer” known as *wadaajaa* which was followed by a banquet.⁷⁴ The house where a *qaalluu* carried out his/her ritual was known as *galma*.⁷⁵ These are a few among various aspects of the traditional Oromo belief.

In different parts of Oromo land, there were some consecrated sites of the Oromo indigenous religion. Cecchi has mentioned such areas found in two parts of the Gibe region. According to

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 49, 58.

⁷⁰ Asmarom Legesse, *Oromo Democracy: An Indigenous African Political System* (Trenton, 2000), p. 101.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, pp. 100-101.

⁷² Trimmingham, p. 255.

⁷³ Bartels, p. 14; Knutson, p. 53.

⁷⁴ Trimmingham, p. 262.

⁷⁵ Knutsson, pp. 65, 83-86.

him, the first were found in Gommaa on top of two elevated areas known as “Sinka and Bemba or Kella Egdu Biya”. The other was Mount Ijeersaa in Geeraa.⁷⁶

Nevertheless, gradually a large number Oromo groups shifted from Waaqeeffannaa to universal religions such as Islam and Christianity, from nomadic way of life to agriculture and from egalitarian *gadaa* institution to the system of the nobility.⁷⁷ In the Gibe region, it was Islam that took the hearts and souls of the Maccaa Oromo in general and that of the kings in particular.

3.2.1. Islam and Monarchs of the Shanan Gibee States

As it has been mentioned, in the Gibe region the Maccaa Oromo not only formed five monarchical states but also adopted Islam as their religion. Here the monarchs and the aristocracy were the first to embrace Islam. Then most of the rest of the common people followed their footsteps. It seems mainly through the long-distance merchants of northern Ethiopia (*jabarti*) that some or most first generation Muslim kings and nobility of the Gibe region were converted to the new religion. In addition to the long-distance traders, Muslim religious leaders and the Gibe kings contributed a lot in the conversion of the people to Islam.⁷⁸

Sources claim that most members of the ruling class joined Islam for political and economic reasons,⁷⁹ while, according to Guluma Gameda the common people accepted this religion (chiefly) “in the hope of reestablishing the harmony and order in their cosmology” that was broken up following with the weakening of the *gadaa* system.⁸⁰ Firstly, the explanation that the aristocracy and the first monarchs of the Gibe states accepted Islam only for political and economic reasons seems not convincing. Other factors were also involved.

Secondly, Guluma’s argument that forwards the factor for people’s conversion to Islam has some truth in it. However, excluding the ruling class from this explanation and attributing the

⁷⁶ See Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia...*, p. 82.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 189.

⁷⁸ Guluma, “The Islamization of the Gibe Region...” pp. 63-67; Trimmingham, pp. 109, 199-205. Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia...*, pp. 151-153, 161;

⁷⁹ Guluma, “The Islamization of the Gibe Region...” pp. 67-73. Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia...*, pp. 150-154.

⁸⁰ Guluma, “The Islamization of the Gibe Region...” p. 67.

conversion of the people only to one motive seem unconvincing. The spiritual gap created by the decline of the *gadaa* system and with it the traditional Oromo religion affected not only the common people but also the nobility and the founding fathers of the Gibe states for they were part of the Oromo society of the time. Thus, this spiritual vacuum too (to some extent if not equally with the common people) paved the way for the conversion of the aristocracy and the early monarchs to Islam. Moreover, we can infer from sources that the intensive exposition of the early monarchs, the nobility and the common people to Muslim merchants and preachers due to the long distance trade facilitated the conversion process.⁸¹ Besides the factors mentioned above, the similarity of the concept of “One Unique God” that has no “equals” or “partners” between the traditional religion and Islam might have helped in smooth transition from Waaqeffannaa to the new religion.⁸² Furthermore, it is understandable that Islam as the religion of the monarchs and dignitaries of the Gibe states it had edge on the traditional Oromo religion and thus was able to disseminate quickly into the people.

During the initial phase of the expansion of Islam, most ordinary people were followers of the Oromo indigenous belief while the monarchs and the aristocracy were Muslims and passionate promoters of the new religion. It seems, “the old religion and Islam operated side by side for a long time, and it was only in the second half of the nineteenth century that the new religion limited the scope of the old.” The traditional Oromo religion continued to exist under a new form.⁸³ Similarly, once the Shanan Gibe monarchs were Islamized, they fully supported, fostered and usually sponsored the spread of the new religion in their kingdoms while they did not completely abandon their relation with and attachment to their national Oromo religion and culture.⁸⁴ Here also we see change and continuity.

...Interestingly...the Gibe kings championed and propagated Islam while offering sacrifices to Waqa, and without stopping the famous pilgrimage to the land of Abba Muda, the spiritual head of the Oromo religion. What is more, the kings not only sent gifts to Abba Muda, by the hand of the *jila* (pilgrims), but also regarded the presence of the *jila* in their states as conferring a blessing. In 1846 Antoine

⁸¹ See Abir, pp. 76, 85-86; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 134, 150-151.

⁸² In the Waaqeffannaa belief of the Oromo, Waaqa (the Creator or God) is the “Unique one” and “has no equals” (see Bartles, pp.100-101). Similarly in Islam, Allah (the Creator or God) is “One” “and there is none coequal or comparable to Him” (see M. Taqiuddin Al-Hilali and M.Muhsin Khan, p. 1053. See also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 152; Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom*, p. 42 and Mekuria, p. 239).

⁸³ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 151-154. See also Mekuria, p. 240 and Trimmingham, pp. 262-263.

⁸⁴ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 152-153, 171-172.

d'Abbadie saw the *jila* from Limmu-Ennarya, Gumma, Jimma, and Gera gathered in Limmu-Ennarya before their departure on the long journey to the land of Abba Muda⁸⁵

Mohammed Hassen in one of his wonderful path-breaking books has stated that the ruling family of Limmuu-Innaariyaa in general and Abbaa Gommol I (Bofoo) the founding father of the kingdom in particular were the first to embrace Islam unlike their counterparts in other Oromo kingdoms of the Gibe region.⁸⁶ However, I doubted this claim of the work. It appears, the Awaalini the ruling house of the kingdom of Gommaa accepted Islam much earlier than the rest of the Maccaa Oromo dynasties of the Gibe region.

Because first, as we have mentioned earlier, written works and informants maintain that the Awaalini were Muslims before their movement with other Oromo clans into the Gibe region in the sixteenth century.⁸⁷ It is believed that before their great movement in the sixteenth century, a section of the Oromo people inhabited in Muslim and Christian kingdoms of the medieval period.⁸⁸ Sources states that Muslims interacted with or influenced segment of the Oromo people before a large-scale population expansion of the later. A work claims that a Muslim religious man called Awusaid had actively participated when the Ituu Oromo renewing the *gadaa* system and formulating additional laws at Odaa Bultum in thirteenth century.⁸⁹ Also, Kelly states it seems due to the pre-expansion Islamic influence on the main Oromo groups of Kenya such as “the Orma, Borana, Gabbra and Sakuye all have traditions that say they have been Muslims in the distant past.”⁹⁰ In addition, it is claimed that Muslim groups joined at Odaa Nabii a part of the Maccaa Oromo who moved to the areas of the current Wallaggaa administrative zones.⁹¹ Moreover, as Mohammed Hassen himself has stated:

...Contact between Islam and some Oromo groups spanned six to seven centuries. Perhaps as early as the fourteenth century, and certainly by the fifteenth, the

⁸⁵ See *Ibid*, p. 153.

⁸⁶ See *Ibid*, pp. 105, 153 and 155.

⁸⁷ Aman, pp. 20-22 and 28. See also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 90, 150 and Guluma, “Gomma and Limmu...,” p. 52. Informants: *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Sadii, Abbaa Foggii and others.

⁸⁸ Negaso, p. 30; Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom...*, pp. 31-32.

⁸⁹ See Alemayehu, *History of the Oromo to the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 81-83, 85-86

⁹⁰ Hilarie Ann Kelly, “From Gada to Islam: The Moral Authority of Gender Relations among the Pastoral Oromo of Kenya,” PhD Dissertation (University of California, 1992), p. 302 cited in Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom...*, p. 34.

⁹¹ See Negaso, pp. 21-22 and 25.

influence of the two universal religions in the Horn of Africa was filtering through contemporaneously into the area of the original home of the Oromo. Of the two religions, it was Islam which left a lasting mark on some aspects of Oromo culture, especially the Qallu institution. While the previous radiation out of the Muslim principalities under Christian administration may have kindled a spark of Islam among some sedentary Oromo groups within or periphery of the Christian kingdom...the pastoral Oromo on the whole retained their traditional religion. During their [expansion], they moved across land where there was Muslim population, such as the Hadiya, whom they adopted and who were eventually assimilated. In the process of the [movement], the Hadiyas and perhaps also some Muslim Oromo, lost their Islamic religion, but retained their Muslim names. It was because of this phenomenon that we find Muslim names in the genealogies of the various Oromo groups. In the Gibe region itself, there were a number of groups who traced their genealogies back to the sixteenth century, to the time when they lived in Bali...⁹²

Aman Seifedin also says:

...According to some informants, Islam was practiced in Gommaa by section of the society well before the rise of the monarchy. As far as the pre-monarchy Islam is concerned, informants emphasize the following three points. First, the Muslims were very lax in adhering to the principles of Islam. Second, Islam did not in pure form; rather it coexisted with indigenous religion of the Oromo. Third, the majority of the people were *Waaqeffataa*, i.e.; the followers of the Oromo religion.⁹³

Secondly, Major Harris, Cecchi and others have stated that the people or/and the Oromo of Gommaa were the first to embrace Islam among their counterparts in the Gibe valley.⁹⁴ This implies that the ruling group of Gommaa also joined Islam before the rest of the Maccaa Oromo dynasties of the region. Mohammed Hassen himself acknowledged that the people of Gommaa accepted Islam prior to the inhabitants of the other Gibe states.⁹⁵ However, his claim that the Sapheeraa the ruling house of the Limmuu-Innaariyaa embraced Islam ahead of the Awaalini the ruling group of Gommaa⁹⁶ does not match with the trend or the two phases of the expansion of Islam in the Gibe region. As Mohammed has stated, Islam propagated in the Gibe region in two phases. In the first phase until 1840s “Islam was the religion of the kings and the nobility in all the Gibe state except Gomma” and in the next phase, slowly but surely Islam took root among the citizens of these states chiefly because of the support of the Gibe

⁹² Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 150.

⁹³ Aman, p. 20.

⁹⁴ See W.C. Harris, *The Highlands of Aethiopia*, (London, 1844), p. 60 and Trimmingham, p. 200.

⁹⁵ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 109 and 155.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 105, 153 and 155.

monarchs in its propagation.⁹⁷ Therefore, since the predominant people of the kingdom of Gommaa were converted to Islam before that of the other four Gibe states and the trend of conversion to this religion was from top to bottom, it is obvious that the ruling group of Gommaa were Muslims ahead of the rest dynastic houses of the Gibe kingdoms.

As it has been already indicated, some sources associate the background of the ancestors of the Awaalini dynasty or group with the *qaalluu*, a priest of the Oromo indigenous religion, and *awliya*, Muslim saints favored with blessings of the Creator.⁹⁸ Serge Tokarev states, “Islam was revised considerably among the people of Tropical Africa in accordance with local conditions. Often the population accepted only the outward form of [Islam], its simplest rituals, but maintained their old beliefs...”⁹⁹ Often following the conversion of peoples of an indigenous belief to Islam, prominent Muslim religious leaders assumed the place or role of spiritual heads of the native belief usually with their old titles.¹⁰⁰ It seems, the reverse feature was also true.¹⁰¹ According to Mohammed Hassen, “It is plausible that individuals with rudimentary knowledge of Islam may have served as Oromo ritual leaders [i.e. *qaalluu*] or shaped religious views of some Abbaa Muudaas.”¹⁰²

Trimingham, whose scholarly works on Islam are valuable, states in the kingdom of Jimmaa “Abbaa Gomol, father of Abba Jifar [II], accepted Islam about the middle of the nineteenth century...”¹⁰³ But, a conversion to Islam by a monarch from the Diggoo dynasty of the kingdom of Jimmaa took place earlier than the reign of Abbaa Gommol (ca.1864-1878). For example, *Masjiida Afurtamaa* (“Mosque of the Forty”) where the royal cemetery was/is found and which is located a few kilometers away from the palace of Abbaa Jifaar II at Jireen was one among many mosques built by King Abbaa Booqaa (ca.1858-1864) who was the father of Abbaa Gommol.¹⁰⁴ Written sources and informants show that Abbaa Jifaar I (ca. 1830-1854/5) who finalized the process of state formation in Jimmaa was the first to accept Islam in

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 151.

⁹⁸ See chapter 2 section 2.2.2.ii of this paper.

⁹⁹ Serge Tokarev, *History of Religion* (Moscow, 1989), p. 85

¹⁰⁰ See Trimingham, p. 263; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 153.

¹⁰¹ See Aman, pp. 20-21, 28; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 90, 150; Guluma, “Gomma and Limmu...,” p. 52.

¹⁰² Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom...*, p. 58.

¹⁰³ Trimingham, p. 205.

¹⁰⁴ See Ketebo, pp. 23 and 100; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 227. Informants: Abbaa Foggii, Abbaa Zinaab, Abdulkereim among others.

this kingdom. It is believed that *Sheik* Abdul Hakim was responsible for the conversion of Abbaa Jifaar I (Sanaa).¹⁰⁵ According to informants, *Sheik* Abdul Hakim had been in Limmuu-Innaariyaa with a certain Muslim preacher called *Sheik* Mahammad Tahir of Gonder before he went to Jimmaa. It is said that before he left for the kingdom of Jimmaa *Sheik* Abdul Hakim spent a short time with *Sheik* Mohammad Tahir who had been invited by Abbaa Bogiboo I and even was given to marry the king's sister in order to teach Islam in his kingdom.¹⁰⁶

As it has already been mentioned, the claim that the legendary founder of the last/longest dynasty of the Oromo kingdom of Guumaa was a Muslim merchant from Tigray was untenable.¹⁰⁷ In addition to the explanations given in relation to this point, first the name of the clan from whom this founding father of the ruling house came from was Adamii. Secondly, contrary to Islamic law that forbid Muslims from eating “unlawful” (“Haram”) flesh of certain animals,¹⁰⁸ tradition claims that this legendary pioneer of the Adamii rule in Guumaa consumed indiscriminately meat of any beast. For instance the legend documented by Cerulli states that “there was no flesh that” [the so called Muslim Adam] did not eat.”¹⁰⁹ Thirdly, as it has already been indicated, oral tradition mentions this personality sometimes by the name “Adam” and at another time as Adamii.¹¹⁰ For instance, the original Afaan Oromo version of the legend collected by Cerulli uses the name Adam¹¹¹ and Adamii interchangeably for this legendary founder of the new dynasty in Guumaa¹¹² while its English translation uses exclusively the name “Adam” for him.¹¹³

¹⁰⁵ Lewis, p. 41; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 157 and 181; Ketebo, p. 20 and others. Informants: Abbaa Foggii, Abbaa Zinaab, Abbaa Nagaa among many others.

¹⁰⁶ Informants: Abbaa Nagaa, Abbaa Cabsaa Abbaa Garoo and *Sheik* Tahir Abbaa Maccaa.

¹⁰⁷ See this paper chapter 2 section 2.2.2.i.

¹⁰⁸ Al Hilali and Khan, p. 44; Lesley Stone, “A Contextual Introduction to Islamic Food Restrictions,” a third year paper at Harvard University (1998), pp. 5-6; K. Nakyinsige *et al*, “Halal Meat: A Niche Product in the Food Market,” *2012 2nd International Conference on Economics, Trade and Development IPEDR*, Vol.36 (2012), PP. 168-169.

¹⁰⁹ Cerulli, pp. 285 and 299.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 283-285. Informants: Ahmed Abbaa Foggii, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Garoo .

¹¹¹ See Cerulli, pp. 283-284.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 285.

¹¹³ *Ibid*, pp. 286-289

Fourthly, both literally works and oral informants have claimed that Adam was a famous hunter,¹¹⁴ which in Afaan Oromoo means *adamsaa*. Like many parts of East Africa, history shows us the expansion of Islam in the Gibe region associated mainly with trade and traders not with hunter. Also, as it has previously been mentioned the existing socio-cultural condition of the Maccaa Oromo of the Gibe region in the time did not permit newcomer or “outsider” long distance merchant to be a king at once. Therefore, based on the above reasons, the name “Adam” given in tradition to the legendary founder of the longest dynasty in Guumaa might have been a short form of either his clan name, Adamii or the Afaan Oromo term *adamsaa* (hunter) which could be used to refer to his activity or occupation. It appears in order to Islamized the origin of the founder of the ruling house of the kingdom of Guumaa after conversion to the new religion twisting the term Adamii or *adamsaa* into the name Adam with fascinating myth was not difficult.

The process of Islamization in the Gibe region had various impacts on all sections of the people both the ruling class and the common people. For the sack of sticking to the topic of the study here, we try to list some effects of Islam in relation to the monarchs (and the aristocracy). Though, such and similar impacts sometimes partially or fully affected both the ruling group and the common people alike.

Some of these impacts include the following. First, sources indicate that at times after Islamization there was a tendency among a number of Cushitic peoples or in some other places to connect their ancestors’ background to the Arabs. It is mainly because of the influence of Islam that some ruling houses of the Oromo states (or groups) in the Gibe region tried to link their origin to the Arabs including to the family of the Prophet’s followers or to the Prophet himself. They believe this claim earn them high respect among their Muslim subjects and in the Islamic world.¹¹⁵ Secondly, like many Muslim communities in the world, Islam influenced and facilitated in orienting the relation of the people of the region in general and monarchs and the aristocracy in particular with Hijaz (or the western part of the present

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 283, 286 and 292; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 108; Huntingford, “Ethnology and History...,” p. 37 and others. Informants: Ahmed Abbaa Foggii, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Garoo.

¹¹⁵ Mohammed, *The Oromo and the Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia*, p. 91. See also Braukamper, pp. 60 and 132-133; Trimmingham, pp. 141, 156, 178, 198-199, 211; Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History...,” p. 35.

day Sandi Arabia) and other parts of the Islamic world.¹¹⁶ Thirdly, with increasing Islamization in addition to Afaan Oromoo, Arabic became one of the languages of foreign correspondence for Oromo monarchs of the Shanan Gibee states.¹¹⁷ Fourthly, as it has already been mentioned Islamic connection had impact on the title of these monarchs. Due to the Islamic influence that some or a few of the Shanan Gibee monarchs started to use the title sultan with their names.¹¹⁸

Also, it seems Islam reinforces the power of the Gibe kings. Besides these, it assist in strengthening “the independence of the states” ruled by these Maccaa Oromo monarchs against the neighboring non-Oromo kingdoms.¹¹⁹ Moreover, due to the effect of Islam that the Gibe kings gave up one after the other the *harii* custom (the practice of eliminating political opponents confiscating their possession and selling their family members as slaves) and enslaving their Muslim subject.¹²⁰ It was a *mootii* of the kingdom of Gommaa first started to ban such practices in the region.¹²¹

In addition, Islam helped King Abbaa Joobir of Guumaa to forge an alliance of four states (except Geeraa) in the name of *jihad* in order to wage a war against the coalition of four neighboring non-Muslim Oromo groups boarding his kingdom.¹²² Similarly, during and after the expansion of the armies of *Nigus* Takla Hāymānot of Gojjam and Mnilik of Shawa to the Gibe region in the beginning of 1880s various leaders of Guumaa, Gommaa, Geeraa and Limmuu-Innaariyaa declared wars of *jihad* against the invading forces.¹²³ This shows that the Islamic concept of *jihad* influenced some actions or reactions of a certain number of rulers and war leaders of the Gibe states during confrontations.¹²⁴ Furthermore, a sense of Islamic unity motivated some Gibe kings to give asylum for some persecuted Muslims who fled from

¹¹⁶ See Ketebo, pp. 64-65; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 157, 160-161 and Trimmingham, p. 202.

¹¹⁷ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 99, 106, 177-178.

¹¹⁸ See *Ibid*, p. 181; Trimmingham, pp. 128-130, 184, 203 and 205. Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 144-146; Temesgen, p. 74.

¹¹⁹ Trimmingham, p. 199. See also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 90.

¹²⁰ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 128, 156-157; see also Beke, p. 259.

¹²¹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 128, 156-157.

¹²² Trimmingham, pp. 200 and 202; Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History...” pp. 38-39; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 60-61.

¹²³ Informants: *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Nagaa, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Maccaa and others.

¹²⁴ See Trimmingham, p. 202; Guluma, “Conquest and Resistance in the Gebe Region...,” p. 59; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 160.

northern Ethiopia, especially of Wollo due to a cruel treatment by Emperor Tewodros (1855-1868) and then Emperor Yohānns (1872-1889).¹²⁵

3.2.2. Christianity and Monarchs of the Shanan Gibe States

In addition to Islam, Christianity with its various branches influenced the Oromo people or/and culture. The extent of effect differs from time to time, region to region and group to group in the wider Oromoland. The contact of Christianity with and its impact on the Shanan Gibe Oromo in general and that of their monarchs in particular were not as strong as Islam.¹²⁶ Still there was relation, especially between the European missionaries and the Oromo monarchs of the Gibe valley before conquest of the region by Abyssinian rulers.¹²⁷ In relation to the Shanan Gibe Oromo monarchs it appears the impact of Orthodox Christianity increased especially in 1880s during and following this conquest.¹²⁸

The following are a few cases that may highlight these relations and/or impacts. Abbaa Jifaar I (Sanaa), the monarch of the kingdom of Jimmaa between 1830 and 1854 responded to Antonie d' Abbadie's mission in 1840s:

I will give a house and a piece of land to all foreigners who know to read and write, but on condition that they believe in one God. If, on other hand, they teach to my subjects not to lie at all and tell the truth, I believe they will bring good luck to my kingdom.¹²⁹

During this time, Abbaa Bogiboo I (Ibsaa), king of Limmuu-Innaariyaa even requested Antoine d' Abbodie to establish a church for convincing him remain in his kingdom.¹³⁰ In 1854, with the invitation and support of Abbaa Bogiboo I to Cardinal Massaja (the earliest Bishop for the Oromo land), a Catholic mission was founded in Saqqaa, the capital of Limmuu-Innaariyaa. Cardinal Massaja even attempted to convert Abbaa Bogiboo I and his family to Catholicism. However, Abbaa Bogiboo I declined this intention of the Catholic mission. This famous king of Limmuu-Innaariyaa said that his Catholic guests were too late to convert his family and his people to their religion; had they arrived there before Muslim

¹²⁵ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p.158. Informants: Abbaa Foggii, *Sheik* Nasir and Abbaa Nagaa among others.

¹²⁶ Hunting, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia...*, p. 88.

¹²⁷ See Trimingham, pp. 201-202; Salviac, pp. 60-65, 387-388.

¹²⁸ Trimingham, pp. 201-202; Temesgen, p. 60; Ibsa, pp. 70-71 among many others.

¹²⁹ See Salviac, p. 54.

¹³⁰ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia* p. 172.

sheiks he and the entire people of his kingdom could have been followers of the Church of Rome.¹³¹ Upon the death of Abbaa Bogiboo I who was the great friend of Cardinal Massaja the Catholic mission grieved with the people of the kingdom.¹³²

After Abbaa Bogiboo (Ibsa)'s death in September 1861 his son Abbaa Gommol II (Abbaa Bulguu) succeeded his father as the new king. It is stated that Abbaa Gommol II who was under the influence of some intolerant Muslims expelled Cardinal Massaja and his Catholic mission from Limmuu-Innaariyaa in December 1861. The reason for this expulsion was for the suspicion that the Catholic centers in the kingdom were piling up armaments secretly and waiting favorable time to overthrow the government.¹³³

Based on Cecchi's account, Trimingham has speculated that monarchs who ruled Geeraa before King Abbaa Magaal (ca. 1848-1870), who was converted to Islam, became Christians due to the influence of indigenous non-Oromo people. In the words of Trimingham:

...The [Oromo] rulers of Gēra had, it seems, absorbed Christianity from the former Sidāma population along with their system of government, for Cecchi records that Abba Magāl succeeded in converting his brother to Islam by inducing him to eat meat killed according to Islamic rite (which...was to Christians and Muslim equivalent to apostasy, but was disregarded by pagans), 'in spite of the fact that his father, on his bed-death, had cursed those of his sons who had apostatized from Christianity'.¹³⁴

Besides Abbaa Bogiboo I of Limmuu-Innaariyaa, in 1859 King Abbaa Magaal I of Geeraa welcomed Massaja in his palace and helped the Bishop in the establishment of Catholic centers at Caallaa and Affaloo.¹³⁵

As far as the Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity's impact on a few members of the Shanan Gibee Oromo monarchs was concerned, it was worthwhile to mention the following developments that took place during and after the conquest of the region. It is stated that *Dajjāzmach* Wolda Giorgis, one of Mnilik's generals, after conquering the kingdom of

¹³¹ Abba Antonius Alberto, *Ya Kātolik Betakiristiyyān Tārik Ba Itiyophiā* ('A History of Catholic Church in Ethiopia') (Addis Ababa, 1993), pp. 81-83; Salviac, p. 65.

¹³² *Ibid.* See also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia...*, p. 195.

¹³³ Abba Antonius, pp. 94-95; see also Salviac, pp. 387-388.

¹³⁴ See Trimingham, p. 202.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.* See also James C. McCann, *Peoples of the Plow: An Agricultural History of Ethiopia 1800-1900* (London, 1995), p. 152.

Limmuu-Innaariyaa constructed the Saint Markos Church close to the once famous place of Abbaa Bogiboo I.¹³⁶ In the words of Huntingford, following this conquest, “the only Christians [in Limmuu-Innaariyaa] were Abyssinian soldiers, and an occasional local converts who gave up Islam for political reasons, like the *Fitāwrāri* Abbaa Bagiboo.”¹³⁷

On whether Abbaa Bogiboo II the last king of Limmuu-Innaariyaa was really converted to Christianity or not there are three views. The first one claims that he was converted to Christianity because of political motive. The problem with this view is that its source does not tell us exactly if he died as a Christian or not.¹³⁸ The second version admits or rejects half of the aforementioned claim to some extent with modified meaning. Informants of this claim believe that Abbaa Bagiboo II first embraced Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity for a while after conquest but later on, he returned to Islam and died as a Muslim.¹³⁹ I was also told that Abbaa Bogiboo II died while he was in Jimmaa and buried at Muslim cemetery of Jireen.¹⁴⁰ The third view claims that Abbaa Bogiboo II even was not converted to Christianity from the very beginning and was a Muslim for good.¹⁴¹ But, according to both this and the second claims, some of his children became Christians permanently or for sometimes while others remained as Muslims.¹⁴² In line with this, Trimmingham’s work states, “the son of [Abbaa Bogiboo II] was educated by Wolde Gorgis and converted to Christianity.” Nevertheless, this and other works that have similar view on the issue mention nothing about the conversion of the last monarch of Limmuu-Innaariyaa to the religion of his new bosses.¹⁴³ Whatever the cases were, it seems that when he died Abbaa Bogiboo II was a Muslim.

Also after conquest in Guumaa individual’s conversion to Christianity took place through political marriage. As Cerulli states following occupation of the kingdom of Guumaa by Mnilik’s force, *Rās* Tasammā Nādaw the head of this army married Alima the female child of Abbaa Foggii who was the last monarch of the Adamii dynasty and the brother of King Abbaa

¹³⁶ Trimmingham, pp. 201

¹³⁷ Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia...*, p. 82.

¹³⁸ See *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Informants: Abbaa Nagaa, *Sheik* Hasen, Abbaa Cabsaa and others.

¹⁴⁰ Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Abbaa Nagaa, *Sheik* Hasen and others.

¹⁴¹ Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, *Sheik* Tahir.

¹⁴² Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, *Sheik* Hasen, Abbaa Nagaa and others.

¹⁴³ Trimmingham, p. 201. See also Phāwlos Gnogno, *Dāgmāwi Atse Mnilik* (‘Emperor Mnilik II’), (Yakkātit 1984 EC), p. 34.

Joobir Abbaa Duulaa of Guumaa.¹⁴⁴ According to Alemayehu after Mnilik's soldiers controlled Guumaa, Alima was taken to the capital of the empire as captive. Here in palace, Tāyitu wife of Mnilik converted Alima to Christianity with a new Amharic name, Ballatishāchaw and gave the latter to *Rās* Tasammā as his formal spouse. With this Alima was given to have a limited governorship position under *Ras* Tasammā in Guumaa.¹⁴⁵

In conclusion, the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe Oromo kingdoms had traditions some of which were peculiar to them while others were shared with ordinary people. These were true in the cases of the naming tradition, titles and symbols of the royalty, aspects of language and custom. In addition, before their conversion to a universal religion, as other Oromo groups elsewhere, at least most Maccaa Oromo of the Gibe region were followers of Waaqeeffannaa, the indigenous belief of the people. However, due to internal and external factors especially Islam spread among the Shanan Gibe Oromo. During the dissemination of Islam in the region, the new religion was accepted first by upper class in general and the monarchs in particular. It was the ancestors of the ruling house of Gommaa that was first influenced by Islam much earlier than the rest of dynasties of the neighboring Oromo states of the Gibe region. In their parts, being the first ardent followers of the new religion, the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms played a key role in the propagation of Islam to the people; and they were affected by it distinctively. Indeed, the spread of Islam had various effects on the Shanan Gibe Oromo in general and their monarchs in particular. In the next chapter, we treat briefly the administrative aspects and various relations of the Shanan Gibe monarchs.

¹⁴⁴ Cerulli, p. 61.

¹⁴⁵ Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, pp. 238-239.

CHAPTER FOUR

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS AND INTERACTIONS

The Shanan Gibe states had boundaries and more or less similar administrative structure. The monarchs of these kingdoms also had relations among themselves and with rulers beyond the region. This chapter deals with briefly certain administrative aspects of the monarchs of Shanan Gibe states, and part of their relations and interactions among each other and outside the region.

4.1. Administrative Aspects

Under this section, we try to deal with two sub-topics. First, we treat about administrative centers such as palaces and capitals of the kingdoms of the Shanan Gibe monarchs. Then, we will see briefly some other administrative (and/or government) issues in relation to these Oromo monarchs.

4.1.1. Administrative Centers: Palaces and Capitals

In the Shanan Gibe kingdoms, the principal *masaraa* (palace) of the monarchs symbolized the most notable characteristics of political and commercial phenomena. The main palace of the monarch was the heart of the administrative, the political and the economic activities in the kingdom. It “was the nerve center from which new political ideas radiated. Here question of war and peace were decided, new proclamations announced.” It was here that prominent individuals who politically offended the monarchs and those considered enemy of the monarchy were imprisoned or punished by death. Close to the principal residence of the monarch found two types of trade centers—one for local merchants and the other called *mandaraa* established by the monarch for outside trader.¹ Besides the main palace, kings usually had other *masaraa* in their territories.² Indeed, the capital of the monarch was the place where the main *masaraa* was located. Hereafter we will see briefly the administrative capitals of the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states one after the other.

Regarding the capital of the kings of Geeraa there is a view, which maintains that Ciiraa was the seat of the main *masaraa*.³ Unlike to this, Ciiraa was not the main center of the kingdom of

¹ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 97-98.

² *Ibid*, p. 167.

³ Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo Hanga Jaarraa 20th*, p. 243.

Geeraa. Rather, it has been the capital for the present day district of Geeraa and is located near to Caallaa, which was the seat of the principal *masaraa* for the monarchs of the state.⁴ In fact, various other works confirm that Caallaa was the capital of the kingdom of Geeraa.⁵

Fig.5. Caallaa the main administrative center of the kingdom of Geeraa during the reign of Abbaa Magaal I (r. ca. 1848-1870)



Source: Massaia, *I Miei Trentacinque Anni di Missione Nell'alta Etiopia*, Vol. 3 and 4, p. 161.

Some literary sources claim that “Chirra” was the capital for the kings of Guumaa.⁶ But, Deressa Bayisa’s work states that informants in Guumaa reject the presence of an area called “Chirra” in the kingdom.⁷ Charles T. Beke who published his work in 1843 reported that “Gombatta” (Gomboxxaa) was the capital of the state of Guumaa⁸ though there is a view that maintains it was not the capital but a main market of the kingdom.⁹ However, as Mohammed Hassen states, “all the Gibe kings built merchants’ villages known as *mandera* [*mandaraa*], sited near their

⁴ Deressa Bayisa, p. 24. Informants: Ferid, *Sheik Ahmad Abbaa Dikoo*, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Duraa and others.

⁵ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 87 and 145; Ibsa, p. 19; Gaalii, p. 154 among others.

⁶ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 87, 108, 145; Abir, p. 83. See also Deressa Bayisa, p. 24.

⁷ Deressa Bayisa, p. 24.

⁸ Beke, p. 259.

⁹ Deressa Bayisa, pp. 24, 55.

main *masseras* [*masaraa* or palaces] in their capitals.”¹⁰ Often capital of the Shanan Gibeë monarchs had a main market.¹¹ By the time Beke visited Ethiopia Gomboxxa might have been the administrative and commercial capital of the kingdom of Guumma.

One source claims that the main place of most kings of the state of Guumaa was found in Dambii or Kooyee while (besides this) the last monarch of the kingdom set up his principal *masaraa* at Geepha.¹² Indeed, Geepha is situated not far away from Dambii. According to another source, Geepha is located roughly between 10 and 12 kilometers from the current center of Dambii. To the latter source, Dambii was one of the market centers in the kingdom in addition to Gomboxxa while Geepha was the capital.¹³ Various works indicated that Geepha was the seat of the kingdom of Guumaa.¹⁴ It seems the monarchs of Guumaa either transferred the initial capital of the kingdom¹⁵ or had at least more than one *masaraa* in different areas. Whatever the case, by the time king Abbaa Joobir Abbaa Duulaa (ca. 1879-1881) of Guumaa ruled the monarchy, it appears Geepha was the capital of his government.

Also, in the kingdom of Jimma the main seat of the palace of the monarchs changed from one place to another. Some sources state that Abbaa Faaroo (ca. 1742-1782) who laid down the foundation for the formation of the kingdom of Jimmaa under the Diggoo dynasty had his main *masaraa* at Kiftaanaa in Maanna.¹⁶ It is reported that Abbaa Jifaar I (1830-1854) had his palaces in different places such as at Kiftaanaa, at Jireen, in Saqqaa (of the kingdom of Jimmaa) and Dogossoo in the present day district of Nadhii Gibeë (Tiroo Afataa). He died in his palace at Dogossoo and was buried there where we found his tomb.¹⁷ Herbert Lewis mentions that Abbaa Jifaar I established a minimum of five *masaraa* in various parts of the kingdom of Jimmaa.¹⁸

¹⁰ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 145.

¹¹ See *Ibid* and Guluma Gameda, “Market, Local Traders and Long-Distance Traders in Southwestern Ethiopia During the Nineteenth Century,” in *Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, vol. I, ed. Taddese Beyene (1984), pp. 376-377.

¹² Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, p. 234.

¹³ Deressa Bayisa, pp. 24-25.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 16, 24-25; Gaalii, pp. 135-136, 139 (and see also a map on its last cover page). Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Garoo, Sabit, Miliyon and others.

¹⁵ Deressa Bayisa, p. 25.

¹⁶ Ketebo, p. 16; Buli Ejata, “Seenaa Masaraa Abbaa Jifaar” (‘A History of the Palace of Ababa Jifaar,’) a manuscript prepared at JZCIO (n.d.), p. 3. See also Yonas Seifu, “A Historical Survey of Jimma Town (1936-1974),” MA Thesis (AAU, History, 2002), p. 7.

¹⁷ See Abdulkarim, Abdo *et al*, p. 4. Informants: Abbaa Foggii, Abdulkarim.

¹⁸ See Lewis, p. 41.

Fig.6. The palace of Abbaa Jifaar II at Jireen (in Jimmaa)



Photo credit: Frobenius-Institute

On the other hand, in relation to the first seat of palace there is another view which maintains that Abbaa Faaroo had built his main *masaraa* at a place called Seennaa (or Dohaa Guddaa) in Maannaa and made it his center of administration. According to this version, Abbaa Magaal the son and successor of Abbaa Faaroo also first based at Seennaa before he shifted his new capital to another closer and relatively strategic site at Kiftaanaa in Maannaa. After this, it is said that, Abbaa Magaal, until the end of his rule, ran the affairs of the emerging state from Kiftaanaa. Abbaa Raagoo the eldest son and successor of the former spent his whole reign here. Abbaa Jifaar I (Sanaa) was also at Kiftaanaa in the initial years of his rule before he established his center at Jireen.¹⁹

However, one source said that it was the father of Abbaa Jifaar I (Sanaa), Abbaa Magaal that transferred the capital of the kingdom of Jimmaa from Kiftaanaa to Jireen.²⁰ Unlike the view of

¹⁹ Yahya Abbaa Gissaa, “Seennaa Ummata Aanaa Maannaa” (‘A History of the People of Maanna District’), a manuscript prepared at Maannaa District CTO (2007 EC), pp. 11-15,17, 20; Yahya Abbaa Gissaa, “Seen[n]jaa (Dohaa),” a manuscript prepared at Maannaa District CTO (2007 EC), pp. 1-3. Informants: *Haji* Abbaa Milkii Abbaa Biloo, Abbaa Diggaa Abbaa Goduu.

²⁰ Buli, pp. 4-5.

this work, other sources have pointed out that it was Abbaa Jifaar I (1830-1854) who set up his main center at Jireen²¹ at the expense of a rival Badii leader.²² It is believed that Jimmaa's king of the time preferred Jireen to Kiftaanaa due to his interest to command the trade center of Hirmaataa, which was situated at a close range to the former. The overlooking hill of Jireen was also strategic to control unexpected attacks from possible hostile forces in the vicinity.²³ It is said that it was Abbaa Jifaar II who constructed the palace at Jireen that survived until the present time, in about the end of the nineteenth century.²⁴

As far as the seats of the main *masaraa* for the monarchs of the kingdom of Limmuu-Innaariyaa are concerned, it is worthwhile to mention Saaphaa and Saqqaa which served as capitals one after the other. Sources maintain that Saaphaa was the capital of the state of Limmuu-Innaariyaa during the reign of Abbaa Gommol I or Bofoo (ca.1800-1825) the founding father of the kingdom. After abdicating his throne in 1825, Abbaa Gommol I passed away in Saaphaa in 1837.²⁵ When Abbaa Bogiboo crowned as the king in 1825 Saqqaa, which was a commercial center of the state, became the new capital of Limmuu-Innaariyaa.²⁶ The following quote explains the reasons behind Abbaa Bogiboo I's transfer of capital from Saappaa to Saqqaa:

At Saqqaa, Abbaa Bagibo found a commercial town surrounded by a land of uncommon fertility, which probably surpassed even his own expectations. Along with his wars against his neighbors...Abbaa Bagibo built a new capital at Saqqa. The transformation of Saqqa into a new capital was naturally connected with the implementation of a new policy. Sappa had been the capital of the kingdom of Limmu- Innarya, during the reign of his father. Probably as part of the peace formula, Abba Bagibo left Sappa under his father's hand and founded a new capital. Saqqaa, favored by a most fortunate geographical position and fertility of its surroundings, was a flourishing commercial town. The policy which had the most fruitful influence in the short run was that of banning the Jabarti traders from going beyond Saqqa. This gave the Afkala [the local Oromo merchants] the monopoly of the trade beyond the Gojeb. It also contributed to the growth of the capital and to the king's own prosperity...²⁷

Thus, we understand from this Abbaa Bogiboo I transferred his capital from Saaphaa to Saqqaa for political, strategic and economic reasons. Antoine d'Abbadie (in 1847/1848) reported that in

²¹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 111-112, Yonas, pp. 7-8. See also Ketebo, p. 19.

²² Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopian*, p. 112.

²³ Yonas, p. 7; see also Buli, pp. 4-5.

²⁴ Buli, pp. 7, 20. See also Ketebo, p. 66.

²⁵ Abir, pp. 78-79. See also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 103-104, 163-165.

²⁶ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 166.

²⁷ *Ibid*

addition to his main palace in the new capital, Abbaa Bogiboo I had fourteen other *masaraa* throughout Limmuu-Innaariyaa. All of these were constructed on elevated location.²⁸

There is a view that Aggaaroo was the state capital and main market for kings/kingdom of Gommaa in the first half of the nineteenth century.²⁹ However, sources indicate that since the emergence of state in Gommaa, Sayyoo was the popular capital and the main commercial center of the kingdom for various monarchs³⁰ before it was later replaced by Aggaaroo. My informants claim that it was King Abbaa Jifaar Abbaa Moorkii (ca. 1864-1877) of Gommaa who was attracted by its strategic location built another *masaraa* (palace) in sparsely settled and small market area of Aggaaroo in the last years of his reign. This incident facilitated the transfer of the main *masaraa* from Sayyoo to Aggaaroo.³¹ The young Abbaa Booqaa (ca. 1877-1883) the son and successor of Abbaa Jifaar Abbaa Moarkii ruled Gommaa with his mother from his palace in Aggaaroo.³² Though dominated and manipulated by his queen mother³³ it seems during (and after) the time of the young Abbaa Booqaa that Aggaaroo was more expanded with many new houses were built mainly surrounding the new palace.³⁴ Sources indicate that this palace was situated exactly at a site where the present Aggaaroo Main Commercial Bank of Ethiopia has been found, in front of the municipality of the town.³⁵

Ephrem and Girum have stated that it was during the time of Abbaa Booqaa the old settlement and trading area of Aggaaroo was “revived” or “revitalized” as an important market center in Gommaa. This was due to the need for additional market, accessibility and strategic location etc.³⁶ It appears Aggaaroo was more associated and popular with the name of the young Abbaa

²⁸ Cited in *Ibid*, p. 167.

²⁹ See *Ibid*, pp. 87 (Map 7), 137 (Map 8) and 145.

³⁰ See Aman, pp. 15 and 26; Guluma, “Markets, Local Traders...,” pp. 376-378. Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Sadii and others.

³¹ Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, *Sheik* Naasir, Abbaa Sadii and others.

³² See Trimmingham, p. 200. Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, *Sheik* Naasir, Abbaa Sadii and others.

³³ See Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 142.

³⁴ Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Sadii, and other.

³⁵ See Abdo Adam, “Ka’umsa Moggaafama Maqaa Magaalaa Aggaaroo,” (‘Origin of the Name of Aggaaroo Town’), a manuscript prepared at JZCTO (Jimma, 2009 EC), p. 3; Gaalii, p. 207. Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, *Sheik* Nasir, Abbaa Sadii, and others.

³⁶ Ephrem Seifu, “A Short History of Agaro Town,” BA Paper (Addis Ababa University, History, 1988), p. 18 and Girum Yeneneh, “A Historical Survey of Agaro Town: 1920s-1980s,” MA Thesis (Jimma University, History, 2013), pp. 13-14.

Booqaa than his predecessor father or his manipulator queen mother. Thus, the town was sometimes called Aggaaroo Abbaa Booqaa.³⁷

In short, most monarchs of the Shanan Gibe'e kingdoms established their *masaraa* on top of elevated areas. Initial seats of the main palaces of these states were shifted by one or the other king from where they had been located to another more suitable area because of strategic, economic, political and etc reasons. Capitals like Saqqaa of Limmuu-Innariyaa, Aggaaroo of Gommaa etc. were set up on already existing sparsely inhabited and/or insignificant market areas. Most or all the Shanan Gibe'e monarchs had markets near to their main palaces. Kings like Abbaa Bogiboo I of Limmuu-Innaariyaa, Abbaa Jifaar I of Jimmaa and some others had different palaces throughout their kingdoms in addition to their main *masaraa*.

4.1.2. Administration and Monarchs of the Shanan Gibe'e States

Among the Shanan Gibe'e monarchies the entire power was controlled by the kings.³⁸ Such phenomenon was a paradigm shift from the government and administration of the *gadaa* system.³⁹ In these kingdoms monarchs were assisted by a state council consisted of influential persons. The kings decided who would be a member of the council or not. The council mainly helped the monarchs as advisors.⁴⁰ To mention only one example:

... Abbaa Bogibo [I of Limmuu-Innaariyaa] was helped by an advisory council composed of some of his closest relative and important officials of the court. But this advisory council did not constitute a check on his unlimited power, as he could make or unmake any of the dignitaries who took part in it...⁴¹

In the kingdom of Jimmaa during the reign of Abbaa Jifaar II there was a highest official under the king called *abbaa gurmuu*. The *abbaa gurmuu* was the prime minister. He was the main assistant of the king. With the approval and guidance of the king, he managed the regular affairs of administration. "The prime minister was a close friend and advisor of the king, administered the kingdom in the king's absence, and could use the king's seal when necessary."⁴²

³⁷ See Girum, p. 4. Also, it is a popular tradition especially in Gommaa..

³⁸ Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia*..., p. 55; Abir, p. 82.

³⁹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 93-94.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 96.

⁴¹ Cited in Abir, p. 82.

⁴² Lewis, p. 88.

As it has already been mentioned, states ruled by Shanan Gibeke kings had territorial boundaries. Continuous marks and strategic defensive lines encircled the borders of individual kingdoms. The gates of borders of these states were controlled and monitored by guards. There was also alarm system that links the borders to the main *masaraa* (palace) of a kingdom. Alerting was carried out by beating a drum called *goonoo* when there was assault on the kingdom by hostile forces.⁴³

Territories within boundaries of each kingdoms were divided into higher administrative units known as *qoroo*.⁴⁴ Each Shanan Gibeke states had various numbers of *qoroo* (provinces).⁴⁵ For instance, Jimma the widest kingdom had sixty *qoroos* during the reign of Abbaa Jifaar II.⁴⁶ It is said that Guumaa had from ten to twelve *qoroo*⁴⁷ and the kingdom of Geeraa had nine *qoroo*.⁴⁸ These provinces of Oromo kingdoms were introduced by monarchs for administrative reasons “and could be changed in size, subdivided, or merged into other.”⁴⁹ The Shanan Gibeke kings appointed “eligible” officials, from dignitaries, who represented them at different administrative levels.⁵⁰

... The *Koro* was governed by an official whose title was *Abbaa Koro* and who held the administrative, judicial and military power in his [province]. Very often the governor was one of the king's brothers, sons, sons-in-law, or trusted slaves. Each governor had his own estates and *Massera* or *Masseras*, in which he housed his family, followers and slaves. In time of peace the governor ruled his [province], dealt with most of the judicial problems and with the help of an especially appointed administrator collected the taxes from the peasants. In time of war, the governor was the commander of all the able-bodied men in his province, and at the head of his contingent took part in the battles under the command of the king.⁵¹

Abbaa qoroos might or might not be natives of the provinces they governed. They were assigned by the king to serve wherever he desired. The office of *abbaa qoroo* was not always passed to a male offspring of the governor. However, the monarch could allow the son to continue as *abbaa*

⁴³ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 97; Abir, pp. 81-82.

⁴⁴ Abir, p. 83; Lewis, p. 89.

⁴⁵ Informants: Abdulkarim, Abbaa Nagaa and Abbaa Sadii.

⁴⁶ Lewis, p. 89; Ketebo, pp. 42 and 53.

⁴⁷ Deressa Bayisa, pp. 28-29.

⁴⁸ Ibsa, pp. 20-21.

⁴⁹ Lewis, p. 89.

⁵⁰ Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia...*, pp. 55-56; Tesema, “The Political Economy...,” p. 97.

⁵¹ Abir, p. 83.

qoroo in a province the new appointee was believed fit.⁵² Below *abbaa qoroo* there were other minor officials of lower administrative unit.⁵³ For instance, one of these was *abbaa gandaa*. An *abbaa qoroo*, subordinate to him, had various *abbaa gandaa* who were heads of their villages. *Abbaa gandaa* collected tribute, conscripted men for the king, “took turns in guarding the frontiers, administered justice in the king’s name, and deal with all matters not needing the king’s personal attention”.⁵⁴

Other very important the kings’ authority who were “without specific territorial jurisdiction” include *abbaa duulaa*, *abbaa kellaa* and *abbaa miizaan*. *Abbaa duulaa* was the head of the king’s army. *Abbaa keellaa* was the chief of soldiers who protected gates along frontier defensive lines. The *abbaa miizaan* was a head of “the customs and responsible for seeing that taxes and duties were collected”. *Abbaa miizaan* sometimes was known as “the king’s right arm.”⁵⁵

... *Abbaa Miizaan*... had the combined functions of treasurer and minister for foreign affairs. He supervised the king’s treasury, accounts, storehouses, private domains, and royal workshops. He was responsible for relations with foreigners and foreign merchants and he supervised the markets and the merchant villages.⁵⁶

4.2. Interactions of the Monarchs of Shanan Gibe States

Monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states had contacts among each other and with other rulers of non-Oromo and Oromo kingdoms found in and beyond the region. They maintained among themselves wide range of relations through establishing communications of information, visits of officials, interconnected trade and “political marriage”. They had also interactions of conflict and war. Similarly, outside of the Shanan Gibe states, these Oromo monarchs had interactions with some rulers of the surrounding kingdoms of various peoples in one way or the other. Moreover, they had contacts especially with a number of Muslim rulers beyond the region. In addition, different European missionaries, explorers, travelers etc. visited the region and some of them met

⁵² Lewis, p. 89.

⁵³ Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia...*, pp. 55-56; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 97; Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” p. 97 and others.

⁵⁴ Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia...*, pp. 55-56.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 56. See also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 143-145.

⁵⁶ See Abir, p. 83.

the contemporary rulers of the Shanan Gibe'e kingdoms. This section treats the contacts of the monarchs of Shanan Gibe'e states at various levels very briefly.

4.2.1. Communication and Diplomatic Relation

Before 1880s, the kings of the Shanan Gibe'e states dispatched among themselves ambassadors that "had diplomatic immunity while in office". However, after annexation of these kingdoms by Mnilik's administration only Abbaa Jifaar II had ambassador in Addis Ababa for his state survived conquest through peaceful submission.⁵⁷ As it has been indicated, there were communications and exchange of information among monarchs of these states. Information flowed frequently and continuously among the palaces of these rulers. "Spies reported to their respective governments of any secret military treaties which were concluded against a third party." Rich governors (*abbaa qoroos*) were sent as authorized messengers to arrange marriage unions, to finalize secret agreement of military alliance and to sign peace treaties between warring parties. To facilitate and/or enable diplomatic contacts with non-Oromo states, the monarchs of Shanan Gibe'e kingdoms arranged interpreters some of whom went with state delegation.⁵⁸ Abir has stated:

... The very extensive political life, the intrigue and the negotiation of treaties with the neighboring counties necessitated a large number of messengers and ambassadors called *Lemi*. The importance of *Lemi* varied according to the duties they were entrusted with. For minor affairs, the king employed less important personalities, whereas for treaty-making and important messages he would employ a well-known dignitary (*Soressa*) or even an *Abba Koro*. A number of translators of the different languages in use in the surrounding kingdoms were also employed in the court of Abba Bagibo [I]. The services of an interpreter were required whenever embassies arrived from Kaffa or from other countries whose languages was not [Afaan Oromoo].⁵⁹

... Messengers and ambassadors were continually on the road between [Limmuu] Enarea and all the countries of southern Ethiopia, and ambassadors from many kings and chiefs visited Abba Bagibo to coordinate policies, conclude alliances, declare war or to negotiate peace. ...although a king of only a small kingdom, Abba Bagibo's name was known all over the Ethiopian highlands and the coast, and [Limmuu] Enarea became important out of all proportion to its size.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia...*, pp. 56-57.

⁵⁸ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 98.

⁵⁹ Abir, p. 84.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 88-89.

Monarchs of the Shanan Gibeë kingdoms were renowned for exchange of presents especially among one another. These occurred in joyful events. Also, authorized state visits were frequent aspects of the diplomacy among these Oromo rulers.⁶¹

4.2.2. Marriage Ties

As it has already been indicated, the monarchs of the Shanan Gibeë states created bonds of political marriage among each other and with several ruling houses of the neighboring non-Oromo kingdoms.⁶² We have mentioned that usually to discuss and arrange these marriages, rich governors were sent to the palaces of the neighboring rulers with whom such marriage unions were to be made.⁶³ Even there were also occasions when European travelers were assigned to negotiate on behalf of one of the Oromo kings among the Shanan Gibeë states.⁶⁴ Such royal weddings were celebrated by special public ceremonies. Presents were given to consummate the marriage alliance.⁶⁵ We can mention many instances of political marriages of the monarchs from each Shanan Gibeë states. However, here for the sake of convenience we limit ourselves to a few cases.

The famous king of Limmuu-Inaariyaa Abbaa Bogiboo I (1830-1861) employed “political marriage” as a useful way of diplomacy. He had female spouses from each ruling lines of the Shanan Gibeë Oromo states, Kaffa and Dawuro. Abbaa Bogiboo I’s marriage connection with the kingdom of Kaffa was special in two ways. Firstly, the senior wife of Abbaa Bogiboo I was a female offspring of his contemporary monarch of Kaffa. Secondly, “In 1843, Abba Bagibo decided to marry a sister of the reigning king of Kaffa as his twelfth wife.” For this purpose, Abbaa Bogiboo I dispatched Antoine d’Abbade the French traveller with other important personalities to Kaffa for arranging the marriage union. Also, “Around 1846, at the age of forty-four, Abbaa Bagibo married a fourteen year-old daughter of the king of [Dawuro].” Arnauld d’Abbadie, the brother of Antoine was among the important elders assigned for negotiating the

⁶¹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 98.

⁶² See *Ibid*, pp. 113,163,179,185-187; Lewis, pp. 77-78 and Antonio Cecchi, *Kafännā Tārikuwā 1390-1897* (‘Kaffā and Its History 1390-1897’), trans. Takle Shalgito (1985 EC), p. 25. Informants: Abdulkarim, Ababa Zinaab, *Sheik Nasir* and others.

⁶³ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 98.

⁶⁴ See Abbā Antonius Alberto, *Ya Kātolik Betakristiyān Tārik Ba Itophia* (‘A History of Catholic Church in Ethiopia’), (Addis Ababa, 1993), p. 54; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 187; Max Gürhl, *The Citadel of Ethiopia: The Empire of the Divine Emperor*, trans. I.F.D. Marron and I.M. Sieveking (London, 1932), p. 173.

⁶⁵ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 98-99.

marriage. “For d’Abbadie, Abbaa Bagibo appeared to live for his aspiration to govern the Gibe region through political marriages.”⁶⁶

Of Abba Bagibo’s sons, more than twenty married women from either the ruling houses of the surrounding countries or from the *sorressa* (wealthy men) of their own country. The numerous daughters born to his wives and concubines were given in marriage to wealthy men of the surrounding countries. Thus, Abba Bagibo held together his own country through political marriages. It is possible too, that all his Abbaa Qoroos (provincial governors) may have had marriage links with the royal house of Limmu-Innarya. As with his own country, Abba Bagibo sought to hold together the surrounding countries through political marriage. However, the marriage union between Limmu-Innarya and Jimma Abba Jifar did not bring lasting peace between the two states. The economic and political interests that produced conflict between them were too wide and too deep to be closed by marriage alone. The hostility generated by the conflicts increased, being freshly fueled by the intrigues of the Jabarti traders and the ambition of Abba Jifar [I or Sanaa] to expand the frontiers of his state at the expense of Limmu-Innarya.⁶⁷

Fig.7. Abbaa Bogiboo I (r. 1825-1861) of the kingdom of Limmuu-Innaariyaa



Source: Guglielmo Massaia, *I Miei Trentacinque Anni di Missione Nell’alta Etiopia*, Vol. 3 and 4 (Rome, 1921), p. 143.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 186-187; see also Abir, p. 88.

⁶⁷ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 187.

Also in 1840 Abbaa Bogiboo I communicated Goshu who was the viceroy of Damot, Agaw-Midir and 'Gojjam-proper' between 1823 and 1840 to marry the daughter of the latter. However, this political marriage was not realized. Because, it appears Goshu* was in serious external and internal political problems and he consider the gap of religion that exist between the two was too wide to bridge.⁶⁸

The ruling house of Jimmaa also had marriage connection with that of the royal family of the kingdom of Guumaa. King Abbaa Booqaa of Jimmaa communicated King Abbaa Duulaa of Guumaa so that Abbaa Gommol the son and would be successor of the former to marry the daughter of the latter. It is claimed besides that of Jimmaa various ruling houses of the neighboring Oromo states proposed the daughter of the king of Guumaa for marriage at the same time. It is said that out of these options Abbaa Duulaa of Guumaa chose the marriage proposal came from the ruling house of Jimmaa for only the latter was willing to accept a prerequisite forwarded by the king of Guumaa. This precondition was that if the first child of the daughter of Abbaa Duulaa of Guumaa would be a male, he would legitimately succeed his father, Abbaa Gommol Abbaa Booqaa.⁶⁹

According to informants, the route or trip from Guumaa especially through Gommaa for the wedding delegation that was sent to bring the bride to Jimmaa was not friendly and safe. It is said that the Gommaans even secretly planned to kidnap the bride and bring her to the court of their king in case the people who accompany the princess try to cross through Gommaa. It seems this information already leaked and reached to the ears of members of the wedding delegation and their host. As Gommans expected, a wedding group that accompanied a claimed bride was sent from the palace of Guumaa to cross through Gommaa to Jimmaa. Then the Gommaans surrounded and arrested all members of this wedding group. And, they found that this so called royal wedding delegation that went through Gommaa was a deceptive one in an attempt to take the bride through another safe passage. They came to realize that the so-called bride in the group was not the daughter of the king of Guumaa rather she was a fake "royal bride". The actual royal wedding delegation that accompanied the real bride or daughter of the king of Guumaa passed

* Goshu was in a serious trouble at that time because in 1840 he was in conflict with *Ras* Ali the real "power behind the throne in Gondar" and then in 1841 with his son Birru. Both of them defeated Goshu and costed him (besides his reputation) territories such as Agaw-Midir and "Gojjam-proper" (*Ibid*, pp. 79-80).

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 177-180.

⁶⁹ See Ketebo, pp. 26-27.

through Limmuu-Innaariyaa and managed to reach the kingdom of Jimmaa safely.⁷⁰ Also, informants said that it was during this time that Abbaa Araboo came from Guumaa to Jimmaa accompanying the daughter of King Abbaa Duulaa with the wedding delegation. Some regarded Abbaa Araboo regarded as one of Islamic saints in the region. Many of his admirers visited his tomb as a shrine.⁷¹

It was out of the marriage union of the ruling houses of Jimmaa and Guumaa that the famous Abbaa Jifaar II was born. It is claimed Abbaa Jifaar II had been appointed as the king* of Jimmaa prior to he was in his mother's womb.⁷² During his reign, Abbaa Jifaar II created various marriage relations outside his kingdom. "Borelli reports negotiations between Abba Jifar II and the king of [Walāyita] for one of the latter's daughters."⁷³ Abbaa Jifaar II also used marriage connection to strengthen his internal administration by giving his different daughters in marriage to important personalities (including governors) of his state.⁷⁴

In addition to what have been discussed in the previous paragraphs, the list of political marriage unions that took place among various ruling house in the region was too many to enumerate here. To add only two examples, as it has been indicted, King Onchoo Jiilchaa of Guumaa's daughter was King Abbaa Bosoo of Geeraa's mother.⁷⁵ Abbaa Raagoo I (ca. 1842-1848) of Geeraa had wedlock with "Gawi Nechocho" one of the kings of Kaffa in nineteenth century for the former married the daughter of the latter.⁷⁶

In short, usually many of the monarchs of the Shanan Gibee states used marriage for political end. They employ the marriage connections with the ruling houses of the neighboring or surrounding kingdoms to create and nurture a healthy relation. They also used their marriage unions with important personalities within and outside their kingdoms to strengthen the administration of their states.

⁷⁰ Informants: Abbaa Zinaab, Isaq and Abbaa Garoo Abbaa Dilbii and others.

⁷¹ Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Sheik Abubeker, Sheik Mohammed Abdulwahid, Abbaa Zinaab and others.

* Lewis states that though Abbaa Jifaar II was not the eldest son of Abbaa Gommol, he succeeded his father as a king because his mother *Gennee* Guumayittii put pressure on her husband (see Lewis, p. 77).

⁷² See Ketebo, pp. 26-27. Informants: Abbaa Zinaab, Abdulkirim.

⁷³ Cited in Lewis, p. 78.

⁷⁴ Ketebo, pp. 86-86; Lewis, pp. 77-78

⁷⁵ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 133.

⁷⁶ See Jafar, p. 27

4.2.3. Religious Relation, and Some European Explorers and Missionaries

The monarchs of the Shanan Gibe Oromo states had religiously motivated relation with Islamic holy sites in Hijaz (the western part of the present day Saudi Arabia)⁷⁷ and contacts mainly based on Islamic affiliation with various Muslim rulers or countries outside the region.⁷⁸ In Islam pilgrimage to holy city of Mecca in Hijaz is the fifth fundamental by which every physically fit Muslim who can afford is obliged to accomplish this religious journey at least once in a lifetime. “In the 1840s d’Abbadie met several Muslims from the region that had gone to Mecca and Medina a number of times. The pilgrimage to Mecca indicates that Islam was making progress in the Gibe region.”⁷⁹ Undoubtedly, the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states initially created contacts with Hijaz through pilgrims from their kingdoms.⁸⁰ Also, it seems the monarchs of the Gibe valley established relation with different Muslim countries prior to Mnilik’s annexation of the region. For instance, according to Ketebo, in addition to Hijaz the most popular king of Jimmaa, Abbaa Jifaar II was able to create relation with “Zanzibar, Yemen and Egypt”.⁸¹

Until 1880s various European explorers, travelers, missionaries etc. had been in the Gibe region. Different contemporary monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states hosted some of them.⁸² These foreigners include the d’Abbadie brothers, Massaja, Cecchi, Soleitlet, Franzo, Traversi, Borelli etc.⁸³ The following were a few among these Europeans. Antoino d’Abbadie and his brother Arnauld d’Abbadie were in the region from 1843 to 1846. Since these two Europeans were so close to Abbaa Bogiboo I of Limmuu-Innaariyaa (as we have already mentioned) they were assigned one after the other as members of eminent personalities who were dispatched to negotiate marriage for the king with the rulers of the neighboring states. “Guglielmo Massaja, the first Catholic bishop of the Oromo territory, was in Ethiopia for three decades, some of which time he spent in the Gibe region”. Massaja appreciated Abbaa Bogibo I for his hospitality at his

⁷⁷ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 157, 160-161; Trimmingham, p. 202; Ketebo, pp. 64-65. Informants: Abdulkerim, *Sheik Nasir* and Abbaa Foggii.

⁷⁸ See Ketebo, pp. 64-65.

⁷⁹ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 157.

⁸⁰ See *Ibid*, pp. 157, 160-161. Informants: Abdulkerim, *Sheik Nasir*, Abbaa Foggii and others.

⁸¹ See Ketebo, pp. 64-65.

⁸² Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 84, 172, 187 and 195; Ketebo, p. 63; Alamaayyoo, *Seena Oromoo...*, pp. 313-328; McCann, pp. 150-152 and others.

⁸³ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 84, 172, 187 and 195; Ketebo, p. 63; Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia,” p. 79.

court in Saqqaa and support in his mission in Kaffa and the region. Also, Antonio Cecchi visited the Gibe region from 1879 to 1880.⁸⁴

In the kingdom of Geeraa, Queen Dagooyittii (Guumayitti or Artittii) jailed Antonio Cecchi and Giuseppe Chiarini the two Italian geographers.⁸⁵ Sources claim that the queen of Geeraa detained Cecchi and Giuseppe Chiarini on suspicion of spying for King Mnilik who wanted to control the Gibe region. It is stated that on 5 October 1880 Giuseppe Chiarini passed away due to unknown disease and malnutrition while he was in Geeraa.⁸⁶ On the other hand, Chiarini's associate Cecchi was set free from the prison of the queen of Geeraa in August 1880.⁸⁷

Fig.8. *Gennee* Dagooyittii (Guumayittii or Artittii) of the kingdom of Geeraa



Source: Cecchi, *Da Zeila Alle Frontiere Del Caffa...*, p. 260.

⁸⁴ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 84, 172 and 187.

⁸⁵ See McCann, pp. 150, 168; R.A. Caulk, "Territorial Competition and the Battle of Embabo, 1882," *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. XIII, No. 1 (1997), p. 68.

⁸⁶ See McCann, p. 168; Chris Prouty Rosenfeld, *A Chronology of Menilek II of Ethiopia* (East Lansing, 1976), p. 85.

⁸⁷ Caulk, p. 68.

According to sources on modern history of Africa the activities and works of the majority of the nineteenth century European travellers, explorers, missionaries, etc. in the continent directly or indirectly promoted the interest of the European colonial powers in Africa or had relation with European colonization of Africa. It seems some of them who were in the broader region might not have political motive except pursuit of knowledge or evangelical mission. However, it appears that the works and activities of most European explorers, travellers, missionaries of the time in the continent more served the interest of the European colonial powers/governments in Africa than the Africans or facilitated the colonization of various African communities by European countries.⁸⁸

4.2.4. Commercial Relations

The monarchs of the Shanan Gibee Oromo states had commercial relations among themselves, and with the surrounding states and peoples and far beyond these. Their kingdoms were linked to each other through trade routes that were frequented by various merchants. They had trade connection beyond the Shanan Gibee Oromo states with Kaffa, Dawuro, Konta, Yam, Oromo rulers and chiefs in Wallaggaa and Iuabbaaboor, Gojjam, Shawa, Wollo, Tigray, Walayta, Gurage, Kanbata, Hadiya, Harar, Bani Shangul, the Red Sea Port of Massawa etc.⁸⁹

The trade condition of the nineteenth century of the broader region had resemblance with that of the pre-colonial trade activity of other areas of Africa. “Passing through different areas under the control of the local chiefs, the long distance merchants had to negotiate for the safety of their lives and their properties”. Then again, local rulers gave “protection to the caravan merchants in return for gifts of valuable luxurious items or monopoly of buying and selling the commodities they needed.”⁹⁰ The Shanan Gibee monarchs like their counter parts elsewhere controlled the markets, trade routes, the entrance and exit gates, maintained peace and order, protected the safety of merchants and their properties and benefited from customs and market dues through state structure in their kingdoms. Also, they were rich merchants who had monopoly on trading and owning expensive items like gold and musk.⁹¹

⁸⁸ See Vincent B. Khapoya, *The African Experience: An Introduction* (1994), pp. 100-103; Ali A. Mazrui, “European Exploration and Africa’s Self-Discovery,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (1964), pp. 661-666.

⁸⁹ See Mohammed, pp. 98-99, 135-149 and Abir, pp. 85-93.

⁹⁰ Guluma, “Markets, Local Traders...,” p. 375.

⁹¹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 144-149. See also Abir, pp. 83-89.

There were significant commercial centers in the Gibe valley. These were Saqqaa, Atnaagoo, Caffee, Sunxuu and Saaphaa in Limmuu-Innaariyaa, Hirmaataa, Qumbii and Ono in Jimmaa, Sayyoo in Gommaa, Caallaa in Geeraa, Gomboxaa in Guumaa and Bongaa in Kaffa etc. Besides these there were other minor trading centers. The markets in the Gibe region were interconnected by commercial network. Also, trade routes that extended from different direction crossed the region. The *jabartii* the long-distance Muslim traders from northern Ethiopian or their representative visited many of significant commercial centers of the region. Among the markets of the Gibe valley, Saqqaa was the most important commercial center in the first half of the nineteenth century. Only in the second half of the nineteenth century Hirmaataa the market of the monarchs of the kingdom of Jimmaa replaced Saqqaa of Limmuu-Innaariyaa as a leading trade center of the region. This was due to some extent Limmuu-Innaariyaa's decline, Jimmaa's control of additional areas in the east and its consolidation and stability as a state.⁹²

The higher official that established and maintained amicable relation with foreign traders for the Shanan Gibe monarchs was *abbaa miizaan*. The Oromo kings of the region assigned *abbaa miizaan* "only from among successful and able traders ... Even successful foreign traders, the Jabarti, were appointed by some kings to this important office." *Abbaa miizaan* welcomed foreign merchants and facilitated their meetings with the kings. "In short, he was the channel of communications between the king and the foreign merchants."⁹³

Here it is not out of place to comment on the change that took place in relation to the status of the merchants such as the *jabartii* ("Muslim traders from Northern Ethiopia") and/or *naggāde* ("Muslim long-distance traders and outsider"). As it has repeatedly been mentioned, sources indicate that especially before the formation of Oromo monarchical states in the Gibe valley, the *naggāde/jabartii* were among the occupational groups who were discriminated economically and socially.⁹⁴ However, mainly after the emergence of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms in the region, unlike the rest occupational groups gradually the status of the *naggāde /jabartii* increasingly improved. Sources indicate that even during the inception of monarchical state in Gommaa, one *naggāde* clan participated in the meeting of leaders from nine Oromo groups who elected the

⁹² Guluma, "Markets, Local Traders...", pp. 376-378; see also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 135-149.

⁹³ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 144.

⁹⁴ See Aman, pp. 11-12; Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 63.

initial *mootii* (king) of the territory.⁹⁵ In different parts of the Gibe region, they intermarried with the Maccaa Oromo (including with the family of kings from various dynasties). They also became influential, and important officials such as ministers especially *abbaa miizaan*, advisors etc.⁹⁶ It seems, accelerated Islamization of the Oromo in the Gibe valley and increasing significance of long-distance commercial activities in nineteenth century were the main factors for this enhancement of the condition and position of the *naggāde*.⁹⁷

Anyway, due to Abbaa Bogiboo I's protective policy that prevented outside traders not to go further away of the kingdom of Limmuu-Innaariyaa, the *jabartii* merchants exchanged their items with goods from Kaffa, Jimmaa, Guumaa, Gommaa, Geeraa, Dawuro, Konta, Kambata, Walayta and others in Saqqaa. Thus, Abbaa Bogiboo I made Saqqaa the seat of his government and the dominant commercial center in the Gibe valley in the first half of the ninth century. Because of this, a lot of *jabartii* flocked to Saqqaa. Even a number of them gradually resided there forever.⁹⁸ As it has been stated in the following way:

Abba Bogibo [I] owed his great wealth partly to the benefits of trade... He dominated the political scene of the Gibe region up to 1861, not only through his sophisticated policy of "divide and rule," reinforced by political marriages and generous gifts, but also as a result of the fact that his capital was the headquarters for commercial exchange. In Saqqaa, the Jabarti traders from the north, the Afkala [Oromo] traders from the Gibe region and others from Gurage, Hadiya, [Dawuro], Konta, Kaffa, [Yam], Gamo, Gardo, Tambaro, Walayta, Wallaga, Illubabor, and many other places met while engaged in buying and selling. Saqqa's population included Muslim traders from the north (both Oromo and non-Oromo), Arabs, Hararis, a few Christian traders from Gojjam, Gondar, Tigray, together with mercenaries from the latter, and traders from the surrounding kingdoms. It already had that cosmopolitan atmosphere which later characterized Hirmata (near Jiren), the capital of Jimma Abba Jifar.⁹⁹

Through this trade, long-distance traders brought salt and mainly foreign goods like beads, glasses, cloths, scissors, knives, cooking items etc. to the markets of the monarchical Oromo and the surrounding Omotic states in the nineteenth century. The most important export items of the region were ivory, slaves, gold, musk, coffee and others. As it has been indicated, the trading of

⁹⁵ See Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 69-70; Aman, p. 13.

⁹⁶ See also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 135, 144, 192; Ketebo, pp. 52, 59-60; Aman, p. 13, and others. Informants: Abbaa Nagaa, Abdulkirim, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu among many others. The information collected from these informants is more relevant to the issue than the cited works.

⁹⁷ Aman, p. 13.

⁹⁸ Guluma, "Markets, Local Traders...", pp. 376-378. See also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 140-141 and Abir, pp. 85-86.

⁹⁹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 141.

gold and its possession was reserved only for monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states and the neighboring non-Oromo kingdoms where rings of gold were the symbol of kingship.¹⁰⁰

4.2.5. Non-Harmonious Relations

The monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states sometimes had relation of conflict and/or war among each other, with the neighboring Oromo chiefdoms and armies of non-Oromo rulers of the surrounding region.¹⁰¹ The motives for these conflicts were mainly economic, political or territorial expansion etc.¹⁰² Wars among the kings of the Shanan Gibe Oromo states became a pattern. Sources indicate that there were repeated wars between Jimmaa against Limmuu-Innaariyaa, Gommaa, Geeraa and Guumaa. Monarchs of Jimmaa like Abbaa Jifaar I and Abbaa Reebuu fought against these neighboring Oromo kingdoms.¹⁰³ There were also wars between Limmuu-Innaariyaa and Guumaa,¹⁰⁴ Guumaa against Gommaa, Jimmaa, Geeraa etc.¹⁰⁵ If not all, most wars among the armies of the monarchs of these Oromo kingdoms settled in peace agreements.¹⁰⁶

The kinds of relations among the kings of the various Shanan Gibe states, more or less, were not always the same. A monarch of an Oromo kingdom in the Gibe region might have relatively good relation with a few or some of his neighboring counterparts while he/she could be hostile to other/s. Sources indicate that somewhat, the kings of Jimmaa and Guumaa had friendly relation for some time, but by no means smooth one.¹⁰⁷ This was chiefly due to the marriage wedlock between the two ruling houses (since beginning of ca. 1860s),¹⁰⁸ and these two kingdoms had not shared boundaries¹⁰⁹ which were in many cases the source of contentions and conflicts.¹¹⁰

Most part of the relation of the two famous kings of Limmuu-Innaariyaa such as Abbaa Gommel I and Abbaa Bogiboo I with rulers of Guumaa was not friendly. The same was true for the

¹⁰⁰ Guluma, "Markets, Local Traders..." pp. 375, 381-382; Abir, pp. 85-88; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 145-149.

¹⁰¹ Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia...*, pp. 59-60.

¹⁰² Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 106, 183-184, 186-189.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 184-185; Ketebo, pp. 19-22. Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Ferid and others

¹⁰⁴ Abir, p. 88.

¹⁰⁵ Huntingford, "The Ethnology and History of Southwest..." p. 38.

¹⁰⁶ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 173, 183-184; Abir, p. 92.

¹⁰⁷ Informants: Abbaa Zinaab, Abdukerim, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu and others

¹⁰⁸ See Ketebo, pp. 26-27; Guluma, "Conquest and Resistance..." p. 56.

¹⁰⁹ See Mohammed, p. 87; Abir, p. 74; Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia...*, pp. 14-15 (map. 2).

¹¹⁰ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 142, 106, 181-185.

relation of Abbaa Bogiboo I of Limmuu-Innaariyaa with Abbaa Jifaar I of the kingdom of Jimmaa.¹¹¹ Similarly, the relation of the monarchs of Jimmaa and Gommaa was marked by steady conflicts.¹¹² In the first half of the nineteenth century, the principal trade route from Saqqaa to Bonga transited through Gommaa and Geeraa. According to Guluma Gemedaa, “the importance of this route would partly explain the constant hostilities between Jimmaa and Gommaa until the second half of the nineteenth century”.¹¹³ Besides this, other factors for repeated fighting between Jimmaa and Gommaa were territorial conflicts over bordering areas and around Gembee¹¹⁴ and the failed long desire of the kings of Jimmaa to annex Gommaa and Geeraa.¹¹⁵ Jimmaa was the biggest and the most populous state among the Shanan Gibee kingdoms¹¹⁶ while Gommaa was “the smallest of all” among them.¹¹⁷ In the words of Guluma, “Jimmaa for a long time sought to incorporate the kingdoms of Gera and Gommaa. However, here it was not so lucky. Through regional alliance and with small but effective armies both kingdoms resisted Jimmaa’s attempts.”¹¹⁸

The following oral tradition collected from informants in Gommaa indicates an exchange of war of words between the kings of Jimmaa and Gommaa before or after a confrontation. According to these informants, one of the kings of Jimmaa sent a suck of *xaafii/tef* (*eragrostis abessinica*) to a monarch of the kingdom of Gommaa to threaten with numerical superiority his kingdom had. The message was that the Jimmaans were as numerous as this suck of *xaafii/tef*. But, the king of Gommaa responded to the former by sending back a fistful of grains of pepper/chili to warn that even if they were small in number* they gave a hot taste like such pepper/chili.¹¹⁹ Abreham Alemu also has documented the same story in his paper (of 2012), but attributing it as an exchange of message that occurred between the last monarch of Jimmaa and a “king” of Geeraa.¹²⁰

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 175.

¹¹² See Aman, p. 31; Guluma, “Markets, Local Traders...,” p. 378.

¹¹³ Guluma, “Markets, Local Traders...,” p. 378.

¹¹⁴ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 111-112; Aman, p. 31.

¹¹⁵ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 111.

¹¹⁶ Ketebo, pp. 1-2.

¹¹⁷ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 116; see also Trimmingham, p. 200.

¹¹⁸ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 112.

* See the work of Cerulli, p. 53 for comparison with this tradition.

¹¹⁹ Informants: Yisehak, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Sadii among many others.

¹²⁰ See Abreham, p. 37.

In attempts to subdue the various bordering Oromo chiefdoms under their rule especially monarchs of Guumaa, Limmuu-Innaariyaa and Jimmaa fought wars against these groups.¹²¹ It is claimed that rulers of the kingdom of Guumaa sometimes with the support of most of the neighboring Oromo kingdoms waged generally unsuccessful wars. These wars were against the various surrounding groups such as Leeqaa etc.¹²² Monarchs of Limmuu-Innaariyaa, Abbaa Gommol I and especially of Abbaa Bogiboo I fought against Noonnoo, Botor, Agaloo, a part of the Badii group etc.¹²³ Abbaa Jifaar I of Jimmaa annexed the Badii Foollaa clan following prolonged confrontations.¹²⁴

As it has been mentioned in the war between the rulers of Guumaa supported by most monarchs of the neighboring Oromo kingdoms and the adjacent Oromo chiefdoms, it seems the former failed to prevail over the latter.¹²⁵ In relation to this conflict, Cerulli's *The Folk-Literature of the Oromo of Southern Abyssinia* gives us wonderful detailed descriptions with explanations. Indeed, this marvelous work of Cerulli is a very important source for history, folk tales, legends, culture, art, language etc. of the Oromo people in general and that of the Maccaa in particular. Nevertheless, the following and other similar claims mentioned in different parts of this work are unconvincing and not defensible. According to a few of these claims:

Pursuing his enemies, [Ligdi Bakaree,* a brave leader of Noolee Kaabbaa] advanced as far as the village of Boqa Maracco in Guma and challenged the people to send against him ten Muslim warriors whom he alone fought and defeated... The Nole Kabba, after invading nearly the whole of Limmuu [Innaariyaa] began to suck the adjoining districts of [J]imma Abba [J]ifar. Therefore, the [song] praising the victory, allude to the custom of the court of [J]imma of escaping to Garo, whenever the capital of the kingdom was in danger...¹²⁶

Moreover,

... Garbi [J]ilo [leader of the Leeqqaa Billoo] is advised by his son, Nagu Garbi, to avoid a face to face battle with the army of Guma which is more numerous in cavalry; and instead, to have the army pass through the territory of the neighboring kingdom of Gomma, so as to attack the

¹²¹ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 142,160 and 175.

¹²² See Cerulli, pp. 23-43, 49, 50-51, 291; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 160.

¹²³ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 106, 175 and 188-189. See also, Abir, pp. 90-92 and W.C. Harris, *The Highlands of Aethiopia*, vol. III (London, 1844), pp. 54-55.

¹²⁴ Abir, p. 92.

¹²⁵ See Cerulli, pp. 23-43, 49, 50-51, 291; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 160.

*Cerulli's work has mentioned, "Ligdi Bakarie was a brother of Moroda, the [king] of Lieqa Naqamte" (Cerulli, p. 43).

¹²⁶ See Cerulli, p. 49.

army of Guma from the rear. Garbi [Jiloo] accepts the advice, calls to his aid [J]imma Ar[j]o, [J]imma Gudaya, Kennu, the Lieqa Sibū, the Lieqa Naqamte, and the Lieqa Horda. [Jawwee] is occupied with these preparations...The contingents of Lieqa Sibū and of the Lieqa Horda arrive to help Garbi [J]ilo. The latter having crossed the Limmū territory without a struggle attack the kingdom of Gomma. In a single day Gomma is defeated and the Lieqa arrive at Faca.* Their vanguard crossed the river. The royal enclosure of Gomma is taken by the Lieqa and the king's women are made prisoners; the king of Gomma escapes into the kingdom of Giera. The army of Guma hastens to the Faca; it arrives there... Meanwhile a column of Lieqa cavalry has crossed the Faca unexpectedly and having crossed the Guma frontier is devastating the country in the rear of the hostile army... [J]awe on the other hand gives battle and is vanquished. His defeated army is scattered in flight. Garbi [J]ilo returns victorious to Billo...¹²⁷

It seems most parts of the above stories were either extremely exaggerated or fabrications. This is because of the following reasons. To begin with, narrations of such significant events and extensive devastations have not been remembered among many elders, or have not been corroborated by parallel stories/sources in most part of Guummaa** and Limmuu-Innaariyyaa, and in the whole of Jimmaa and Gommaa.¹²⁸ Also, it was difficult for Leeqaa or Noolee Billoo etc. groups to move far away from their bases up to the center of relatively vast territory of the Gibe region and won easy victories over the armies of the kingdoms of Guumaa, Limmuu-Innaariyyaa, Gommaa and Jimmaa. The latter had more privileges than the former to beat their opponents or defend themselves effectively against their rivals at home terrains.

In addition, the above extract of exaggerated narrations bestowed superhuman quality to the forces of Noolee Kaabbaa, Leeqaa etc. in their fight against the Oromo kingdoms in the Gibe region.¹²⁹ For example, though the people of of Guumaa in general and their rulers in particular

*This work of Cerulli claims 'Faca' was a river found between the kingdoms of Jimmaa and Gommaa (see *Ibid*, p. 293). On the other hand, the story in this same work implicitly indicates 'Faca' was a river that bordered the kingdoms of Gomma and Guumaa (*Ibid*, pp. 290-291).

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 291. This quote is a part of the prose collected by Cerulli from Loransiyos (see Cerulli, pp. 7, 281-283).

**It appears that there were skirmishes and small-scale accidental conflicts among these neighboring Maccaa Oromo groups. However, the type of such extensive war and destructions that have been painted by Cerulli's informant was exaggeration (see also Gaalii, p.183. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Garoo).

¹²⁸ Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Garoo and Abbaa Zinaab.

¹²⁹ See Cerulli, pp. 49, 291.

were known as warriors,¹³⁰ the story has claimed Ligdi Bakaree the chief of Noolee Kaabbaa “alone fought and defeated” ten soldiers from Guumaa.¹³¹

Moreover, as it has been quoted in the above, the work speculates that there was a custom among the monarchs of the kingdom of Jimmaa to flee to Gaaroo when the main administrative center of the state was exposed to the risk of attack.¹³² However, firstly, it is a speculation based on verses of a song.¹³³ Secondly, informants besides rejecting this claim they have stated that there was no even a single similar incident, which happened in the court of the kingdom of Jimmaa, let alone the existence of such royal custom there.¹³⁴ Thirdly, unlike what has been mentioned in this work of Cerulli, to the researcher’s knowledge there is no other credible source that confirms the existence of such custom in the royal court of the kingdom of Jimmaa.

Further, it is stated that usually the number of soldiers in the battles that took place in the region by that time was small, not exceeding 40 or 50 fighters in one side.¹³⁵ Thus, it appears, given this small number of fighters, the extent and magnitude of invasion, victory, destruction and menace claimed to be caused by neighboring Oromo chiefdoms in the Gibe region was unlikely. A fighting force of such small number could not attain this much complete supremacy over armies of more than one Oromo kingdoms and cause huge destruction on their own territories that covered wide areas.

On top of these, the above story claims that the small number of fighters of Garbii Jiiloo (of Leeqaa Billoo) attained swift, utter and easy victory over the army of the king of Gommaa within only one day. It adds, “the royal enclosure of Gomma is taken by the Lieqa and the king’s women are made prisoners; the king of Gomma escapes into the kingdom of Giera.”¹³⁶ However, firstly, elders who are well informed on the history of the kingdom of Gommaa categorically reject this claim. They maintain that they have not heard such story in their lifetime.¹³⁷ Secondly,

¹³⁰ See Mekuria, pp. 343-346; Deressa Bayisa, pp. II, 38-39, 42-43, 45, 86; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 160 among others. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Garoo, Abbaa Foggii, Mahammed-Kebir Abbaa Diggaa.

¹³¹ Cerulli, p. 49.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49

¹³⁴ Informants: Abbaa Zinaab, Abbaa Nagaa, *Sheik Tahir* and others.

¹³⁵ See Cerulli, pp. 290, 291, 293; Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia...*, p. 59 and Huntingford, “The Ethnology and History...,” p. 38.

¹³⁶ See Cerulli, p. 291.

¹³⁷ Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, Sheik Nasir, Abbaa Sadii are among many others.

even this claim contradicts what the work of Cerulli has already mentioned saying that the people of Gommaa were warriors.¹³⁸ Thirdly, let alone these small number of soldiers of Garbii Jiiloo, sources indicate that even the larger, more equipped, trained and organized Mnilik's army was not able to enjoy such a swift and easy victory in the kingdom of Gommaa in 1886/1887.¹³⁹

Similarly, a story in this work claims, in a conflict between King Jawwee of Guumaaa and King Abbaa Booqaa of Jimmaa, "The king of [J]imma had with him forty-four horsemen...Then the people of [J]imam were numerous. The men of Guma could do nothing against that swarm of bees; in one day the army of [J]imam destroyed the people of Guma, the army of Guma..."¹⁴⁰ First, the story depicts Abbaa Booqaa of Jimmaa as warlike king while various sources states that he was peaceful religious person unlike to his predecessors.¹⁴¹ Secondly, the story exaggerates forty-four soldiers on horses back as "swarm of bees". Thirdly, the narration claims that these equestrians of King Abbaa Booqaa of Jimmaa "destroyed the people of Guma, the army of Guma" within only one day an incident of which has not been supported by my informants.¹⁴² Thus, it seems that it had at least exaggerations.

Furthermore, it seems Laransiyos Walda Iyasus was more influenced by Leeqaa tradition than any other Oromo group.¹⁴³ Loransiyos whose first name was claimed to be Abdella¹⁴⁴ was originally from Abbichuu clan of Tuulamaa Oromo. "He was taken by his parents to Lieqa Naqamte and remained there during his youth." Loransiyos served in the armies of Moradaa and Kumsaa Moradaa of Leeqaa Naqamtee, Jotee Tulluu of Leeqaa Qeellam etc. participated in various wars as soldier. "He speaks the dialect of Lieqan Oromo (Northeastern Macca) and while he knows the Macca dialects well..., he remembers very little of the dialect of Tulam-Oromo..." Cerulli has stated that he gathered almost the entire materials for his work of *The Folk-Literature of the Oromo of Southern Abyssinia*, from Loransiyos.¹⁴⁵

¹³⁸ See *Ibid*, p. 53.

¹³⁹ See Guluma, "Conquest and Resistance in the Gibe Region...", pp. 58-95; Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 149-150. See also chapter 5 part 2 of this paper. Informants: Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Sadii, *Skeik* Nasir and others.

¹⁴⁰ Cerulli, p. 290.

¹⁴¹ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 158, 185; Ketebo, pp. 22-23; Lewis, p. 43.

¹⁴² Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Garoo, Abbaa Simal Abbaa Wadaajoo, Sabit.

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, pp. 6-7.

¹⁴⁴ See *Ibid*, p. 249.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 6-7.

What is more, the sources for some of the claims were emotional (war) songs of historical subjects.¹⁴⁶ Therefore, it is misleading to rely too much only on such emotional and sometimes propagandist (war) songs (especially of collected from one side of the warring party) to attain a general and clear historical picture of these conflicts between the two neighboring Maccaa Oromo groups led one by monarchs and the other mainly by chiefs.

In short, some part of the stories cited above and similar others might give us a clue about a glimpse of historical phenomena that took place in the region. However, this does not make the whole of such narrations collection of facts. Rather, they have contained numerous exaggerations. Thus, taking such stories as entirely creditable evidence in historical works without questioning their weakness and crosschecking with other sources is misleading and not wise.

In relation to the neighboring non-Oromo kingdoms, at times there were conflicts between some of the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states and the kings of these surrounding states.¹⁴⁷ The main reason behind these conflicts was the desire to expand the territory of one ruler at the expense of the other.¹⁴⁸ For instance, Tulluu Gunjii of Geeraa engaged in a war against the kingdom of Kaffa.¹⁴⁹ Also, the army of Abbaa Jifaar I of Jimmaa fought against Yam twice only within two years, first in 1843 and then in 1844.¹⁵⁰ During the time of Abbaa Jifaar II the war between the kingdoms of Jimmaa and Yam continued.¹⁵¹ In addition, it is claimed that there were continuous conflicts between the rulers of Jimmaa and that of Dawuro.¹⁵²

Moreover, some monarchs of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms had relation of confrontations with a few Abyssinian rulers. Sources indicate that King Abbaa Bogiboo I of Limmuu-Innaariyaa was able to extend his influence over the commercial centers of Soddoo and Agabaja and its surrounding outside the Gibe region. This brought, Abbaa Bogiboo I into conflict with King Sāhla Slāse of Shawa. The actual influence of the former over these areas began to diminish

¹⁴⁶ See *Ibid*, pp. 6-7, 43-49.

¹⁴⁷ Informants: Abdulkerim, Abbaa Zinaab, Ferid and others.

¹⁴⁸ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 181-183. See also Wandmāgagn *et al*, *Ya Yam Bherasab Tārik* ('A History of the Yam Naionality/ People'), (2004 E.C.), pp. 69-71 and 82.

¹⁴⁹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 112.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 182-183; Nigusu, pp. 46-49.

¹⁵¹ See Nigusu, pp. 50-52. Informants: Makonnin Waldayyasus, Abdulkerim, Abbaa Zinaab and others.

¹⁵² Seid Ahmed, "A Historical Survey of Dawaro, Southwest Ethiopia, up to 1974," MA Thesis (AAU, History, 1984), pp. 48-51; see also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 192.

when the later control them militarily in 1840s.¹⁵³ Secondly, in 1880s the soldiers of most of the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states were forced to involve into military confrontation. This was due to the incursion to their territories first by the army of *Nigus* Takla-Hāymānot of Gojjam and then by the force of Mnilik of Shawa about whose conquest of the region in relation to the Shanan Gibe Oromo monarchs will be treated briefly in the next chapter, in addition to succession and its problems.

¹⁵³ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 175-176, 188-189 and 192; Abir, p. 90.

CHAPTER FIVE

V. SUCCESSION AND ITS PROBLEMS, AND CONQUEST IN RELATION TO MONARCHS OF THE SHANAN GIBEE STATES

The monarchs of the Shanana Gibe Oromo states were sovereign ever since the emergence of their kingdoms until 1880s. In these kingdoms, there was a fluid rule of succession from one king to the next sometimes with trouble. In this chapter, we treat briefly succession and the bitter power struggle that occasionally took place. Moreover, this chapter will touch some issues relevant to conquest of these states in 1880s in relation to the Oromo monarchs of the Gibe region.

5.1. Succession and Power Struggle in Dynasties of the Shanana Gibe States

It is reported that usually in the Shanana Gibe Oromo kingdoms whenever a monarch passed away the news would be kept secret till the successor took the throne of the deceased king following a ritual of slaughtering a red bull. Then, the news of the demise of the monarch and the crowning of a new successor broke to the public.¹ After that, *abbaa qoroos* (provincial governors) would attend the main *masaraa* (royal court) to grieve over the death of the monarch and express their loyalty to the crowned new king by bestowing *irreessa* (fresh green grass). Afterwards, the newly enthroned monarch with relevant governors (*abbaa qoroos*) would visit different provinces of his kingdom amid drumbeats.²

As we have repeatedly indicated among the Shanana Gibe states the post of the king was hereditary. Cecchi reported that generally the first son of the king from his first official female spouse inherited, although any wife's eldest qualified son could be designated as a crown prince. The future successor of the king was permitted to put on a golden bracelet after a certain time. If the brothers of the legitimate successor were many in number, there was a possibility of a bloody conflict following the passing away of the monarch until one came victorious over the others. In

¹ See Deressa Bayisa, p. 33. See also Ketebo, p. 29.

² See Deressa Bayisa, p. 33.

the absence of an official heir, an influential eligible person of highborn background in the kingdom could be selected to replace the monarch.³

When the king won a power struggle and caught the rebellious member of the royal family or suspected his brother, relative etc. that might be a threat to his throne, he could isolate the royal contender from his power base and usually banished him to the neighboring state⁴ or seldom to a peripheral area of the kingdom. This practice of confining a royal opponent in Afaan Oromoo was known as *dabarsuu* literally means to pass to somebody or somewhere. Such action was also carried out to the vice versa.⁵ On other hand, there was time when the royal opponent failed to win a power struggle could be castigated by death.⁶ The following cases from various Shanan Gibee states indicate interesting historical phenomena in relation to succession and power struggle usually within and sometimes among the Oromo dynasties of the region.

We have already said that the council of state whose members were handpicked or could be removed by the king was an instrument to serve as advisor. But, there were situations when the state council removed or collaborated with royal rivals in deposing ‘unfit’ or ‘unpopular’ *mootii* (king) from power. Informants state that Abbaa Raagoo (ca. 1824-1830) the eldest son of Abbaa Magaal (ca. 1782-1824) and the third ruler of Jimmaa under the Diggoo dynasty was removed from the throne by councilors (influential elders) because of his inability to handle the state affairs efficiently. It is claimed that Abbaa Raagoo was mentally “unfit” to rule the emerging state as *mootii*. Thus, after discussing on the issue, members of the council of state replaced Abbaa Raagoo by Abbaa Jifaar I (Sanaa) who was a capable younger brother of him. Abbaa Raagoo resisted this move by trying not to handover the ring (*amartii*) which was the symbol of kingship to his chosen younger brother. However, to no avail. The ring was taken away from him by force and given to Abbaa Jifaar I or Sanaa (ca. 1830-1854) a brilliant king that turned the emerging state into matured, strong and famous kingdom during his reign.⁷

Also, following the death of Abbaa Jifaar I, there was a power struggle between two of his sons. In the words of Harbert Lewis:

³ See Huntingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia ...*, p. 55.

⁴ See Deressa Bayisa, p. 33. Informants: Abbaa Zinaab, Abdulkerim, *Sheik* Nasir and others. Here, the information from the informants is more specific and relevant to the issue than the cited work.

⁵ Informants: Abbaa Zinaab, Abdulkerim, *Sheik* Nasir and others.

⁶ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 169-170, 189-193.

⁷ Informants: Yahya, *Haji* Abbaa Milkii.

Abba Jifar [I] died in 1855 after reigning twenty-five years. A short dispute over the succession developed between his oldest son, Abbaa Gommol, legitimate heir to the throne, and a younger (and more vigorous) son, Abba Rebu. Abba Jifar died in a palace east of Jiren. Abba Rebu was with him at the time while Abba Gommol was at a palace southwest of Jiren. Abba Rebu was therefore able to gain possession of the gold ring of kingship. With his followers he reached Jiren before his brother and seized the throne. Abba Gommol was then exiled to Kafa.⁸

The researcher has been told that initially Abbaa Reebuu had not been around where the king was in deathbed. His mother who was with the dying king sent to her son a secret message to arrive as quickly as possible and own the golden ring before other legitimate contenders to the throne such as his eldest brother, Abbaa Gommol and his uncle, Abbaa Booqaa did. The young ambitious Abbaa Reebuu spent no time. He reached there ahead of other aspirants. He took the gold ring violating the custom of seniority and succeeded Abbaa Jifaar I.⁹ Sources indicate that Abbaa Reebuu (ca. 1855-1858) a warlike young king of Jimmaa was assassinated by his own men who were working with outside conspirators while fighting the army of Gommaa supported by other neighboring Oromo kings especially of Abbaa Bogboo I of Limmuu Innaariyaa. He was hated in Jimmaa because he denied the kingdom peace and punished those who opposed his militaristic policy. This gave the shrewd Abbaa Bogiboo I of Limmuu-Innaariyaa an excellent opportunity to penetrate among the aristocracy of Jimmaa in turning them against their warrior king. Abbaa Reebuu was disliked and feared by surrounding Oromo leaders because he waged war of expansion on all neighboring kingdoms.¹⁰

According to informants, inside conspirators from the nobility of Jimmaa informed and convinced Abbaa Booqaa, who was the religious minded brother of Abbaa Jifaar I, he would be the next king when the militant Abbaa Reebuu was removed from power. As the plotters planned, Abbaa Booqaa Abbaa Magaal became the next ruler* of Jimmaa after Abbaa Reebuu's own soldier called Abbaa Diimaa Gabbaraa stabbed to death this young king in a battle against the kingdom of Gommaa.¹¹ Abbaa Booqaa (ca. 1858-1864) who came to power after this event at his old age reversed the militaristic policy of Abbaa Reebuu, engaged in cultivating peaceful relation with neighboring states and worked hard in propagation of Islam

⁸ Lewis, p. 42.

⁹ Informants: Yahya, *Haji Abbaa Milkii*.

¹⁰ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p p. 184-185; Ketebo, p. 20.

* Herbert Lewis states, "Abba Rebu's son was kept from the throne because he was just an infant" (Lewis, p. 43).

¹¹ Informants: Abbaa Jebel Abbaa Fiixaa, Zaakir Abbaa Boor, Yahiya and others.

in Jimma.¹² It seems, in banishing his royal opponent the peaceful Abbaa Booqaa was not different from other Oromo kings of the region. The researcher has been informed that while Abbaa Booqaa was in power he exiled his rival brother Abbaa Bulguu Abbaa Magaal to Kaffa for challenging his succession to the throne. According to these informants, Abbaa Bulguu spent the rest of his life in Kaffa where he finally died and buried there.¹³

Partly similar event took place in the kingdom of Gommaa. Abbaa Booqaa Abbaa Jifaar succeeded to the throne of Gommaa in his young age in 1878. The real power was in the hands of his mother. The queen mother decided political and other important issues. Nevertheless, the council of state of Gommaa called *qophoo* was enraged and isolated by her actions and decisions. In about 1882, the state council of Gommaa (*qophoo*) removed Abbaa Booqaa from power and sent him and his queen mother to Kaffa in exile. At the same time, the *qophoo* chose Abbaa Duulaa the son of Abbaa Qiriphee who had been a famous advisor to monarchs of Gommaa between 1850s and 1870s to succeed Abbaa Booqaa.¹⁴

In the kingdom of Geeraa power struggles among the ruling monarchs and their rival brothers took place. These conflicts for dominance over the other resolved by replacement of the ruling monarchs with their contending brothers. When he came to the throne and ousted from it, Abbaa Bosoo (ca.1838-1842) of Geeraa had to confront his brothers in fierce power struggle. He came to power with the help of Onchoo Jilchaa the king of Guumaa who captured and killed Tulluu* Gunjii (ca. 1835-1838) of Geeraa. Abbaa Bosoo was half-brother of Tulluu Gunjii. He was also the grandson of Onchoo Jilchaa of Guumaa through his daughter. It was the operation of Onchoo Jilchaa of Guumaa brought Abbaa Bosoo to the throne of Geeraa. “Whether it was because of the way he came to power or not, Abbaa Bosoo was an unpopular king. His reign was short-lived. Around 1838, he was over thrown and exiled to Jimmaa by his brother Abba Rago.”¹⁵ According to other sources the council of state, important individuals and most section of the people were against Abbaa Bosoo, thus he was forced to hand over his power to his younger brother Abbaa Raagoo I (ca.1842-1848) and took refugee first in

¹² Ketabo, pp. 22-23. See also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 185.

¹³ Informants: Abbaa Jebel Abbaa Fiixaa and Zaakir Abbaa Boor.

¹⁴ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 142; Guluma, “Conquest and Resistance in the Gibe Region...,” p. 55.

* Informants claim that when Onchoo Jilchaa of Guumaa came to fight Tulluu Gunjii of Geeraa, the latter was sick but he fought to the death (informants: Yahya, Ababa Maccaa Ababa Duraa).

¹⁵ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 113.

Gommaa and then for good in the kingdom of Jimmaa, Maannaa at a place later called Sayyoo.¹⁶ It seems Abbaa Bossoo was grieved by what happened to him in Geeraa. One source claims that for this he cursed Geeraa and blessed Gommaa and Jimma for the hospitality he received from the kings of the two states.¹⁷

After the passing away of Abbaa Raagoo I in about 1848, a fierce conflict for the throng of Geeraa occurred between Abbaa Magaal on one side and especially his brothers on the other side. Abbaa Magaal was a strong and crafty person. He formed alliance with Abbaa Bogiboo I of Limmuu-Innaariyaa. Abbaa Magaal requested Abbaa Bogiboo I to support him militarily in this power struggle against his brother. The latter accepted the request but if only the former would be converted to Islam when he was put on the power. Immediately after Abbaa Magaal (ca. 1848-1870) came to the throne with Abbaa Bogiboo I's military intervention, the former accepted Islam.¹⁸

There were occasions when the monarchs' sons who were the heirs apparent to the throne rebelled against their fathers, the kings. Here we mention two examples from the kingdom of Limmuu-Innaariyaa. First, Abbaa Bogiboo I (Ibsaa) came to power through a successful *coup d'état* type of take over. Ibsaa who was made *donachoo* (crown prince) by his father, after creating a strong basis of support among politicians and soldiers, he revolted against Abbaa Gommol I (Bofoo) in 1825. Abbaa Gommol I who realized he was fighting a losing war against his son accepted an imposed agreement and relinquished his power to Abbaa Bogiboo I (Ibsaa). In turn, Abbaa Gommol I was permitted to remain at his palace in Saaphaa with certain influence over the surrounding areas. He passed away in 1837 (more than one decade after he was removed from power) and was buried there.¹⁹

In his reign, Abbaa Bogiboo I (ca. 1835-1861) also faced a failed coup led by his second son the heir apparent to the throne. It is stated that since Abbaa Bogiboo's confidence on his second son was so high, first he made him the heir to the throne and then in 1841 the head of his army. Abbaa Bogiboo I's son relied on his fame among the army, support from Jimmaa's Abbaa

¹⁶ Yahya A[bbaa] Gissaa, "Seenaa Abbaa Bosoo." A manuscript possessed by Maaanaa Distric Culture and Tourism Office (Yabuu, 2011 EC), pp. 1-3, 8-9. Informants: *Haji* Abbaa Milkii, Abbaa Diggaa Abbaa Goduu.

¹⁷ McCann, pp. 151-152.

¹⁸ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 160-160,193.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 163-165.

Jifaar I (Sanaa) whose daughter was his wife, backing of few religious personalities and the long distance merchants (*jabartii*) who were annoyed for Abbaa Bogiboo I prohibited them not to proceed and trade further away from the capital, Saqqaa. This inexperienced the would be heir of the king wanted to repeat the example of his father's ascendancy to the throne by compelling Abbaa Bogiboo I to renounce his power in favor of him. Thus, he secretly attempted to remove his father from power in 1847. The shrewd king who was aware of the whole plot of his son from the very beginning through his intelligence foiled the *coup d'état* and punished the leader of the conspiracy and his loyal followers severely. The crown prince (*donachoo*) was first disgraced, tortured and jailed at a notorious prison and then "he was exiled to Gera, but drowned in the Didessa River while on his way there."²⁰

To sum up, in the Oromo monarchies of the Gibe region generally when a king passed away the news would be kept secret until the successor came to the throne. In theory, there was hereditary succession formula among the Shanan Gibee Oromo monarchs. On the average, this succession formula was respected and did work. But, sometimes it was violated and thus at times this resulted in bloody conflicts. When a king was weak or unpopular, he could be toppled from power by his councilors and influential members of the nobility or by royal rivals who had the blessing of the state council and important aristocrats. In such cases, the deposed king might be succeeded usually by his son or brother or seldom by acceptable member of the nobility. At times, in the internal power struggle of royal rivals of one state, influence kings of the neighboring kingdoms did intervene even 'militarily siding with their favorite candidates that maintained their interests or confronting the monarchs they opposed. This happened especially in the kingdom of Geeraa repeatedly. Deposed monarchs or rivals who lost in power struggle usually were sent to the neighboring states. But, there were exception. Also, there were occasions when crown princes revolted against their fathers to succeed them. This is how the famous Abbaa Bogiboo I (Ibsaa) of Limmuu-Innaariyaa come to power but still with generous treatment to his deposed father while the former's son who staged unsuccessful coup against him in 1847 paid a heavy price for his deed.

²⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 189-191.

5.2. Conquest and Monarchs of the Shanan Gibe States

Ever since their formations till the beginning of 1880s, sovereign monarchs ruled the Shanan Gibe Oromo kingdoms.²¹ As it has already been indicated, it was first Takla Hāymānot of Gojjam extended his authority over the rulers of these states but for a very short period. Immediately, King Mnilik (Emperor Mnilik after 1889) annexed the Shanan Gibe states. It is obvious that wherever or whenever it occurred, conquest had usually multiple effects. Similarly, the incorporation of the territories of these Oromo kingdoms affected a lot of their people in general and their monarchs of the time in particular at various degrees. This last section of the paper deals mainly with issues relevant to the conquest of the Shanan Gibe states in relation to their monarchs very briefly.

Before 1880s, for a long time the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe Oromo states had agreement of mutual alliance with oath (*kakuu*). According to this agreement, if any force attacked one of these five kingdoms the other four had to fight together with their ally against the intruder.²² For example, sources indicated that Emperor Tewdros (1855-1867) had a desire to control the Shanan Gibe states and the surrounding region. Thus, he issued a command to his representative in Shawa to organize capable force that would march to the region. Abbaa Bogiboo I (r. 1825-1861) who realized this ambition of Tewdros urged and united the rulers of the neighboring Oromo kingdoms and peoples against the latter. Abbaa Bogiboo I sent a threatening message saying that if Tewdros dispatched his troops to the region he would pay a high price for the Oromo would fight “as one man” to the end. It is stated that Tewdros considered this warning of Abbaa Bogiboo I of Limmuu-Innaariyaa seriously and relinquished his plan of military campaign to the region.²³ It seems in addition to Abbaa Bogibo I’s maneuver and threat other factors might be involved in forcing Tewdros to give up his plan of military expedition to the Gibe region and its most adjacent lands.

²¹ See Lewis, pp. 44-45; Cerulli, pp. 3, 14, 118 and 282; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 1, 93, 196-200; Ketebo, pp. 1, 34.

²² See Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” pp. 133-134; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society ...,” p. 144; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 184, 194.

²³ Salviac, p. 63. See also Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 194-195.

One work claims that prior to the arrival of Mnilik's army, the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states met in Saqqaa of Limmuu-Innaariyaa and, following a lengthy exchange of ideas, made an oath to fight together and defend themselves against the Shawan force.²⁴ This work adds:

... In their oath, they discussed and agreed to establish a sovereign Gibe state after safeguarding their states from the invaders. It was agreed that Abba Jifar II would be the overall *Moti* of the Gibe Oromo states and Sulxaan Abba Bagibo II would be the secretary general (*barreessa waliigalaa*) of the whole Gibe states.²⁵

Regarding the quoted extract part of the claimed "oath", in fact such kind of agreement did not happen. To begin with, this claim is unfounded.²⁶ Also, many elders from the areas of historical five Gibe states reject this claim.²⁷ Moreover, sources indicate that following the coming to power of Abbaa Jifaar II in the kingdom of Jimmaa the rulers of Gojjam and then Shawa started military campaign for annexation of the Gibe region at the beginning of the 1880s. At that time, Abbaa Jifaar II (r. c. 1878-1932) had been at his young age* and inexperienced yet.²⁸ Thus, the influence of his mother and other advisors on his decision was high even in matter of how to deal with the campaigns of conquest of the Christian leaders.²⁹ However, if not initially, Abbaa Jifar II was capable, cunning and very popular king in most of his long reign.³⁰ In addition, all Shanan Gibe kingdoms and their monarchs had "the spirit of independence for defense of the frontiers of each state."³¹ Furthermore, sources show that ever since the formation of the Shanan Gibe monarchies till their annexation in 1880s, no Oromo monarch was ready to sacrifice his/her sovereignty willingly and accept to be ruled by either kings of Jimmaa or Limmuu-Innaariyaa or any other neighboring states for the sake of such so called "a sovereign Gibe state".³² Indeed, just before the conquest there were still old suspicion and rivalry among the monarchs of the Shanan

²⁴ Temesgen, pp. 73-74.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 74.

²⁶ See Tesema, "The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...", pp. 133-134; Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 144. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Garoo, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, *Sheik* Hasen and many others.

²⁷ Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Abbaa Sadii, Ferid are a few among many others.

* For instance, in 1880 Ababa Jifaar II was nineteen years old (see Ketebo, pp. 28-29; Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 144).

²⁸ See Ketebo, pp. 28-30; Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society..." pp. 144-145.

²⁹ Ketebo, pp. 29-30; Lewis, p. 78; Mekuria, p. 340.

³⁰ Lewis, p. 46.

³¹ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 98.

³² See *Ibid*, pp. 184-185, 197; Guluma, "Conquest and Resistance...", pp. 56-57.

Gibee states.³³ For that matter, in 1880 even, there was a war between the kingdom of Jimmaa and Geeraa³⁴ Therefore, because of all these reasons, the second part of the above-mentioned so-called “agreement” or “oath” did not happen.

In addition, a source states that just before annexation by Mnilik, King Abbaa Jifaar II of Jimmaa was ruling the Shanan Gibee states.³⁵ However, various works written by historians and anthropologists point out that until annexation in 1880s, Ababa Jifaar II and his predecessors were kings of only the state of Jimmaa. While the other four Gibe states had their own monarchs independently. Thus, the claim has been forwarded above is indeed a factual error.³⁶

At the end of 1870s and/or during the beginning of 1880s (just before and/or during the advent of conquest), the following monarchs ruled the various Shanan Gibee Oromo kingdoms. According to Guluma, in Geeraa the Queen mother *Gennee* Guumayittii (Dagooyyittii or Artittii) who came to power as a regent to her child ruled the kingdom from ca. 1870 to 1887. As it has already indicated, Gommaa was practically ruled by queen mother of Abbaa Booqaa who was a young prince that assumed power in about 1878. Because of the queen mother’s unpopularity among the members of the council of state (“*qophoo*”), both the young king Abbaa Booqaa and his mother were deposed from power and replaced by Abbaa Duulaa Abbaa Qiriphee in about 1882. In Limmuu- Innaariyaa after the death of the famous Abbaa Bogiboo I (Ibsaa) in 1861 the kingdom was ruled by Abbaa Bulguu (or Abbaa Gommol II) from 1861 to 1882, and by Abbaa Bogiboo II from about 1882 to 1886. In Jimmaa starting from about 1878, Abbaa Jifaar II was ruling the kingdom. In Guumaa, Abbaa Joobir was the monarch of the kingdom from about 1879 until 1881.³⁷ Guluma states:

By the late 1870s, [the monarchs of the Shanan Gibee kingdoms] already knew the plans of the two Christian monarchs to invade the region, but

³³ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 197; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 144-145.

³⁴ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 144.

³⁵ See Abbaa Duulaa Gammadaa, *Qabsoon Uummata Oromoo Eessaa Ka’ee Garamitti* (‘A Struggle of the Oromo People from Where to Where?’) Afaan Oromoo version (Finfinnee, 1996 EC), pp. 20-21; Abbaa Duulaa Gammadaa, *Ya Oromo Hzb Tgl kayat Wadet?* (‘A Struggle of the Oromo People from Where to Where?’) Amharic version (Finfinnee/Addis Ababa, 1996 EC), p. 20; Guluma Gameda, *The Struggle of the Oromo People: from Where to Where?* English version (2005), p. 20.

³⁶ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 93-112, 153-161 and 196-200; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 67-80, 140-145; Trimmingham, pp. 199-205; Ketebo, pp. 34-35; Mekura, pp. 338-346; Bahru, *A History of Modern Ethiopia*, pp. 18-19, 61. See also this paper chapter 2 part 3.

³⁷ See Guluma, “Conquest and Resistance...,” pp. 55-57 and Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 141-145.

were ill-prepared to meet the challenges. Besides social crisis caused by the pandemic of the late 1870s, almost all of them lacked strong and experienced leadership. Ironically, as internal competition over the control of fertile agricultural lands, local markets, trade and trade routes increased, the leadership quality of the kingdoms declined.³⁸

Both Takla Hāymānto of Gojjam and Mnilik of Shawa wanted to control the Gibe region. It was the former that first sent his army to the region in (February/ March) 1881 following his coronation by Emperor Yohanns IV (r.1872-1889) of Ethiopia as the “King of Gojjam and Kafa” in the same year. Because, Takla Hāymānot realized “his title to Kafa was empty unless he conquered the Gibe region”.³⁹ It is said that Moradaa of Leeqaa Naqamtee dispatched message to the monarchs of Shanan Gibe states especially to Abbaa Joobir of Guumaa warning them “it would be better to pay tribute because the Oromo could not match the Gojame rifles, still almost unknown in the Oromo lands.”⁴⁰ As it has already been mentioned, though the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms had a pact of mutual military alliance of defense against any invading force they failed to stand together against the army of Gojjam and became tributary one after the other chiefly due to the absence of common trust among themselves.⁴¹

Among the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states, it was the king of Guumaa showed the strongest challenge to the army of *Nigus* Takla Hāymānot of Gojjam led by Daraso in 1881.⁴² According to my informants when the news of the submission of Abbaa Jifaar II of Jimmaa to *Nigus* Takla Hāymānot was heard at the court of Guumaa, Abbaa Diggaa a brother of Abbaa Joobir and the commander of the army of Guumaa threatened* the court of Jimmaa. He vowed that when they returned from the battle against the army of Gojjam with victory they would rule the kingdom of Jimmaa as tributary state. It is said that the reply to the threat of Abbaa Diggaa from the court of Abbaa Jifaar II was that paying tribute to in-law (“*soddaa*”) would not be

³⁸ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 141. Bahru states that here the name Kaffa “had the general connotation of south-west” Ethiopia (Bahru, *A History of Modern Ethiopia*, p. 62).

³⁹ Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 140-141. See also Bahru, *A History of Modern Ethiopia*, pp. 61-62; Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” pp. 134-135.

⁴⁰ Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” p. 134.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, pp. 133-134; Ketebo, p. 31.

⁴² Guluma, “Conquest and Resistance...,” P. 57; Ketebo, p. 31; Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” pp. 134-135.

* For various versions of the story, see Deressa Bayisa, p. 43 and Gaalii, pp. 276-277.

worse than paying tribute to Takla Hayāmānot. However, it was emphasized that first, the in-law must safely return from the battle that he had chosen to engage in.⁴³ As stated by Guluma:

... Even after he learned Jimma’s submission, Abbaa Digga urged his brother to mobilize Guma’s army to block Ras Darassu’s advance to the west. Unfortunately, poorly armed and lacking support from its neighbors, Guma too failed to stop the tide of conquest. After a fierce battle at Bakkee Ganji, Guma was defeated; Abba Jobir and Abba Digga were killed in the battle and the kingdom was briefly occupied by Tekle Haimanot’s army. Similarly, the other Gibe states put up uncoordinated resistance before they were defeated by the Gojam and Shewan army.⁴⁴

Fig.9. A recent portrait of Abbaa Joobir Abbaa Duulaa of the kingdom of Guumaa.



Source: from the gallery of Artist Ibsaa Filee. See also Anteneh, p. 17.

⁴³ Informants: Mahammed-Kebir, Abbaa Foggii and Abbaa Cabsaa.

⁴⁴ Guluma, “Conquest and Resistance...,” P. 57.

While Deresu was in Guumaa it is reported that he destroyed the land and pillaged the country.⁴⁵ In relation to this, a source claims that the place name what it called Agāyyahu came from the Amharic word “I burned it to ash.”⁴⁶ However, my informants maintain that the real name of this place was not Agāyyahu but Agayyoo.⁴⁷ Indeed, Agayyoo was a name of an Oromo clan. For instance, a tradition mentions that Agayyoo was a name of one of sub-branches among the Siibuu of Maccaa Oromo.⁴⁸

Takla Hāymānot’s army did last in the Gibe region only for about one year. Mnilik who felt unease by Takla Hāymānot’s control of the region sent his force there under the command of Goobanaa Daaccee. Mnilik’s army kicked out Takla Hāymānot’s force from the region and replaced it following the former’s military victory over the latter at the Battle of Embobo in June 1882. The main reason, for the bitter conflict of the two forces here was economic.⁴⁹ In the words of Bahru Zawde:

... The urge to control the source of the lucrative long distance trade was probably the most important. It was this economic factor that ultimately pitted Shawa against Gojjam in the Gibe region. Their competitive drives to control south-western Ethiopia, and thereby to direct as much trade as possible to their respective regions, culminated in the battle of Embabo (6 June 1882) in present-day north-eastern Wallaga.⁵⁰

Mnilik followed two policies during the various campaigns of conquest in the territories his force incorporated. When rulers and/or kingdoms submitted peacefully without resistance for example Abbaa Jifaar II of Jimma, Morodaa of Naqamtee etc., Mnilik allowed them internal autonomy; however when they resisted his expansion his reaction was harsh one.⁵¹ Like the different kingdoms and peoples annexed by Mnilik’s administration, we witnessed these two cases among the Shanan Gibe Oromo states.⁵² As it has already been indicated, among the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states Abbaa Jifaar II fitted to the first group. Since he submitted peacefully to

⁴⁵ Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” p. 134.

⁴⁶ Temesgen, p. 64.

⁴⁷ Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Sabit, Ahmad and others.

⁴⁸ Anonymous, “Genealogy of the Maccaa (Boorana),” in *Documents for Wallaga History (1880s-1920s EC)* eds. Alessandro Triulzi and Tesema Ta’a, Vol. I, Amharic Texts (Addis Ababa, 1996 EC), pp. 289-290.

⁴⁹ See Bahru, *A Modern History of Ethiopia*, pp. 60-62; Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” pp. 134-140; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society ..,” pp. 138, 141 and 145 among many others.

⁵⁰ Bahru, *A Modern History of Ethiopia*, p. 60.

⁵¹ Trimmingham, pp. 128-129; Bahru, *A History of Modern Ethiopia*, p. 61; Tesema, “The Political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia...,” p. 159.

⁵² Ketebo, pp. v, 30-34-35; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 200; Guluma, “Conquest and Resistance...,” pp. 56 -59; Trimmingham, pp. 200-2004; Lewis, p. 45.

Mnilik, Abbaa Jifaar II was left in power with internal autonomy for his kingdom.⁵³ Whereas, the neighboring Oromo kingdoms and/or peoples can be grouped more or less into the second trend for most of their rulers were not partially willing to submit fully in the way the Shawan court desired. Thus, these monarchs were deposed from their power and their kingdoms were come under the direct rule of Mnilik's administration.⁵⁴

According to Guluma Gemed, unlike Jimmaa, starting from 1882 for a few decades Mnilik's authority over the four Gibe kingdoms could be categorized into two stages. The first stage, between 1882 and 1886, comprised gathering of tribute not altering the prevailing social and political system. Tribute was enforced; however, Mnilik's military men were not dispatched to gather it. Taxation still was controlled by native rulers that sent the necessary quantity to *Rās Gobanaa* viceroy of Mnilik or presented without any intervention to the imperial palace at Intotto. Members of imperial army were not stationed in the region until 1886 during which 'indirect' authority was replaced by direct rule. But, there was plundering by imperial soldiers. Such looting instigated opposition that lasted even following some of the Oromo kings had showed their willingness to send tribute or had been deposed from their position.⁵⁵

Presumably, to neutralize this rebellion and guarantee the continuous safe movement of resources to imperial palace, Mnilik started the second stage of his administration in 1886. Confronted with prevalent opposition and perhaps distrusting *Ras* Goobanaa who was Mnilik's deputy in the region and whose influence had increased enormously following his conquest of the Maccaaland for the Shawan king, Mnilik partitioned the Gibe region and the whole recently conquered Maccaalands into various administrative divisions and assigned representatives that were more reliable to every such unit. Goobanaa was permitted to keep merely a minor section of the area he had conquered and ruled as imperial deputy. With the exception of Jimmaa, the four Oromo monarchies in the Gibe region were organized into three administrative unities such as Limmuu, Gommaa-Geeraa and Guumaa. *Dajjāzmāch* Walda Girogis a cousin of Mnilik appointed to administer Limmuu. *Dajjāzmāch* Bashāh Abboyyee another cousin of Mnilik was

⁵³ Trimmingham, pp. 28-29; Lewis, p 45; Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society....," pp. 145-146, 152-154.

⁵⁴ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 200; Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society....," pp. 145-148, 152-153.

⁵⁵ Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society....," pp. 147-148.

assigned to Gommaa-Geeraa. *Dajjāzmāch* Tasammā* Nādaw, offspring of Mnilik's teacher was given Guumaa. Meanwhile the previous monarchs of the four Oromo kingdoms in the Gibe region were imprisoned.⁵⁶

Contrary to most other neighboring Oromo and non-Oromo monarchs, why Abbaa Jifaar II of Jimmaa submitted peacefully to Mnilik's administration? For this Mekuria Bulcha's work, list most of the reasons. Abbaa Jifaar II had good information on military capability of Mnilik from Muslim refugees of Wollo he hosted, and the Shawan camping of Hadiya. Also, Muslim religious clerics advised the young king of Jimmaa not to fight Mnilik rather submit to him. Moreover, Queen Mother *Gennee* Guumayittii convinced her son to keep away from confrontation with Mnilik and agree to his authority. In addition, "Abba Jifar followed the example set by Morodaa Bakare or was in consultation with him".⁵⁷ Furthermore, Mnilik's promise of internal autonomy and "fair treatment" for those who would submit peacefully⁵⁸ might have its own motivating effect on him and his cabinets. Herbert Lewis has stated that Abbaa Jifaar II also advised the monarchs of the neighboring Oromo states not to fight Mnilik and rather surrender peacefully like what he had done. "But they refused and consequently suffered the devastation of their lands and the loss of their sovereignty."⁵⁹

Though we do not have access to the first written document of the agreement between Mnilik and Jifaar II, it is believed that the following were the main points of it. King Abbaa Jifaar II of Jimmaa agreed, first to acknowledge Mnilik as his boss; second, to pay yearly tribute and third, to provide support and when needed march with soldiers of Mnilik for war of conquest outside of Jimmaa. Mnilik on his side agreed, first to observe the complete local autonomy of the state of Jimmaa while Abbaa Jifaar II to be left in his throne; second, to avoid the settlement of imperial soldiers in Jimmaa and third, to refrain from establishing churches in Jimmaa.⁶⁰ Moreover, it is claimed that due to this agreement Abbaa Jifaar II gave up to Mnilik the right to wage war

**Dajjāzmāach* (subsequently *Rās*) Tasammā Nādaw was assigned as viceroy over Guumaa and the bordering area of Iluabbaaboor in 1886 (Mekuria, p. 344).

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 148-149.

⁵⁷ Mekuria, pp. 339-340.

⁵⁸ See Trimmingham, p. 128.

⁵⁹ Lewis, p. 45.

⁶⁰ Ketebo, pp. 32-33. See also Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 145-146; Trimmingham, pp. 129, 203; Lewis, p. 45.

independently and establish relation with citizens, representatives and rulers of foreign countries on his own (without authorization from somewhere else).⁶¹

Fig.10. Abbaa Jifiaar Abbaa Gommol (r. ca. 1878-1932) of the kingdom of Jimmaaa



Source: a photo from Jimmaa Museum. See also Ketebo, p. 97.

In relation to Abbaa Jifaar II's constant yearly tribute paid to Mnilik a work has misquoted Guluma's paper to justify one of its misconceptions on part of an issue as follow:

... Abba Jifar II was allowed to rule his kingdom in return for loyalty and *regulate* the regular payment of fixed annual tributes *from* the rest of Gibe states or monarchies*

⁶¹ See Ketebo, p. 56.

*The bolded-italicized parts of the quotation are not stated in the original source from which the writer cited; rather it is unjustified insertion. See Guluma, "The Rise of Coffee...", p. 53 for comparison.

*who remained resistant to the contemporary ideological transformation and subsequently crumbled forcefully.*⁶² (Bolded italic added for emphasis.)

As it has already been indicated clearly unlike half of the aforementioned claim, one of the terms of agreement between Mnilik and Abbaa Jifaar II was the latter's payment of fixed yearly tribute ('*qurt gibir*') collected only from the kingdom of Jimmaa but not from the neighboring Oromo states of the Gibe region.⁶³

It seems this and other similar misinterpretations of the work have mainly or at least partially emerged from the following statement that the author of the material has read in one of Guluma's papers, which states, "in 1887, Abba Jifar was given custody of the deposed Oromo kings of Limmu, Gera, and Gomma while Menelik campaigned in Gondar."⁶⁴ However, unlike Guluma's work the author of the other material claims, "in 1887, due to his established loyalty, Abba Jifar II was given custody of the *territories*" where the removed monarchs of the kingdoms of Gommaa, Limmuu-Innaariyaa and Geeraa had ruled. He also says, "the secret of the decline for the political autonomy of Gomma was taken off by Basha Aboye in 1886 and given as custody to Abba Jifar II in 1887" till the end* of his reign.⁶⁵

Indeed, Jules Borelli who has been quoted in Guluma's work was in the Gibe region between 1887 and 1888. He has reported what the governor of Limmuu-Innaariyaa *Dajjāzmāch* Walda Giyorgis was believed to say when the latter was about to leave for urgent imperial call handing over the deposed monarchs of most neighboring Oromo states of the Gibe region to Abbaa Jifaar II as captives in December 1887:

Menelik summons the chiefs and warriors near to him, for some grave events have happened to Abyssinia. I must leave, but I will return soon; nothing will be changed here. In the meantime, in the name [of] the king, I charge you to keep the kings of Limmu, and Gomma, the queen of Gera and her son imprisoned and under chains;

⁶² See Gemechu, p. 120

⁶³ Ketebo, p. 333, 37-39, 41, 45-47, Lewis, pp. 45; Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 145-146 and 153-154; Guluma, "The Rise of Coffee..." p. 53 and others.

⁶⁴ See Guluma, "The Rise of Coffee..." p. 53 and also for comparison Gemechu, p. 120.

*Though it is out of the scope of the period of the study, it is related for this and the following extracts have showed the level of misinterpretations and distortions manifested in the work has been cited. The writer claims that since Gommaa was in Abbaa Jifaar II's custody, its people (like the inhabitants of the kingdom of Jimmaa) spared from the mistreatment of imperial administration as long as the king of Jimmaa was alive (see Gemechu, p. 120) both of which were not true. Also, the author of the paper applies irrelevant analysis, explanation and parallel to Gommaa from Guluma's thesis that argues the rise of the importance of coffee was responsible for ending the internal autonomy of the kingdom of Jimmaa in 1932 (for comparison see both Gemechu, pp. 106, 120 and Guluma, "The Rise of Coffee..." pp. 52, 62-68).

⁶⁵ See Gemechu, p. 120.

with respect to the son of the king of Limmu, I will take him away. Look after all these countries; by your power, prevent revolt, and if it breaks out, repress it.⁶⁶

From this we can understand that first *Dajjāzmāch* Walda Giyorgis expressed that once his mission was over he would return immediately. In fact, this is what he did. According to Guluma, Walda Giyorgis Abboye came back to Limmuu-Innaariyaa with additional (modern weapon armed) troops in the last months of 1889 or the beginning of 1890.⁶⁷ Limmuu-Innaariyaa became the power base of Walda Giyorgis for the following decades.⁶⁸ Secondly, Walda Giyorgis has pointed out that the *status quo* would not be changed when he was absent from the region. Guluma has stated that Gommaa and the territories of most of the neighboring Oromo kingdoms of the Gibe region remained in the hands of loyal appointees of the Shawan imperial court* while Abbaa Jifaar II continued to rule the kingdom of Jimmaa with internal autonomy.⁶⁹

Due to rebellion in Gommaa in 1887-1888 its governor *Dajjāzmāch* Bashāh Abboye was dismissed and replaced by *Dajjāzmāch* Damissaw Makonnin another loyal commander who administered Gommaa for the following 12 years. This resistance of the people of Gommaa also altered the administrative position of the territory of the kingdom to *mād bet*⁷⁰ for the tribute collected from such lands completely directed to the imperial palace. Gommaa and other so called *mād bet* provinces usually administered by governors accountable directly to Mnilik's palace.⁷¹ As far as the deposed monarchs who were transferred to Abbaa Jifaar II as prisoners were concerned, when Walda Giyorgis returned back to the region, it appears they were not retransferred to this influential Shawan general. Sources indicate that, at least half or the majority of these deposed monarchs spent most or all of the rest of their lives in exile in Jimmaa as detainees.⁷²

⁶⁶ Cited in Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 153.

⁶⁷ See Guluma, "Conquest and Resistance...", p. 59.

⁶⁸ See Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 151.

* Jafer states that the Shawan imperial court ruled Geeraa through Abbaa Jifaar II from 1920s to 1932 (see Jafer, p. 37). In spite of out of the time scope of this study, we can conclude from the statement at least since its conquest in 1887 until 1920s Geeraa was directly governed by imperial administration.

⁶⁹ See *Ibid*, pp. 146-154, 157-159 and 180.

⁷⁰ See *Ibid*, pp. 151-153. See also Guluma, "Conquest and Resistance...", pp. 58-59.

⁷¹ See Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 180 and 301.

⁷² See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 200; Trimmingham, p. 202; Mekuria, p. 341 and others. Informants: Abbaa Nagaa, Ferid.

Abbaa Jifaar II participated in various Mnilik's army campaigns of conquest and "pacification" of the surrounding non-Oromo and Oromo kingdoms.⁷³ My informants claim Abbaa Jifaar II was also requested to participate in military campaign for the re-conquest or "pacification" of Guumaa. It is said that he replied, since Guumaa was in-law ("soddaa"), it was difficult for him to take part in that military campaign.⁷⁴ As it has already been mentioned, Abbaa Jifaar II's mother was the daughter of King Abbaa Duulaa (r. ca. 1840-1879) of Guumaa.⁷⁵

Sources maintain that Abbaa Jifaar II through peaceful submission spared his kingdom from sever impacts of conquest.⁷⁶ Guluma states:

... Abbaa Jifar's peaceful submission helped Jimma to escape harsh treatment at the hands of the imperial army. While the people in the Gibe region and of course the whole of southern Ethiopia languished under the imperial rule, those in Jimma enjoyed a relatively prosperous life.⁷⁷

On the other hand, following submission of Abbaa Jifaar II to Mnilik in 1882 tax on the people of the kingdom grew to compensate the tribute sent to the imperial court.⁷⁸ Also it is stated conquest intensified slave trade in the kingdom of Jimmaa until it was later banned by Mnilik. The relation of the two was that slave trafficking was the main source for Abbaa Jifaar II to pay annual tribute for internal autonomy of his kingdom.⁷⁹

Mostly, Abbaa Jifaar II had amicable relation with Mnilik. His peaceful submission laid a fertile ground for Abbaa Jifaar II to cultivate a good and close contact with Mnilik.⁸⁰ Abbaa Jifaar II was one of the guests who attended the wedding ceremony of Mnilik and gave presents for both partners when the latter got married Taitu at Madhani-Alam Church in Ankobar in 1883.⁸¹ Sources point out that apart from an incident of Abbaa Jifaar II's detention* by Mnilik (for about

⁷³ Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 151; Ketebo, pp. 33, 39-40, 48-49.

⁷⁴ Informants: Abbaa Foggii, *Sheik* Tahir.

⁷⁵ See this paper, chapter 4 section 4.2.2.

⁷⁶ Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 145-146, 152-154; Ketebo, pp. viii, 44, 102; Lewis, pp. 45-46; Mekuria, pp. 340-341.

⁷⁷ Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 154.

⁷⁸ Ketebo, pp. 41-44; see also Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 154.

⁷⁹ See Ketebo, pp. 94-95; Tekalign, "The Slave Trade in the Economy of Jimma," p. 309.

⁸⁰ Trimmingham, p. 203; Ketebo, pp. 33-34, 37, 48-49, 56-57.

⁸¹ Harold G. Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menelik II Ethiopia: 1844-1913* (Oxford, 1975), p. 72.

*It is stated that Abbaa Jifaar II was imprisoned by Mnilik on allegation of promoting the conversion of the needy Christians to Islam by attracting them to Jimmaa promising good opportunity, and helping Hassan Injamo of Qabena during and after his uprising. It is also claimed that Abbaa Jifaar II was accused of communicating with agents of and governors/rulers in other foreign countries without the consent of Mnilik, collaborating with his rebellious brother who opposed paying annual tribute to the Shawan court etc. (see Guluma, "The Rise of Coffee...", pp. 53-55; Ketebo, pp. 56-57).

half-year or a year) in Addis Ababa in around 1889 and other lesser or short-lived fall-out, generally the famous last king of Jimmaa remained faithful to his boss.⁸² In fact, unlike the rest of the Oromo monarchs of the Gibe valley, politically Abbaa Jifaar II came out stronger from the conquest in 1880s and its effects, and got the trust of Mnilik.⁸³

As it has already been indicated Abbaa Jifaar II advised the monarchs of the bordering Oromo kingdoms of the Gibe region not to confront Mnilik's force militarily but submit without resistance.⁸⁴ Based on the information of some sources we understand that this advice of Abbaa Jifaar II had influence on the then king of Gommaa, Abbaa Duulaa Abbaa Qiriphee.⁸⁵ Guluma's work indicates that the coming to power of Abbaa Duulaa in Gommaa pleased the fighters and the nobility at the beginning for he himself was a warrior, and his father was experienced longtime advisor to successive monarchs of the kingdom. According to Guluma, however, after a few years while the Shawan force encroached the kingdom of Gommaa, Abbaa Duulaa clashed with members of the state council that thus denied him their backing; rather than to continue fighting the Shawan force, Abbaa Duulaa sided with them in 1886 at the time of the last phase of the annexation of Gommaa.⁸⁶

Guluma also comments, "It is not clear whether Abbaa Dulaa voluntarily joined the Shewan army or detained by Menilek in 1886 when he went to Entoto to pay tribute. Henry Audon, French explorer, met Abba Dula and his party at Entoto in 1886."⁸⁷ It seems this king of Gommaa had been captured by Mnilik's force⁸⁸ because in 1887 Abbaa Duulaa was one of the prisoners who were in the custody of the imperial jurisdiction.⁸⁹

Regarding this, the following are possible explanations. The first view is that as Guluma has implicitly suspected King Mnilik's force might have put Abbaa Duulaa under custody when the

⁸² Ketebo, pp. 56-57; Guluma, "The Rise of Coffee...", pp. 53-55. See also Trimingham, p. 203.

⁸³ Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society ...," pp. 152-153.

⁸⁴ Lewis, p. 45.

⁸⁵ See Mekuria, p. 342; Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, p. 400. Informants: Abbaa Sadii, *Sheik* Nasir. Here, information from elders is more specific and relevant to the issue than the cited works of Mekuria and Alamaayyoo.

⁸⁶ See Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 142 and Guluma, "Conquest and Resistance...", pp. 55-56.

⁸⁷ Guluma, "Conquest and Resistance...", p. 60.

⁸⁸ See *Ibid*; Mekuria, p. 342.

⁸⁹ See Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", p. 153; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p. 200; Mekuria, p. 342.

latter travelled to Intotto Palace for paying tribute in 1886.⁹⁰ The second explanation, which is to some extent similar to this view, is that it appears the Shawan army captured and imprisoned Abbaa Duulaa while he ran away from enraged warriors of Gommaa following disagreement with them. The researcher have been told by his informants that once the difference was emerged between the two, a group of infuriated warriors came to Abbaa Duulaa's court, attempted to capture him and take away the gold ring (*amartii*) the symbol of kingship from him. However, Abbaa Duulaa escaped through backyard of the royal residence escorted by a few of his followers and went outside of Gommaa.⁹¹ It seems Abbaa Duulaa was imprisoned while he was outside of Gommaa or in the territory controlled by Mnilik's army.⁹²

Fig.11. Abbaa Duulaa Abbaa Qiriphee (r. ca 1882/3-1886) of the kingdom of Gommaa with his entourage.



Source: Audon Henry, "Voyage au Choa (Abyssinie Mèridionale)," *Le Tour de Monde*, 58 (1889)

⁹⁰ See Guluma, "Conquest and Resistance...", p. 60.

⁹¹ Informants: Abbaa Sadii, *Sheik Nasir*.

⁹² See Mekuria, p. 342; Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, p. 400.

Sources indicate that in the absence of Abbaa Duulaa a new leader of resistance emerged. The warriors of Gommaa led by a man called Abbaa Booraa who returned from exile in Kaffa showed fierce opposition to Mnilik's army headed by Bashāh Abboye. In about 1886/1887, the two forces fought at the Battle of Bakkee/Malkaa Tijjee, which was very close to the main settlement area of Aggaaroo. Both camps suffered a lot. It is said that in this confrontation Abbaa Booraa the leader of Gommaa's force died while more soldiers of *Dajjāzmāch* Bashāh lost their lives than that of Gommaa. Due to this set back, *Dajjāzmāch* Bashāh withdrew to Limmuu-Innaariyaa. However, after sometime he came back to Gommaa reinforced with additional troops. In the second encounter, *Dajjāzmāch* Bashāh vanquished the small force of Gommaa and set up a seat of his administration at Sayyoo by giving to it a new name, Mannāgashā.⁹³

As far as some main impacts of annexation of the Oromo kingdoms of the Gibe region in 1880s on their monarchs were concerned, we can sum up the following points briefly. As it has already been mentioned, due to his peaceful submission to Mnilik of Shawa, Abbaa Jifaar II continued to rule the kingdom of Jimmaa as *mootii* with autonomy and growing influence.⁹⁴ On the other hand, the monarchs of the neighboring Oromo kingdoms in the Gibe valley were deposed from their power and their kingdoms were subjected to imperial administrative adjustment in which Limmuu-Innaariyaa, Gommaa, Geeraa and Guumaa were organized into three administrative units and assigned to more loyal Shawan representatives.⁹⁵ Besides these, after the conquest the palace of Abbaa Jifaar II continued to flourish⁹⁶ while the palaces of the other contemporary monarchs of the neighboring Oromo kingdoms in the Gibe valley were ruined.⁹⁷

Also, as it has previously been mentioned, the deposed monarchs of the Gibe Oromo kingdoms were sent to prison.⁹⁸ To cite one example, Queen Mother Dagoyyittii (Artittii or Guumayittii) of Geeraa who was the regent of her son Abbaa Raagoo II attempted to stop the Shawan army heading to Geeraa. In 1887 after a decisive battle, the army of Geeraa was suffered a defeat by

⁹³ See Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 149-150; Guluma, "Conquest and Resistance...", p. 58; Mekuria, p. 342. See also Alamaayyoo, *Seenaa Oromoo...*, p. 400.

⁹⁴ See Trimmingham, pp. 128-129; Lewis, pp. 45-46; Ketebo, pp. v, viii, 23-34; Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 145-149 and 153; Mekuria, pp. 340-341 and others.

⁹⁵ See Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 145-149 and 153.

⁹⁶ See Ketebo, pp. 65-67; Lewis, pp. 67-69-72.; Mekuria, p. 340.

⁹⁷ See Gaalii, pp. 172-173, 207-209; Ketebo, pp. 65. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, *Sheik* Hasan and Abbaa Cabsaa.

⁹⁸ See Guluma, "Land, Agriculture and Society...", pp. 149 and 153; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 200. Informants: Abbaa Nagaa, Abbaa Tamam.

more organized and armed force of Mnilik led by *Dajjāzmāch* Bashāh Abboye. Thus, the queen mother with her son Abbaa Raagoo II* was captured and imprisoned in Jimmaa where it was claimed that they passed away later on.⁹⁹ According to my informants, Abbaa Jifaar II hosted this queen of Geeraa during her stays in jail in Jimmaa in one of Islamic holidays. It is said that *Gennee* Artittii was enraged at Abbaa Jifaar II for she was not seated in a “good” chair that fit to her status. Realizing her anger, the host Abbaa Jifaar II ordered his men to replace the seat by a “better” one after which *Geennee* Guumayittii/ Artittii calmed down.¹⁰⁰

Moreover, conquest harmed the majority monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states economically. Sources indicate that before 1880s monarchs and their men possessed most of the lands in these Oromo kingdoms.¹⁰¹ However, unlike Abbaa Jifaar II after annexation, the rulers of the other neighbouring Gibe states lost a large extent or most of their lands¹⁰² and even Queen Artittii/ Guumayittii/ Dagooyittii of Geeraa became economically dependent. Phawlos Gnogno in his work *Dāgmāwi Atse Mnilik* (‘Emperor Mnilik II’) has stated:

[ኔኔ ጉሙይቲ] ትመራው የነበረው ኔራም በ1879 ዓ.ም.** [እንደ ኢትዮጵያ አቆጣጠር] በምኒልክ ሠራዊት ተያዘ። ...ምኒልክ ጥር 4 ቀን 1899 [እንደ ኢትዮጵያ አቆጣጠር] በፃፉት ደብዳቤ ‘...የሰደድሽልኝ መተያያ አንድ ድርብ፣ አንድ ኩታ ደርሶኛል። እጅግ ማለፍ ያለው እግዚአብሔር ይስጥልኝ። እማርስበት በሬ ያልሸውንም ከአባ ጅፋር ዘንድ አስር በሬ ዳርጌሽለሁ’ ብለዋል።¹⁰³

A rough translation of this quote might be:

... Mnilik’s army occupied Geeraa that was ruled by *Gennee* Guumayittii in 1879 [EC].... Mnilik in his letter wrote on Tir 4, 1899 [EC] said, ‘The presents you sent, one *gābi* [“a kind of shawl like garment made of a thick layer of cotton cloth”] and one

*It is also said that following this incident Abbaa Raagoo II’s son Abbaa Magaal was also sent into exile (see McCann, p. 168), possibly to the palace of Kumsaa Morodaa in Naqamtee (see Ibsa, p. 33).

⁹⁹ See Jafer, pp. 30 and 33; McCann, p. 168; Trimmingham, p. 202; Ibsa, p. 32. Informants: Ferid, Abbaa Nagaa.

¹⁰⁰ Informants: Abbaa Nagaa Abbaa, Abbaa Tamam.

¹⁰¹ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp 121-122. Informants: Abbaa Foggii, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa and others.

¹⁰² See Lewis, pp. 45-46. See also Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...” p. 297. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Ferid, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Garoo.

**In Ethiopian calendar Tir 4, 1899 was 12 January 1907 of Gregorian calendar. This was out of the period covered by the thesis. Nevertheless, what has been quoted in the work of Phāwlos Gnogno as the message of a letter from Mnilik to *Gennee* Guumayittii, in addition to its various other implications, helps us understand at least the following. First, *Gennee* Guumayittii was alive on 12 January 1907. Secondly, the queen mother of Geeraa was reduced from a wealthy monarch of a kingdom to economically dependent exile who even demanded a help to get oxen for tilling. This personal economic problem of *Gennee* Guumayittii was not created over night rather the processes had started with the conquest of the kingdom of Geeraa by Mnilik’s army before the close of 1880s.

¹⁰³ See Phāwlos, pp. 35-36.

kutā [“toga or white cotton loose garment”], were delivered to me. They are very good. Thank you. As to your request of oxen for tilling, I gave you ten oxen from Abbaa Jifaar’.

In addition, conquest had impacts on language of correspondence of the rulers in the region. As it has been mentioned, before 1880s Afaan Oromoo and Arabic were the languages of correspondence for the kings of the Shanan Gibee states.¹⁰⁴ However, since the 1880s Amharic started to be used as a medium of correspondence between the rulers of the region, especially of the palace of the kingdom of Jimmaa and the Shawan imperial court.¹⁰⁵ Here also we see change and continuity.

Furthermore, conquest affected the intensity of interactions and contacts between the two sides. In 1880s, willingly or unwillingly a growing interaction or communication was formed between Abbaa Jifaar II and the other deposed monarchs of the Shanan Gibee states on one hand and Mnilik and his officials on the other hand.¹⁰⁶ According to my informants, there had not been such extend of contact and close interaction between the two sides before 1880s.¹⁰⁷ Though it had a boss and subordinate form, this interaction began to increase significantly in 1880s¹⁰⁸ Sources indicate that there were various degree of contacts and interactions including physical one between the monarchs of the Shanan Gibee states especially of Abbaa Jifaar II on one side and Mnilik’s officials or Mnilik himself on the other side during this time.¹⁰⁹ For instance, since 1880s a number of letters were sent from Mnilik or his officials to Abbaa Jifaar II (and possibly from the latter to the former),¹¹⁰ and this king of Jimmaa made trips frequently and attended to Mnilik’s court at Intotto.¹¹¹ It is stated, “each year in November or December, Abba Jifar went to Addis Ababa to deliver his tribute to Menelik in person.”¹¹²

¹⁰⁴ Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 106,177. Informants: Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, *Sheik* Hassan, Abbaa Sadii and Abdulkirim.

¹⁰⁵ See Ketebo, pp. 77, 127-129; see also Phāwlos, pp. 35-36.

¹⁰⁶ See Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 153. Informants: Abbaa Nagaa, Abdulkirim, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa, Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu and others.

¹⁰⁷ Informants: Abbaa Nagaa, *Sheik* Nasir, Ferid and others

¹⁰⁸ See Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, pp. 1, 93, 196 and 198-200; Trimmingham, pp. 199-203; Lewis, pp. 45-46; Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” pp. 145-154

¹⁰⁹ See Guluma, “Land, Agriculture and Society...,” p. 153; Ketebo, p. 77. See also Appendices of this thesis. Informants: Abdulkirim, Abbaa Nagaa, Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa and others.

¹¹⁰ See Ketebo, pp. 127-129. Informants: Abdulkirim, Mahammed Kebir, Abbaa Foggii and others.

¹¹¹ Guluma, “The Rise of Coffee...,” p. 53; Ketebo, pp. 45-46; Marcus, p. 72. Informants: Abbaa Zinaab, Abbaa Foggii, Abbaa Nagaa and others.

¹¹² Guluma, “The Rise of Coffee...,” p. 53.

To conclude this part, the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states were sovereigns since the emergence of the Oromo kingdoms in the region until 1880s. Successive rulers of these states had agreements of military alliances against their common enemies (whether the enemies were from inside or outside). However, such alliances did not work during the conquest of the Gibe region in the 1880s. At the beginning of 1880s, first *Nigus* Takla Hāymānot's army of Gojjam was able to establish authority on territories ruled by monarchs of the Gibe valley for about a year. Then immediately because of the military expansion of Mnilik of Shawa into the Gibe valley and other parts of Maccaalands the army of Takla Hāymānot of Gojjam was kicked out of the region and replaced by the former. As a result of the Shawan army conquest of the Gibe region except Abbaa Jifar II the most famous last *mootii* from the ruling house of Jimmaa and his monarchy that survived up to 1932, four Oromo dynasties together with the kingdoms they had ruled such as Limmuu-Innaariyaa, Gommaa, Guumaa and Geeraa brought to end in 1880s. Indeed, particularly Mnilik's conquest of the Gibe valley had profound consequences on the region and its people in general and most monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states in particular. Due to his peaceful submission, only Abbaa Jifaar II relatively escaped or survived from most political, economic, social and other effects of conquest and even capitalized out of it while the other contemporary monarchs of the neighboring Oromo states of the Gibe region became victims. More or less, the same contrast was also true for the territories and peoples of the Oromo kingdoms of the Gibe valley in line with the fate of the two categories of their monarchs of the time.

Conclusion

The conclusion part of the thesis will indicate that the objective of the study has been met highlighting the main findings in relation to the purpose and questions of the research. It will also point out the significance and the contributions of the work. Moreover, it informs the limitations of this thesis and recommends for future study.

The study shows the various legends on the origin of groups related mainly to various dynasties that ruled the Shanan Gibe states and have attempted to explain them in detail. Indeed, some works have attributed the origin of most of the dynasties of the Shanan Gibe states to non-Oromo elements that had no any connection with expanding pastoralist Oromo groups of the sixteenth century. My thesis underlines that the ancestors of all founding fathers of the five Oromo kingdoms in Gibe valley had been from among Oromo groups who moved from their center in the present southern Ethiopia in the sixteenth century towards the Gibe region and the surrounding areas and settled there as the *daggala saaqii* (pioneers). This research gives additional explanations and evidences to the view that challenges and refutes the above-mentioned contrary claim.

It is believed that the founding fathers of the Maccaa Oromo dynasties in general and that of the Shanan Gibe ruling houses in particular were ether *gadaa* officials such as *abbaa duulaa* and *abbaa bokkuu* or their descendants. My study underscores and comes up with additional evidence that besides *gadaa* officials (like *abbaa duulaa* and *abbaa bokkuu* etc.) or their offspring who set up monarchical states and ruling houses in Jimmaa, Limmuu-Innaariyaa, Guumaa and Geeraa, a *qaalluu* or a descendant of a *qaalluu* establish a kingdom and a dynasty in Gommaa. The work using mainly new evidence from the female nomenclature of the Shanan Gibe Oromo that traditionally calls the women of the group as *qaallittii*, underlines that the ancestors of the ruling house of Gommaa had been *qaalluu* or from a *qaalluu* clan whose origin was the traditional Oromo religion, Waaqeffannaa. The thesis also underlines that many consider the ancestors of the dynasty that ruled the kingdom of Gommaa spiritual or religious; and some even regarded them as *awliya* (Islamic saints).

The work underlines that there had been groups whose leaders involved in power struggle against the founding fathers of some new dynasties. These contending groups were the the Badii

in Jimmaa, the Badii and the Dagooyee in Guumaa and the Sigaroo in Limmuu-Innaariyaa. Moreover, it explains about most of these contending groups in Guumaa and their leaders during or after the emergence of monarchical state there. Besides, the study emphasizes that the five Oromo dynasties that ruled the Shanan Gibe kingdoms from the eighteenth century till conquest in 1880s came from the Adamii in Guumaa, the Awaalini in Gommaa, the Diggoo in Jimmaa, the Sapheeraa in Limmuu-Innaariyaa and the Sayyoo in Geeraa. In addition, this work shows the various sub-branches of most or all of these five groups and come up with additional information on some of them, for instance, on branches of the Diggoo of Jimmaa and the the Sayyoo of Geeraa, and the Sapheeraa of Limmuu-Innaariyaa as a collective group name. Furthermore, it identifies politically the dominant wings within most of these groups.

The dominant view is that before the expansions all the Oromo had been followers of the indigenous religion, Waaqeffannaa. While the bulk of the Oromo were followers of the traditional religion, there were also a small section the Oromo who were exposed to Islamic and Christian influences before their great movement in the sixteenth century. My study emphasize with additional explanation the view that the ancestors of the ruling house of Gommaa had been Muslims when they were in Baalee before the sixteenth century movement that brought the clan with many other Oromo groups to the Gibe region.

The emergence of the Oromo monarchs and kingdoms in the Gibe region brought up a tradition that fit to monarchical bureaucracy and its mentality. The thesis has underlined, explained and analysed the origin, tradition and transformation of names of respect in the Gibe valley in relation to the people in general and that of the monarchs in particular. In addition, as one of its major findings, the study reveals and explains what were called “speech/language of palace” (“*hasaa masaraa*”) a diplomatic and polite way of expression, and “language of bird” (“*afaan simbirroo*”) which was a secret language. Under this group, terms, phrases, sayings and royal customs usually frequented in Shanan Gibe kingdoms were also included. Besides these, the study explains how some of these originated and then disseminated into the mass of the population chiefly because of internal factor.

There was hereditary succession practice among the monarchs of Shanan Gibe states of various dynasties. However, this was not always the case and thus sometimes there were power struggles that were resolved through different mechanisms including bloody conflicts. This thesis indicates

that how the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe Oromo kingdoms or their victorious royal contenders banished real or suspected political opponents by exiling either to mainly the neighboring states or seldom to difficult remote areas of their own kingdoms through a practice known as *dabarsuu*, which literally means to pass to somebody or somewhere. Also, based on oral tradition my study shows how and why Abbaa Raagoo (ca. 1824-1830) the third ruler of the kingdom of Jimmaa was removed from power and replaced by his younger brother Abbaa Jifaar I (ca. 1830-1855).

In 1880s first *Nigus* Takla Hāymānot of Gojjam very briefly and then Mnilik of Shawa were able to extend their authority of various degrees over the monarchs of the five Gibe states through military campaigns. Thus, the Shanan Gibe Oromo states were annexed by Mnilik's administration. While the monarchs of Geeraa, Limmuu-Innaariyaa, Gommaa and Guumaa lost their power, and their kingdoms were put under the direct control of the Shawan administration, only Abbaa Jifaar II of Jimmaa and his kingdom escaped the harsh effects of conquest through peaceful submission to Mnilik of Shawa. In relation to this, this work challenges some historical misconceptions, misinterpretations and distortions appeared on various literary materials while it gives also additional explanations and fresh insights to a number of relevant issues. Moreover, the study has attempted to present additional (but brief) evidences that underscore some of the political, administrative, economic, cultural etc. impacts of conquest mostly by comparing the monarchs of Geeraa, Limmuu-Innaariyaa, Gommaa, Guumaa in one hand with Abbaa Jifaar II of Jimmaa on the other hand.

These are some, not all, of the findings the work. In short, the study comes up with additional or new views, interpretations, explanations, details etc. on some historical phenomena revolved around the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states. It also sometimes challenges or questions a number of relevant misconceptions, misinterpretations, distortions, etc. appeared in various works.

This work is significant. The study is different from the majority works or researchers mainly because it is fully dedicated to the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states and matters relevant to them. In addition, unlike most works this thesis has attempted to identify and partly fill some (not all) gaps of misconceptions, misinterpretations, distortions etc. appeared in various works in relation to these monarchs.

As far as the contributions of the study are concerned, we can say the following. The thesis has added a value in widening the existing historical knowledge on the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe Oromo kingdoms. Also, as it has repeatedly been mentioned, the work has filled parts of various gaps appeared in a number of works of other researchers or authors. Moreover, the research has produced a historical document on the Oromo monarchs of the Gibe valley. In addition, this work will inspire other researchers to address limitations exhibited in my thesis and conduct further studies on the subject.

This research is an aspect of the continuation of unfinished studies. Hence, much works await researchers on the subject. To begin with, my thesis could not use or incorporate enough archival materials on monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states up to 1880s for I fail to access them. Also, the study has tried to utilize some main relevant sources but it does not use all related materials for various reasons. In addition, because of inaccessibility or luck of sources or some other reasons, the research has not given proportional coverage to individual monarchs or dynasties of the five Oromo kingdoms of the region; and the period this study is supposed to cover has not been treated equally. What is more, sources on some lists and many reigns of the monarchs of Shanan Gibe states are not unanimous; and thus such parts of the lists and reigns of these rulers presented in this work are also tentative ones and subjected to change supported by research and/strong evidence. Moreover, oral information and tradition have not been collected, represented and utilized fairly and written sources have not been used equally for all kingdoms and their monarchs. Besides, different aspects of the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states have not been treated evenly in the study. Furthermore, some of the informants interviewed and used in this thesis are highly influenced by recent political, administrative, social, cultural, religious and economic realities of the grater region. On top of these, my work has not used a balanced number of female informant visa vise male counterparts. Last but not least, the researcher might have limited bias on some issues in the paper. Because of these and other gaps of the thesis, weakness of other works and luck of enough study on various parts of the subject, further researches should be conducts on different or all areas of the monarchs of the Shanan Gibe states in general, and lists and reigns of most of these rulers of the five Oromo dynasties in particular.

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1. Archives

- i. The archival materials attached in Appendices of this thesis have been incorporated from Ketebo's work mentioned below under listed books.
- ii. Abbaa Jifaar II's photograph whose picture I have attached in the last chapter of this thesis is found at Jimmaa Museum.

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List of Informants

S. No	Name	Age	Interview		Remark
			Date	Place	
1.	Abbaa Biyyaa Abbaa Bulguu	72	19/2/2016	Aggaaroo	He is a peasant who has a very good knowledge on history and culture of the Oromo of Gommaa
2.	Abbaa Biyyaa <i>Sheik</i> Abubeker	65	10/12/2015	Jimmaa	He is a <i>muazzin</i> (prayer caller) of Abbaa Araboo's mosque at Muujjaa/Jireen in Jimmaa. He had good information on biography of Abbaa Araboo.
3.	Abbaa Biyyaa Kabir	62	27/12/2019	Jimmaa	He is one of the <i>gadaa</i> officials of the council of Odaa Hullee.
4.	Abbaa Cabsaa Abbaa Garoo	67	16/7/2018	Jimmaa	He is a merchant. He has a good knowledge on some part of the history of Shanan Gibee Oromo.
5.	Abbaa Diggaa Abbaa Goduu	91	10/3/2016	Ittisa Guddaa (Maannaa)	He is a farmer and has a good knowledge on a history of the monarchs and kingdom of Jimmaa.
6.	Abbaa Diggaa Abbaa Duulaa	71	27/12/2019	Jimmaa	He was the late Abbaa Gadaa of Odaa Hullee
7.	Abbaa Foggii Abbaa Joobir	85	25/3/2003	Jimmaa	He was the great grandson of Abbaa Jifaar II.
8.	Abbaa Garoo Abbaa Dilbii	86	8/10/2019	Omoo Baqqoo (Gommaa)	He is a farmer. He has very good information on some tradition of the Shanan Gibee Oromo.
9.	Abbaa Jebel Abbaa Bulguu	68	17/10/2011	Jimmaa	He had some knowledge on a history of the ruling houses of Gommaa and Jimmaa.
10.	Abbaa Jebel Abbaa Cabsaa	67	7/3/2016	Jimmaa	He had some information on Oromo tradition in Jimmaa
11.	Abbaa Jebel Abbaa Fiixaa	67	11/7/2021	Jimmaa	He was a distant relative of the founder of the kingdom of Jimmaa. He knows very well some aspects of history of the monarchs of Jimmaa.
12.	Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Duraa	67	17/2/2019	Caallaa	He is a farmer. He had some information on history of the kingdom of Geeraa in general and its ruling house in particular

S. No	Name	Age	Interview		Remark
			Date	Place	
13.	Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Garoo	59	9/5/2019	Jimmaa	He is a member of <i>gadaa</i> council of Odaa Hullee. He is from Saxxammaa (part of historical Guumaa). He has information on some aspects of the monarchs of the kingdom of Guumaa.
14.	Abbaa Jihad Abbaa Maccaa	60	30/9/2016	Jimmaa	He is a descendant of Abbaa Bogiboo I (Ibsaa) of Limmuu-Innaariyaa and a member of <i>gadaa</i> council of Odaa Hullee. He has a very good knowledge on Oromo culture and tradition in general and a history of the kings, state and people of Limmuu-Innaariyaa in particular.
15.	Abbaa Maccaa Abbaa Duraa	76	9/3/2016	Yabbuu	He is a farmer and has good information on history of some monarchs of Geeraa and Jimmaa. He has also a good knowledge on culture of the Oromo people in the region.
16.	Abbaa Madad Sheekootaa	52	11/2/2016	Ciiraa	He is a farmer. He has a very good information on the history of the people and monarchs of the kingdom of Geeraa
17.	<i>Hajii</i> Abbaa Milkii Abbaa Billoo	90	10/3/2016	Ittisa Guddaa (Maannaa)	He is a farmer and has a very good information on history of the monarchs of the kingdom of Jimmaa, and Oromo culture of the region
18.	Abbaa Nagaa Abbaa Mukaa	79	10/3/2016 6/4/2016	Jimmaa	He had immense information on history of monarchs of the Shanan Gibee Oromo in general and that of Limmuu-Innaariyaa in particular.
19.	Abbaa Sadii Abbaa Saambii	70	20/2/2016	Aggaaroo	He is a retired merchant and has a very good knowledge on a history of the kingdom of Gommaa and its people in general and the relevant monarchs in particular.

S. No	Name	Age	Interview		Remark
			Date	Place	
20.	Abbaa Simal Abbaa Wadaajoo	78	4/3/2021	Jimmaa	He is from Sigmoo town (historical Guumaa). He has good information on history and tradition of Guumaa Oromo.
21.	Abbaa Temam Abbaa Bulguu	64	16/1/2017	Jimmaa	He is farmer and has good information on tradition of the Gibe region in general and the kingdom of Jimmaa in particular.
22.	Abbaa Zinaab Abbaa Waarrii	68	7/3/2016	Jimmaa	He has a very good knowledge on the tradition and history of the Shanan Gibee Oromo kingdoms in general and that of Jimmaa in particular.
23.	Abdulkerim Abbaa Garoo (<i>Obboo</i>)	60	29/12/2013 5/4/2014 6/5/2014 26/10/2014	Jimmaa	He is a great grandson of Abbaa Jifaar II. He is a prominent public historian on the Shanan Gibee Oromo in general and Jimmaa in particular. He has tremendous knowledge on history and tradition of monarchs of the kingdom of Jimmaa and other states in the region.
24.	Adem Hussein (<i>Obboo</i>)	65	2018	Jimmaa	He is a retired merchant and has good information on Oromo tradition and history in general and that of the Arsii in particular.
25.	Ahmed Abbaa Dikoo (<i>Sheik</i>)	90	17/2/2019	Ciiraa	He is a farmer and has good information on monarchs and tradition of Geeraa.
26.	Ahmed Abbaa Foggii (<i>Obboo</i>)	75	12/2/2016	Tobbaa	He is pensioner. He has a good knowledge on tradition of the people and some aspect of history of the kingdom of Guumaa
27.	Ahmed Abbaa Garoo (<i>Obboo</i>)	57	4/3/2021	Jimmaa	He has very good information on tradition and history of the kingdom and the people of Gommaa.
28.	Aman Abdurahman (<i>Obboo</i>)	70	2018	Adaamaa	He had good information on tradition and a history of the Oromo in general and that of Arsii in particular.

S. No	Name	Age	Interview		Remark
			Date	Place	
29.	Asna Abbaa Garoo (Aaddee)	45	19/4/2019	Aggaaroo	She is a granddaughter of King Abbaa Booqaa of the monarchy of Gommaa.
30.	Biyyaattuu Abbaa Garoo (Aaddee)	68	21/4/2019	Jimmaa	She has some information on tradition of the ruling house of Gommaa.
31.	Ferid Abbaa Boor (Obboo)	67	2/7/2018	Ciiraa	He is descendant of the kings of the state of Geeraa. He has immense information of history of the people of Geeraa in general and its ruling house in particular.
32.	Habib Abbaa Simal (Obboo)	60	13/11/2021	Jimmaa	He is a peasant. He has some information on ruling house of Gommaa
33.	Halima Abbaa Simal (Aaddee)	63	13/11/2021	Jimmaa	She has some information on ruling group of the kingdom of Gommaa.
34.	Hasan Nasir (Sheik)	60	17/2/2016	Atnaagoo	He is a descendant of Abbaa Bogiboo I of Limmuu-Innaariyaa and has very good information on a history and tradition of the people and monarchs of Limmuu-Innaariyaa.
35.	Jemal Abbaa Foggii (Obboo)	62	9/2/2016	Jimmaa	He has a wide understanding on some parts of a history and tradition of the Oromo in general and the Gibe valley in particular
36.	Kedijja Ahmed (Aaddee)	60	2018	Jimmaa	She is a housewife and has some information on the tradition of the Arsii Oromo.
37.	Kāsāye Daggife (Ato)	70	11/6/2020	Jimmaa	He is a retired teacher. He has good information on the twentieth century history of the region.
38.	Mahammed Abbaa Joobir (Obboo)	72	10/2/2017	Finfinnee/ Addis Ababa	He is a grandson of King Abbaa Booqaa of Gommaa. He has some information on monarchs of Gommaa.

S. No	Name	Age	Interview		Remark
			Date	Place	
39.	Mahamednur Abbaa Jemal (<i>Haji</i>)	73	22/11/2019	Jimmaa	He is a community leader and has some information on tradition of the Shanan Gibee Oromo in general and that of Jimmaa in particular
40.	Mahammed Amin Abdulwahid (<i>Sheik</i>)	65	1/8/2020	Jimmaa	He is one of the community leaders around the shrine of Abbaa Araboo. He has some information on Abbaa Araboo.
41.	Makonnin Waldayyasus (<i>Ato</i>)	72	2/3/2021	Jimmaa	He is a retired teacher. He has immense knowledge on a history of the Yam people. By the time we interviewed <i>Ato</i> Makonnin, he published two books in relation to a history of the Yam people.
42.	Mangistu Gabra Mikāel (<i>Ato</i>)	70	12/11/2003	Jimmaa	He has very good information on the twentieth century history of the country in general and the region in particular.
43.	Miliyon Tigist (<i>Obboo</i>)	50	21/11/2016	Jimmaa	He is a civil servant and artist. He has a very good information on tradition and history of the Shanan Gibee Oromo.
44.	Nasir Abbaa Maccaa (<i>Sheik</i>)	64	20/2/2016	Aggaaroo	He is a guarding of the shrine of Waaruukkoo. He has very good information on history of the monarchs and people of the kingdom of Gommaa.
45.	Sabit Jemal (<i>Obboo</i>)	52	16/3/2016	Jimmaa	He has worked as civil servant at various institutions and has a good information on some aspects of a history of the kingdom of Guumaa
46.	Shemsiya Abbaa Garoo (<i>Aaddee</i>)	75	11/2/2016	Ciiraa	She has some knowledge on various descent groups of Geeraa.

S. No	Name	Age	Interview		Remark
			Date	Place	
47.	Sherefe Abdulqadir (Aaddee)	55	20/2/2016	Aggaaroo	She has very good information on some Oromo tradition of the kingdoms of Gommaa and Guumaa
48.	Sultan Abbaa Joobir (Obboo)	59	19/2/2016	Aggaaroo	One of the grandsons of King Abbaa Booqaa of the monarchy of Gommaa.
49.	Tahir Abbaa Maccaa (Sheik)	67	16/7/2018	Jimmaa	He is a peasant and has good information on some aspects of a history of Limmuu-Innaariyaa and Jimmaa.
50.	Tijjani Abbaa Oliy (Obboo)	46	10/2/2016	Ciiraa	He is a civil servant and has very good information on some parts of the tradition and history of the kingdom of Geeraa and Gommaa.
51.	Yahya Abbaa Gissaa (Obboo)	45	12/3/2016	Jimmaa	He works at CTO of Maannaa District and has very good information on history of the monarchs and people of the kingdom of Jimmaa, and the tradition of the region. He has also some knowledge on monarchs of Geeraa.
52.	Yisehak Qannoo (Obboo)	48	9/10/2019	Jimmaa	He is a private businessperson. He has a lot of information on tradition of the Oromo of Gommaa and Jimmaa.
53.	Zafar Abbaa Diggaa (Obboo)	42	9/3/2016	Yabbuu	He is a farmer and has good information on some kings of Geeraa and Jimmaa.
54.	Zakir Abbaa Boor (Obboo)	44	20/4/2014	Jimmaa	He works at JZCTO. He has good information on a few monarchs of the kingdom of Jimmaa.

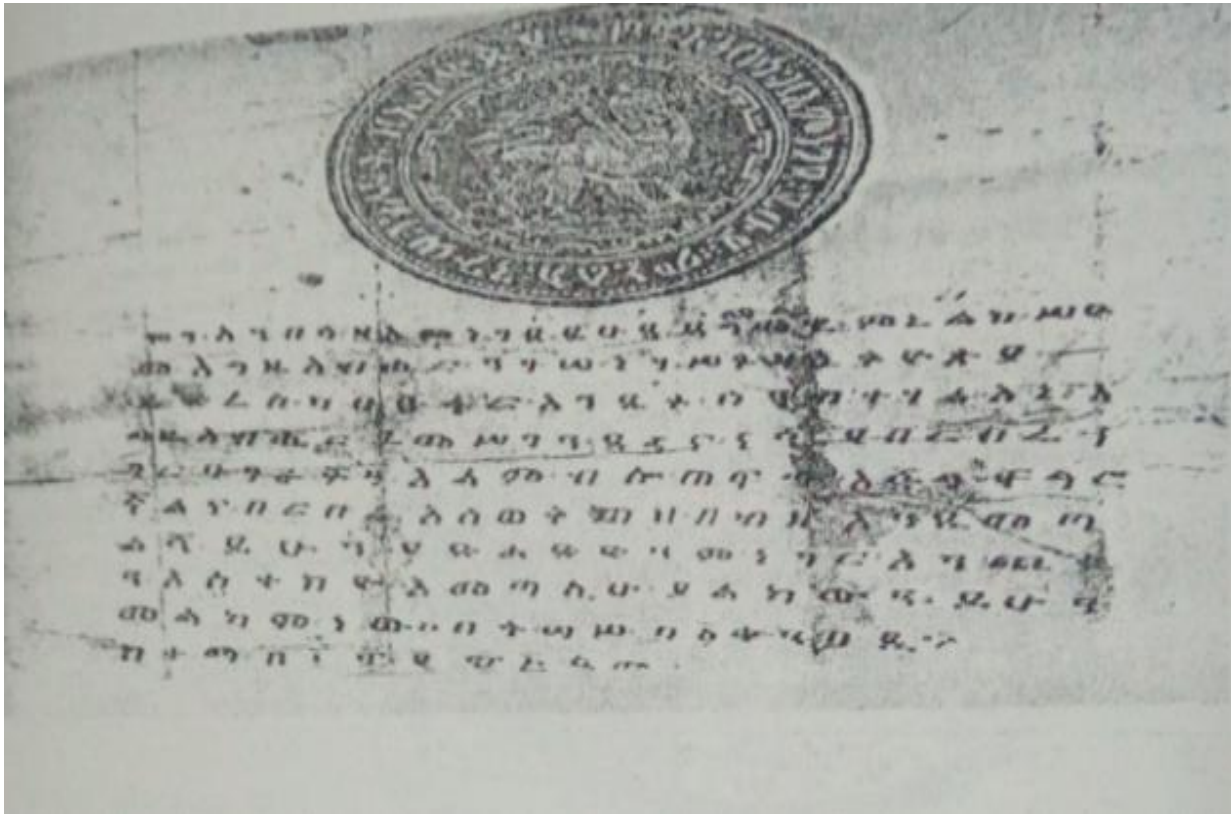
Appendices

Hereunder, the attached historical letters relate to Abbaa Jifaar II of the kingdom of Jimmaa. Archives relevant to the monarchs of the kingdoms of Geeraa, Gommaa, Guumaa and Limmuu-Innaariyaa are not included here.

This is mainly because of the following reasons. To begin with, as it has repeatedly been indicated, after annexation of the five Maccaa Oromo states of the Gibe region by Mnilik's force, due to his peaceful submission Abbaa Jifaar II continued to rule the kingdom of Jimmaa with internal autonomy paying annual tribute to imperial court at Intitotto/Addis Ababa from the beginning of 1880s to 1832. Whereas the monarchs of the other four neighboring Oromo states such as that of Limmuu-Innaariyaa, Gommaa, Geeraa and Guumaa were removed from their power and the kingdoms they had ruled ceased to exist in 1880s. This development had direct relation to the reason why more archival materials such as historical letters, pictures etc. relevant to Abbaa Jifaar II were available than the rest contemporary monarchs of the four bordering Oromo kingdoms during and/or after 1880s. In other words, because of Abbaa Jifaar II's long years of reign and more or less amicable relation with Mnilik and the Emperor's successors many letters sent from imperial court addressed to the former during/or following 1880s unlike the contemporary monarchs of the adjacent four Oromo Gibe states whose existence came to an end in 1880s.

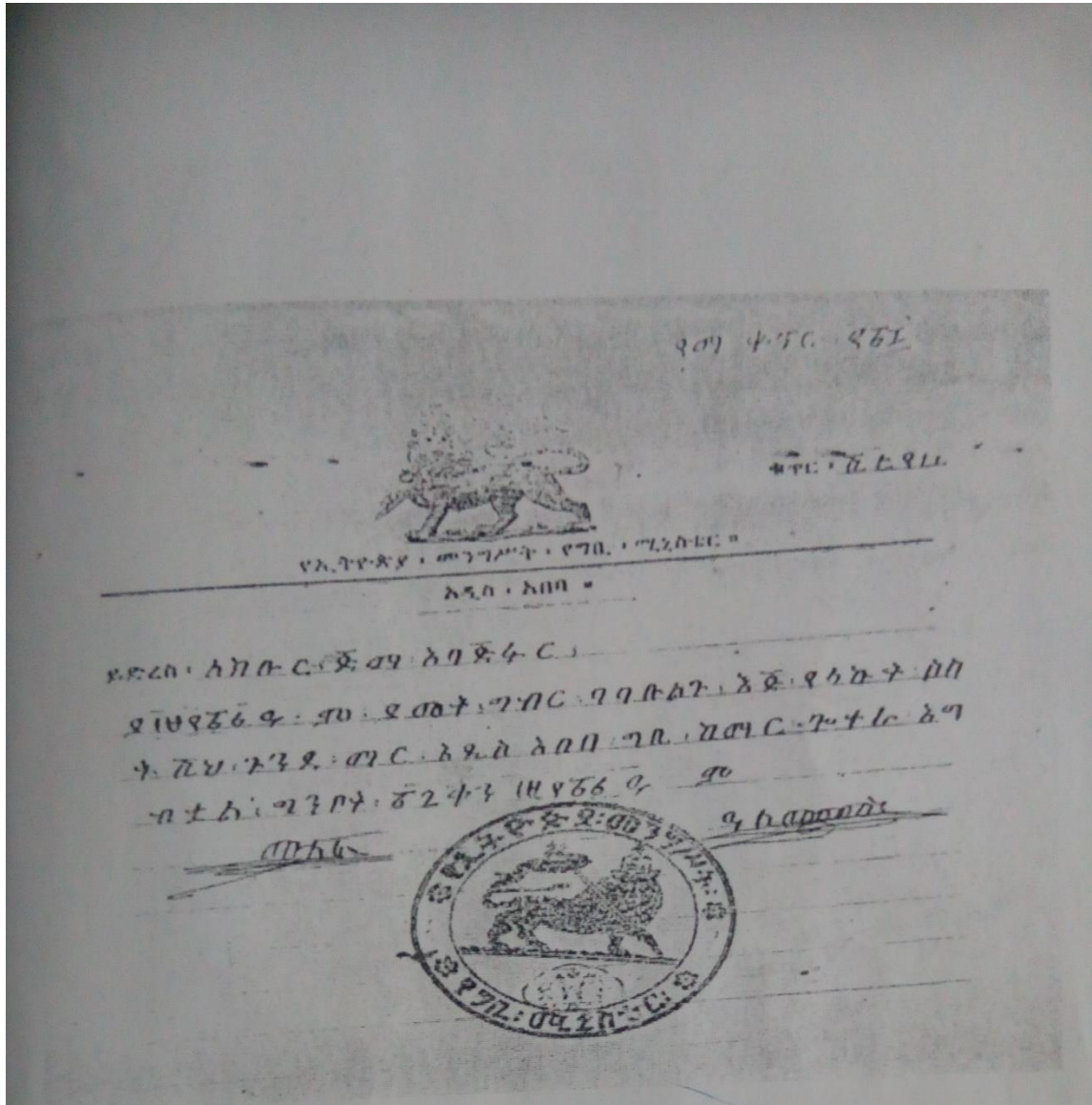
In addition, as far as the other historical letters that were relevant to the various monarchs of the Shanan Gibe kingdoms and produced during or after 1880s were concerned, my attempt to obtain them at different institutions in Addis Ababa/Finfinnee was unsuccessful. Moreover, it is believed that archives related to a few monarchs of the Oromo kingdoms of the Gibe region especially of Abbaa Bogiboo I of Limmuu-Innaariyaa found at least in few European archival centers. However, I was not able to get access to these archives. Thus, I have attached below a few archives that are related only to Abbaa Jifaar II.

Appendix 1



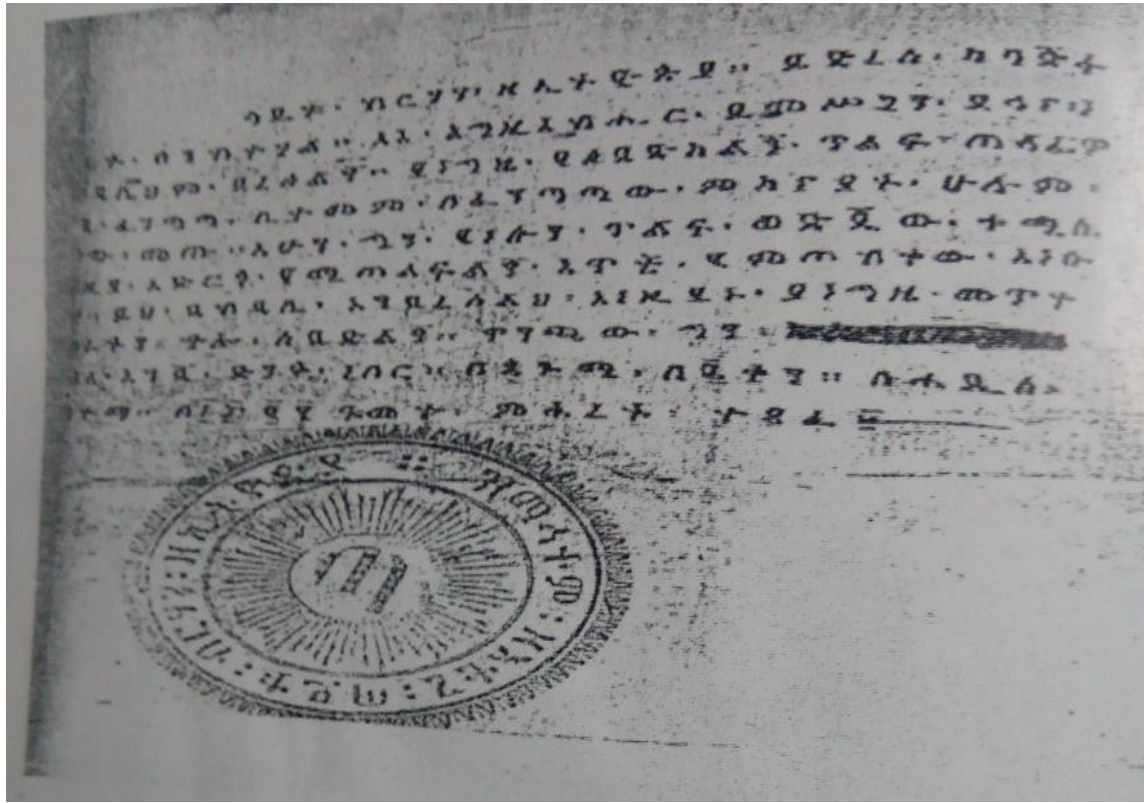
According to this letter, Mnilik requested Abbaa Jifaar II to send him a large amount of pepper.

Appendix 2



This letter indicates that honey was one of the taxes paid by Abbaa Jifaar II to Mnilik's court.

Appendix 3



Tāyту sent this letter to Abbaa Jifaar II. The letter indicates that Tāyту appreciated Abbaa Jifaar II's skillful weavers, and even requested him to send them for her.

Glossary

The meaning of words and phrases not listed under glossary are explained in this paper at least where they have been mentioned for the first time.

<i>Abbaa</i>	Father (owner) of
<i>Abbaa bokkuu</i>	A leader of <i>gadaa</i> in power
<i>Abbaa duulaa</i>	A leader/father of war (a head of an army)
<i>Abbaa gadaa</i>	Similar to <i>abbaa bokkuu</i>
<i>Abbaa miizaan</i>	“Father of balance”; an official responsible for commercial and foreign affairs
<i>Abbaa muudaa</i>	Spiritual head of the Oromo indigenous religion; anointer of the pilgrims
<i>Abbaa qoroo</i>	A provincial governor within Maccaa Oromo kingdoms
<i>Awliya</i> (sing. <i>Wali</i>)	Saints
<i>Ayyaana</i>	Spirit
<i>Buttaa</i>	One of the most significant Oromo festivals, in which all members of a <i>gadaa</i> group in power celebrated slaughtering a bull
<i>Caffee</i>	Council of various Oromo descant groups or sub-groups (the Oromo parliament or the <i>gadaa</i> assembly)
<i>Daggal saaqii</i>	“Forest opener”; pioneer settler
<i>Dajjāzmāch</i>	Literary “commander of the gate”; a politico-military title lower than <i>rās</i>
<i>Donachoo</i>	Crown prince
<i>Gadaa</i>	Socio-political system of the Oromo
<i>Galma</i>	A place or a house where a <i>qaalluu</i> carried out his ritual
<i>Gennee</i>	Lady; title used for royal ladies in the Gibe region
<i>Geppoo</i>	Boundary
<i>Goonoo</i>	A drum for alarming or calling people in the Gibe region
<i>Gosa</i>	clan or tribe
<i>Haadha</i>	Mother (owner) of
<i>Harii</i>	“Sweep away” or “throw away”; the practice of enslaving and selling a family for political or other reason.
<i>Jabarti</i>	Usually Muslim merchants from northern part of Ethiopia
<i>Jiila</i>	Oromo pilgrim to the center of <i>abbaa muudaa</i>

<i>Kakuu</i>	Covenant, swearing, oath
<i>Mād bet</i>	Literary “kitchen”; land used for royal food supply; areas usually administered by officials directly answerable to Mnilik’s court
<i>Masaraa</i>	A residence of a monarch; royal enclosure; palace
<i>Mootii</i>	A king or conqueror
<i>Mootummaa</i>	Kingdom or state
<i>Naggādee</i>	Denote to traders, outsiders and Muslim clerics who came to the Gibe region from northern part of Ethiopia, chiefly from Gondar, Wallo, Gojjam, Tigray, etc.
<i>Nigus</i>	King
<i>Odaa</i>	The “holy” sycamore tree; a sacred place of meeting
<i>Qaalluu</i>	A spiritual head and ritual expert of the indigenous Oromo belief; a priest in Waaqeffannaa
<i>Qoroo</i>	A province in Maccaa Oromo kingdoms of the Gibe region
<i>Qurt gibir</i>	Annual fixed tribute
<i>Ras</i>	Literally “head”; the highest politico-military title next to <i>nigus</i>
<i>Waaqa</i>	God in Afaan Oromoo (the Oromo language)
<i>Waaqeffannaa</i>	The indigenous Oromo religion

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my work and that all source materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name _____

Signature _____

Date of submission _____