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**DEPARTMENT OF OROMO FOLKLORE AND**  
**LITERATURE**

**INDIGENOUS CULTURAL PRACTICES OF THE**  
**OROMO IN SHEKOTA GUUMAA ISLAMIC SHRINE**  
**CENTER AND ITS ENVIRONS IN GUUMAAY**  
**DISTRICT OF JIMMA ZONE**

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OROMO IN SHEKOTA GUUMAA ISLAMIC  
SHRINE CENTER AND ITS ENVIRONS IN  
GUUMAAY DISTRICT OF JIMMA ZONE**

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## Transliteration

In this Research, all Afaan Oromo words are spelled according to the writing and reading system of Afaan Oromo alphabet.

1. Afaan Oromo has five vowels. Each vowel is written in short and long forms.

Short vowels	Long vowels	Examples
a	aa	<i>Nagaa</i>
e	ee	<i>deeme</i>
i	ii	<i>Jirbii</i>
o	oo	<i>Qoxoloo</i>
u	uu	<i>muguu</i>

2. The lengthen of a vowel sound can change a meaning.

Example: *Rafuu* --- *slipping*

*Raafuu* --- *cabbage*

3. Geminating of consonant sound can change the meaning

Example: *Hiree* --- *chance*

*Hirree* --- *arm*

4. A sequence of more than two vowels is possible only if separated by glottal (?).

Example: *Re'ee*—goat

5. There are paired phonemes that are formed by two different consonants in Afaan Oromo language. These are:

**dh** [ɗ] = as in **dhaga** → stone

**ch** /tʃ/ = as in **dache** → earth ,

**sh** /ʃ/ = as in **bishan** → water

**ny** /ɲ/ = as in **nyaara** → eyebrow

**ph** /pʰ/ = as in **suphee** → clay

6. Moreover the following sounds have different sounds from the English consonants

c = /c'/, as in **cabbi** → ice

q = /k'/ as in **marqa** → porridge

x = /t'/ as in **qixxe** → equal



## Glossary

Definition and meanings of some basic terms and concepts used in the paper

Abbaa Muudaa	spiritual head of the <i>muudaa</i> office for life.
Ayaannaa	spirit, the invisible part of some thing
Balaa	scourge, tribulation
Darasa	religious students
Du'a	supplication
Fiqh	Islamic law
Gadaa	a socio-economic, political and religious institution of the Oromo
Giiftii	an honorific name given to ladies in Oromo culture
Hadra	Sufi gathering for collective worship
Jabarti	Muslim traders from northern Ethiopia
Madrasa	modern Islamic school
Mawlid	the Prophet's birthday festival
Milkii	It is an omen, a sign of good or evil to come
Muudaa	anointing pilgrimage to the land of <i>Abbaa Muudaa</i> (most senior <i>Qaalluu</i> )
<i>Nahiw</i>	
Nuuroo	Ritual ceremony praying for rain as to be rain
Odaa	the holy sycamore tree, a sacred place of assembly
Qaallu	the messenger of <i>Waaqaa</i>
Qubbaa	a domed-shaped tomb, shrine
Salawat	intercessory prayers, intercessory prayer book
Shari'a	the religious law of Islam
Shekota / Sheikii	an honorific title given to a highly respected <i>shaykh</i> .
Sufism	the ascetic and mystical way of Islam
Tariqa	religious order, or a spiritual way
Tasfir	to explain, to expound, to disclose. <sup>[1]</sup> In Islamic contexts,
Tawahida	the Oneness of Allah
Waaqa	God, Supernatural, the creator of this world and everything on the world.
Wali	saints
Zakāt	obligatory alms

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## ***Abstract***

*Islamic shrines are not only religious places, but are also important depositors of the pre-Islamic cultures of the indigenous societies. They are also the important heritages which help to know changes and continuities of cultural elements of indigenous society. This research paper has been conducted to examine indigenous cultural practices of the Oromo in Shekota Guumaa Islamic Shrine center and its environs (Waarukkoo and Abiyyoo Booree) in Guumaay District of Jimma zone. Some of the pre-Islamic Oromo cultural and ritual traditions are practicing integrated with some Islamic religion practices and preserved in the three shrine sites. However, because of the influences from some Islamic reformists, the current circumstances of the shrines are not suitable and cultural practices are in danger. The information was obtained by interview, participant observation, group discussion and document analysis.*

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **1.1. Back ground of the Study**

Culture encompasses all that human beings have and do to produce, relate to each other and adapt to the physical environment. It includes belief, morals, law, custom, and any other capacities and habits acquired by human as a member of society. In other words, culture is a patterned way of life shared by a group of people; agreed-upon principles of human existence (values, norms and sanctions) as well as techniques of survival (technology) (Rossi, 1980). Culture is also the aspect of existence which makes people similar to some people, the way of life common to a group of people, a collection of beliefs and attitudes, shared understandings and patterns of behavior that allow those people to live together in relative harmony, but set them apart from the majority of the people in the world (Friedl and Pfeiffer 1977: 283-284).

Indigenous culture is the local culture that is unique to a given society and indigenous people have kept their cultures alive by passing on their worldview, their knowledge and know-how, their arts, rituals, and performances from one generation to the next. It has also included speaking and teaching their own languages, preserving their cultural heritage like their sacred and significant sites and objects. It has also involved defending and holding onto their lands and territories since these are fundamental for sustaining them as people.

Oromo is one of indigenous people in East Africa (Mohammed Hassen, 1990; Workineh Kelbessa, 2001 and African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2006) and the largest single ethno-nation in Africa (Appiah& Gates, 1999; Asmerom Legesse, 1973). Oromo have very rich indigenous culture and traditional belief system that passed from generation to generation. As Jayilan Woliey (2006: 258) says, "One thing that makes the Oromo the most important people in the African continent is their possession of the Gada system, the egalitarian cultural, political, economic and military organization..."

However, the Oromo indigenous culture has not been sustained keeping its originality. There is change and continuity in Oromo indigenous cultures. We can raise many reasons for these changes. "...that the Oromo have largely lost partially as a result of their adaptation of the

monarchical system of governance since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and notably due to their fall under the conquest of Menelik II at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century,” (Jayilan Woliey 2006: 258).

This has been true to the Oromo of all five Gibe states in general and Guumaa in particular. According to Mohammed (1994), one reason for the decline of Oromo indigenous culture in Gibe states was the expansion of Islamic religion that was in turn facilitated by the emergence of monarchical system.

*In the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the eminent scholar-saint and reformer, Shekota Guma, who strongly condemned un-Islamic rituals performed around the shrines of Waruko and other saints, attempted to purify Islam from old beliefs and rituals. It is said that he cut down the trees found near the shrines of Waruko and other saints. At Quda Qunaco he informed the local people that Waarukkoo was a Muslim and a slave of Allah, and thus he should be treated as a Muslim not as a Qaallu (a priest of Oromo traditional religion)... He [Sheekota Guumaa] barred women and shubbisaa from entering the enclosure, and generally enforced a strict Islamic discipline and norms on the celebration of the mawlid and other festivals. Towards the end of our period, the regulations which were once strictly enforced gradually began to relax. For instance, women and shubbisaa were allowed to enter (Aman Seifedin, 2006:71).*

This shows that the Islamic religion leaders condemned Oromo indigenous cultural practitioners like *Qaalluu* and *Shubbisaa*. They cut the trees around the shrine area. Nevertheless, the people did not accept the regulations, but gradually relaxed them and reverted back to their indigenous culture. Therefore, in this research, thematicized under heritage, the researcher has examined the maintained practices of Oromo indigenous culture in the *Shekota Guumaa* Islamic shrine center and its environs in *Guumaay* District of Jimma zone.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

The history of Islam began to be emerged in Ethiopia since 615 A.D (Trimingham, 1965; Hussein, 1992; Erlich 1994). The process of Islamization in Ethiopia is unique and slowly expanded. It was not spread in the form of Arabization as in the North African Countries. “Although the Muslim communities in the region take pride in Islam and some of their languages, architecture and literature reflect Arabic influences, they have remained loyal to their

traditional culture and ethnic identities,” (Trimingham, 1965). This means, the indigenous cultures and practices of different communities have been maintained and preserved within the heritages of Islam. This is particularly true in the Oromo society. For example, Siyoum Merga (2012:16) states Ethiopian indigenous cultural practices such as *muudaa* ceremony of the Oromo are inculcated within the ritual practices of Islamic shrines. Jeylan Hussein (2005: 54) also states that the *muudaa* ceremony at Annajina revealed that the pre-Islamic cultures of the Oromo formed not only the color, but also the substance of the cult of Sheikh Hussein. Therefore, it is difficult to ponder that the cult of Sheikh Hussein as a new religious and cultural identity introduced with Islam.

Islam spread in *Guumaa* in 1830 (Mohammed H, 1994) and through the course of their long history, Muslim communities of *Guumaa* have acquired several cultural heritages (tangible and non-tangible ones). As in the case of other religions in Ethiopia like Christian churches and monasteries as well as ritual centers of indigenous religions, Islamic heritages like mosques, tombs, domestic houses, shrines, urban centers, trade routes, gravestones and inscriptions are the most important depositors of the cultures of many Muslim communities (Kassaye, 2009). Aman Seifedin (2006) states that shrine center of *Qubba Waarukkoo* is one of the shrine centers known in the area and throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century pilgrims to the shrine center performed various pre-Islamic practices such as sacrificing an animal, throwing food and milk around the shrine and under the trees.

Despite this fact, Islamic cultural heritages in general and the interactive between Oromo indigenous culture and Islamic shrine centers in particular are not sufficiently studied although few studies have been recently conducted on Islamic shrine in *Guumaa* and its surrounding; *Waarukkoo* and *Abbiyyoo Booree*. As a result of this, the study of Islamic shrine centers is very helpful to understand the cultural changes and continuity of the communities.

Accordingly, this research was designed on the basis of the contemporary necessity to conduct research and conservation activities on the indigenous cultural knowledge of the Oromo community side-by side with Islamic shrine centers of *Shekota Guumaa* and its environs.

Therefore, this study has tried to address the following major questions:

- Which Oromo indigenous cultural elements remain in Shekota Guumaa shrine center and its environs?
- How the indigenous cultures exist with the Islamic religion?
- What is the attitude of the people to this existing indigenous culture?
- What are changes and continuities of Oromo indigenous culture in the shrine center and its vicinities?

### **1.3.Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1.General Objective**

This study aims to examine that the Oromo indigenous cultural practices at Shekota Guumaa and the neighboring Islamic shrine areas.

#### **1.3.2.Specific Objectives of the Study**

Specifically, the study aims at attaining the following objectives, which are to:

- attempt to understand the historical background of the Shekota Guumaa and its adjacent Islamic shrine centers;
- Identify the causes of cultural changes;
- Discern the extent of changes in Oromo Indigenous culture in Shekota Guumaa and the hinterland Islamic shrine centers;
- Understand the attitude of the guardian, religious leaders and the community around the shrine centers concerning Oromo indigenous culture;
- Identify the connection between the Oromo Indigenous culture and Islamic shrines;
- Indicate the mechanisms to sustain the Oromo indigenous culture in the area.

### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

It is true that indigenous cultural and natural heritages need to be researched and conserved for so many benefits of the community. Indigenous culture is the key point to indicate the identity of any society. Oromo is one of the indigenous peoples in Africa with rich indigenous culture which was transmitted from generation to generation.

The Oromo Indigenous culture has been declining from generation to generation. Some Oromo cultures were totally forgotten, some of them have been reshaped or modified to adapt within the current political, religious, economic and other social factors. In this study, the changes and continuities and factors for the changes of the Oromo Indigenous culture in Shekota Guumaa and the environs Islamic shrines have been identified.

Therefore, the result of this study provides valuable information about the present status of the Oromo indigenous culture at *Shekota Guumaa* and its environs Islamic shrine centers. This may help culture and tourism offices at federal, regional, zonal and district levels to formulate conservation strategies for tangible and non-tangible heritages and integrate them into their development and ecological protection initiatives. The information acquired from this research also help as an input to the formulation of policies and strategies concerning research and conservation activities of the heritages. Furthermore, the study shows the potential significances of these shrine sites as important tourism destinations.

### **1.5. Delimitations of the Research**

According to the information from Jimma Zone Culture and Tourism office there are more than ten (10) Islamic shrine centers in Jimma zone. From these shrine centers, this research has been investigated on *Shekota Guumaa, Waarukkoo and Abiyyoo Booree* shrine centers in *Guumaay* district of Jimmaa Zone, Oromiyaa. The reason why the researcher has focused on this area is that the Oromo indigenous culture in the shrines in Jimmaa zone in general and in *Shekota Guuma* and its surroundings in particular was not yet focused by many researches. The other point which attracts the researcher to focus on these areas is that the shrine areas are the only shrine center which remains with the name of one of the five Gibe states, Guumaa.

### **1.6. Limitation**

In spite of the intensive efforts made to fill every the gap, the study has got its own limitations due to various restraints. Time constraint during both data collection and analysis was the major limitation that is worth mentioning. Two months of field work are inadequate for the qualitative collection of data. The other problem is that since some religious rituals are celebrated annually, there was no chance to observe and record actual situation of the ceremony. In addition, some informants were reserved to give information on some points.



The restructuring of the district administration has been another problem. Until 1986 E.C. *Guumaay* was administrated under Ilubbaboor zone and in 1987 it was made to be administrated under Jimma zone Gomma district. In 1998 it was separated from Gomma district and became an independent district of Jimma zone. This unstable administrative rearrangement has created complex situation to get sufficient information about the district.

## **1.7. Methodology**

### **1.7.1. Sampling Techniques**

Social researchers are regularly faced with the fact that they cannot collect data from everyone who is being researched. As a result, they depend on getting evidence from a portion of the whole in the expectation and hope that what is found in that portion applies equally to the rest of the population. Therefore, in this study the researcher hand-picked the experts from Jimmaa Zone Culture and Tourism Office and *Guumaay* District Culture and Tourism Office. These informants nominated other people who were appropriate informants for this research. The sample thus snowballs in size as each of the nominees was asked, in turn, to nominate other further persons who were included in the sample. These all nominees were then contacted and included in the sample. In this case, the researcher used the snowball sampling technique which was completely compatible with purposive sampling.

### **1.7.2. Methods of Data Collection**

Broadly speaking, as any academic discipline has its own research approaches and ethics, so do indigenous studies. The researchers of social sciences can use four data collecting methods: questionnaires, interviews, observation and document analysis, each of which provides an alternative tool available to the researcher for the collection of empirical data (Denscombe M. 2007:133). Bariman A. (1989: 114-115) also state that qualitative research investigation employed three chief sources of data: field notes deriving from participant observation, conversation records and documents. Therefore, since this research is basically qualitative, the relevant data were collected from both primary and secondary sources from February to March 2014 through the following method of data collection:

### **1.7.2.1. Observation**

Direct Observation is a fundamental and highly important method in all qualitative inquiry and used to discover complex interactions in natural social settings. It entails the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviors, and artifacts (objects) in the social setting chosen for study. To demand firsthand data, the researcher spent two month (March-April, 2014) in the setting, learning about daily life there. Therefore, the researcher in this partial participant observation collected data from the *Shekota Guumaa* Islamic shrine center and the two shrine centers of *Waarukkoo* and *Abbiyyoo Booree* which have direct relation with *Shekota Guumaa* by overtobservation.

### **1.7.2.2. Unstructured Interview**

Unstructured interviews are not directed by a pre-existing agenda and carried out by qualitative researchers aiming to elicit respondents' ways of thinking about the issues with which the qualitative researcher is concerned (Bariman A. 1989:122). They go further in the extent to which emphasis is placed on the interviewee's thoughts. The researcher's role is to be as un-intrusive as possible to start the ball rolling by introducing a theme or topic and then letting the interviewees develop their ideas and pursue their train of thought (Denscombe 2007:176).

Therefore in this research, unstructured interview was presented to three religious leaders (one from each three shrine centers), six selected (three female and three male) elders who are knowledgeable of the culture and history of the society, one descendant of each shrine center. In this method, the researcher took necessary data by using audio recorder, video recorder, and image viewer and also took field note.

### **1.7.2.3. Group Discussion**

As with other qualitative research methods, focus group discussion can use for exploratory, explanatory and evaluative research. Since the research is more of exploratory and explanatory research, this method helped to get great range of view on the topic. The researcher formed four groups with seven members in *Waarukkoo*, seven members in *Sheekota Guumaa*, eight members in *Abbiyyoo Booree* and six membersa (all femal of Giiftii Faaxuma ceremony participants). Those well-known informants are elders and have good knowledge about Oromo culture, living

surrounding the shrine areas and used to participate in different ritual ceremonies in the shrine and the custodians of the shrines. The researcher conducted interactive discussion and got relevant data. In this method, the researcher took necessary data by using audio recorder, video recorder, and image viewer and take field note.



Picture 1: Group discussion in Waarukkoo



Picture 2: Group discussion in Shekota Guumaa



Picture 3: Group discussion at Abbiyoo Booree



Picture 4: Group discussion With Giiftii Faaxuma Ceremony participants at Waarukkoo

All the above photos were taken by the author during the fieldwork

#### 1.7.2.4. Document Analysis

Document is any material that provides information on a given social phenomenon and which exists independently of the researcher's actions (Corbetta 2003). According to Denscombe (1998:13), documents can be treated as sources of data and the documentary sources identified are written documents, visual sources (pictures, artifacts) and even sounds (music). All these are constituted some form of 'document' which has a value for research, but they are used relatively and rarely within the social sciences which are restricted to written form of document like website pages and the internet, diaries, letters and memos, records of meetings, newspapers and magazines, government publications and official statistics. The social researcher can undertake empirical research based on documents which incorporate as wide and as inclusive data as possible, and which aims to 'bring things up to date'. Newspapers, company reports, and committee minutes are just some of the possible sources that can be surveyed (*Ibid*).

Therefore, in this research the researcher collected data from written documents of Jimma zone Finance and Economic Development office concerning the district profile and one manuscript from Culture and Tourism office of Guumaay district. The other written documents are found at

the shrine centers. These written documents at shrine centers are written in Arabic language and the informants, Raayya Hajj Jamal at Sheekota Guumaa and Sheikh Ahimad Haji Kadir at Waarukkoo helped the researcher in translating the document from Arabic to Afaan Oromo.

### **1.7.3. Data Analysis**

There are many different types of qualitative data analysis. The methods are depend on the research topic, personal preferences and the time, equipment and finances available to conduct the research and a very personal process, with few rigid rules and procedures (Dawson C. 2009 and Gray, A. 2003:147). Some anthropologists claim that ethnography is always descriptive. However, this research is not limited to descriptive works rather it extended to interpretation and analysis of facts from the insider's view of social reality commonly called the emic. The researcher also transcribed the data obtained through interview and group discussion. When we say transcription, it is not about jotting up or summing up what a researcher, interviewer or transcriber feels; it is all about what the respondent feels (Singh, K., 2007)

## **Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature**

### **2.1. Oromo Worldview, Religion and Philosophy**

The Oromo belong to the Cushitic language-speaking family, who lived for thousands of years in what is today called Ethiopia. Oromo are one of the most indigenous peoples of Ethiopia (Mohammad Hassen 1994:77). Workineh Kelbessa (2001:2) also argues that the Oromo are the largest group of Cushitic speakers who have inhabited north-eastern and Eastern Africa for long time. Alemayehu Haile (2009:14) also explains, quoting Tesema Ta'a, Cushitic speaking people used to live in the east African region along Red Sea and Cush was the earliest language to be spoken in Ethiopia. Consequently, the ancient history of the Oromo is the history of Cushitic people, because Oromo is the descendant of ancient Cushitic people of east Africa. The Oromo oral tradition also supports that the origin of the Oromo is Walaabuu, today Bale.

In spite of the fact that there are several indications and evidences for the fact that the Oromo are indigenous to east Africa, Abyssinian monarchs, monks and their European supporters wrongly contend that the Oromo did not originally belong to Africa (Workineh Kelbessa, 200:2). For instance, the Abyssinian court historian, Alaqa Taye (1955) supposed that in the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries the Oromo migrated from Asia and Madagascar, entered Africa via Mombasa and spread north and eastwards. However, in reality, the 16<sup>th</sup> century was not the era of Oromo migration to East Africa; it was a time when the Oromo were actively recapturing their territories and rolling back the Christian and Muslim empires (Asafa Jalata, 2005).

Therefore, the Oromo people have also a very rich indigenous knowledge fostered by the size of the population and large land areas with diverse climatic conditions. Oromo society like any society has been conscious of its cultural identity, its relation to nature, and the existence of a powerful force that regulates the connection between nature and society. Oromo indigenous knowledge refers to the unique, traditional, local knowledge existing within and developed around the specific conditions of the society covering all aspects of life including management of the natural environment. It has been a matter of survival to the peoples who generated these systems, their relation to nature.

Asaffa Jalata (2012:140) says the Oromo knowledge of society and the world can be classified into cultural and customary knowledge (*beekumsa aadaa*), and knowledge of laws (*beekumsa seera*). The *beekumsa seeraa* subdivided into *seera Waaqa* (the laws of God) which is never changed and *seera nama* (the laws of human beings) which can be changed through agreement and democratic means. Both *seera Waaqaa* (law of God) and *seera nama* (the law of human) should be expected to be learned and recognized by every person. The customary knowledge (*beekumsa aadaa*) of Oromo is a public and common knowledge that leads and regulates the activities of members of society.

In relation with spiritual and physical worlds the Oromo world-view could be treated under three headings: *uumaa (Waaqaa)*, *ayyaanaa* and *safuu*, which are used to explain the organization and interconnection of human, spiritual and physical worlds (Gemechu Megersa 2005: 69, Asafa Jalata 2012:142 and Bartels 1983). It is not easy to translate these three terms into English without distorting their full meanings. These three Oromo spiritual and physical world views are changing and fading their originality in different parts of Oromiyaa in different levels because of many factors like political influences, diffusion of culture, influence of Islam religion and Christian religion, modern education, technology and so on.

The five Gibe states in general and Guumaa in particular were among the areas at which the Oromo egalitarian administration and traditional Oromo religion began to decline due to the expansion of Islamic religion, the authoritarian state formation and other factors. Guumaa was the second to form state, the fourth to accept Islamic religion and the first to declare jihad in the name of religion from the five Gibe states (Mohammed Hassen, 1994). Nevertheless, the Oromo people of Guumaa like other Oromo people did not totally stop their indigenous culture and belief system (Aman Seifedin, 2006 and Mohammed Hassen, 1994). Therefore, the framework of this research has been to look the practices of indigenous concepts of the Oromo in Sheekota Guumaa and the environs. The researcher has examined the current change and continuity of the above three terms and other Oromo world view and knowledge in Sheekota Guumaa and the environs.

### 2.1.1. The Oromo Concept of *Waaqaa*

The word '*Waaqaa*' has double meaning: one is approximately what means 'God' in English and the other is the sky (Tilahun Gamta 1993). *Waaqeffataa* (believer in *Waaqaa*) has a belief in existence of only one Supreme Being i.e. *Waaqaa*. Muslim Oromo and others use the word "*Rabbii*" instead of *Waaqaa*. Thus, Oromo had concept of monotheism from time immemorial. Workineh Kelbessa (2001: 22) describes that Oromo religious belief is based on the view that *Waaqaa* has multiple attributes. *Waaqaa* is before everything else (*i.e. Beelii Beelil*), a creator (*uumaa*) of everything (all living and nonliving things) in the universe as a unified single whole-coherent. *Waaqa* is *hunda danda'aa* (*omnipotent*: nothing is impossible for *Waaqaa*). *Waaqaa* is *Hunda beekaa* (*omniscient*: all-wise, all-knowing, all-seeing and all-hearing). *Waaqa* is *hundaa tolaa* (*benevolent*) and a kindly figure. *Waaqa* is the source and lover of truth, pure; intolerant of injustice, crime, sin and all falsehood. The Oromo never worshipped carved statues, trees, rivers, mountains ' or animals. According to the Oromo tradition, all these are creatures and they belong to *Waaqaa* (Bartels, 1983:91). Therefore, Oromo worship *Waaqaa* no other creation as *Waaqaa* is not a created being, but is the elder of all and has power on all things.

As Bartels (1983: 89) indicates, *Waaqaa* lives in the sky and the words for God and sky are the same. It is said that at the very beginning, the supreme *Waaqaa* was much nearer to man and He was visible and living on the Earth. He used to speak with the people and solve their problems. One day a mule kicked his belly. *Waaqa* then cursed the mule to be barren and left the Earth in anger and became invisible. Following this, the Oromo say the black *Waaqa* is living above the blue sky. Thus, when man commits sins, *Waaqaa* goes away, but the earth remains. The Earth is considered as *Waaqaa's* wife (*Ibid*: 108). The earth is described as being a Mother and *Waaqaa* is like a father who goes away (*Ibid*: 110). This Oromo Concept of *Waaqaa* in Christians or Muslims Oromo experiencing the divine have continued almost unaffected, in spite of the fact that several rituals and social institutions in which it was expressed, have been very diminished or apparently submerged in new ritual cloaks (Bartels 1983: 15). Therefore, since the Sheekota Guumaa shrine and the environs Islamic religion leaders forced the people to strengthen Islamic religion, the researcher has been interested to study the current concepts and practices of *Waaqaa* of the people of the Shekota Guumaa and the environs shrine areas.



### 2.1.2. The Oromo Concept of *Ayyaanaa*

The Oromo believe that *Waaqaa* creates and regulates human and physical worlds in balanced ways through *Ayyaanaa* (Asafa Jalata, 2012). *Ayyaanaa* preserve the connection between the creator (*Waaqaa*) and the created. *Ayyaanaa* act as the intermediaries between humankind and *Waaqaa*. *Ayyaanaa* was created by *Waaqaa*; *Ayyaanaa* has no existence apart from *Waaqaa* and cannot create, hurt or kill anything. *Ayyaanaa* can only communicate the problems of humans to *Waaqaa*. Nonetheless, with the help of *Waaqaa*, *Ayyaanaa* can be invoked to bring misfortune upon the person unwilling to comply with societal traditions. (Workineh, K. 2001: 26)

According to Oromo indigenous belief system, there are many saints like divinities/*Ayyaanaa*, each seen as refraction/one corner of *Waaqaa*. All the things in the universe are believed to have their own *Ayyaanaa*. Everything in this world and every days, months and season has its own *Ayyaanaa* (Bartels, L., 1983: 112-115 and Dahl, G., 1996: 167). Each social group like lineage has its *Ayyaanaa* which define its people and material success. Oromo identifies that each lineage (*balbalaa*) or clan (*lammii*) has its own *Ayyaanaa*. Bartels (1983) and Workineh (2001) argue that as each clan has its own *Ayyaanaa* and invoked for help in order to fulfill one's duties, to be successful, and to avoid evil acts, for it is believed to be more powerful than one's own *Ayyaanaa*. Likewise, the *Ayyaanaa* of the clan is more powerful than a father's *Ayyaanaa* and mother's *Ayyaanaa*.

This concept is not acceptable in the modern religions: Islam and Christian. Nonetheless, most Oromo people, after conversion to Islam or Christianity, are still attached to their beliefs, traditional religion, culture and ancestral laws described by a number of observers (Bartels 1983). Although most of the Oromo society converted to Islam before a century, they still practice their indigenous culture within the Islamic religion. Therefore, *Ayyaanaa* is one of the concepts of Oromo indigenous knowledge and in this research; the researcher has attempted to examine the current status of this concept among the society around the shrines area.

### 2.1.3. The Oromo Concept of *Qaalluu*

*Qaalluu* serves as an intermediary between human and the *Ayyaana* (Workineh K. 2001: 26). The *Qaalluu* is the intermediary between the human and the clan *Ayyaanaa*; not individual *ayyaana*. *Qaalluu* is the original Oromo religious and ritual expert. He/she is a messenger or prophet of Waaqa who handed the law of Waaqaa (Aman Seifedin, 2006) and considered as senior, pure and clean person in the lineage (Gadaa M., 1989: 19). Oral information shows *Ayyaana* is attached to individual *Qaalluu*, both are inseparable. Each of the fully-fledged Oromo families has its own *Qaalluu* who is also known as *Ayyaantuu* for s (he) might be possessed with *Ayyaanaa*. However, *Booranaa* *Qaalluus* do not worship any spirits although their authority is of divine origin. In other parts of Oromiyaa, interpretation or practices of *Qaalluu* are quite different from that of *Booranaa* though there is a very strong relationship between the two. Evidence in *Booranaa* shows that possession cult has nothing to do with original Oromo conception of *Qaalluu*, which continues to operate till nowadays only in *Borana* (Baxter et al 1996).

*Qaalluu* institution is one of the most important institutions and existed since mythical time (Gadaa M., 1989: 19). *Qaalluus* are the most custodian pillar persons who, in past were responsible for rituals more explicitly blessings and organization of election of *Gadaa* leaders and councils. They have had a moral authority and social duty to oppose tyrants and support popular Oromo democracy and *Gada* leaders (Asafa Jalata, 2010). In the Oromo believe system, the *Qaalluu* “is thought to possess sacred characteristics that enable him to act as intermediary between the people and . . . [God],” and “he had no administrative power, but could bless or withhold blessings from *Gadaa* leadership, and had an extraordinary power to curse anyone who threatened the wellbeing of the entire community by deviating from . . . [God’s] order” (Kelly, 1992: 166). *Muudaa* (pilgrimage) was made once every eight years in order to honor and get the blessings of the senior *Qaalluu*. Accordingly, *Qaalluus* are senior in ritual sphere whereas *Abbaa Gadaa* is senior in secular realm. *Gadaa* leaders govern society for a limited period whereas *Qaalluus* are hereditary leaders.

This vital institution in the religious life of the Oromo was not sustained keeping its indigenous color in the Sheekota Guumaa shrine and its environs. However, this does not mean that all elements of the institution ceased to exist altogether.

#### **2.1.4. The Oromo Concept of *Safuu***

*Safuu* is the concept which rooted in Oromo culture to regulate Oromo behavioral and social life.

*“Safu is a concept that embodies the Oromo culture of respectfulness and self-restraint. It regulates Oromo social life and behavior pertaining to, among other things, marriage, vertical and horizontal relationships between people, fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, parents and children, the young and the old, in-laws, generations and between Oromos and non-Oromos (the Orma) Safu also regulates the relationship of the Oromos with their Creator, Waqa Uuma. It guides Oromo leaders in discharging their social, spiritual and political responsibilities without infringing upon the rights of the people and without offending Waqa,”* (Benti Getahun, 2002: 74).

*Safuu* is the communal affiliation between the elements of the social cosmic order which maintain practices obligatorily through ethical conduct (Gemechu Megersa, 1996: 97). It is an ethical and moral code that Oromo use to differentiate bad from good and wrong from right. Workineh K. (2001:34) says “Oromo believe that *Safuu* involves avoiding embarrassment, bad conversations, lying, stealing, and so forth. *Safuu* is respecting one another and respecting one's own *Ayyaanaa* and other's *Ayyaana*.” This shows that in the Oromo society, *Safuu* has a great value to regulate the relation between the societies.

*Safuu* also refers to the existence of distance and respect between all things and all things act accordingly to its *Ayyaanaa*. As Bartels (1983:170), noted,

*Safuu "implies that all things have a place of their own in the cosmic and social order, and that they should keep this place. Their place is conditioned by the specific [Ayyaana] each of them has received from Waaqa. Every creature and especially man has to act accordingly to its own [ayyaana] and to respect the others [ayyaana]. Safuu implies both rights and duties."*

It adjusts Oromo social life and behavior relating to marriage, vertical and horizontal relationships between people, fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, parents and children, the young and the old, in-laws, generations and between Oromo people and non-Oromo people. It is intrinsic to the existence of the Oromo indigenous culture.

#### **2.1.5. The Oromo Concept of *Nagaa***

The literary meaning of *Nagaa* is “peace”. Yet it carries extended meanings such as “harmony,” “order,” “balance,” “justice” (Tenna Dewo 2008). In every day activity Oromo give priority to *Nagaa* and pray about *Nagaa* and wish *Nagaa* for all creatures. Oromo start and end all their

prayers with *Nagaa* (Mohammad H., 2005). *Nagaa* also maintains the interaction of Oromo with the environment communally or individually. Mohammad H. (2005) says,

*“For the community, peace [nagaa] is the maintenance of law and order, care of the poor, weak and sick. For an individual, it is inner peace: peace of body, mind and soul. Peace relates to an individual's imaginative sense of well-tempered, balanced interrelations with other persons, the environment and with Waaqa.”*

Tenna Dewo (2012:163) says, “That the Oromo pray for the peace of everything, even for such things as stone, water, and air, shows that in Oromo cosmology everything is interconnected through a myriad of webs and threads.” According to this explanation (the concept of Oromo), peace is not only needed for human being, but also for all environments. The Oromo strongly believe that humans cannot delight in peace while nature suffers confusion. Thus, for the Oromo, peace is holistic: it is the harmonious relationship among all the parties involved. This is why the Oromo interact peacefully with the environment and conserve the environment.

In the concept of the Oromo, *Nagaa* is also directly related to health. To Oromo *Naga* is the other face of *fayyaa* (health). According to Begna F. (2003) in the concept of Oromo, *Nagaa* and *Fayyaa* are inseparable and they are not only important for human being, but also for environment. The Oromo concept of health is thus more holistic than the one defined by the World Health Organization. The World Health Organization (1997) definition of healthy is related to physical, mental, spiritual and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or sickness. However, in addition to what mentioned by WHO, the Oromo's *Nagaa* includes the peaceful interaction of human with the environment. It is also peace with oneself, with Waaqa, with the community and with the environment, and it unites an individual with the community, the community with the environment. Therefore, since it is the Oromo indigenous concept which maintains the relation between community and community, community and the environment, this research will also focus on concept of *Nagaa* in relation with the shrine area.

#### **2.1.6. Oromo Concept of Social development**

Asafa Jalata (2012: 140-141) explain that the Oromo worldview and concepts of Social development in seven phases. These are *guddina*, *gabbina*, *bal'ina*, *badhaadhina*, *hoormata*, *dagaaga*, and *dagaa-hoora* interrelated phases. *Guddina* brings new experience to the people which show an improvement in cultural life. *Gabbina* integrates collective cultural experiences

with current social conditions. *Bal'ina* involves the expansion of cultural and political experiences from Oromo to other society, based on the principles of democracy. The cumulative of these three phases lead to *badhaadhina*. The development of *badhaadhina* stage facilitates the emergence of the *hormaata* phase at which the availability of abundant resources and peace; animals and people reproduce and multiply. Next to *hormaata* the *dagaagina* phase comes and development cycles are assessed and integrated to maintain even and sustainable development. The end phase of development called *daga-hoora*. At this phase Oromo expands its cultural experiences of development to neighboring peoples and had conflict with others over natural resources (Asafa Jalata, 2012: 140-141).

## **2.2. The State Formation in Five Gibe**

There were five states in Gibe region; Limmuu Inaariyaa, Guumaa, Gommaa, Jimmaa and Geeraa. These states were formed by Maccaa Oromo. The Maccaa first arrived at Gibe region at second half of sixteen century and formed states at second half of eighteen century (Mohammed 1994:87-88). There were different reasons for state formation in the region. From these reason one is that the influence of neighboring states. After the states formed the ruling class became rich and rich families were pushed themselves into foreground and gradually eclipsing the traditional *Gadaa* leaders (Ibid). Therefore, the Maccaa Oromo gradually changed their political institution and ideology to meet the demands of new condition. Some prominent and powerful individuals made their office hereditary emerged. The new *motis* (rulers) championed Islam because it reinforced their authoritarian rule, a new trend contrary to the principle of the *Gadaa* system. *Qaallu* and the *Qaallu* institution which had been so vital in the religious life of the Oromo began to lose their importance. Nevertheless, this does not mean that all elements of the *Gadaa* stopped to exist.

## **2.3. Spread of Islam and Decline of Oromo Traditional Religion in Gibe States**

The history of Islam in Ethiopia can be dated back to 615 A.D. when the Arabian Prophet Mohamed's followers came to Aksum fleeing persecution of Quraayish ruling elite in Mecca (Trimingham 1965:44, Mohammed 1994 and Erlich 1994). Because of this persecution, the Prophet advised his followers to migrate to Aksum where they would be saved by honorable Christian king, Najaash (Dereje Feyissa, 2011). Thus, this provided a suitable scenario to the

expansion of Islam in Ethiopia. Hussein Ahmed (2006) states, the hospitality and the tolerance the Sahaba got in Ethiopia is said to be critical in the survival and expansion of Islam.

Trimingham (1965:199) argues that between 1840 and 1870 the five Gibe kingdoms adopted Islam through Muslim merchants from Warjih of Shawa, Daaritaa in Begemidir, and from Egyptians and the Sudan. The role of northern traders in introducing Islam to the Gibe region is more convincing but the impact of Sudan and Egypt were not as such considerable. In the conversion of the Kings and nobilities in Gibe region to Islam, the Jabarti traders from northern Ethiopia, including Oromo traders from Shawaa and Walloo had played their own role at the early nineteenth century (Mohammed H. 1994:151).

As Mohammed says the conversion to Islam in Gibe state had two stages. First up to 1840s, Islam was the religion of kings and nobilities of Gibe states except in Gommaa. During this stage, majority of the society preserved their traditional religion, Waaqeffanna. The Muslim Merchants facilitated favorable condition for the spread of Islam and preach that the Oromo religion is not adequate and the traditional Oromo priests were ignored from politics and administration. At second stage, ardent kings made their duty to spread Islam to their people and it became the religion of the people. Spreading Islam in the Gibe region was the slow process because it was not easy to convert the Oromo people who rooted deeply in the soil of traditional religion.

Factors for the spread of Islam in Gibe region were the sympathy of kings toward Islam and the effectiveness of teachers and the preachers of the religion. The kings and leaders accommodated and protected the Muslim scholars, teachers and preachers who came from different parts of Ethiopia (Mohammed H. 1994:174-175).

Deressa Bayisa (2013:77) citing Aman Seifaddin, states that there were internal and external factors which facilitated the spread of Islam in the region. The internal factors were the decline of traditional religion and the establishment of monarchial system in the region. External factors were the restoration of trade around the Red Sea.

## 2. 4. The Spread of Islam in Guumaa

Mohammed (1994: 58, 159) explains that Guumaa was one of the five Gibe states and the second state to be formed next to Limmu Inaariyaa. Today, the early Guumaa state is divided into various districts like *Guumaayi*, *Sanxammaa* and *Sigimoo*, under Jimma zonal administration and *Dhidheessa* under Iluu Abbaaboora zonal administration (Deressa Bayisa 2013:16). The original name of Guumaa is left with Guumaayi district with little modification (from Guumaa to Guumaayi).

The Guumaa state was the fourth state of Gibe kingdoms to accept Islam and the first state to declare the jihad in the name of the religion. Islamic religion became the religion of ruling dynasty in 1830. Abba Maannoo, the king of Gommaa, played a great role to spread Islam in Guumaa and he also influenced Jaawwee Oonchoo Jiilchaa, the king of Guumaa, to abolish some Oromo cultural institutions, like *buttaa* (Mohammed H. 1994: 159).

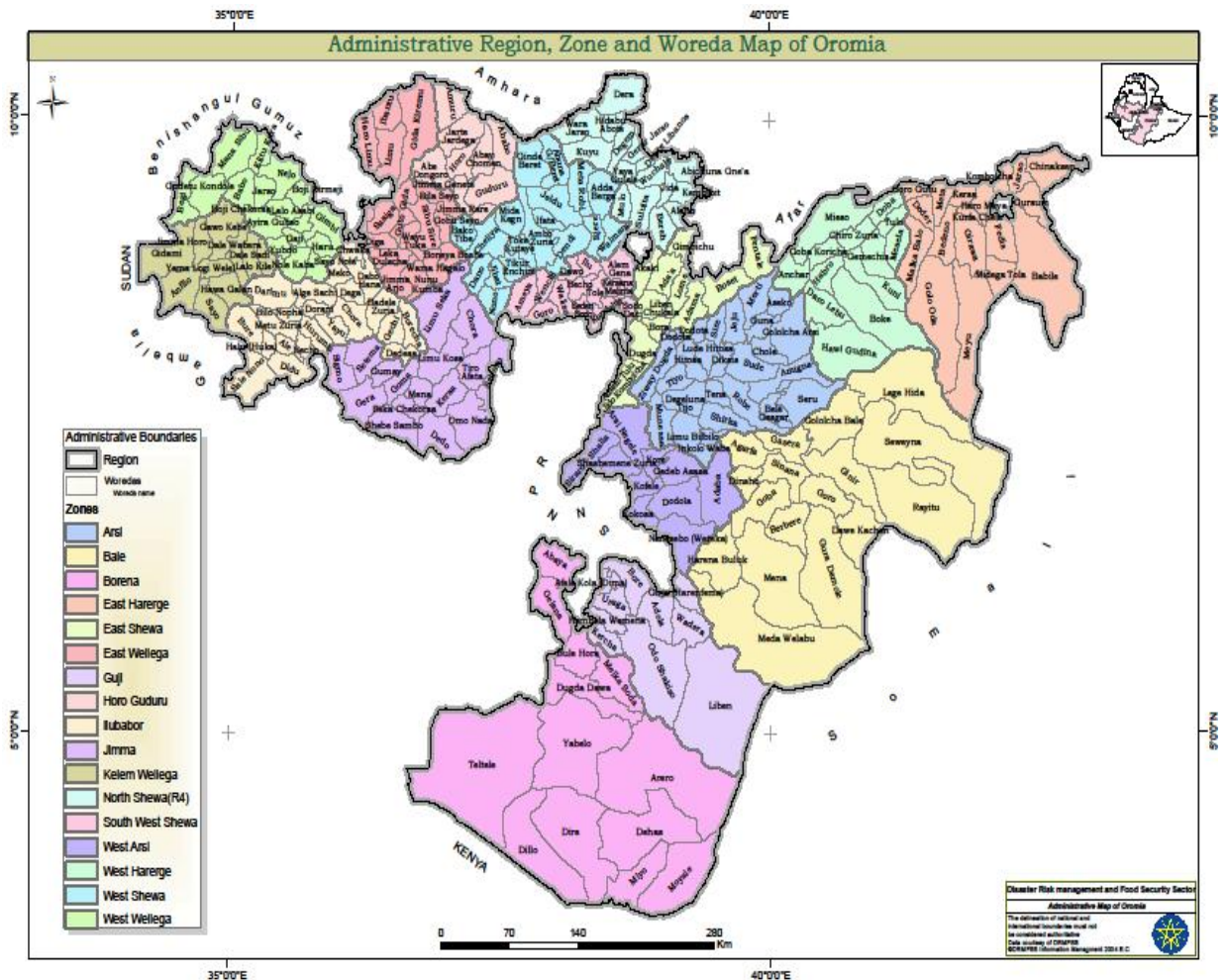
Nevertheless, Islam became strong during the reign of Abbaa Duulaa (1858 – 1879) because, Abbaa Duulaa had got Muslim teachers from Abbaa Booqaa of Jimmaa. The other very important reason that strengthened Islam in Guumaa was the letter sent to Abbaa Duulaa from Sheikh Sa'id Ahimed, the custodian of the tomb of Prophet at Al-Madina. As Mohammed (1994:160) writes,

*It (the letter) urged all the believers that the “end” of the world was coming and that they should fortify themselves in their faith. It had its desired impact on Aba Dula and his son and successor, Aba Jobir. Perhaps it was in response to this letter, he declared a jihad in name of Islam- although it was also in their own territorial interest.*

## Chapter Three: Background of the Study Area

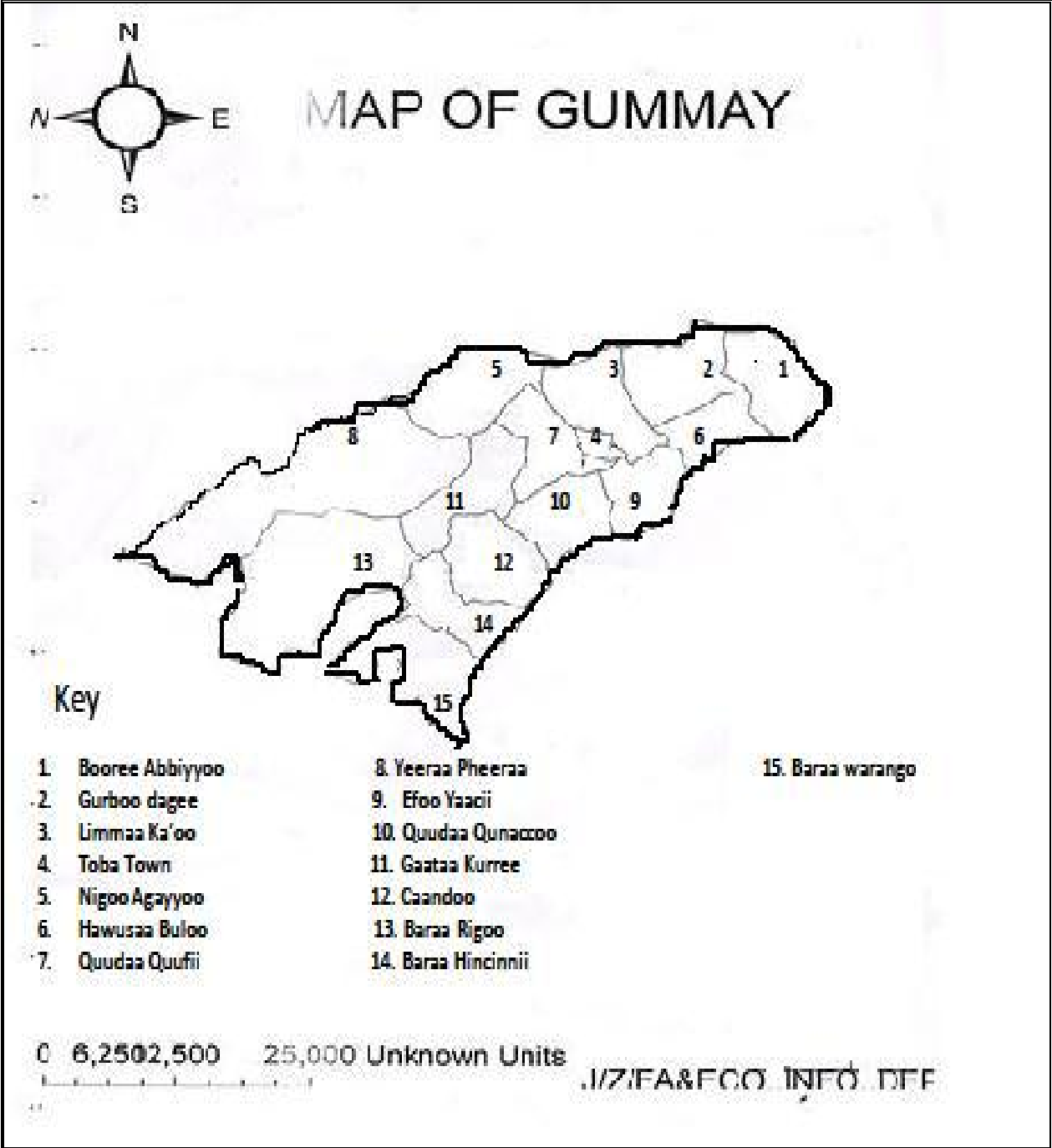
### 3.1. Geographical Location and Environmental Setting

In its relative location, Guumaay district is located in south western part of Ethiopia at 431 kms from the continental, national and regional capital, Finfinnee and 75 kms to the North West of Jimma town. Being one of the 18 districts of Jimma zone of Oromia Regional state, the district is bounded on the East by Gommaa district, on the South by Geeraa, on northwest by Dhidheessaa district of Iluu-Abbaaboor Zone and on the West by Saxxaammaa district. In its absolute/astronomical location, It is located between latitude  $7^{\circ}40' - 7^{\circ}80'N$  and longitude  $36^{\circ}17' - 36^{\circ}25' E$ . (2003 and 2004 EC, Socio- Economic Profile of the *Guumaay* district).



Map 1: Administrative Region, Zones and Woredas of Oromiyaa





Map 2: Map of Guumaay district with Gandaa division

The area coverage of the district is 544 square kilometers. It has 15 *gandaas* (*qabalee*, local administration), and of these 15 *gandaas* only one is town *gandaa* and the rests are rural *gandaas*. In 2003 EC from the total land area of the district, 149.97 km<sup>2</sup> used for annual production, 87.87 km<sup>2</sup> for permanent product, 13.51 km<sup>2</sup> covered by forest, 76.16 km<sup>2</sup> covered by grass land (for animal grazing), 22.10 km<sup>2</sup> unutilized farm land, 26.19 not productive (difficult to farm). From all coverage of forests area 1.75 km<sup>2</sup> is manmade forest and the rest coverage is natural forest, demarcated and conserved. The major trees in natural forest are *Waddeessaa* (*Cordia Africana*), *Sondi* (*Acacia Abssinica*), *Gaattiraa* (*Juniperous procera*), *Ambabbeessa* (*Albizia schimperiana*), *Bakkanniisa* (*Croton macrostachyus*) *Qararoo*, *Badessaa*, *Qilxuu*, *Qa'ii* and other. The dominant trees from manmade forest are *xid* and eucalyptus tree (2003 and 2004 EC, Socio-Economic Profile of the Guumaay District).

As far as the topography is concerned, the known mountains in the district are *Tabba Argaal*/Arga Mountain (meeting place for the Gibe states and local leaders, elevated with 70% slope); *Tabbba Yanii* (Yani Mountain) elevated with 50% slope and *Tabba Qarree* (Qarre mountain) elevated with 45% slope. The district has an agro-ecological setting with 26.4% Baddaa (highland), 47.2% Baddadaree (temperate) and 26.4% Gammoojjii (lowland).

According to the mentioned profile, the temperature of the district is warm. Average temperature of the district is between 27.5c-30c and reliably receives good rains, ranging from 1,400–1500 mm per annum. In normal years, the rainy season extends from February to October. The same report states that the district receives Arfaasaa (spring) rains from February, with intermittent rains continuing through May.

### **3.2. Identity and Clan Structure Guumaay**

The two main Oromo groups, Barentu and Borana, expanded in two adjacent directions. The Borana section was divided in to three confederations i.e. Tuulamaa-Maccaa, the Gujii and the southern Borana (Sabboo-Goonaa). Before they began their separate expansion, the Maccaa and Tuulama held their *caffee* (assembly) at Oda Nabee near Dukam. After they were separated from the Tulamaa, the Maccaa formed two confederations: the *Afre* confederacy (the confederacy of the four, composed of Hokkoo, Calliyaa, Gudruu, and Liiban) and the *Sadacha* confederacy (the confederation of the three, composed of Oboo, Suubaa and Hakakoo,). *Arfee* left Nabee during

Roobalee Gadaa (1570-1578), the Sadachaa, left the center during the Birmajjii Gadaa (1578-1586) (Mohammed Hasan 1994).

After they left Nabee, the Maccaa established their new center at Oda Bisil located between the *Billoo*, *Geedoo*, and Gibe rivers. Later, they expanded mainly to the areas presently called western Gibe regions and different parts of western Oromiyaa by using their superior cavalry, surprise attack and better organization that the *gada* system afforded (Asafa Jalata, 2010).

The second Macca Oromo confederacy, *Sadacha*, began to strengthen their expansion and took the southern and South Western direction and spread over Gibe valley and eventually occupied in the formation of the five Oromo Gibe kingdoms (Deressa Bayisa, 2013).

In the early time movement of Oromo of the Macca Oromo moved to *Guumaa* mixed with early inhabitants of people through an important Oromo customary institution *guddifachaa* (adoption) and assimilation. Today there are more than 70 clans and sub-clans including *ogessota* (artisan group) inhabited in the district, and of these more than ten of them belong to the Kafa people (Deressa Bayisa, 2013). The main Oromo clans and sub-clans inhabitant in the today Guumaay district are *Dagoyyee*, *Adamii*, *Sadachaa*, *Badii*, *Sapheeraa*, *Hawwalanii*, *Agaloo* etc.

Alamayehu Haile and et al. (2006) states that there are three different evidences on genealogy of Jimma but he himself put the following four alternatives:

1. *Lallo*, *Badi*, *Agaloo*, *Billoo*, *Sadacha*, *Qoree*, *Harsuu* and *Hariiroo*
2. *Diggo*, *Sadacha*, *Qoree* and *Laaloo*.
3. *Diggo*, *Laloo*, *Abukaakkoo*, *Sadachaa*, and *Qoree* or *Billii*.
4. Other referred to as the Nine-Gibe. These are *Laloo*, *Agaloo*, *Sadachaa*, *Harsuu*, *Jaarsoo*, *Badii*, *Adamii*, *Hawaalaa* [*Hawaalanii*] and *Sapheeraa*.

From all these alternatives, the Nine-Gibe is more relevant to the Oromo clan currently inhabiting in *Guumaay* district.

### **3. 3. Guumaa State and its Ruling Class**

Since the early *Guumaa* state is divided into districts like Dhidhessa of Ilu-Abbabora zone, and *Guumaay*, *Sigimo* and *Saxxamma* of Jimma zone and all historical documents written on *Guumaa* state are concerned with all these districts; it is not easy to identify the historical facts of

the modern *Guumaay* district. Therefore, this research attempts to assess *Guumaa* state in general.

The kings of *Guumaa* traced their origin to a man called Adam, who lived in *Ebicha Tola* forest, a wooded region between *Guumaa* and *Nonno Gacci*. At that time, *Guumaa* was divided into two parts namely *Daagoyyee* under the leadership of *Sarbaroodaa* and area around *Ciraa* under the leadership of *Jiilchaa*, whom chronicle presented as son of Adam. *Sarbaroda* tried, but failed to capture Adam and killed by Adam (Mohammed, 1994 and Enrico Cerulli, 1922).

After *Sarbaroodaa* died, Adam mounted the throne of the *Daagooyee*. As he started ruling *Guumaa*, he abolished the festival of the *butta* and "This kingdom is a Mussulman kingdom," he said. So Adam quickly made the *Daagoyyee* Muslim. The historian Mohammed Hassen, in discussing this tradition, suggests that Adam was invented so as to claim the original founder of the dynasty was Muslim. When Adam died, his son, *Jiilchaa* ruled only over the land of the *Daagoyee*. During the reign of *Jilchaa's* son, *Oonchoo*, there was continuous fighting with *Gomma*, *Geerra* and *Jimma* and *Oonchoo* expanded his boundry, afterwhich he was nicknamed as *Abbaa Duulaa* (Mohammed, 1994). As different document shows King *Jaawwe*, the 4<sup>th</sup> ruler of *Guumaa* was converted to Islam by merchants from *Shawa* and *Begmdir*, and in turn he imposed his religious faith upon his subjects (Trimingham, 1952).

**Table 1: List of Rulers of the Kingdom of Guumaa**

Tenure of Rulers	Incumbent	Remarks
late 18th century	Adam	Founder of Guma
1795	Jiilchaa	
1810	Oonchoo	
1830 - 1854	Jaawwee	
1854 - 1879	Abba Duulaa	
1879 - 1890	Abbaa Joobir	
1890 - 1899	Abbaa Foggii	Conquered by Ras Tessema Nadew, representative of Menelik II
1899 - 1902	Firrisaa	revolted against Menelik II

**Source:** Based on C.F. Beckingham and G.W.B. Huntingford, *Some Records of Ethiopia, 1593-1646* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1954), p. lxxxvif

### 3.4. Demographic Context

Based on the Oromia Finance and Economic Development profile from 2011 to 2013 total population of Guumaay district is discussed on the following table.

**Table 2:** Population of Guumaay district from 2011 to 2013

Year	Urban +Rural			Urban			Rural		
	Both sex	Male	Female	Both sex	Male	Female	Both sex	Male	Female
<b>2011</b>	68712	34398	34314	6822	3365	3457	61890	31033	30857
<b>2012</b>	70705	35396	35309	7020	3463	3557	63685	31933	31752
<b>2013</b>	71,459	35,773	35,686	6,764	3,353	3,411	64,695	32,420	32276
<b>Average yearly increment in %</b>	1.98%	1.98	1.99	-0.37	-0.13	-0.25	2.24	2.21	2.27

Source: Oromia Finance and Economic Development profiles.

From the total population 9.47 % were urban dwellers and 90.53 % were rural dwellers. The Muslims covers the majority (94.97%) of the population. The Oromo constitute 95 % and *Afaan* Oromo is widely spoken as first language by 96.43% of the people while 3.57% speak other languages. Thus, 2.83 % of the people who belong to other ethnic groups (non-Oromo) speak *Afaan* Oromo as a first language.

**Table 3:** Number of the Population of *Gandaas* in which the shrine centers are found.

Name of <i>Gandaa</i>	Number of population		
	M+F	Male	Female
<b>Quudaa qunaccoo</b>	5625	2845	2780
<b>Abiyyuu Booree</b>	3280	1674	1606

Source: Physical and socio-economic profile of Oromia 2013

According to the 2007 Ethiopian National Population and Housing Census final report the population density of the district is 166.6 people per square kilometer (Km<sup>2</sup>).

### 3.5. Economic Activities

#### 3.5.1. Farming

The main economy of the district is based on agriculture. The major agricultural productions of the district are coffee, Čat, maize, sorghum, xaafii (*eragrotis* teff), barley, wheat and so on.

**Table 4:** The agricultural farming area in hectare and production in quintal of the district in 2003(2010/2011) and 2004 (2011/2012)

Number	Major types of crops	2003(2010/2011)		2004(2011/2012)	
		Area (ha)	Production (q t.)	Area (ha)	Production (q t.)
<b>1.</b>	<b>Cereals</b>				
	Teff	3570	39669.5	2565	35249
	Barley	1060	23910	1034	21275
	Wheat	479	10277.5	380	9239
	Maize	4971	198730	3812	174616
	Sorghum	421	86410	1758	43950
	Millet	10	100	10	120
	Oats	27	243	27	378
<b>2</b>	<b>Pulses</b>				
	Horse beans	560	2080	487	6331
	Field peas	300	3300	260	2344
	Haricot beans	132	1320	820	10660
<b>3</b>	<b>Oil seeds</b>				
	Niger seed	168	1092	155	1085
	linseed	130	910	130	1040
	rapeseed	146	1168	146	1606
<b>4</b>	<b>Permanent</b>				
	coffee	5024.5	45,220.5	5435.4	54,354
	čat	137.8		140	
	Banana	5024.5	5024.5	5024.5	5024.5
	Qocoo (Inset)	137.8	137.8	137.8	137.8

Source: 2003 and 2004 EC Guumaay district socio-economic profile

#### 3.5.2. Livestock, Poultry and Beekeeping

The other income resources of the district are livestock, poultry and honey production. Socio-economic profile of the district shows that the number of livestock and poultry increase yearly.

**Table 5:** livestock and poultry of the district

<i>Year</i>	<i>Cattle</i>	<i>goats</i>	<i>sheep</i>	<i>horses</i>	<i>Mules</i>	<i>Donkeys</i>	<i>Poultry</i>
<b>2003(2010/2011)</b>	9545	12501	31165	4140	2105	1266	49472
<b>2004(2011.2012)</b>	10499	13751	34282	4554	2368	1392	76000

According to the above table the number of livestock has shown considerably increase from year 2003 E.c to 2004 E.c.

Table 6: Honey production and number of beehives

<i>N<sub>o</sub></i>	<i>Types of hives</i>	<i>2003 E.C</i>		<i>2004E.C</i>	
		Number of hives	Production (Kg)	Number of hives	Production (Kg)
<b>1</b>	Traditional	41208	76500	30532	244256
<b>2</b>	Intermediate	1970	18825	1446	21690
<b>3</b>	Modern	4193	40350	3822	122304
	<b>Total</b>	47371	135675	35800	388250

In 2003 E.C the productivity of hives per production in kg

- ❖ With traditional hives, 2.42 kg of honey per beehives
- ❖ With intermediate, 9.15 kg of honey per beehives
- ❖ Modern beehives , 9.62 kg of honey per beehives and

In 2004 E.C the productivity of hives per production in kg

- ❖ With traditional hives, 8kg of honey per beehives
- ❖ With intermediate, 15kg of honey per beehives
- ❖ Modern beehives, 32kg of honey per beehive.

## Chapter Four: Data Presentation and Analysis

As it has been already stated, Oromo indigenous cultural practices have been assessed in three Islamic shrine sites in Guumaay District of Jimma zone. The shrines are *Sheekota Guumaa*, *Abbiyyoo Booree* and *Qubbaa Waarukko*. Accordingly, the detail description and analysis about Oromo indigenous cultural practices in the shrine sites as well as other related features are presented here in this chapter.

### 4.1. Historical Overview *Sheekota Guumaa* and Its Environs

#### 4.1.1. Sheekota Guumaa

Sheekota Guumaa (Sheikh of Guumaa) was the name given for Adam Abdalla. Adam was born in 1861 at the place called *Sawaa*, located in *Dhidheessa* District of Ilu *Abbaboora* zone. At the age of 7 years, he was sent to his uncles, mother's brothers, in *Sanxammaa* and got a chance to join *Sheekota Okkola*, who taught him Qur'an at a place called *Gidoo*. After he completed basic Qur'an education, Adam went back to his family (Informants: Rayya Hajj Jamal Hajj Mohammed).

Around 1870 Islam made considerable advance in Gomma and it was a time when the Islamic teachings were not yet deep rooted in *Guumaa* (Mohammed Hassen, 1994), Adam was sent at the age of 12 years in 1873 for further Islamic education to *Gomma*, where migrant Muslims used to teach Quran. In *Gomma*, Adam joined *Shekota Tijje* (al-Hajj Mahmud Abu Bakr or Mahmud Qoraare) and Shaykh Adam Ibrahim (known commonly as *Shekii Gommaa*), one of the most illustrious local Muslim scholars. They taught him Tasfir, Tawhida, Fikha, Nahiw. Particularly, Shaykh Adam Ibraahim played a great role in his education.

*Some students of Shaykh Adam [Sheekii Gomma] later played an important role in the expansion of Islamic knowledge in Gommaa and Gummaa. For instance, Shekota Gummaa (Adam Abdallāh), whose name is closely linked with Islamization of Gummaa kingdom, had studied under Shekii Gommaa before he left for Wallo (Aman Seifedin, 2006).*

Adam Abdalla (Sheekota Guumaa) studied under these two Sheikhs for indefinite time and left for Dawway (southern Walloo), in unidentified year, to attain advanced level of Islamic



education. In Walloo he studied under Sheikh Bushura Qoti (*Sheekii Qotii*). According to local tradition Adam Abdalla (Sheekota Guumaa) always said, “Isaanuma Qotiitu qotee nu dhaabe”. Meaning, “It was the Qotii, who planted us.”



**Picture 5:** Late Shakota Guumaa (1861-1928) photo from Rayya Hajj Jamal

After he had completed Islamic religious education at Walloo-Dana, Adam went back to Jimma and got the seniority name “Shaikh”. Then after, he was commonly known in the name Sheekota *Guumaa* (the Sheikh of Gumma). In Afaan Oromo grammatical context this Arabic Word, ‘Sheikh’, converted to ‘*Sheekota*’ for two purposes; to pluralize the word and to venerate the person who is called by this seniority name. Even though, *Sheekota Guumaa* is the popular name of Adam Abdalla, people call him in different names; Shaikh Adam Abdallah, *Geetawwan Guumaa*, *Sheekota Dagoyyee* and *Abbaaarri*. *Dagoyyee* is his clan and some people considered him as the religious leader or representative of the *Dagoyyee* clan and call him *Sheekota Dagoyyee* (Sheikh of Dagoye). *Abbaaarri* is cultural name given to Adam Abdallah. Most of the time, in Gibe region after a male married the word ‘Abbaa’ (father) attached to some other names and called “Abbaa ...” therefore; culturally Adam Abdalla was called Abba Waarri (informants).

Adam (Sheekota Guumaa) was the first person to be learned in Islamic education from Guumaa state in particular and from Gibe region in general. He was the eminent reformer of Islamic religion in the area. According informant and descendant of *Sheekota Guumaa*, Raayyaa Hajj Jamaal, while Adam Abdallah was coming back from Walloo, he came across Jimma kingdom's ruler, Abba Jifar II and Abba Jifar gave him residence. Adam also established the first *Madrasaa* at a place called *Ayinoo* in Jimma. Then he established the second *Madrasaa* in Deedoo, where he ordered to cut down the trees, under which the Oromo people used to perform their traditional rituals. Next to Deedoo he established *Madrasas* in *Maannaa* at different places like *Gaarukkee*, *Baqoo*, *Bendoo* (Cesache), *Ilbuu*, *Beeroo* (Kasoo) and *Dadoo* (Kambo). Finally, he went back to *Guumaa*, where lived the rest of his life and established many *Madrasaas* like *Kaso-daamburii*, *Sawaa*, *Nurallah Ahimad*, *Xaawoo*, *Quudaa*, *Waarukkoo*, *Bara Qullubbii*, *Booree Abbiyoo* and *Toobbaa*. According to oral tradition, and Culture and Tourism Office of *Guumaayi* District, Sheekota Guumaa established more than 18 *Madrasaas*.

In the entire places, where he established *Madrasas*, he took actions on traditional rituals and *Qaalluu* institution. Therefore, *Qaallu* and the *Qaallu* institution which had been so vital in the religious life of the Oromo began to lose their importance. In the area, some features of the former Oromo religion continued to manifest them within Islam long after the Islam became the religion of the masses around the first part of the nineteenth century and some other cultural elements are tolerated and accommodated until today (Informants).

Moreover, at the northern front of the *Sheekota Guumaa* mausoleum, there had been a mosque, built around 1896 at the place called *Xaa'oo Masara*, North-East of *Toobbaa Town* (the capital of *Aanaa Guumaayi/Gumaay District*). Since the *Xaa'oo Masaraa* area is lowland, many *darasaa* (Students of the Islamic religion) died of malaria and the mosque was transferred to *Quuda* in 1910 and in 1944 it was rebuilt and its roof covered by corrugated iron.

Adam (Shekota Guumaa) has been considered as a holy man/saint (*wali*), one who is spiritually close to Allah and upon whom Allah has bestowed special favors and miraculous gifts (*baraka*). He represents a link between the creator and His creatures. The saints, alive or dead, are believed to have special powers to help those who seek their assistance. For example, as to the oral tradition of the area, one of the miracles done by Shekota Guumaa was:

When the mosque was transferred from *Xaa'oo Masaraa* to *Quudaa* the people of *Quudaa* and Shekota Guumaa's students (darasaas) moved to Qoxoloo, far from *Quudaa* around 4km, to cut down the bigger tree for pillar of the mosque. The thickness of the pillar was hug of two people at a time. The people wanted to transfer the pillar from *Qoxoloo* to *Quudaa*, but they couldn't move it. After many trials, they sent a message to *Sheekota Guumaa* as it is beyond their control. Therefore, *Shekota Guuma* came and touched the pillar with his *Siwaki* (local tooth brush made form plants) and said, '*mana Rabbi taata deemi* (move, you will be the house of God).' After that the pillar simply pulled by people and easily arrived at *Quudaa*( *Informant: Raayyaa Hajj Jaamal*).

In the mediation, he played great role in fair and balanced way. For example, informants told to researcher as a case what he did once up on a time, when a cow of someone grazed the other person crop and conflict occurred between two individuals. Consequently, the disputants brought their case to Adam, who gave the solution deciding that the owner of the crop could use the milk of the cow for seven consecutive days (*'Amma haqqiin isaa keessaa dhumutti akka elmatu murteesse'*).

The other point that the informants raise as exemplary work of Sheekota Guumaa is that a person pushed the other person's boundary and planted coffee dislodging the border. Then the two neighbors quarreled and brought the case to Sheekota Guuma. After he observed what happened, he gave the solution. He said to the disputants.

Atis haqqiin namaa siif hin fayyadu waan ta'eef buna lafa keerra dhaabame haabuqqifatu, siinis lafti namaa siin hin fayyadu buna kee irraa buqqifadhu. Garuu, yoo bunicha buqqiftu biyyoon waliin ka'u immoo haqqiisaa waan ta'eef biyyoo isaa asitti irraa hurgufii kankee qofa fudhuu deemi. Achiin booda namichi balleesse(daangaa darbe) bunni isaa waan jalaa gogeef lammata daarii hin darbine (Informant; Raayyaa Jamal).

Others' haqqii (belonging of others) will not help you (the owner of the land). Therefore, he has to pick coffee plant off and take to his own land. You also (who breached the boundary) made a mistake. The land of other will not help you. Therefore, pick off your coffee plant and take to your land, but the soil on the root of your coffee plant is not your *haqqii* (belonging to you). So you have to clear the soil from roots and take only your coffee plants. After that, all picked off coffee plants were dried; the person who had the

habit of infringing boundary did not repeat such perverted activities (Informants: Sheikh Kamal; Hajj Abdulsalam).

Adam also taught hard working and appreciated hard workers. Once up on a time he arranged *Daboo* to collect cotton. (*Daboo* is form of cooperation labour between peasants at which Oromo people mobilized during the busy seasons like harvesting). Many people participated in the *daboo*. Some of them, who worked vigorously and collected large amount of cotton, and the others, who collected sluggishly, collected small amount of cotton. Since it was his *daboo*, Adam moved into the cotton field and observed activities of all participants. Therefore, at the end of the *daboo*, he wanted to teach sluggers and he said:

Hundi keessan jirbii ar'a mata-mataa kessaniin funaannattan ofuma keessanii fudhaa galaatii ittiin uffata sagadaa hojjetadhaa. Akka keessa tolanii hojjetaniin argannaanis waldarba (walcaala) jedhani(Informant; Raya Jamal).

All of you take away all the amount of cotton you collected individually for yourself and make praying clothes. As you work honestly, you gain more. This history is still told as a proverb. "Dubbiin funaansa jirbii Sheekota Gumaa taate" Meaning: "*The episode is like Sheekota Guumaa's cotton collection*".

Sheekota Gumaa Islamic shrine center is located around 6 km far from Toobbaa town to the south in *Ganda Quudaa Qunaacoo* particularly at place called *Quudaa*. The center was established as a shrine center in 1928 on the grave of *Sheekota Guumaa* (Adam Abdalla). It was built from wood and mud and thatch-roof. In 1944 as it was getting old it was demolished and rebuilt from stone and mud, and corrugated iron roof in a rectangular sketch by Yemeni expert locally called Abdalla Yaman. The house on the tomb of *Shekota Guumaa* has only one door lying in the western direction which serves as entrance and exit. The house has one window lying in the north. The house of the tomb itself is surrounded by a fenced enclosure and the fence is built from mud and stone. Nonetheless, currently the fence is damaged.



Picture 6: Shekota Guma mausoleum (photo by author during field work)



Picture 7: The Mosque of Sheekota Guumaa (photo by author during field work)

Moreover, at the present-day, both the mosque and mausoleum are getting old. The trees in the compound were cut down and the areas are full of herbs. According to the information from informants, the people, who are celebrating different religious ceremony and pray at the shrine center, are few in number (around thirty), and almost all of them are adults and older.



**Pictur 8:** *The Books stored at individual home.*

According to one of the informants, there were more than 500 old books in the shrine. The books were written and copied in hand by local writers: Sheikh Abdalla Harar, Sheikh Mohammadnur Abba Hormaati, Hajj Mohammed Sheekota, Sheikh Ahimed Hariiroo, Abbiyyoo Sheikh Hussein, Sheikh Abdulqadir Abbaa Magaal, Hajji Muzammil Abba Dhaabaa, Hajji Abdulsamad Abba Dhaabaa, Hajji Umar Gibee, Hajji Reebuu Abbaa Laaftoo, Sheikh Kamaal Abbaa Daajee

and Abbaa Bulguu Abbaa Daajee. The contents of books are about religion and history of Sheekota Guumaa. Nevertheless, from these books, more than 300 were stolen by unknown persons. The rest books are collected at individual's homes.

#### **4.1.2. Qubba Waarukkoo/Waarukkoo Shrine**

Qubba Waarukkoo is also located in *Ganda* Quudaa Qunaacoo around 5km far from *ganda* Yacii Guumaa to the west. Waaruu was the original name of Warukkoo. Waaruu was from Awaalini clan of Limmu Innarriyaa. According to my informants, descendants of Waaruu and guardians of the Waarukkoo, Sheikh Ahimad Kadir and Sheikh Naasir Kadir, Waaruu (Mohammad Anuwar) was the descendant of Abbaa Manoo (Odaa Allayyoo), the first king of Gommaa and the founder of the famous Awaalini dynasty, which ruled over Gommaa for more than a century.

According to the prevailing traditions, the ancestors of Waarukkoo and the Awaalini clan to which he belonged, is neatly linked to *Shaykh* Husayn (of Anaajinaa), and through him to the family of the Prophet. Sheik Ahimad and Sheikh Nasir also count their ancestors orally and read from written note in Arabic language up to Sheikh Hussein of Bale based on the Oromo cultural practices, which require that any person should count his/her ancestor at least up to seven following systematic sequence:

**Table 7:** Back (Warukkoo- Sheikh Huseen) and forward (Waarukkoo – Sheikh Nasir/Sheikh Ahimad) Waarukkoo’s descendants

<i>Name</i>	<i>Stage of descendants</i>
<i>Nasir /Ahimed</i>	<i>1<sup>st</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Jamaal/ Kadir</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Aliyi(Abba jobir)</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Hasan(Abba Bulgu)</i>	<i>4<sup>th</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Mohammadamin(Abbaa Morki/Addo)</i>	<i>5<sup>th</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Adam (Abbaa Goolee/Suuchoo)</i>	<i>6<sup>th</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Suleyiman (Cawwaaqaa)</i>	<i>7<sup>th</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Allayyoo (Abba Bakkee)</i>	<i>8<sup>th</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Caree</i>	<i>9<sup>th</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Mohammad Anuwar (Waaruu)</i>	<i>10<sup>th</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Abdulbaaqii</i>	<i>11<sup>th</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Hussein</i>	<i>12<sup>th</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Kadir</i>	<i>13<sup>th</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Jamaluddin</i>	<i>14<sup>th</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Mohammad</i>	<i>15<sup>th</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Zakariya</i>	<i>16<sup>th</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Nurallah Haimed</i>	<i>17<sup>th</sup></i>
↓	
<i>Nur Hussein (sheik Hussein)</i>	<i>18<sup>th</sup></i>

According to this genealogical order, Waarukkoo is the 10<sup>th</sup> ancestor of Ahimad and Nasir. Nur Hussein (of Baalee) is the 18<sup>th</sup> ancestor of them.



There are two assumptions why Waaruu left Limmuu to Kafa. The first assumption is the conflict happened between him and his younger brother, Xaboo. Other assumption is that Waarukkoo's journeys to Kafa and other places purely on religious grounds. After he spent some years in Kafa, he came back with twelve Kafa clans like Innaraataa, Innamaasa, Innaannuu, Inno, Innooqilloo, Innaangiyaa, Innaaroo, Qaammo, Innayaadaa and Innakaroo settled permanently in Gommaa and Guumaay area. One knowledgeable informant says that clans name those who started in "Inn..." are belongs to Kafa. Different clans which came from Kafa with Waarukkoo are considered as his followers with strong religious respect for him and considered him as a legendary holy man.

In the local traditions, Waarukkoo is remembered as a wanderer who continuously moved between the five Gibe states and Kafa. Thus, his long journey, coupled with his assumed miraculous activities and his legendary descent from *Shaykh* Husayn of Baale made him popular.

*[Waarukkoo] was a worker of miracles: he could fly like an eagle, and could change men into animals. He first settled in Kefa, but was forced to flee and took refuge in Gomma, crossing the flooded Gojeb by striking the waters with his staff and dividing them (Aman Siefedin 2006).*

Like all other Muslim saints, Waarukkoo is also believed to have possessed *Baraka* (literally, divine favor) manifesting itself in the working of miracles (*karama*). His devout followers visit the shrine annually and weekly. A large number of pilgrims from Gommaa, Guumaa, Ilubbabora and from other places have been visiting this shrine, especially if they have vowed to do so or have a vow to fulfill, sought his assistance in times of illness, distress and other problems. Even today, whenever they encounter problems, it is common to invoke his name in order to find support. They yell thus: "... *Waarukkoo gaafa rakkoo*" (Waarukkoo helper in difficulty days).

Traditionally before the area became the Islamic shrine center, the *Waaruu* tomb area was the sacred area of the Oromo people. This is related to the aural tradition of miracle made by *Waarukkoo*. Once upon a time *Waarukkoo* took rest under the shade of the big tree. He asked a woman for milk but she rejected his question. When she arrived at her home, she found all her milk containers empty. She screamed, "This is what that *Waarukkoo* did against me", and ran

irritably to Waarukkoo. At that instant, a big tree split into two and sheltered *Waarukkoo* inside. Starting from that day, whenever cows give birth, the owners of the cows and close neighbors take fresh milk to that big tree and drank under its shade; the local people prepared a big feast and celebrate different ritual ceremonies under the shade of that tree. After his death Warukko also buried near that big tree and the area continued as the center of Oromo traditional ritual center until it was barred by *sheekota Guumaa* (informants).

Since many pilgrims come to the shrine center, there is beautiful yard in front of the Waarukkoo compound at which the pilgrims perform the Mawlid (the Prophet's birthday) festival yearly. Furthermore, the area is green and surrounded by big trees like *Waddeessaa* (*Cordia Africana*), eucalyptus tree, *Sondi* (*Acacia Absinica*), *Gaattiraa* (*Juniperous procera*), *Ambabbeessa* (*Albizia schimperiana*), *Bakkanniisa* (*Croton macrostachyus*) and other trees. From these trees, Waddeessa looks very old and its branch has been cut down many times and also the remnants of different trees are observed. This indicates that before it became Islamic shrine center Qunacoo area had been the center of Qaallu institution, where the Oromo had performed their cultural practices under a tree of the area.



**Picture 9:** *Whole Compound of Qubba Warukkoo of Qunacoo*

Photo by author: during field work.

According to some informants, in the earliest time the shrine areas were protected by the plants and animals around the shrine. For instance, until the mausoleum was constructed, the shrine of *Waarukkoo* at *Quuda Qunacoo* had been surrounded by forest and it had been believed as it had been guarded by wild animals like lions, leopards, wolves and snakes. According to local traditions, wild animals would have attacked those approaching the shrine with evil intentions. Therefore, these animals have been protected by the people. Furthermore, according to the Oromo World view, since everything in this world has its own *Ayyana*, every wild animal should be protected. Bartels (1983) states that *Waaqaa* is bless us, if we do not begrudge the animal their share in what he has given us, because we maintain his *safu*, the *safu* he put between us and animals. The People hate a man who curses monkeys and birds when they come to eat crop. They consider the animals as messengers from *Waaqaa*. Some times when they eat too much crops of somebody, it is considered as punishment of *Waaqaa*.

Bartels also state, *Maccaa* tend to belief that lion's *Ayanaa* is very strong and full of respect. As the *Boranaa* (*angafa*/eldest Oromo) is nearest to *Waaqaa* from human kind, lion/the first wild animal is nearest to *Waaqaa* from all wild animals.

According to the local oral tradition, the elder son of *Agaloo* called *Bosarii* was breeding lions, which lived with man just like other domestic animals. Once up on a time, *Bosarii's* two sons traveled to Kafa, killed two men, and as soon as they went back and arrived at their home, they told to their father what they did. Their father dazed and asked them, why? The sons responded that they did not have a reason. At that moment, the father went out, gathered the lions and advised them that his sons, who killed human being without any reason, might kill all of them and hence, they should run to the forest, which the lions did. This and other stories tell us about Oromo traditional mechanisms of protecting wild animals at the shrine areas.

There are five houses in the *Waarukkoo* compound. From five, two of them are built on graves; tomb of *Waarukkoo*, which became a site of great veneration after his death and grave of Shaikh Ahimad Ariiro (*Waarukkoo* custodian). Similarly with that of Sheekota Guumaa, *Waarukkoo's* mausoleums have only one door sided to the western direction which serves as entrance and exit. As informant described, the reason why the doors of mausoleums lying to the West is that when a man dies the dead body is buried laying on right hand, face to north, head to the East and the

leg to the West. Therefore, while interning and exiting the tomb, since walking through the head of dead body is *Safuu*, the door of mausoleum has to be directed to the West on the leg side.



Pictur 10: *Waarukkoo's mausoleum*, Photo by author during field work

The rests are *Masgiida Juma'aa* (Mosque for Friday pray), Room for Salawat (intercessory prayers) at which weekly ritual ceremonies like *Giiftii Faaxumaa*, *Awwal Kamis*, *Jelanii* and so on take place. According to informant Ahimad Kadir, the fifth one, which was built from thatch-roof, was the oldest or the first mosque in the compound with more than 100 years age. It is built in the design of any Oromo cultural house. It has eight pillars (*utubaa*) and one central pillar (*hiiroo*). The informants assume (they are not sure) that the eight *utubaas* (pillars) are representing the eight Gadaa years or parties/*gogeessaa*.



Pictue 11: Exterior of Old mosque



Picture 12: interior part of the old mosque, all above Photos by author during field Work

In this hut (old Mosque) there are different Oromo traditional and Islamic religion materials and books. Informant Ahimed Kadir said that the materials were made at unknown time and inherited from generation to generation. Most of the books were hand copied by local people. The contents of the books are religious and some of them are historical notes.



Picture 13: Shaattaa



Picture 14: Hankaaksee



Picture 15: Duffii (drums), photo by author during field work



**Picture 16:** *Religion books and historical notes*      **Picture 17:** *Gabatee Mukaa (Wood plate)*  
*Photos by autor during field work*

### **4.1.3. Abiyyoo Booree**

Abbiyyoo Booree shrine center is far away from Toba town around 12 km to the North-East in Ganda Booree Abiyyuu. The meaning of Abbiyyoo is equivalent to father and Booree is the name of the place. Therefore, Abbiyyoo Booree means “the father of Booree.” Abbiyyoo was a name given to Hussein Abba Magal after he had got the title sheikh and done different miracles. He was born around 1865 from the Adami clan, ancestor of Adam the first founder of the dynasty of Guumaa. He was tutored under Sheekota Guumaa for twelve consecutive years. According to oral tradition, Abbiyyoo did different miracles. From these miracles:

Once up on a time a guest came to Abbiyyoo’s home at a night time for his personal affairs. After he contacted Abiyyoo and completed his issue, he stood to leave to his own home, but Abbiyyoo did not allow him to go out because it was mid-night and too dark. The guest appreciated Abbiyyoo for his kindness, but it was a must to go to his home since the pig could eat his maize. However, Abbiyyoo said, “Don’t worry, we are there. We will keep your maize”. Therefore, the guest sat down and started chewing *čat*. While they were chewing *čat*, pig entered the maize farm of the guest at Calloo some 7km from Booree. Then, Abbiyyoo saw the pig in maize farm through his spirit and threw two sticks of *cāt*, which were inserted (speared) on the side of the pig and the pig died (informant; Sheikh Maruf Sheik).

The other miracle that was told to me by Sheikh Maruuf is that once upon a time Abiyyoo sent a woman to the home of her relative with somebody called Mohammed. As they walked some distance from Abbiyyoo's home, Mohammed attempted to arrest and rape the woman in the forest. As soon as Mohammed hanged up the woman, Abbiyyoo observed through his sprits and said "*hin dhiiftu Maammad, Mohammed discontinue!*" Mohammed was shocked and looked for who talked to him, but he never saw any one around him other than Abbiyyoo's sound. Finally, he stopped trial to rape and sent the women to her relatives.

These and other traditional tells are deep rooted in the minds of the followers of Abbiyyoo. Still today they fear; respect him and refrain from doing evil activities because when they try any evil activity, his *Ayanaa* is believed to observe and hurt them or their family or property.

The Qubbaa (shrine) center area is sloppy and it is rounded by big trees. In the compound there are three houses; two mausoleums and one mosque. From these two, Abbiyyoo Tomb is found at the south to the second tomb of Sheikh Abdulqadir Abbaa Magaal, elder brother of Abbiyyoo. Both tombs have only one door. Abbiyyoo's tomb door is directed to the West, like tombs of Sheekota Guumaa and Waaruuukkoo, but uniquely the door of sheikh Abdulqadir tomb is pointed to the east. Any of the informants could not sure why this tomb's door is pointed to the east unlike other tombs, but one of the informants and son of sheikh Abdulqadir Abbaa Magaal gave his suggestion saying that traditionally Oromo built house is pointing to the East and thus, this may indicate the Oromo traditional home building. The mausoleum of Abbiyyoo was first built in 1931 from thatch-roof and around 1970 the wall was converted to stone and mud and the iron sheet roof by three Arabian experts called Ali, Ali and Ahider.





Picture 18: The whole campus of Abiyoo Booree, photo by author during field work



Picture 19: Tomb of Abbiyyo. Photo by author during field work

Even though there are two mausoleums in the center, since Abbiyyoo was known as miracle doer and knowledgeable of Islamic religion, the shrine center is called by Abbiyyoo Abba Magaal.

#### 4.2. The Relations between Shekota Guumaa, Waarukkoo and Abbiyoo Shrine Centers

The three shrine centers of Guumaa have direct relation to each other. From all these shrines Waarukkoo is considered as the eldest/*angafaa*. To confirm the seniority (*angafummaa*) of Waarukkoo the Mawlid started at Waarukkoo on eleventh day of Rabi'a l-Awwal (Islamic calendar). Next to Waarukkoo, the twelfth day of Rabi'a l-Awwal is celebrated at Sheekota Guumaa shrine center. Finally since Abbiyoo is the *quxisuu* (lastly established shrine center or youngest of all), the Mawlid is celebrated at Abbiyoo Booree on thirteenth day of Rabi'a l-Awwal. Thus, Mawlid festivity is started at Waarukkoo and ended at Abbiyoo Booree.

All are the followers of *Sufism* (the ascetic and mystical way of Islam), but they were different in *Tariqa* (religious order or a spiritual way). The followers of Abbiyoo Booree and Sheekota Guumaa were following the order of Sammāniyya. Sammāniyya (named after its founder, Muhammad Abd al-Karim al-Sammani, 1718-75), was dominant in Guumaa. It was introduced into the region by a Sudanese *Amir* Hussein, known among the local Oromo as *Sheekota Garbii*. In this regard, during the early period of Islamization, particularly before the diffusion of the religious orders (*tariqa*), saint Waarukkoo was not connected to a particular religious order (Aman Seifedin, 2006). After religious orders were introduced, the descendents of Waarukkoo were members of Qadiriya Tariqa (named after its founder, a Abd al- Qadir al- Jilani, 1077-1166), but in early 1920s, Sheekota Guumaa introduced Summaaniyya to Waarukkoo's followers.

Sheekota Guumaa worked a lot to purify Waarukkoo from different traditional beliefs and ritual ceremonies. He ordered to cut down the trees found near the shrines of Waarukkoo. He taught the local people that Waarukkoo was a Muslim and a slave/servant of Allah, and thus he should be treated as a Muslim not as a *Qaallu* (a priest of Oromo traditional religion). He also striped women and *shubbissaa* from entering on the festivity of Mawlid. Inside the enclosure of shrine of Waarukkoo, *shubbissaa* (ritual dancing) was absolutely prohibited by him. Generally, Sheekota Guumaa enforced a strict Islamic discipline and norms on the celebration of the Mawlid and attempted to remove ideas about the *Qaalluu* from the mind of the people although he was not too much successful especially in the later case.

### 4. 3. Pilgrimage and Spirit Possession

#### 4. 3. 1. Pilgrimage to the Shrines

When pilgrimage is mentioned, the first view that comes to one's mind is the travelling of Christians to Jerusalem and Muslims to Mecca. This is, however, oversimplification. Stopford (1999) states that, pilgrimage has been practiced for thousands of years and has been a feature of every major religion and very many minor cults across the world, and its origins probably go back long before the written record. All pilgrims were not pilgrims for the same purpose. Even at a specific pilgrimage center it is possible to find people coming with various purposes and a single individual may travel on pilgrimage for a multitude of motives. Gemechu (2007) states that, six driving forces behind pilgrimages in Ethiopia. First, it is common to almost every religion to undertake journeys for the sake of spiritual fulfillment. Second, it can be viewed for expression or claiming group identity and used as occasions for the fulfillment of group rites of passages such as age-set transitions and hand-over of spiritual power. The third motive is their use as healing centers. The fourth one is that related with the idea of votive gifts. Under this ideology, we can observe the concept of reciprocal relationship between the supernatural and the individual. The fifth motive to make pilgrimages is the issue of trade and extortion; for sale of many different goods and religious supplies such as religious literature, amulets, paintings, manuscripts etc. and medicines. The sixth motive is associated with recreation. This is especially the case when the center is found in proximity with urban centers.

In the Oromo indigenous cultural practice, pilgrimage is a journey to a holy place for religious reasons to *Abbaa Muudaa* (father of anointment or a great *Qallu*) every eight year. *Muudaa* pilgrimage was considered to be a very holly pilgrimage and the pilgrims were seen to be under the special protection of *Waaqaa*. As Bartels (1983) states, among the *Maccaa*, before setting out, the pilgrims would spend the last night standing up; did not sleep in door and abstain from sexual intercourse. They walked having straight stick in one and *qumbi* in another hand; did not cross more than one river a day; did not wear trousers and all Oromo would give them hospitality on journey. When they reach *Abbaa Muudaa's* house, they would tell their problem and *Abbaa Muudaa* take single seed of myrrh and throw in fire. By looking the smoke, he advised them and foretold the future.

The above traditional Oromo practice of visiting Abbaa Muudaa every eight years to have the anointment ceremony for them under the *Gadaa* system, had already been transfigured into a Muslim practice of visiting (*ziyāra*) mausoleums. However, the Oromo people of western Ethiopia have accepted Islam in their own way (Ishihara 2009). Moreover, some elements of pre-Islamic Oromo culture performed in Islamic shrine centers. For the Oromo, this pilgrimage (*muudaa*) represented a sort of continuity between the past and the present. In effect, when they abandoned their former religion/*Waaqeffanna*, the cult of the sheikh became a rallying point and an important factor in their spiritual life and worldview. Similarly the Islamic shrine centers in Guumaay District have great importance in preserving the pre-Islamic culture of the Oromo.

There are different events which made the pilgrims to move to the shrine centers of Sheekota Guumaa and its environs shrine sites. One of the events has been the celebration of Mawlid (the Prophet's birthday festival) yearly. Since Waarukkoo is *angafaa* (the elder), the pilgrims start to celebrate Mawlid at *Waarukkoo* shrine center, next to *Waarukkoo*, they celebrate at *Shekota Guumaa* shrine and finally they celebrate at *Abiyyoo Booree* since it is *quxisuu*/youngest. In the Oromo cultural practice, *angafa* has a great respect in all aspect of life. Every priority is given to the elder. Even *Abba Muudaa* was from the *Boranaa*, since the *Boranaa* is the elder of the Oromo clans and the *Qalluu* of Oromo clans are from the elder lineage.

The shrine centers of Sheekota Guumaa and its environs have been used as the starting and ending place for pilgrimage to Nur Hussein of Bale shrine center. Particularly Waarukkoo shrine center is serving as starting and ending place for journey to Dirree Nur Hussein until today. Before they start their journey, the pilgrims gathered at Qubba Waarukkoo to be blessed, to take orders and experiences from elders or from those who had the experience of pilgrimage to Dirree Nur Hussein of Bale. After they spend seven to fourteen days at Dirree Nur Hussein, they directly come back to Qubba Waarukkoo (Waarukkoo Shrine) to report and make the pilgrimage full or complete. They say *guutachuuf as deebine* (to make our pilgrimage full, we return to here). Those who come back from Nur Hussein carry *Alama* (Y-shaped sticks). The purpose of *Alama* is its service as an emblem for making pilgrimage and when they walk on foot in rural area (in forest) they push plants or grass from their ways.



Picture 20: Some Pilgrims on journey from Nur Hussein to Waarukkoo



Picture 21: Wel-Coming to pilgrims from Nur Husein at Waarukkoo  
All above photos by author during fiel work



Picture 22: On rest at arrival (Waarukko)

Picture 23: Information Sharing and short dua

Photo by author during field work

The pilgrims practice different Oromo customs such as *ebbissu* (blessing), *shubissu* (a rhythmic rocking motion), *kadhannaa* (praying), having symbol of pilgrim and other modes or similar activities with what pilgrims to *Abba Muudaa* on the journey did. Nevertheless, in Ziyyera (pilgrimage) to Shekota Guumaa and Abbiyyoo Booree, different ritual activities are totally pending to collapse. Only a few old and adults who are living around the shrines are performing Oromo custom and Sufism ritual practices. Pilgrimage to shrine sites by Sufism followers is blamed and criticized by Islam reformists (locally called *Wahabiyas*). Some people who used to make pilgrimage to Dirree Nur Hussein of Bale are quitting pilgrimage and are giving back their Alamas (Y-shaped stick they brought from Dirre Nur Hussein) to Waarukko shrine. They don't throw out to everywhere because they brought it from shrine area. This shows that they reserve their Alama in the site to divert the attention of something which forces them to loss Alama.



Picture 24: Some of *Alamas* backed to the shrine by those who ‘fled’ from the shrine.

#### **4. 3. 2. Hadra**

*Hadra* is gathering of people for collective worship that is conceived not only as a religious occasion for recalling God and invoking divine blessing, but also as a social gathering where neighbors and friends exchange news and ideas. A custodian of Waarukkoo Sheikh Haimad Kadir and my assistant Rayya Jamal explain that in past every day of the week was dedicated to



a certain wali providing people with religious justification and reasons for opening *hadras* any time they want with Oromo cultural elements on their ways.

1. Monday is dedicated to Prophet Mohammed.
2. Tuesday: the day of Sheikh Hussein of Bale.
3. Wednesday: the day of Abdulqadir al-Jilani, and the Qadiriya *hadra*.
4. Thursday: the day of Faaxumaa, a daughter of the Prophet Muhammad
5. Friday: the day of Juma'a and Sammaniya *hadra*.
6. Saturday: the day of Sawidna Khadiri.
7. Sunday: the day of Sayyid Nasrullah of Limmuu.

In Shekota Guumaa and Abbiyyoo, *hadra* was performed up to early 1990s in a good manner. Nonetheless, in the present-days since the ritual ceremony is abandoned by *Wahhabis* and the number of Sufis is very less, the *hadra* ceremonies are not persistent as they were performed in the past. However, in Waarukkoo even though the number of the participants is lower, it is practiced better than those of the two.

#### **4.3.3. Giiftii Faaxumaa**

The word “*Giiftii*” is Afaan Oromo word, an honorific name given to ladies. It is given to *goofta*'s (king's) wife or the lady, who is the owner of someone else or something. Sometimes, it is used to call someone, who is guest or whose name is not surely known. In another way, Ishihara (2009) states that most of the descendants of *Al-Faki* live in the Jimma area, where they, both men and women, are extended considerable respect, called by the honorific title *Giifti*. Usually in the Oromo cultural title names, *giifti* is given to the woman to show feeling of admiration or hierarchy. Therefore, *this honorific name, Giiftii*, is given to Faaxumaa, daughter of the Prophet Muhammad. The people memorize Faaxumaa in *hadra* (collective worship), which they call as *Giiftii Faxumaa* and is celebrated weekly on Thursday by Muslim women. Every Thursday, women gathered together to pray for fertility, health and prosperity, pray for childlessness (barren women/*maseena*). In the past, the women living around the shrine areas celebrated at the enclosure of the shrine site. However, in the current time the ceremony takes place at individual's homes turn by turn.

This *hadra* performance consists of six elements: the recitation of poetic and non-poetic verses, making *du'aa*/pray (collective supplication for divine grace), chewing *čat*, drinking coffee, feasting, and burning incense. In the performing of each element, different Oromo cultural practices have been seen. In the recitation of poetic and non-poetic verses the women invoke and narrate about the miraculous intervention of Giifti Faaxumaa's holiness. They also recount how Giifti Faaxumaa took them out of problems and present thanks to Giiftii Faxumaa. Some of them induce the members of the *hadra* to stand, and jump up and down in the traditional way of Oromo dancing (*shubbisuu*) by beating the drum as follow:

**Afaan Oromo**

**English Translation**

Amiin jedhaa, Yoo nama eebbisanii,  
Balaa jabaate, Nurraa deebisanii,  
Garaa laafuu dide, nu hinlaaffisannaa,

*Say Amen when she blesses  
She prevented dangerous accident on to us  
We can convert the hardened heart to  
compassion*

Caatii haajaa hin baafne, nu hinqaamsisiinaa.  
Garaa laafuu dide, nu halaaffisanuu,  
Caatii haajaa himbaafne, nu hinqaamsisanuu  
Yaa rabbi nuu guuti muraadii,  
Barakaa Faaxumaa Rasuulii,  
Dhaaphuu nu laali.

*Don't force us to chew an invalid cat  
She can convert hardened heart to compassion  
She will not force us to chew invalid cat  
Ho God ! Give us a complete a murad  
Blessing of Faxuumaa of the prophet  
Look us carefully*

Most of the time the important food on *hadra* ceremony is *Marqaa* (porridge) with butter and cheese, and *buna qalaa* (slaughtered coffee). The food is prepared and presented to the women by the wife of the house hold. As soon as the food is drawn near one of the elder women, she starts to bless (*eebbisuu*) the woman who presents the food and here families as follow:

**Afaan Oromo**

**English translation**

Manni mana nagaa siif haa ta'u,  
Mana keeyrii hata'u  
Maqaa Rasuulaatiin,  
Heerumsiifadhu,  
Fuusifadhu,

*May your house be peaceful  
May your house be healthy  
In the name of the prophet  
May your daughter gets marriage  
May your son gets marriage*

Ganama keewatani,	<i>If you save at your early age</i>
Galgala taa'anii nyaatuu,	<i>You may feat at old age</i>
Haara galfii	<i>Get rest</i>
Rabbi duuniya siif haa kennu	<i>May God give you wealth</i>
Rabbi maatii keen walitti sihaajjallatu	<i>May God love you with your family</i>
Afaan keessan tokko haa ta'u ,	<i>May you be in agreement</i>
Garaan keessan tokko haata'u	<i>May you have one heart</i>
Waan laattan hin dhabiina	<i>May you have what you can give</i>
Waanyaatan hindhabiina	<i>May you have what you will eat</i>
Nagaa argadha	<i>May you live in peace</i>
Isha Allaa .	<i>Thanks to Alla</i>

This Islamic rite is more enthusiastic towards the Oromo traditional values. As elsewhere in Islamic Africa, the influence of Islamic laws and codes was very limited, and was always subordinate to and combined with the local customs (Hassen, 1990; Trimmingham, 1965). Though *Giifti Faxuumaa* is the Islamic ritual, the Oromo women reflect their cultural elements. The feast starts and ends in blessing. In the *eebbisuu* (blessing) the women wish *nagaa/peace* and all good things to be given from *Allah* (God) to the women of the house hold. They bless by mixing Afaan Oromo and Arabic words. In the Oromo cultural practices and world view *nagaa/peace* is not only the absence of war but also a proper relationship within the localities and with *Waaqaa* (God) (Dessalegn 2005; Tsaga, 2010). They start blessing from *Nagaa* and end with *Nagaa*. In Oromo daily life the word *Nagaa* has been repeatedly used.

*The Oromo of Ethiopia maintain that "peace," translated as [n]agaa, is the essential key to all cosmic and human order, possessing the highest and most central value for humanity to pursue. This view is expressed in the songs they sing, in the prayers and blessings they offer, in the ritual and ceremonial activities they undertake, in the speeches and narrations they deliver, in the administrative and legal actions they perform and in the proverbs, folktales and stories they cite or tell. The Oromo concept and practice of peace is based on traditional values and beliefs anchored in the gadaa (Tenna Dewo, 2008).*

The other element performed in Giftii Faaxumaa is du'aa (supplication), literary *Kadhannaa* in Afan Oromo. In fact the word is derived from the Arabic root meaning to call out or to summon. It is calling out to God; it is a conversation with creator. Qadhi, Y. (2001) defines that du'aa is worship, the seeking of aid, a request, call and speech to Allah and he also called it the weapon of the believer. On the du'aa ritual ceremony of Giftii Faxuma at Warukkoo, the women make a curve line and put a bundle of *čat* (*Catha edulis*) in front of them. The elder woman picks a *čat*, blesses and gives to the next woman; the second also blesses and gives to another next woman. After all the women bless and spit saliva on *caat*, the last one gives to the woman, who is the owner of the home. She also receives the *čat* by kissing on the center of palm of the woman, who gives *čat* to her. This action of spiting saliva on the *čat* symbolizes blessings from their heart. In Oromo World view, spiting the drool is not only for blessing, but is also used for forgiveness. If an old woman of the participant of the ceremony cursed other woman before, the cursed woman said, *naa tufaa* (spite for me) and the old woman also said, *tuf..tuf..tuf... siif tufeera* (I spite) .

After that, they continue chewing *čat* and start chatting with each other. As they are getting *mirqanaa* they start du'a, which is started by the elder women and the other said "Amen" holding up their palm and moving their fingers. Chewing the leaves of *čat* shrubs is one of the most spectacular component of religious rituals at Giifti Faaxumaa ritual ceremony. One of my informants told me that there is no *Giifti Faaxumaa* ritual ceremony without *čat and coffee*; *čat* is a leaf blessed by Allah (God), as one chews more, he/she memorizes *Giiftii Faaxumaa's* assistance and feels the fear of Allah (God).



Picture 25: Ćat ceremony on Gifti Faxuma and Singing (humming), photo by author

The other important element in *Giiftii Faaxumaa* ritual ceremony is coffee ceremony. While chewing *ĉat* and making du'a, the owner of the house prepares coffee, which is common activity in Oromo society on every ritual activity. As part of coffee ceremony, burning incense is also done. In fact burning incense is not only related with coffee ceremony, but also the whole ceremony of the *Giiftii Faaxumaa*. The ceremony has its own coffee pot, which is different from other ordinary coffee pots. According to my informant Hadha Firathe, coffee pot of *Giiftii Faaxuma* gives service only on the *Giiftii Faaxuma* ritual ceremony. It is bigger than others ordinary coffee pot. This pot is found in the home of every member of *Giiftii Faaxumaa*.

In the ceremony, any male has no right to participate including the husband of the host of the ceremony. Only unmarried boys help the women by chopping and splitting the fire wood, and fetching water. They help them outside of the house and do not enter the house. The women give them food and drinks outside. Small children, who cannot differentiate bad from good, can attend the ceremony. Unmarried girls also do not attend it; they are invited only for feast that afternoon, after eating and drinking, they go back to their house. After the main ceremony

completed, at the night the married men are also invited to eat what is prepared for them. After eating and drinking, they can recite and pray side by side with the women throughout the night. According to my informant Sheikh Nasir Jamal, the activities like shubbisuu, coffee ceremony and other activities performed in the ritual ceremony have no bases in the Holy Quran stating that he cannot refer any verse or article from the Quran. On the other hand, as to some of my informants, the Ateetee (female divinity) had been performed in the area, but after the rise of Shekota Guumaa, Ateetee and other non-Islamic rituals performed around the shrines were prohibited. Nonetheless, the Oromo women have inserted some cultural practices of Ateetee in *Giftii Faxuma* ritual ceremony. Therefore, some *Giftii Faaxuma's* ceremonial elements have been derived from *Ateetee*, because we can observe different *Ateetee* elements in *Giiftii Faaxumaa*; shubbisuu, eebbisuu, cultural coffee ceremony and preparation of cultural food.

*Ateetee* is a fertility ritual honor of the spirit of motherhood (*ayyana dubarti*) in Oromo tradition. The *Atete* practice by women is one part of a belief system that women are intermediary figures between *Waaqaa* that represents nature and the physical world or human. This is a part of the belief system that women are closer to nature in their nurturing and life-sustaining activities.

Generally, the purposes of *Giiftii Faaxuma* ritual ceremony, in addition to pray for fertility, are for getting prosperity and preventing conditional events like drought and epidemic diseases. The ceremony is also a help to set *Nagaa*; reconcile women if any dispute is there among themselves, because they assume that, if the disputants are there together to pray, *Giftii Faxuma* do not hear their pray. Therefore, this day the senior women reconcile them if there is dispute among the members of *Giiftii Faaxumaa*. It is also used to strengthen neighborhood and social interaction or solidarity. It is also the ceremony at which women express freely their idea; act as they wish without any fear and discuss their problems.

Starting from the 1980s, a new wave of Islamic movement has flourished. The fervency at which Islamic revivalism has been moving is high. The Oromo of Guumaa, who are followers of Sufism Islam and practice *adraas* like *Giftii Faaxumaa*, are highly criticized by revivalists and most of them are retreating from mythical Islam.

#### 4.3.4. Sadaqa

Sadaqah is an Arabic term widely used to cover all kinds of charity. Literally 'Sadaqah' means 'truth'. It signifies a charitable deed. However, Muslims are commanded to give compulsory charity with determined purpose and established rules. This compulsory charity is referred to as 'Zakat' (The Central Zakat Committee, 2005). The committee also states that the term 'Zakat' and 'Sadaqah' are often used interchangeably in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Zakat, however, denotes obligatory charity and Sadaqah implies voluntary charity. For easy understanding, the Sadaqat may be classified into two categories: Sadaqah Wajibah (Obligatory Charity) and Sadaqah Nafilah (Voluntary Charity). According to the Islamic law every adult Muslim with regular income and assets is expected to pay each year two and a half per cent of his/her capital in excess of basic needs. Eight categories of individuals are permitted to get *zakāt*. These are the orphans, the poor, the wayfarer, the debtors, the collectors of *zakāt*, the beggars, the captives (to regain their freedom) and those engaged in propagating Islam. The last category includes, among others, the religious teachers and students (*darasa*), and the *imams* (Aman Seifedin, 2006).

Among the Oromo of Guumaa that follow Sufism Muslim, Sadaqah is beyond what we have discussed above. They assume *Silga dhaabachuu* and *shanan deessuu* as sadaqah. They practice *silga dhaabachuu* (*sa'a dhaabachuu*) as it is practiced in indigenous Oromo cultural practice. *Silga dhabachuu* is one of Oromo traditional practices relating to cattle. Traditionally Oromo acquire the knowledge of the importance of colostrums feeding for the new born calves especially for the first 3-5 days.

According to informant and descendant of Shekota Guumaa, Sheikh Kamal Hajji Abdulsama, feeding colostrums for the new born calves is to strengthen the calves to resist disease and grow fast and healthy. To celebrate *Silga dhabbannaa*, milk is collected starting from the fifth day postpartum for the next 2-3 weeks, and kept to naturally ferment. On the day of *Silga dhabbichuu* the owners of the calves, collect *coqorsaa* (running grass/ *Eleusine jaegeri*), *ulmaayii* (*Ekebergia capensis*), *hiddii* (solanaceous fruit/*Solanum Marginatum*) and other plants, and prepare *buna qalaa* (slaughtered coffee/cultural food) and call the neighbors. After all the neighbors gathered, one of the elders having *coqorsa* in his hand start blessing before consumption of dairy products from the new calving.

<b>Afaan Oromoo</b>	<b>Engllsh</b>
Bismillaa'i Rahman Irahimiin	<i>Bismila'i Rahman Irahimiin</i>
Waaqxi Nagaa nu bulchite nagaan nu oolch.	<i>Let God help us to pass the night in peace, as that of the day</i>
Kan nuuf kennef kenni	<i>May you give for who gave us</i>
Jabbiin haa guddatu	<i>May calf grow up</i>
Haati fayya haa bultu	<i>May the cow be healthy</i>
Gurruun fayyaa haata'u	<i>May udder be healthy</i>
Muchi fayyaa haa ta'u	<i>May the teat be healthy</i>
Kormi dalla haabulu	<i>May the Bull be alive in the corral</i>
Kan rimaa'e garaa haabulu	<i>May the pregnant be saved from abortion Waaqni</i>
Nagaa Nuu haakennu	<i>May God give us Nagaa (peace)</i>

After the provided *silgaa* with *buddena* (injera) feasted, they wash their hands only with water on the collected *coqorsa*. Traditionally, after feasting milk and its products washing with soap or other detergents is prohibited because they assume that washing hands after consumption of milk and its products with detergents is considered as to hate the cattle and as the result, Waaqaa may take off cattle.

The other Oromo indigenous culture considered as *Sadaqah* in *Sheekota Guumaa* shrine and its environs is the *shanan deessuu*. *Shanan deessu* is a ceremony on the fifth day after woman gets birth. In this ceremony, neighboring women gather; feast porridge and wash the body of a woman, who gets birth, by boiling water with different kinds of plant. They also sing, dance (*shubbisuu/dalaguu*) and beg *Maram* to give children for barren women. In the case of *Qubbaa Waarukkoo*, the women who get birth do not enter any other person's home until 40<sup>th</sup> day. On 40<sup>th</sup> day, she goes to *Waarukkoo* shrine to be blessed by one of the sheikhs or custodians of the Shrine. It has similarity with the *hammachiisaa* of the indigenous Oromo religion.

Generally the followers of Sufism around *Sheekota Guumaa* and its environs Islamic shrine centers are still practicing these indigenous Oromo cultural practices side by side and blending with their new Islamic religion.



#### 4. 3. 5. Nuuroo

Nuuroo is derived from two Afaan Oromo words: Nu (us) and Roobi (Give rain). Meaning “nu roobii (give us rain). Among the Oromo, rain is always the sign of blessing from *Waaqaa* because rain (water) that comes from the sky promotes the growth of grass; the grass is food for cattle and the cattle give milk. Therefore, if the rain is irregular, they assume that there is something wrong which makes *Waaqaa* unhappy and the elders arrange Nuuroo. Nuuroo ceremony is still practiced in all the three shrine centers with modifications.

In former time during the Nuuroo ceremony, particularly in Waarukkoo shrine of Awalani clan, three sheep used to be slaughtered near the river and people pray (*du'aa*) to *Waaqaa*. The appropriate sheep for Nuuroo ceremony had to be young male and the color of the sheep has to be *gurraachaa* (black), *diimaa* (red) and *daalachaa* (grey). These three sheep were slaughtered near the three rivers in three consecutive days. On the first day of Nuuroo, Warra Qunnacoo (people living around Qunaacoo River) had to slaughter *daalachaa* (grey) sheep near Qunaacoo River. Next to Warra Qunaacoo, Warra Boonoo (people living around Boonoo River) should slaughter *diimaa* (red) sheep near the river of Boonoo. Finally, Warra Qoxoloo (people around Qoxoloo River) had to slaughter *gurraacha* (black) sheep on the third day, after which the ceremony completed and the rain was expected to immediately start.

In Oromo society, these three colors have their own symbolic meanings. That is why the Baqqaloo of Qaalluu Oromo, the Oromo flag contains the black, red and white colors. Black color is symbolizing the unknown universe, super natural, and purity. Red symbolizes humans' life (blood) or the age that are very active life in different institutions. The white symbolizes the stuff that are known to people or something that have lived and passed. White Human bones or ash represent those who have passed through active life in the society, and illustrations of no more to be used as candle and sacrifice, and it is the age of retirement.

Concerning these three colors, my informant Abdo Sheikh Nasir whose father was a known Sheikh, told me that his father slaughtered a white sheep or a hen near their coffee farms when the coffee begin to flower. He said: “Ho *Waaqa* [God]! Who shows us the white flower also show us its fruits.” During the festival he sprinkled the blood on the coffee plant or burned the

bones of slaughtered animals and threw the ash in different directions. Then when the coffee beans turned red, he also slaughtered a red sheep or hen and prayed saying: “Protect the fruit of coffee from rime, heavy wind and coffee disease”. Finally when the coffee bean collected and became black, a sheep or a hen of the same color (black) was slaughtered and the man gave thanks to his *Waaqaa* (God) and brought to *Waarukko* shrine to obtain additional blessing from Warukkoo. In fact, they did not bring only coffee bean to *Waruukkoo* but also any *angafa midhaanii* (the elder of crops) to *Waarukko* before they started to eat. *Angafa midhaanii* (the elder of crops) is the crop which reaps first. This informant blames that those who obliterated this ritual, because after this ritual terminated all crops and coffee could not get *barakaa* (*not blessed*), and different diseases, frost, heavy rain and draught have attacked our coffee and crops.

#### **4. 4. Marriage practice**

Marriage can be described as culturally approved relationships or a union of man and woman, in which there is cultural endorsement of sexual intercourse between the marital partners of the opposite sexes and, generally, the expectation that children will be born of the relationship (International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 1977).

In the case of Oromo, marriage is one of the three things that Oromo talk about in life: birth, marriage, and death (Gemechu and Asefa, 2006). In order to get endorsement of the society it is necessary that the marriage to be formed and recognized in accordance with the customs and taboos of the societies. In Oromo traditional marriage practices, there are also different *laguu* (taboos). For instance, Marriage in between blood relatives is taboo. Oromo before making any contact with the bride's parents, the groom's parents at least probe back seven generations to make sure that the families are not related by blood. The wife calling her husband's and all his families' name, being deflowered before marriage, and marriage between Oboo and Cooroo (dual system draws a careful dividing line between adjacent generations in matter of sex and procreation) are also taboos in Oromo.

The other considerable point in Oromo marriage practice is *Milki*. It is an omen, a sign of good or evil to come. In all steps to be taken and in all events around marriage preparation, every one should be careful for *Milki*. Oromo believed that *Milki* is not only an indicator of the success or failure of marriage at initial stage, but also throughout the life of the partners (Holcomb, 1973).

Especially on the proceeding day and on the day of actual journey for engagement to the house of the future wife, everything needs to be perfect, whole and complete. These future success and failure are symbolized in different activities and events. As my informants, Ahimad Kadir and Sheik Shafi, for example there are signs the society used as indicators of good or bad.

**Milkii Gaarii (Indicators of good milkii):**

Yoo horiin halkan nagaan bule	<i>If all domestic animals spend the night in peace.</i>
Mana lamanittuu biqilli yoo akka gaariitti biqile	<i>If the grain sprouts rightly in both families.</i>
Bishaan yookiin aannan qodaa guutuu baatee yoo namni namatti dhufe	<i>If elders for engagement come across a person carrying a container full of water or milk</i>
Dubartiin ulfi yookiin mucaa baatee yoo namatti dhufte	<i>If they yome across a pregnant women, a women carrying a young baby</i>
Namni lama ta'ee yoo itti dhufan (dhiiraafi dubartii yoo ta'e caalaa bareedaadha	<i>If they come across two men walking together (if male and female better)</i>
Namni loon hoofee yoo namatti dhufe	<i>If they come across people driving cattle</i>
Jaarssaa fi Jaartiin yoo namatti dhufan	<i>If they come across Old man and woman.</i>
Otoo aannan raasanii yookiin osoo sa'a lmanii yoo qaqqaban milkii gaariidha	<i>If they arrive at bride's house while churning milk or milking cows</i>

**On the other hand there are signs which indicate Milkii ajaa /gadhee (bad milki)**

Yoo abiddi dhamee bule	<i>If the fire dies in both family</i>
Yoo namni tokko dubbii nama gaddisiisu fidee namatti hime	<i>If anyone comes across with bad news</i>
Qodaa duwwaa baatee yoo namatti dhufe	<i>If the elders come across a person carrying empty container.</i>
Dubartii abbaan manaa irraa darbe (irraa du'e) yoo namatti dhufte	<i>If they come across a widow</i>
Sardiidni yoo nama qaxxaamurte.	<i>If they are crossed by a fox</i>
Namni tokko qofaa yoo namatti dhufe	<i>If they come across one man walking on the road</i>
Yoo haxxifatan	<i>If some one sneezing</i>
Biqilli yoo sirritti hin biqille	<i>If he grain not sprouts rightly in both families</i>

Sometimes they come across unfamiliar things which are not easy to justify whether it is bad or good milki. In such cases the family of the fiancé goes to the *ayyaana himtuu* (fortune-teller) and *ayyana himtu* tell them whether it implies, good or bad milkii.

However, these traditional marriage practices are approaching to be terminated in the area of this study. My informants told me that this generation is ignoring *safuu* and *milki*. The youngsters are beyond the control of their father and mother. They do not consider about blood relation and about her/his family back ground. They accept what others [religion revivalists] erroneously tell them. They argue against elders raising the pseudo-modern jargons like *fedhii* (interest) and *mirgaa* (right). Therefore, the Oromo marriage practices are not strongly practiced in the Shekoota Guumaa shrine and its environs.

## **Chapte Five: Summary and Recommendations**

### **5. 1. Summary**

Culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, language, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving. It reflects the characteristics of a particular group of people. This multi-dimensional human aspect is affected by internal and external social, political and economic factors((Rossi, 1980 and Friedl and Pfeiffer 1977: 283-284).

Oromo indigenous cultural practices are not out of the impact of these factors. The main reasons of changes of cultural practices of Oromo are the gradual decline of Gada system (and subsequently the Oromo religion centered on it), the expansion of introduced religions: Islam and Christianity, impact of political ruling class, cultural diffusion of neighboring ethnics and so on. Under all these burden Oromo have been practicing their indigenous culture side by side with the intruding religions. In some cases, Oromo adapted their cultural practices to those intrusive religions and political conditions of a stint, and in other cases they adapted the interfering religions and political conditions to their cultural practices.

Like other Oromo cultural practices, the indigenous cultural practices of Oromo in Sheekota Guumaa Islamic shrine center and its environs are affected by the rise of the monarchial ruling system which championed Islam for ideological reasons. These two cases created pressurizing conditions for the rapid changes of Oromo indigenous cultural practices. After the expansion of Islam, different Islamic saints worked to purify Islam religion from traditional rites. However, this does not mean that they discontinued all elements of the Oromo Cultural practices altogether. Though, the people were pressurized to be separated from their traditional cultural practices, some features of the former Oromo religion continued to manifest themselves within Islam long after the latter became the religion of the masses, which tolerated and accommodated numerous previous cultural practices. Yet these remnants of Oromo culture are in frustrations because the worships and activities conducted at shrines are fiercely opposed by the revivalist movement called Wahhabism (locally called Wahabiyyaa).

## **5. 2. Recommendations**

As already mentioned, the Oromo indigenous cultural practices at Sheekota Guumaa and its environs Islamic shrines are performed in line with and syncretized with Islamic religion. Relatively, the shrines are playing a role to preserve Oromo cultural practices in the area. They are not only a religious places, but also important depositories of the pre-Islamic cultures of Oromo. However, the shrine sites themselves and Oromo cultural practices in the sites are currently threatened from Islam revivalists. Thus, the following measures are recommended to protect the shrines and conserve Oromo indigenous cultural practices to utilize their values.

1. Awareness creation program about the current and future values of the shrines must be given to the local community as well as to the regional and local government officials to protect the sites from present and future threatening.
2. Make the area tourism center and the local communities have to be benefited from income that will be obtained from the center.
3. Basic infrastructure such as electricity, telephone and all weather roads must be constructed by the government, NGO'S and local community.
4. To preserve the written documents and other cultural materials, the District administration should construct Museum at shrine sites.
5. Culture and tourism committee should be established at local administration level and the district office of Culture and Tourism should provide professional support to the committees to initiate and promote their cultural practices at their local area.

## Appendix

### Informants during Interview and Group discussion

No	Name	Sex	Age	location	remark
1	Abba Boor Abba Simal	M	55	Sheekota Guumaa shrine	
2	Abba Garoo Abba Sambu	M	60	Sheekota Guumaa shrine	
3	Abba Jabal Abba Jihad	M	61	Abbiyyoo Booree	
4	Abba Na'iim Sheik Isaa	M	55	Sheekota Guumaa shrine	
5	Ahimed Kadir	M	60	Waarukkoo	
6	Hadha Firaab Abba Foggii	F	57	Waarukkoo	
7	Hajj Ahimad Abba Bulgu	M	63	Abbiyyoo Booree	
8	Najash Kamal	M	42	Sheekota Guumaa shrine	
9	Raya Hajj Jamal Hajj Mohammad	M	45	Sheekota Guumaa shrine	Descendant of Sheekota Guumaa
10	Sheik Shaafii Ganjii	M	85	Sheekota Guumaa shrine	
11	Sheikh Ahimad Hajj Kadir	M	58	Waarukko	Descendant of Waarukko
12	Sheikh Jabal Abba Foggi	M	54	Abbiyyoo Booree	
13	Sheikh Kamal Hajj Abdulsalam	M	75	Sheekota Guumaa shrine	Descendant of Sheekota Guumaa
14	Sheikh Maruf Sheik Abdulqadir	M	40	Abbiyyoo Booree	
15	Sheikh Nasir Jamaal	M	65	Waarukkoo	Descendant of Waarukko
16	Zaaraa Abba Jabal	F	53	Waarukkoo	
17	Zazam Jamal	F	47	At warukko from Gomma	
18	Abdo Sheikh Nasir	M	40	Waarukko	

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