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**A HISTORY OF COORAA DISTRICT; ILU ABBA BOOR,**

**Ca. 1880s - 1991**

BY

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**A HISTORY OF COORAA DISTRICT, ILUU ABBA BOOR**  
**Ca. 1880s-1991**

A Thesis Submitted to the College of Social Sciences and Humanities, Department of History and Heritage Management, School of Graduate Studies Jimma University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in History and Heritage Management

By  
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## **APPROVAL SHEET OF THE THESIS**

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As thesis research advisor, I hereby certify that I have read and evaluated the thesis prepared, under my guidance, by Mengesha Lukas entitled “A History of Cooraa district 1880s-1991” and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in History and Heritage Management.

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## **TRANSLITERATION**

### **I. The seven sounds in Amharic and Afaan Oromo are represented as follow.2**

| Amharic | Afaan Oromo | Transliteration |
|---------|-------------|-----------------|
| 1st ቦ   | ba          | ba              |
| 2nd ቡ   | bu/buu      | bu              |
| 3rd ቢ   | bii         | bî              |
| 4th ባ   | baa         | baa             |
| 5th ቤ   | be/bee      | be              |
| 6th ብ   | bi          | b               |
| 7th ቦ   | bo/boo      | bo              |

### **I. Palatal Sounds are represented as follow**

| Amharic | Afaan Oromo | Transliteration |
|---------|-------------|-----------------|
| ሸ       | sh          | she             |
| ሸሸ      | ca          | che             |
| ነ       | ny          | gne             |
| ሻ       | —           | zhe             |
| ጃ       | j           | je              |

### **II. Glottal Sounds**

| Amharic | Afaan Oromo | Transliteration |
|---------|-------------|-----------------|
| ቀ       | q           | qe              |
| ከ       | k           | ke              |

### **III. Dental Sounds**

| Amharic | Afaan Oromo | Transliteration |
|---------|-------------|-----------------|
| ጠ       | x           | xe              |
| ጸ       | ts          | tse             |
| ደ       | dh          | dhe             |

#### IV. Labial Sounds

| Amharic | Afaan Oromo | Transliteration |
|---------|-------------|-----------------|
| ጠ       | m           | me              |
| ጸ       | Ph          | phe             |

NB. All words of Afaan Oromo origin are spelled according to the writing and reading system in Afaan Oromo alphabet, Qubee, to ease the problem of reading some words. Afaan Oromo has basically ten vowels, five short and five long.

#### Short Vowels

a  
e  
I  
o  
u

#### Long Vowels

aa  
ee  
ii  
oo  
uu

Length in vowels result in meaning changes

Example: *Lafa* – Land

*Laafaa* - Soft

Sequence of more than two vowels is possible only if separated by glottal (‘). Example: Re’ee  
Afaan Oromo consonant (phonemes) are geminated or stressed by doubling the similar phonemes, and clustered by devoicing two different consonants.

For example, 'b' in gabbara is geminated.

There are five phonemes used in the thesis which are represented by paired alphabets. These are ch, dh, ny, ph and sh.

- ch - palatal, affricate, voiceless, example in diinticha 'enemy'
- dh - alveolar, implosive, example in dhadhaa 'butter'.
- ny - palatal, nasal, example in nyaata 'food'.
- ph - bilabial, voiceless, ejective, example in hirphuu ' pay damages'.
- sh - palatal fricative voiceless, example in shan 'five'

The consonantal phonemes of Afaan Oromo include the following ejectives in addition to ph:

- c - Palatal, voiceless, affricate example in Cawwaa ' name of minority group.

- q - velar, voiceless, example in qaallu.
- x - alveolar, voiceless, example in Xoobsi



## GLOSSARY

The meanings of the Afaan Oromo and Amharic words or phrases not listed in the Glossary were explained in the part of the thesis.

### Afaan Oromo terms

- Abbaa* -----Father, master of a ceremony/ religion.
- Abbaa Gadaa* -----Prime Councilor, Master of Gadaa period, Gadaa leader
- Aaddee* ----- Fitle of respect for women
- Baddaa* -----High altitude
- Badda- daree* ----- Mid altitude
- Balbala* -----Door, lineage
- Gadaa* -----An Oromo indigenous, traditional socio-political system through which the Oromo society exercise self-governance
- Ganda* -----Village
- Gosa* ----- Clan
- Mana* ----- House, family
- Odaa* ----- A sycamore tree chosen for the performance of religious rituals as well as political actions.
- Qaalluu* ----- Oromo religious leader. He leads ritual performances and prayers, anoint the participants as a religious piety. His gosa and he are believed to be the ‘eldest’. He is seen as a custodian of the waqeffanna and the guardian of the harmonious functioning of the gada system.

### Amharic terms

*Abyot* ----- Revolution.

*Alaqa* ----- Head of church, a learned priest.

*Awraja* ----- Sub-provinces of Ethiopia before 1991.

*Balabbat* ----- Hereditary owner of rest land; or is an appointee at district level by the state to serve as subordinate land administrator or local land lord.

*Balambaras* ----- ‘head of the amba’ a low level administrative title.

*Basha* ----- Derivative of the Turkish ‘pasha’ for low level government official.

*Chisseгна* ----- House hold or Gabbar farmers, who landowners used to evict them at any time.

*Dajazmach*----- A higher warrior title of the feudal period.

*Derg* ----- Literally means committee, but later grow to a governing body in Ethiopia from 1974 to 1991.

*Fitawrari* ----- A warrior title literally means “leader of the vanguard army.”

*Gabbar*----- Tribute paying peasants either in kind or many.

*Gasha* ----- Unit of land measurement, equivalent to 40 hectares.

*Geber* ----- Agrarian tribute, invariably paid in kind, tax

*Grazmach* ----- A warrior title of the feudal Ethiopia, literally means “left leader”.

*Qabale*----- The lowest administrative structure in a district, a sub-country (the post 1974 name for villages).

*Kifle Hagere*----- Province

*Lem* ----- Cultivated land.

*Lem Tef*----- Semi-cultivated land

*Qagnazma* ----- An Amharic warrior title literally means “right leader”, or commander of the right.

*Maderia* ----- Land granted to officials.

*Mikitil Wereda* ----- The post- 1941 sub-district.

*Neftegna* ----- Derived from neft, 'refile', name given to emperor Menilek's warrior of northern origin, who later settled in the south.

*Negadras* ----- Head of merchant, later chief government official in charge of the collection of customs.

*Negus* ----- King

*Ras* ----- 'head', the highest traditional title next to Negus.

*Siso* ----- One third.

*Tef* ----- Uncultivated land.

*Wereda* ----- District.

*Zemecha* ----- Campaign.

## PREFACE

This study is all about a history of Cooraa District from the time of Menelik's territorial expansion to the downfall of the *Derg*. In the reconstruction of this theses various sources are utilized. Since this work is the first at the level of the district; it was too hard to find earlier historical reconstructions specific to the study area. To fill this gap, the researcher assessed all available earlier historical reconstructions done at the level of Ilu Aba Bor. But almost all those available secondary historical reconstructions have insignificant coverage about the district. So that the researcher used various Archives available at NALA and at the hands of private individuals in the district to supplement the major source of the research which was oral traditions extracted from selected, well informed informants of the society.

The historical facts and concepts gathered from oral sources, archival sources and various prior historical reconstructions are arranged both thematically and chronologically in four separate but interrelated chapters. The first chapter deals with the general and historical background of the district. High lights on the early Oromo settlement in the district is briefly stated in this chapter. The second chapter is all about the detailed historical analyses and narrations of the period from 1880s up to 1974. In this chapter the land tenure system, local administration system, the period of Italian occupation and the post Italian period developments other facts of the period, with respect to the district, are presented in it. The third chapter deals with the historical facts appeared in the district during the derg period. In this chapter issues like Nationalization of urban lands and extra houses, Villagization and other related issues of the period are reconstructed well enough. The last chapter of this theses deals with the various socio-economic changes and continuities of the district in the period between 1880s up to 1991.

## ABSTRACT

*This study is a historical survey of Cooraa district from 1880s up to 1991. In the present time the district is found in south western part of Ethiopia in Oromia region in Bunno Beddele Zone. The major aim of this thesis is to examine the major social, economic and political transformations in Cooraa district starting from 1880s at which the area was occupied and incorporated to the Ethiopian empire by the Shawan forces led by Ras Tesema Nadew up to 1991 which marked the downfall of the Derg. In dealing with the subject, the researcher has attempted to collect and utilize the available archival materials, letters, published and unpublished works like articles, theses and dissertations as well as oral information collected from selected informants. Based on the collected sources, the present study attempted to assess how much the post 1880s changes impacted the social, economic and political life of the people living in Cooraa district. The findings showed that in the early time of the Oromo settlement in Cooraa district the people living in the study area were governing themselves by the principles of the Gada system. There were three historical sites, namely Odaa Kumbabe, Odaa Bunnoo and Odaa Humbe at which the people exercised the Gada system long before incorporation to the Ethiopian empire in a decentralized manner. At the end of 19<sup>th</sup> c the district was incorporated to the Ethiopian empire state by the forces of Ras Tesema Nadew. Since then the traditional and indigenous social, political and economic trends were changed bit by bit and replaced by the 'new' socio-political order. Up to the end of the imperial rule in 1974 the gabbar-naftagna system was imposed up on the peasants of Cooraa district and exposed them to feudal exploitation. During the derg period there was relatively better socio-economic developments in the district. But some developmental activity like villagization, Cooperatives and some other issues were affected the society. In general terms through out the past history of the district, there were problems on the side of those who were in power in terms of making the implementation of the various policies and proclamations mass based. The present study revealed that most laws and proclamations in the past were implemented with out making the mass center of change in Cooraa district rather benefited those who were in power. Affected by the wrong implementation of past political and economic systems laws and proclamations in the study area the peasants were unable to lead a better life and also unable to accumulate capital wealth to contribute their part for the country's development. So that the development of the district was highly hindered. The researcher believe that this historical reconstruction will fill the gap of a missing element in the reconstruction of Ethiopian history and serve as a base for future study.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Contents   | page |
|--|------|
| ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....  | i    |
| TRANSLITERATION .....  | ii   |
| GLOSSARY .....   | v    |
| PREFACE.....   | viii |
| ABSTRACT.....  | ix   |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS .....  | x    |
| LIST OF MAPS, TABLES AND PICTURES .....  | xii  |
| CHAPTER ONE .....  | 1    |
| INTRODUCTION.....  | 1    |
| 1.1 Geographical Setting of Cooraa District.....   | 1    |
| 1.2 Nomenclature of The District.....  | 5    |
| 1.3 General Background.....  | 6    |
| 1.4 Genealogy and Background History of the Oromo in Cooraa District.....                                  | 7    |
| CHAPTER TWO .....  | 15   |
| HISTORY OF COORAA DISTRICT; FROM INCORPORATION UP TO THE END OF<br>SOLOMONIC DYNASTY RULE 1880s-1974 ..... | 15   |
| 2.1 The Incorporation of Cooraa District into the Ethiopian Empire State.....                              | 15   |
| 2.2 Administration hierarchy of Cooraa district before and after the Conquest.....                         | 18   |
| 2.3 Taxation and Land Tenure system in Cooraa District .....   | 26   |
| 2.4 The Period of Italian Occupation, Liberation and Its Aftermath in Cooraa District 1936-<br>1941 .....  | 27   |
| 2.4.1 The Period of Italian Occupation .....   | 27   |
| 2.4.2 Liberation and post liberation period .....  | 29   |
| CHAPTER THREE.....   | 35   |
| COORAA DISTRICT DURING THE DERG PERIOD.....  | 35   |
| 3.1 Reforms on the land tenure system .....  | 37   |
| 3.2 Nationalization of urban lands and extra houses .....  | 40   |
| 3.3 Peasant Associations .....   | 40   |
| 3.4 Service Co-operatives .....  | 42   |
| 3.5 Resettlement .....   | 42   |
| 3.6 Villagization.....   | 45   |

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>CHAPTER FOUR.....</b>  | <b>47</b>  |
| <b>GENERAL SURVEY ON THE SOCIO ECONOMIC HISTORY OF COORAA DISTRICT ....</b>                 | <b>47</b>  |
| <b>4.1 RELIGION .....</b>   | <b>47</b>  |
| <b>4.1.1 Decline of Indigenous Traditional Religion in Cooraa District .....</b>            | <b>47</b>  |
| <b>4.1.2 Introduction and expansion of Islam in Cooraa District.....</b>                    | <b>49</b>  |
| <b>4.1.3 Introduction and Expansion of Orthodox Christianity in Cooraa District .....</b>   | <b>52</b>  |
| <b>4.1.4 Introduction and Expansion of Protestant Christianity in Cooraa District .....</b> | <b>54</b>  |
| <b>4.2 ECONOMY .....</b>  | <b>57</b>  |
| <b>4.2.1 Agriculture.....</b>   | <b>57</b>  |
| <b>4.2.2 Trade.....</b>   | <b>61</b>  |
| <b>4.3 EXPANSION OF INFRASTRUCTURES .....</b>   | <b>67</b>  |
| <b>4.3.1 ELECTRICITY.....</b>   | <b>67</b>  |
| <b>4.3.2 TRANSPORTATION.....</b>  | <b>69</b>  |
| <b>4.3.3 COMMUNICATION.....</b>   | <b>70</b>  |
| <b>4.3.4 EDUCATION .....</b>  | <b>72</b>  |
| <b>CONCLUSION .....</b>   | <b>75</b>  |
| <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>   | <b>77</b>  |
| <b>UN PUBLISHED.....</b>  | <b>77</b>  |
| <b>Archival sources .....</b>   | <b>77</b>  |
| <b>Theses and Dissertations .....</b>   | <b>77</b>  |
| <b>PUBLISHED .....</b>  | <b>78</b>  |
| <b>ARTICLES .....</b>   | <b>78</b>  |
| <b>BOOKS .....</b>  | <b>79</b>  |
| <b>LIST OF ORAL INFORMANTS .....</b>  | <b>81</b>  |
| <b>STATEMENT OF AUTHOR .....</b>  | <b>99</b>  |
| <b>DEDICATION.....</b>  | <b>100</b> |

## LIST OF MAPS, TABLES AND PICTURES

| <b>List of Maps</b>   | <b>Page</b> |
|---|-------------|
| Map – 1; Map of the study area with respect to the Country/Ethiopia-----                | 2           |
| Map – 2: Map of Bunno Beddelle Zone-----  | 3           |
| Map – 3: Map of the Cooraa district-----  | 4           |
| <br>  |             |
| <b>List of pictures</b>   |             |
| Figure 1: Historical site of <i>Odaa</i> Kumbabe-----                                   | 19          |
| Figure 2: Administrative hierarchy of Cooraa District -----                             | 21          |
| Figure 3: Picture of <i>Balambaras</i> Gudeta Guso-----                                 | 23          |
| Figure 4: Remains of the dry weather road built by the Italians -----                   | 28          |
| Figure 5; <i>Kodda</i> mountain-----  | 42          |
| Figure 6: Selam Mosque -----  | 45          |
| Figure 7: St. Gabriel Church-----   | 47          |
| Figure 8: A pie chart which shows followers of different religion in the district ----- | 50          |
| Figure 9; Coffee seedlings at Sema yero coffee nurcery Site-----                        | 56          |
| Figure 10; The gate of Sema yero coffee nurcery Site-----                               | 57          |
| Figure 11: The picture of diesel engine power generator -----                           | 60          |
| Figure 12: The first coffee huller machine -----  | 65          |
| Figure 13: The former house of Aruji -----  | 62          |
| Figure 14: The first telegram tower built in the district-----                          | 68          |





# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Geographical Setting of Cooraa District

Cooraa district is located in the south western part of Ethiopia, in Oromia regional state in the former Zone of Ilu Aba Bor, in the present day Bunno Beddele Zone. The administrative headquarter of the district, Qumbabe town, is located at the distance of 516 km far away from the capital Addis Ababa and 36 km from Buno Beddele zone administration center both in the same South Western direction.<sup>1</sup> Cooraa district covers an area of 78,388.5-hectare of land. In relative location the district is encircled or bounded by Dega district in the North, Jimma Zone in the South, Beddelle district in the East and Yayyo district in the western direction.<sup>2</sup>

Concerning to its administration, upto 1975 the district was administered under Bunno *Awraja* as one of the nine *Woredas* namely Beddele, Gechi, Dega, Denbi, Sigimo, Gumay-toba, Cooraa, Borecha and Settemma. At which Bunno *Awraja* inturn was included under Ilu Aba Bor *teklay gizat*.<sup>3</sup> But later after 1991 while Buno *Awraja* was disintegrated some districts like Sigimo and Gumay were put under Jimmaa zone and the rest including Cooraa district were put under Ilu Abba Bor zone. But later recently in 2016 Bunno Beddele zone administration was re-organized and Cooraa district was put under it once again.

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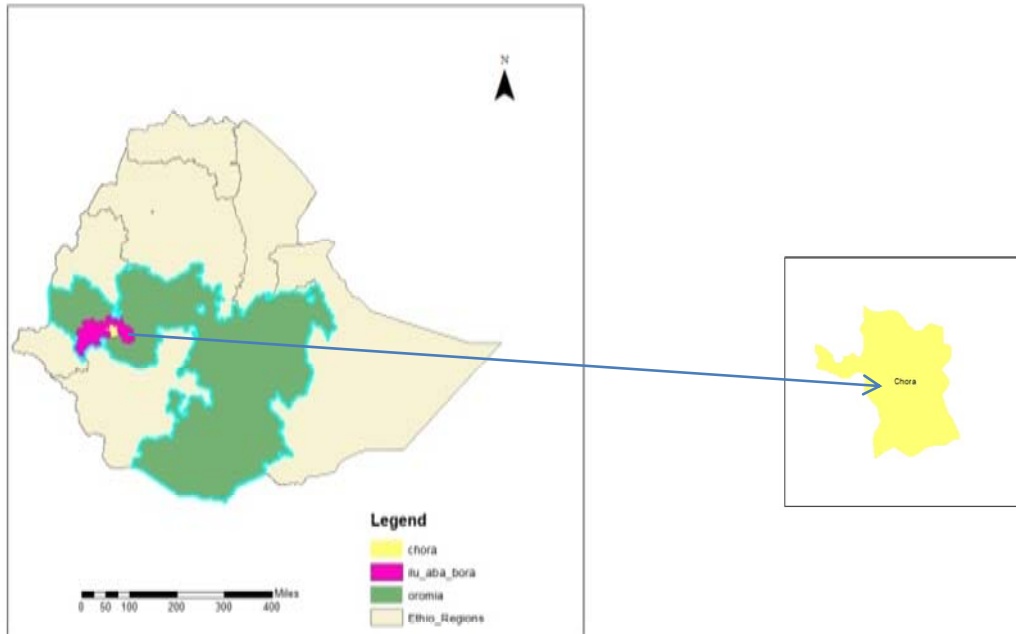
<sup>1</sup> Cooraa district transport bureau, Folder 9 (file no. 6-7) 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Cooraa district Agriculture bureau, Folder 14 (File no. 28), 2009.

<sup>3</sup> See: Appendix- I (NALA)

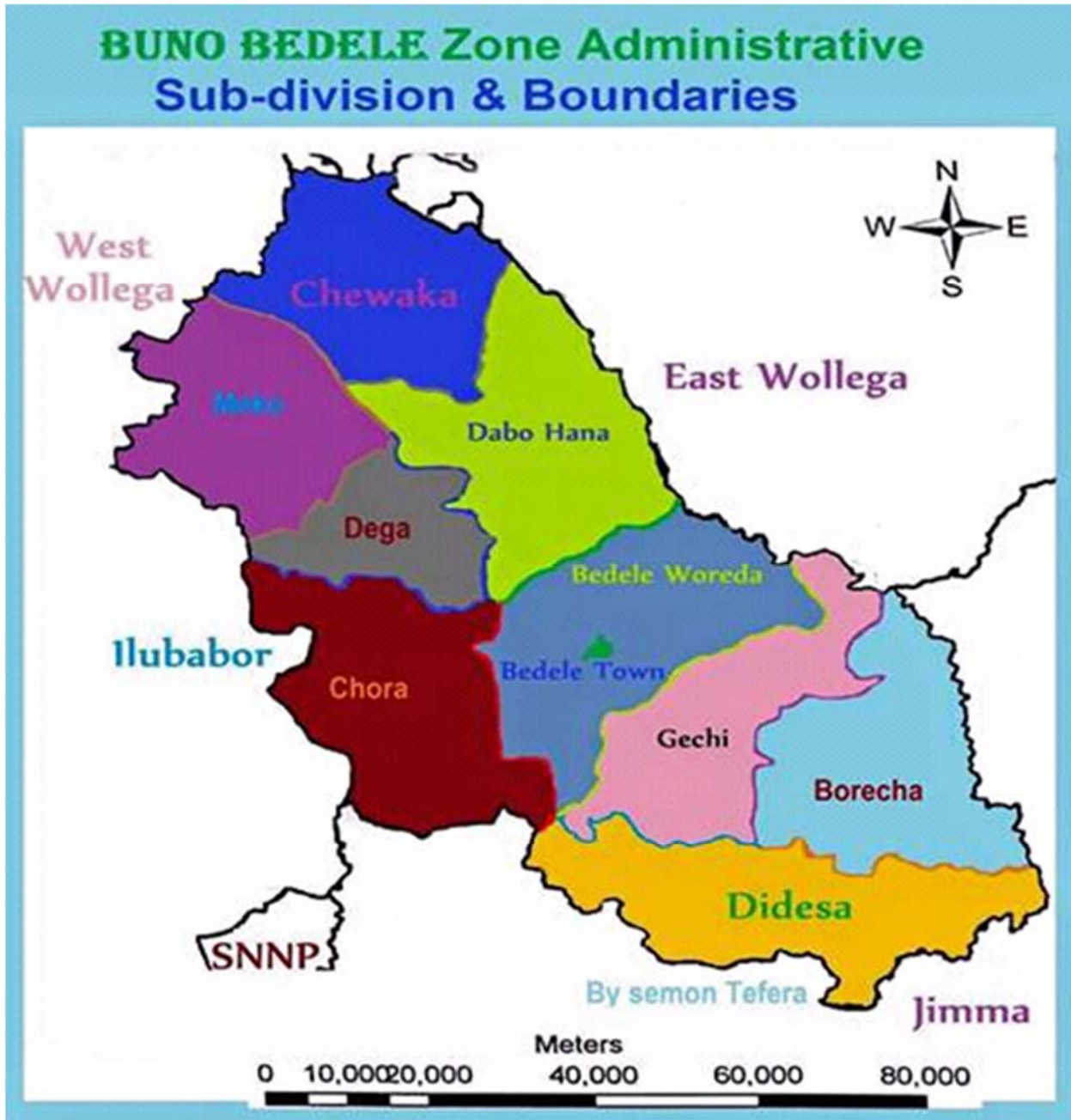
## MAP OF COORAA QUMBABE DISTRICT

Map -1 The study area with respect to Ethiopia



This Map was prepared by Wondwesen Megersa for the sake of this thesis (he was a 3<sup>rd</sup> year GIS student at Jimma University in 2018)

Map 2; The new administrative arrangement since 2016 at which Cooraa district is found presently



Source; Bunno Beddelle Municipality.

Map 3; Map of the specific study area



Source; This map is taken from a magazine prepared in Cooraa district in 2017, for the 21<sup>st</sup> world tourism day.

The average topography of Cooraa district is found in the altitude between 1450-2300 m above sea level. Concerning its climate, the district is divided into three climatic zones; 3.4% of the district is highland or *Baddaa*, 95.10% is temperate zone or *Baddadaree* and the rest 1.5 % is lowland or *Gammoji*. The average heat of the area varies between 9-31<sup>0</sup>c, and it receives annual rainfall which varies between 1500 mm up to 2200 mm annually.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Chora district agricultural office, Folder 14 (File no. 16-28), 2009

Concerning its demography, according to the 2007 population and housing census the total population of the district was 126,353. Out of these total population of the district, around 62,597 of them are Male and the rest 63,756 of them are Females. From the above stated total population of the district, it is only 9,698 people who lives in the urban center presently, and the rest majority which accounts around 116,655 people of the district lives in the rural areas.<sup>5</sup>

Concerning its natural resources, rivers like Dabbaso, Didiksa, Gaabaa, Koodoo, Gabbaa, Qumbabee, Uutaa and Xiphachaa are found in Cooraa District. Concerning its soil most of it, which accounts around 80% out of the total soil, is red soil. The rest 5% and 15 % of soil which is found in the district is black soil and sand soil respectively.

## 1.2 Nomenclature of The District

Earlier to the present study there was no scholarly study about the nomenclature of Cooraa district. Almost all past historical reconstructions that the researcher assessed could not indicate how, by whom and when the name Cooraa came into being and used as a name for the district. So that the major source of information to address this issue is oral tradition of the society. There are two different oral traditions spoken by the people of the district about the origin of the name Cooraa. The first assumption is that it was derived from the Afaan Oromo term “*Cooraa*” which means ‘the collected ones’. According to this assumption, informants stated that the term was used to indicate that the area was inhabited by different collected Oromo clans.

The second assumption which is widely accepted by majority of the society is that, the name Cooraa was derived from the place where the *Saddettan* Cooraa Oromo first came from, which is believed to be Cooraa Botor which is now found in Jimma Zone. According to these informants during the 16<sup>th</sup> century Oromo population movement, the 8 brother clans namely Xuri Jidaa, Use Waacu, Odaa Dallame, Allee, Annoo, Daallee, Mutulu and Wannii were moved out of Cooraa Botor due to demographic factor and settled in the present study area. So that to identify themselves from the other Oromo clans who came to the area nearly at the same time from Wollega across

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<sup>5</sup> Central statistics agency (CSA) 2007 report.

Bunno; they used to call themselves the Saddettan Cooraa. Hence the district was called after them as Cooraa district.<sup>6</sup>

### 1.3 General Background

The major theme of this study is to assess and reconstruct the history of Cooraa district from the 1880s up to 1991. The year 1880s was taken as a land mark because it was in these years that the whole Ilu Abba Bor, including Cooraa district was incorporated into the Ethiopian Empire.<sup>7</sup> The reconstruction of a history of Cooraa district is the first attempt. in the process of South Western Ethiopian history writing. Scholars argue that the reconstruction of Ethiopian history was mostly gives emphasis to the northern part than the rest. This might have various justifications. Some attribute the problem with the scarcity and absence of written primary and secondary source or historical sources in general. Non-literature societies like the present study area were disadvantageous in the past. Before the introduction of the use of oral sources it was impossible to reconstruct the history of non-litration societies. Concerning this issue in general terms, Bahru Zewde stated that;

...The time when the non-literate societies of the south were considered as having no history because of the absence of written records is long gone. Parallel with developments in other parts of Africa, a critical use of oral sources has made possible a reconstruction of their past and hence liberation from the northern (or Semitic) fixation that had characterized Ethiopian studies for long. The greatest single beneficiary of this shift of focus have been the Oromo, who since the late 1960s have been the subject of investigation at both the undergraduate and graduate level.<sup>8</sup>

Eventhough it is not specific to the study area some historians like Yasin Mohammed and Bekele Kenea have reconstructed a history of Ilu Aba Bor in general at which the district is its part. Their

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<sup>6</sup>Informants; Kedir Gelmeso, Nasir Lemu and Mekonnin Guddeta

<sup>7</sup> Yasin Mohammed, "A History of Iluu Abbaa Booraa, Ethiopia, Ca. 1889-1991", PhD Dissertation (Addis Ababa University, History, 2009), P.31.

<sup>8</sup> Bahru Zewde, "A Century of Ethiopian Historiography" *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 2, Special Issue Dedicated to the XIV<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Ethiopian Studies (Addis Ababa, 2000), pp. 1-26.

works can be taken as an eye opening work for historical reconstruction of the area. But, with respect to the present specific study area, Cooraa district, almost all past historical reconstructions including the latter two didn't fully address the specific past historical facts and issues happened in Cooraa district in particular. Whatever reason had created the past gap, I hope this and other future attempts towards the reconstruction of historical accounts might fill the gaps with all challenges to come related with scarcity of sources.

The present study has aimed at investigating the process of incorporation of Cooraa district to the Ethiopian Empire in 1880s and the response of the indigenous society to this process and to point out and elaborate the various changes and continuities related to the of Cooraa district from 1880s to 1991.

Most of the issues in this thesis addressed within the framework of the above stated temporal aspect with proper and scientific interpretation of various primary and secondary sources available. The output of this thesis will serve various stake holders in various ways. First of all, it will serve the society of Cooraa district, by letting them have one initial historical reconstruction of their past being recorded in professional manner. Next it would serve other interested researchers since it is the first attempt in the district it will become a base for further investigation. It will also serve as an element for future reconstruction of Ethiopian history as a building block in the reconstruct of history of the area.

#### **1.4 Genealogy and Background History of the Oromo in Cooraa District**

Oromo is the largest group of Cushitic speaking people, who had lived in North East of Africa for centuries.<sup>9</sup> Most scholars agree that the Oromo were culturally homogeneous with common genealogical ties. According to the findings of different scholars, the original homeland of the Oromo people is somewhere in Bale. Even though it is difficult for all to put the exact specific

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<sup>9</sup> Feyisa Demise, "The Origin of the Oromo: A Reconsideration of the theory of Cushitic Roots", *Journal of Oromo Studies* vol.5.1 and 2 (Tennessee, 1998), pp.157.



place, all tell us that the original home of the Oromo had been in the areas of Bale around Madaa Walabu.<sup>10</sup> Concerning this Tesema reinterpreted;

In the early 1960s, H.S Lewis critically examined the available literature on the Origin of the Oromo and came up with what appears to be a more convincing reconstruction. Based on historical linguistics he concluded that the Oromo “originated in the area between and around lakes Shamo and Stephanie in the area of the Gelana Sagan and Galana Duleli, just south of Bahargamo and mount Wolabo, in northwest Bornaa.”<sup>11</sup>

It seems a reliable truth that the Oromo are the single largest ethnic group both in Ethiopia and the horn. Despite statistical differences, a substantial number of historians, anthropologists and other authorities also agree that the Oromo people are one of the most numerous peoples in Africa.<sup>12</sup>

Sources indicated that, the Bornaa and the Barentu are believed to be the two sons of the Oromo. Even though there is still an argument about exactly why the Oromo moved out from their homeland; the separation of these two groups probably occurred before or during the 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>13</sup> Gradually the Bornaa further sub divided into two branches namely the Maccaa and the Tuulamaa branches and had a common chafe assembly, at *Oda Nabi* in Fatagar.<sup>14</sup>

From these two groups the one i.e. the Maccaa Oromo again sub divided into two clan groups namely the *Afre* and the *Sadacha*. Concerning this division Mohammed stated;

The Maccaa section of the Bornaa was divided into two major confederacies. These were the Afre confederacy (i.e., the confederacy

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<sup>10</sup> Mohammed Hassan. *The Oromo of Ethiopia: A History 1570-1860*, (Toronto, 1994), p.4; Cherri Reni Wemlinger, “Identity in Ethiopia: The Oromo, From the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century”, MA theses, (Washington State University, History, 2008), p.22; Merid Wolde Aregay, “Southern Ethiopia and the Cristian kingdom 1508-1708, with special reference to the [Oromo] migration and their consequences”, Ph. D dissertation, (University of London, History, 1971), p.156.

<sup>11</sup>H.S Lewis... cited in Tesema Ta’a, “The political Economy of Western Central Ethiopia from the mid- 16<sup>th</sup> c to the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries”, PhD dissertation, (Michigan State University, History, 1986), P.7.

<sup>12</sup> Lambert Bartels, *Oromo Religion: Myths and Rites of the Western Oromo of Ethiopia- an attempt to understand*, (Berlin,1983), pp. 12-13.

<sup>13</sup> Mohammed Hassan, p.6.

<sup>14</sup> Mohammed Hassan, p.41; Asafa Jaleta, *Oromo and Ethiopia state Formation and Ethno National conflict 1886-1991*, (Asmara, 1993), p.25.

of the four) composed of the Hoko, Tchalliya, Gudru, and Liban. This confederacy was formed during the Robale gada (1570-1578). The other Maccaa confederacy was the Sadacha (i.e., the confederacy of the three) composed of Obbo, Suba, and Hakako and this was formed during the period of the Birmaji gada (1578-1586).<sup>15</sup>

These two Maccaa confederacies broke away from the chafe assembly at *Oda Nabi* in 1570s and formed their own independent chafe in the 1580s at *Oda Bisil* in Damot. Then on the eve of 17<sup>th</sup>c, two directions of Maccaa movements became clear, the *Sadacha* branch directed their movement towards the Gibe region, whereas the *Afre* branch move forward to the present administrative regions of Wallaga and Ilu Aba Bor.<sup>16</sup>

Other sources also indicate that the Oromo of Ilu Aba Bor is the family of Maccaa which is one of the two sons of Bornaa. After they were separated from the Tulema Oromo, the Maccaa Oromo formed two confederacies during the time of the Robele Geda (1570-1578), which were known as the *Afre* and the *Sadacha*. Out of this two confederacies it was the *Afre* confederacy which were travelled and settled in Ilu Aba Bor during the Oromo population movement.<sup>17</sup>

Alemayehu et.al. also stated that, initially the Maccaa Oromo lived together in one confederacy at *Oda Nabe*. But later they formed their own independent confederacy at *Oda Bisil* during the Robale Gada. Meanwhile the Maccaa organized themselves in to two confederacies which are known as the *Afre* (Four) and the *Sedecha* (Three). The *Afre* composed of Hoko, Chaliya, Guduru and Liban. It was this *Afre* confederacy of the Maccaa family which made its journey to the present day Buno Beddele and Ilu Aba Bor area.<sup>18</sup>

Supporting the above, Yasin Mohammed in his PhD dissertation stated; the Oromo of Ilu Aba Bor are one of the branches of Maccaa and they entered to the present day Ilu Abbaa Bora area from two directions namely Jimmaa and Wallaga. Out of the various Maccaa clans it was the Tumme family which settled in this areas. Yasin stated, “descendants of the Tumme that entered to Ilu Aba

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

<sup>16</sup>Ketebo Abdiyo, *Abba Jifar II of Jimma Kingdom 1861-1934: A Biography* (Jimma, 2012), p.8; Mohammed, p.48.

<sup>17</sup> Alamaayyoo Hayile, Boshi Gonfa and others, *History of the Oromo to 16<sup>th</sup> century*, (Finfinne, 2006): Mohammed, p.48.

<sup>18</sup> Alamaayyoo Hayile, P. 160.

Bor crossing Jimmaa area included the Hadhesso, Saphera, Bacho, Leqaa and Allee and through the direction of Wallagga Birbirso, Bunno, Daarimu, Allee and Suphee.”<sup>19</sup>

Concerning the cause of the population movement scholars forward different reasons and justifications. Some attributed it with an attempt of regaining what was theirs long before and others related it with demographic factors. Concerning this controversy Tesema stated that “the underlying factors and immediate causes for the expansion of the Oromo have been the subject of considerable controversy among scholars and students of the Oromo society”.<sup>20</sup>

In justifying the issue, Gadaa Malba and Tasammaa Taa’aa, share the same idea about the cause of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Oromo population movement. Both scholars stated that the 16<sup>th</sup> century Oromo population movement was aimed at re-gaining or liberating their former territories or possessions which had been taken from them long before. They tried to justify this by providing some evidences like presence of the Oromo in those areas earlier to the mass population movement of this period.<sup>21</sup>

Accepting the demographic and ecological issues as an initiating factors, the same above scholar, Tasamma Ta’a, reinterpreted the ideas forwarded by Yilma Deressa and Haberland stating that;

...the south central highlands of Ethiopia, in which the Oromo used to live, were extremely fertile. There was plenty of pasture for the numerous herds and flocks that the Oromo used to raise... in due course, the number of people and cattle increased so much that there was overpopulation and overgrazing.<sup>22</sup>

There are also some who associated the cause of the population movement with the rivalry among the Christian highland kingdom and the Muslim sultanates. Those scholars stated that, for the reason to control the trade routes and the Ethiopian highlands there was a struggle between Christian highland kingdom of Ethiopia and the Muslim kingdom of Adal in the early sixteenth

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<sup>19</sup> Yasin Mohammed, P.9

<sup>20</sup> Tesema Ta’a, *The political Economy...*, P.12.

<sup>21</sup> Gadaa Malba, *OROMIA: An Introduction to the History of the Oromo People*; Tasammaa Taa’aa, “Senaa Hundee Ummata Oromo” (History of the origin of Oromo)

<sup>22</sup> Tesema Ta’a, *The political economy ...* P.13; Yilma Deressa, *Ye Ethiopia Tarik*, pp.214-215; Haberland, *[Oromo] Sud-Athiopiens*, p.772.

century. Because of this, military defenses in the south were destroyed and power vacuum were created in the southern highlands of the region. Using this power vacuum, the Oromo moved out.<sup>23</sup>

When we come to the specific research area, Cooraa district, the available historical reconstructions states that, the Cooraa Oromo is associated with the *Afre Maccaa* Oromo clan. Yasin Mohammed in his Ph.D. dissertation stated that, “Out of the members of the Tummee, the Cooraa clan that settled in Ilu Aba Bor were known as the Children of Abaloo, reached the area across the Gibe river.<sup>24</sup> Local sources indicated that three major descendants of the Tumme Oromo namely the *Saddettan Cooraa*, the *Torban Bunnoo* and the *Jahan Nonnoo* were formed the district.

According to Oromo oral tradition, out of the above stated three Oromo clans namely Cooraa, Bunno and Nonno; the *Saddettan Cooraa* Oromo clans were arrived in the district in two phases during the period of Oromo population movement.

In the first phase the *Agartu Sadan* (the initial three observers) namely *Odaa Dalaame* from the house of *Gudaya* family, *Uusee Wachuu* from the house of *Yaya* family and *Xurrii Jiddaa* from the house of *Koma* family, moved out from the area known as Cooraa Botor which is presently found in Jimma administrative zone and settled in the present day Qumbabe area at a specific place known as *Birbirsa Cooraa* or *Odaa Cooraa*.

Then, after convinced by the suitability of the area for grazing and farming they go back to where they came from and called the rest five brother clans. In this second phase population movement the rest five families or sub clans who came to Cooraa district were known as Alle, Anno, Dallee, Mutulu, and Wannu.

Then the earlier three families and the later five families of the Maccaa Oromo started to live together in the district between the two rivers, Gabbaa and Daabanaa, by calling themselves the eight families of Cooraa better known as the *Saddettan Cooraa*.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Kevin Shillington, *History of Africa*, (London, 1995), p.164.; Trimmingham J. Spencer, *Islam in Ethiopia*, (London, New York, Toronto, 1952) P.93; Mordechai Abir, *Ethiopia and the Red sea; The Rise and Decline of the Solomonic Dynasty and Muslim European Rivalry in the region* (London, 1980); Cherri Reni Wemlinger, “Identity in Ethiopia; The Oromo from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century”, MA thesis (Washington State University, History, 2008), p.4.

<sup>24</sup> Yasin Mohammed, p.9.

<sup>25</sup>Informants: Kedir Gelmeso, Nasir Lemu and Mekonnin Guddeta

During that period the *Saddeettan Cooraas* were settled in the present specific places like Cooraa Hannoo, Abba Bora, Gujii, Ilaalaa, Abdalla, Allee Sardo, Bajjaa, Dilbi, Shengalaa, Daaboo Tobo, Utaa, Hawwaa Gabbaa and Hawwaa Yember.



The second clan found in the district are the *Torban Bunnoos*. They arrived in Cooraa district crossing Wollega and Beddelle and settled in the north, north east and north western part of the district at specific area like; Delegsa, Caggaa, Bejjaa Haroo, Bejjaa Dabbasoo, Xobsii Dabbasoo, Imboro Bonga, Kuyee Daabena, Agoolee, Dabasoo Sooroo, Beroo Borlee, Beroo Sariitii, Beroo Caabbii, Hannaa Sarbaa, Gefoo Diggajaa, Gefoo Jilaa Gefoo Korbuu and Kodo.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup>Informants; Mekonnin Guddeta, Nasir Lemu and Kedir Gelmeso.

The third clan arrived in the district during the period of Oromo population movement were the Nonnos. Out of the *Jahan Nonno* clan with the exception of Mattu and Hurrummu, the rest were settled in the Western part of the district at specific places like Cirrachee, Haleeluu Gabbaa, Haaleelu Hadhessaa, Semmaa Yeroo and Abbonnoo. In addition to these three Oromo clans who settled in the district there are also others in small numbers like the descendants of Dapho, Guduru and Arfan Jimma Arjo who are living in the district together with others.<sup>27</sup>

Initially Cooraa district was not one single entity or politically united district. Like the rest Oromo population, the *Saddeettan* Cooraa Oromo, the *Jahan Nonno* and the *Torban* Bunno who were settled in the district were exercising the Gadaa system from two power centers namely *Odaa Qumbabee* and *Odaa Bunnoo*. *Odaa Qumbabe* was the power center of the *Saddeettan* Cooraa Oromos. It was found at a specific place called *Tullu Muxee*. *Odaa Bunnoo*, which was served as the power center for the *Torban* Bunnos and the *Jahan Nonnos*. It was found at a specific place called *ganda Humbe*. Local sources indicated that the *Saddeettan* Cooraas were exercising the Gadaa system by appointing Xurri Jiddaa as their Abba Bokku and by making Dabena and Gabba rivers their boundary in the East and West respectively.<sup>28</sup>

The Gada system and other indigenous institutions and systems which were served before the introduction of monarchical system in south and south-west part of the country can be seen as a decentralized governance.<sup>29</sup> The political administration system which was followed by the Oromo in the early period of their settlement in the area was not monarchical system. The Oromo were not originally practicing monarchical form of leadership. It was later that they had developed a new style of governance after their expansion. Before that they were exercising the indigenous democratic political and cultural institution called the Gadaa system. But through time due to the internal dynamism occurred among the Oromo of Gibe region, the native Oromo ruling system, Gadaa, transformed into the monarchical form of government, reducing the role of *Abba Gadas* or Gadaa officials and finally causing them to disappear.<sup>30</sup>

In such gradual change, the Gadaa made transformation and the region fell under monarchical leaders, which was a strange to the Oromo Gadaa system. So that later like most areas of Oromo

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<sup>27</sup> Informants; Nasir Lemu and Mekonnin Gudeta

<sup>28</sup> Informants; Kadir Gelmeso, Makonnin Guddata and Ibrahim Adam.

<sup>29</sup> Zemelak Ayele, p. 3.

<sup>30</sup> Yasin Mohammed, p.12.

land in south western part, *Abba Dulas* became in a position of obtaining personal ownership of much of the land occupied and the political power. So that the Gadaa system start to disintegrate and the *Moti* system oriented kingdoms started to replace it.<sup>31</sup>

Sources indicate that in most areas of the South western part many people who owned land abandoned their holdings and submitted to war leaders in favor of protection.<sup>32</sup> So that the ambition to be *Mooti* (king) give rise. Around the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> c Caalii Shone from the strong warrior Iluu clan, was able to incorporate Hurumu Mattu, Alle, Buree, Suphee. Darimuu, Cooraa, and Buno within few years to his kingdom. During this time Caalii Shone was able obtain the submission of the Cooraa by dispatching a few of his courageous warriors.<sup>33</sup>

Then Caalii Shone started to consolidate his power over a new political kingdom known as Illu Abba Boor, which included among others the *Saddeettan* Cooraa, the *Torban* Bunno and the *Jahan* Nonnos. Until the arrival of the Shawan forces under *Ras* Tesema Nadew, who conquered the kingdom of Ilu Aba Bor in 1880s, the *Saddettan* Cooraa, the Bunnos and the Nonnos were under this kingdom during the reign of Calii Shone and his successors, Waacilaa Bungul and Fttansa Iluu.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Yasin Mohammed, P. 12

<sup>32</sup> Marshal De. Salviace. *An Ancient people, Great African Nation: The Oromo*. Translation from the Original French Edition by Ayalew Kanno. (Paris, 1901), P. 196;

<sup>33</sup> Yassin Mohammed, P. 24

<sup>34</sup> Taye Nemomsa, "Motis of Illubabor", BA theses (Addis Ababa University, History, 1997), P. 2-4.

## CHAPTER TWO

### HISTORY OF COORAA DISTRICT; FROM INCORPORATION UP TO THE END OF SOLOMONIC DYNASTY RULE 1880s-1974

#### 2.1 The Incorporation of Cooraa District into the Ethiopian Empire State

The incorporation of Cooraa district to the Ethiopian empire state was the result of one of emperor Menelik's campaigns. By the end of 1880s Menelik was already able to subdue the kingdom of Ilu Abba Bor. Formerly before it was incorporated to the Ethiopian empire Cooraa district was under the kingdom of Ilu Aba Bor which was ruled by Caalii Shonee and his descendants.<sup>35</sup> Various factors had been forwarded by scholars as a cause for the expansion of Menelik to the south western part of the Ethiopia. Most historians agreed that the basic motive of Menelik's expansion to south western part of the present day Ethiopia was the need to control the lucrative trade items and trade routes which were found in the area.<sup>36</sup>

*Ras Tesema Nadew*, Menelik's war leader whose name was associated with controlling this area was started his campaign to Ilu Aba Boora in general and to Cooraa district in particular, by organizing his forces from Guma. Sources indicated that during this campaign he faced strong resistance from Abba Kutal of Gachi around Didessa river and also from the *Saddeettan* Cooraa, the Nonnos and the Bunos in the present study area. All stated three Oromo clans living in Cooraa district had tried their best to resist the expanding Shawan forces separately with less organization. But they were unable to stop the Shawan forces who were well equipped, well organized and also had soldiers with war experience.<sup>37</sup>

It is a conventional knowledge that either forceful subjugation or peaceful submission were the two fraternal twin choices forwarded by the forces of Menelik to the locals during the period of his expansion at the expense of retaining their political power if they pick the later. With respect to the area under study there is a slight disagreement between scholars on the way and time that

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<sup>35</sup> Informants; Kedir Gelmeso and Mekonin Guddeta

<sup>36</sup> Bahru Zewde, *A history of Modern...*, second edition, (Oxford, Athens, Addis Ababa, 2002), p. 60.

<sup>37</sup> Yasin Mohammed, p.61.



the area was incorporated to the Ethiopian Empire. To see some of the controversial ideas forwarded by various scholars about the way Ilu Abba Bor in general was included under the central government, for example, Bahru stated that:

The Embabo victory was Menilek's passport to the south-west. With little or no resistance, the Oromo states submitted to Menilek one after another. In the years between 1882 and 1886, Menilek was able to obtain the submission of Kumsa Moroda (later dajjazmach, and baptized Gabra-Egziabher) of Leqa Naqamte, Jote Tullu (also made dajjazmach) of Leqa Qellam, Abba Jifar II of Jimma, and the rulers of the other Gibe river states, as well as of Illubabor, further to the west.<sup>38</sup>

According to this explanation; Bahru believes that the incorporation of Ilu Abba Bor to the Ethiopian Empire was through peaceful submission or in his words little or no resistance type, which was equivalent with the areas of Leqa Qellam, Jimma and Leqa Naqamte. A historical question to be raised by the researcher here is that; if it was so done in that way, why the rulers of Ilu Aba Bor didn't retain their autonomy like the rest? Why did the Shewan authority was imposed up on them unlike the rest regions indicate above?

In this regard, Yasin stated that, the conquest of Ilu Abba Bor was not a process of peaceful submission rather it was associated with the campaigns conducted by *Ras* Tesema Nadew in 1880s after he got married to Abbaa Joobir's daughter Balatishachew. He organized his army from Abbaa Joobir's Guumaa for the Ilu Aba Bor campaign. Abbaa Kutal of Gatchi made the first resistance on the upper courses of Didhessaa river. The Shewan forces were able to break Abba Kutal's line of resistance with casualties on both, but it was higher on the side of Abbaa Kutal. This victory helped the Shewan forces to proceed their conquest. The last resistance came from the last ruler of Ilu Abba Bor kingdom, Fattansa Ilu. Fatansa attempted to organize and get help from the nearby Oromo kingdoms. He sent messengers to the adjacent kingdoms such as Jimma and Leqaa Naqamte to create common front against the Sewan forces. But this attempt was failed because they refused the alliance defense. Fatansa Ilu made his final defensive resistance, against the forces

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<sup>38</sup> Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern ...*, p.62.

of *Ras* Tasama, at Gabba river. But his line of defense was crushed in this war and the Shawan forces advanced to the interior of the region.<sup>39</sup>

Similarly, Bekele stated that, the Oromo of Ilu Abba Bor made a fierce resistance against the Shawan expanding army but they were defeated at the battle of Qarsa Googila in 1890. According to this source it was in this battle that Fatansa Ilu was captured and detained until his death at a place called Barro'i.<sup>40</sup>

Available secondary sources like oral traditions and historical reconstruction done before at the level of Ilu Aba Bor by various scholars gives us a clue about the time and the process of incorporation of Cooraa district. Those sources indicated that the incorporation of Cooraa district to the Ethiopian Empire was also conducted in the same period and process with the whole Ilu Abba Bor, in the late 1880s.<sup>41</sup>

Local oral traditions indicate that, the conquest of Cooraa district was associated with Menelik's general *Ras* Tesema Nadew as it was stated earlier. The marriage alliance that *Ras* Tesema Nadew conducted with the daughter of Abba Jobir II of Guma, named Beletshachew, my informants also called her Atomse or Halima, helped him to convince the *Saddeettan* Cooraas, the Bunos and the Nonnos by approaching as if he is one of them came in peace, by hiding his real motive that he came to conquer the area.<sup>42</sup>

Available oral traditions spoken by informants of the society also confirmed that, unlike the expanding Shawan forces the Cooraas had little war experience and equipped with very old weapons like spears and shields. Because of these reasons the forces of Cooraa district were easily defeated. The military success of the Shawans was followed by the imposition of the new social, political and economic system up on the *Saddeettan* Cooraa, the *Torban* Bunnos and the *Jahan* Nonno Oromos. To have clear understanding to what level the military imbalance and gap was wider between the Shawan contingents led by *Ras* Tesema Nadew and the Cooraa local army, it is better to put her what is told by the community elder informants. They said that during the war most of the local soldiers had never seen or experienced with fire arms. They were equipped with

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<sup>39</sup> Yasin Mohammed, Pp.38-40.

<sup>40</sup> Bekele Kenea, "A political History of Iluu Abba Bora; Ca.1974-2000", MA thesis, (Jimma University, History, 2016), P.15.

<sup>41</sup> Informants; Kedir Gebi, Mekonnin Gudeta and Kedir Galmeso.

<sup>42</sup> Informants; Kadir Galmeso and *Haji* Jemal Bushura

spears and shields. While the Shawan expanding military force fired on them they were moving openly with courage towards them. But mean while listening the sound of the gun fire and falling on the ground of their coo fighters start to be observed. This puzzled them and started to talk to each other by saying;

*Achii dim! Jedha, asi diph jedha* Faraway there is a sound which says *dim!*

*Maaltu nuti Dhufe?*<sup>43</sup> Here people are falling down. What is the matter?

The less war experience of the localities and military superiority of the new comers created psychological frustration and confusion among the local soldiers. In the contrary the misunderstanding and the confusion created among the local soldiers gave a good opportunity for new comers/Shawan forces to get an upper hand in the war. Using this opportunity, the Shawans started to divide local clan leaders by promising them to retention of their holdings. This helped them Shawan forces to crush the Cooraas line of defense and resistance with less causality on the side of the Shawans and at the end they were able to control the area.<sup>44</sup>

## **2.2 Administration hierarchy of Cooraa district before and after the Conquest**

Before the imposition of the new feudal order up on the newly incorporated areas, various local and indigenous institutions existed in different corners of the country. In Oromo inhabited areas like Ilu Abba Boora, Gada system existed up to the emergence of monarchial system. Gada system is “an “egalitarian” and democratic social and political system”.<sup>45</sup> Asmarom defined Gada by saying that “the Gada system is a system of classes (*luba*) that succeed each other every eight years in assuming military, economic, political and ritual responsibilities. Each Gada class remains in power during a specific term”.<sup>46</sup>

Even though the concept Gada could refer to the eight years’ period of government, more than that it relates to the totality of the system of governance that was practiced among the Oromo While some elements of the Gada were borrowed by neighboring peoples in the Horn of Africa, it was most rigorously developed by the Oromo. Even though the exact date of its origin is unknown, informed Oromo elders claim that it has an ancient derivation. Some scholars like Dinsa Lepisa

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<sup>43</sup> Informant; Kedir Gelmeso and *Haji* Jemal Bushura.

<sup>44</sup> Informants; Kedir Gelmeso and Mekonnin Gudeta.

<sup>45</sup> Mohammed Hassen, p.10.

<sup>46</sup> Asmarom Laggese, p.8.

see close parallels between the Gada system and Plato's Republic in which leaders were progressively trained until they eventually reached the stage of maturity to assume public responsibilities.<sup>47</sup> It was based on social stratification and was quite similar to the form of democracy that evolved in ancient Athens.<sup>48</sup>

With respect to the study area, sources indicated that, at the initial stage of their settlement in Cooraa district the three Oromo clans namely the *Saddettan Cooraa*, the *Torban Bunno* and the *Jahan Nonno* were exercising the indigenous socio-political system that they inherited from their ancestors, in their respective regions.<sup>49</sup>

The present day Cooraa district was not under one gada administration. But it was controlled and ruled from two power centers separately based on the settlement areas of the above stated three Oromo clans. Local sources indicated that, the *Saddettan Cooraas* had a gada assembly at a specific place which is now known as *Tulu Muxe*, which was called *Odaa Qumbabe*. Similarly, the other two Oromo clans which were found in the district namely the Bunos and the Nonnos also had their separate gada assembly at a specific place called *Odaa Bunno* or *Odaa Humbe*.<sup>50</sup>

The first *Abba Boku* of the *Saddettan Cooraa* at *Odaa Qumbabe* assembly was known as *Xuri Jidda* and the earliest known *Abba Bokus* of the Gadaa assembly at *Odaa Bunnoo* or *Odaa Humbe* were Amacaa yaddessa and Bakkalcho Odaa from the Bunno and Nonno clans respectively. They were ruling their respective clans by decentralized structure separately from these two power centers in line with the administrative system of the Gadaa.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Dinsa Lepisa, "The Gada System of Government" LL B Thesis, (Addis Ababa University, 1975), p.42.

<sup>48</sup>Yohannis K. Mekonnen. ed., *Ethiopia: the land, its people, history and culture* (New York, 2013), p.291.

<sup>49</sup> Informants; Kedir Gelmeso, Nasir Lemu and Mekonnin Gudeta

<sup>50</sup> Informants; Kedir Gebi, Mekonnin Guddeta and Kedir Gelmeso.

<sup>51</sup> Informants; Nasir Lemu, Firrisaa Katoo, Dhaba Nonno and Laggase Kato

**Picture 1.** Historical site of Odaa Qumbaabe which is found in Cooraa district at a specific place called *Tullumuxe*.



Source; *Photo taken by the researcher, 15/8/2018.*

Later on while the Gada system was started to transform itself to monarchical system by various internal and external factors, the *moti* system started to flourish in the area. Around at the beginning of 18<sup>th</sup> c the three Oromo clans of the district were began to be ruled from the two power centers stated earlier separately in different fashion than the Gada system. Without transition of power or

transfer of the Bokku, the eighth year of the Gada power transition period simply began to be used as a law improvement and announcement period only. Oral sources indicated that, during this period *Abba Qido* was the known *moti warqe* of the *Torban Bunos* and the *Jahan Nonos* and the *Saddetan Cooraas* had a joint monarchical rule agreement with the Guma so that *Abba Magal* or *Garbaa Nyaaroo* was appointed *Moti Warqee* of Guma and Cooraa.<sup>52</sup>

After the conquest, the governorship of forcefully subjugated provinces was given to those played pivotal role in the conquest. So that, after the conquest, the governorship of the whole Ilu Aba Bor was given to the then *Dajjach* the later *Ras Tesema Nadew*.<sup>53</sup> The indigenous socio-political institutions which already had started to decline, were dismantled and new feudal order was imposed upon the people. After the conquest the autonomous status of Ilu Aba Bor kingdom brought to an end, *Ras Tasama* made his seat at Gore and started to implement the new political, social and economic system. Higher ranks were given to the Shawan administrators and some of the Oromo elites who contributed in the process of conquest made *balabats* to be a social bridge between the local people and the Shawan rulers. This is done based on the service that they gave for the establishment of the new feudal order. *Ras Tesema Nadew* usually appointed the local chiefs who collaborated with him in the process of conquest as *balabat* or *qoros*.<sup>54</sup>

During this period Cooraa district was divided among nine/9/ local *Qoro* administration. Almost all the appointed *aba qoros* were the former hereditary rulers. Both the settler soldiers and the local appointed *qoros* had the right to use the labor and production of the people in return for the service they provide to the society such as maintaining law and order and collecting government tax. To facilitate the new administration, Shawan governor titles like *ciqa shum* (*village heads*) in collaboration with local title names like *qoro*, *tullu* or *xuxxee* and *shanee*; were given to the local representatives of the government administrative hierarchy.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Informants; Faaris Ejerso, Nasir Lemu, Firrisaa Kato, Dhaba Nonno and Laggasa Kato

<sup>53</sup> Bahru Zewude, *A History of modern ...*, P.88

<sup>54</sup> Harold G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, (1994, Oxford) p. 105; Yasin Mohammed, p.42.

<sup>55</sup> Yasin Mohammed, p. 42.

**Figure 2.;** The administrative hierarchy of Cooraa district after the conquest



The nine/9/ local *qoros* were selected from those who were influential in the pre occupation administration system of the area. Their composition had embrace all the three Oromo clans of the district namely the Cooraas, the Bunnos and the Nonnos. Specifically three/3/ *qoros* were elected from the *Saddettan Cooraa* clan namely Guso Gerba, Dibaba Ankasa and Abba Liban; four/4/ from the *Torban Bunnos* namely Dinqa Wadi, Bulgu Sene, Donacho Garba and Aгаа Qufо and two from the *Jahan Nonnos* namely Guyyoo Embele.<sup>56</sup> In addition to the nine local appointees one/1/ *balabat*, *Grazmach* Wolde Woldemikael, was appointed directly from Shewa to administer the *beterist* of Beletshachew, a vast land which was granted to her during the occupation period. Later he was succeeded by Shiferaw Wolde.<sup>57</sup>

Some of the local *balabats* accepted Orthodox Christianity and learn Amharic in order to get promotion. In Muslim inhabited areas of Ilu Aba Bor there were Muslim *balabats* which served in pacifying and integrating the new order. In Cooraa district with the exception three *qoros* the rest

<sup>56</sup> Informants; Nasir Lemu, Firrisa Ejerso and Dhaba Nono.

<sup>57</sup> Informants; Kedir Gelmesso, Mekonnin Guddeta and Kedir Gebi

were Muslims. Even though these *balabats* cannot easily get the feudal titles, they were given a *Siso* land.<sup>58</sup>

In 1915 land was measured in Cooraa district by *Grazmach* Tase Belachew into *qalad* or *gasha*. This feudal act completely altered the land tenure system. Before the measurement, there was no land alienation in the area and the traditional *Qabiye* land holding system served up to the beginning of land measurement. After the measurement the Shawan officials and the local appointed officials were assigned on a household based on their ranks.<sup>59</sup>

**Figure 3.;** *Balanbaras* Guddeta Guso. *Abegaz* of the nine *qoros* in Cooraa District up to 1974.



**Source;** Collected from the personal photo Album file of his son Mekonnin Guddeta Guso.

According to the new arrangement which introduced after the land measurement in to *gasha* or *qalad*, the society entered in to multiple obligations. Among the various multiple obligations,

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<sup>58</sup> Yasin Mohammed, p. 43. And Informants; Mekonnin Guddeta, Kedir Gelmeso

<sup>59</sup> Informants; Mamo Gebrehiwot, Taye Bekele and Mekonnin Guddeta.



delivering one third of their production, paying tax and tribute, constructing the house of settler soldiers and the *balabats*, supplying gifts like honey, butter, chickens etc. on holidays, transporting grain crops to the nearby government granaries were some of their responsibilities. These made the Oromo of Cooraa district became *gabbars* of the new administration.<sup>60</sup>

Power transfer from one *qoro* to other was conducted through blood line. So that the local *qoros* were later succeeded by their sons.<sup>61</sup> For example, *Fitawrari* Guso Garba was succeeded by his son *balanbaras* Gudeta Guso Gerba, who was assigned to rule the Saddettan Cooraa inhabited areas which was found in between Gabba river and Dabena river and became *Abegaz* of the nine local *qoros*. Bulgu Sene was succeeded by his son Abdisa Bulgu to rule the area around *debeso soro*. *Fitawrari* Dinqa was succeeded by his son *balanberas* Wolde Gebriel Dinqa to rule the area around Debeso Humbe. In the same fashion all the rest; Alemayehu Kumsa, Dheresa Shone, Marga Dibaba, Dayo Gamtessa, Asrate Ligdi were succeeded their fathers' and came to power in the same hereditary feudal system. And Shiferaw Wolde was appointed to administer “*beterist*” from Shewa replacing the former *bete rist astedader* of the Beletshachew's rist land, *grazmach* Wolde Weldemikael.<sup>62</sup>

It was without any improvement in the administrative structure and its hierarchy that the power of the earlier *qoros* transferred to their sons. Here are the names of the known local *qoros* in Cooraa district with the areas or *qabales* at which they were responsible. In between Dabena and Gaba rivers including areas like Bilo, Koda, Aba Bor, Rundase initially it was ruled by *Fitawrari* Guso Gerba. When he died the power was transferred his eldest son *Fitawrari* Ahmed Guso, when he died the power again transferred to his brother *Barambaras* Gudeta Gusso who took the power and led the area up to 1974. Abdisa Bulgu Sene who succeeded his father was responsible for administering the areas around Debeso Kemise. Alemayehu Kumsa was a *qoro* responsible for the areas around Kuyee Daabena. *Balambaras* Wolde Gebriel Dinqa was a *qoro* responsible for rulling the areas around Humbe, Asrate Ligdi was a *qoro* of the areas around Halelu hadhessa and Halelu Gebbaa; Dheressa Shonee was an appointed *qoro* around Abbaa Goroo; Mohammed Dibaba was ruling the areas around Abdella; Deyyo Gemtessaa was the *qoro* of areas around Gefoo Digejja and Shiferaw Wolde was a Shawan appointee to administer the *beterist* of *Ras*

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<sup>60</sup> Informants; Kedir Gelmeso and Mekonnin Gudeta

<sup>61</sup> Informants, Kedir Gelmeso, Nasir Lemu, Mekonnin Gudeta and Bekele Agonafir.

<sup>62</sup> Informants; Kedir Gebi, Mekonin Gudeta, Bekele Agonafir

Mekonnin that he inherited it from Beletshachew which was found in the present day *qabales* like Dilbi, Tobo, Utaa. All the above mentioned ten *qoros* were served up to 1974.<sup>63</sup>

There were also settler soldiers in Cooraa district who had free access to the products and labor of peasants, like *Fitawrari* Muluneh Akale (who was a *Shambel*), *Hamsa Aleka* Abate Garede, *Meto Aleka* Kasaye Aschenaki. Those settler soldiers were given a *maderiya* land in the district in different *Qabales* based on their ranks. For example, *Shambel* Muluneh Akale had four *gashas* of *maderiya* land in Debeso, *Hamsa Aleaqa* Abate Garede had two *gashas* of land within the *qoro* of Bulgu Sene. *Meto Aleqa* Kasaye Aschenaqi had three *gashas* of land from the *qoro* of *fitawrari* Guso Gerba.<sup>64</sup>

The fate of Cooraa district after the conquest started to be decided by the local *qoros*. The nine local *qoros* served as an instrument for the indirect rule. In the local administration both the settler soldiers and the ‘*qoros*’ had power free access on the local resources of the peasants in turn for their service as tax collectors and maintaining peace and orders.<sup>65</sup>

After the conquest, peasants of Cooraa district became *gabbars* with multiple obligations. The district was divided among the *qoros* at which numerous *Ciqa shums* were assigned under them to facilitate the feudal administration. The *Ciqa Shums* were responsible for 100-200 *gashas* of land. Under the *Ciqa Shums* there was a structure which was called the *Tullaa* or the *Xuxee* with the responsibility of administering 5-6 *Shanes* under them. Later during the period of *Dejazmach* Girmachew the name of *Tullaa* was changed to *Iddiir*. The *Iddir* was endowed with judicial power to hear complaints of the *gabbars* and decide on it.<sup>66</sup>

After the introduction of Christianity some *balabats* were baptized and accepted the religion, for example; *Balambaras* Walde Gebriel Dinqa of Humbe, Abdisa Bulgu of Xobsi Debeso, Alemayehu Kumsa of Kuye, Deyo Gemtessa of Gefo can be taken as an example. The rest; *Balambaras* Gudeta Guso of Cooraa, *Balambaras* Mohammed Dibaba of Abdella, W/ro Britu Kumsa of Kombolcha /Cirreche and Asrate Ligdi of Halelu were retained their Islam religion to the end. Some of the *balabats* or *qoros* of the district even began to learn Amharic in order to get

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<sup>63</sup> Informants; Abera Takele, Mekonnin Guddeta and Bekele Agonafir

<sup>64</sup> Informants; Bekele Agonafir, Mekonnin Gudeta and Mamo GebreHiwot

<sup>65</sup> Yasin Mohammed, p. 42.; Informants; Mamo Gebre hiwot and Bekele Agonafir.

<sup>66</sup> Informant; Bekele Agonafir and Mamo G/Hiwot.

promotion.<sup>67</sup> Local sources indicated that *Balambaras Gudeta Guso*, *Balambaras Waldegebriel Dinqa* and *Abdisa Bulgu* had better acceptance in the feudal administration because of their Amharic language skill. Out of these three local *balabats* *Abdisa Bulgu* was fluent speaker of Amharic. So that even sometimes he served as a translator in meetings attended at *Bunno Awraja* when the *balabats* gathered.<sup>68</sup>

### 2.3 Taxation and Land Tenure system in Cooraa District

The question of land tenure has been a pivotal issue in the contemporary history of Ethiopia since the lively hood of the majority is based on it. Most scholars forward that the majority of the indigenous society in the south western part of Ethiopia were deprived of their traditional land right because of the new arrangements.<sup>69</sup> Up to the introduction of Land Measurement or *Qalad/gasha* system there was no land alienation. Before land measurement the traditional *qabiyyee* land holding system was exercised, at which the extensive land was owned by the peasants without multiple obligations.<sup>70</sup>

But after the measurement, tax and tribute was imposed on each household. The Shawan officials were assigned with a number of peasants based on their ranks. Initially the tax payment was in kind not in cash. The appointed nine *balabats* or *qoros* of Cooraa district had free access to the resource, the products and labor of the peasants. The peasants were forced to deliver one third of the production as a *Siso* and also were forced to give free labor service in construction of the *qoros* house, fence and churches. And also they were forced to supply honey, butter, chicken and fatten sheep on holydays Some of the local *qoros* of the district took fatten Oxen even out of holidays most of the time. Local informants indicated that out of the nine local *qoros* *Abdisa Bulgu* of *Debeso Soro* was the unsympathetic one in exploiting the peasants. Informants narrate that, if he saw a fatten ox or sheep at any time in a peasants house he took it for himself even without the will of the peasants. So that most of the time the peasants tried their best to hide them from him. Because this behavior he was so unpopular and that's why he suffered a lot during the 1974 revolution.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Informants; Kadir Galmesso and Makonnin Guddata

<sup>68</sup> Informants; Abera Takkele and Bekele Agonafir

<sup>69</sup> Informants; Mamo G/Hiwot and Bekele Agonafir

<sup>70</sup> Informant: Abera Takele and also see Yassin Mohammed, p.47 & p. 58.

<sup>71</sup> Informants; Kadir Galmesso and Abera Takele.

Later the peasant's life was worsened when the Gambella inland trade was opened in 1904. During this time the Shawan rulers demanded payment of tax in cash. Getting cash was not an easy task during that period. So the peasants start to serve as a porter for export items like Coffee, Wax, Hides and skin between Goree (which was called the Harar of western Ethiopia<sup>72</sup>) and Gambella at which most of them die because of malnutrition, malaria etc. If they were lucky enough to come back, they share what they got with their lords.<sup>73</sup> Concerning the development of trade around this area, Asafa Jalata in his book quoted from Pankhurst that "commercialization effectively began around 1907 when the opening of the inland port of Gambella on the Baro River led to a rapid increase in export to the Sudan." It is also stated that governors of Ilu Aba Bor were major Coffee growers.<sup>74</sup> So it was this situation that worsened the peasants' life for the search of cash which was too scarce during that period particularly in the study area.

## **2.4 The Period of Italian Occupation, Liberation and Its Aftermath in Cooraa District 1936-1941**

### **2.4.1 The Period of Italian Occupation**

In 1936 Italy was conquered Ethiopia to retaliate/revenge and erase the shameful scare that they got at Adwa by cooperative forces of the new Ethiopian Empire. The period of Italian occupation was remembered in different corners of the country in different ways. What was common for all was that it was an attempt of a clear colonization. But whatever the morality and rationale was given to justify in both sides it was a clear aggression act of Italy upon Ethiopia. But the impact of the five years' Italian occupation of Ethiopia was not uniform throughout the country. It varies from place to place.

Local informants indicated that the time of Italian colonial occupation period was a relatively better period in Cooraa district for the majority peasants in relative to the feudal order. During the period

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<sup>72</sup>Asafa Jaleta, *Oromia and Ethiopia: State formation and Ethno national Conflict 1868-2004*, (Asmara, 2005); Richard Pankhurst, 1965: p.67

<sup>73</sup>Yasin Mohammed, pp. 45-48.

<sup>74</sup>Asafa Jalata, p. 91.

of Italian occupation, the people who were living in Cooraa district became relatively free from; multiple tax extraction.

The peasants became masters of their own property and the *gabbars* allowed to own and use their land. Black smiths and wavers who were formerly segregated got respect. Improvements were seen in some infrastructure. For example, dry weather road reached to the district during this period. So all these and other reforms made the period to be relatively better with respect to Cooraa district.<sup>75</sup>

**Figure 4.:** Remains of the dry weather road built by the Italians in Cooraa district



**Source:** Photo taken by the researcher on 04/10/2018.

Politically to the Italians used the former grievances against the Ethiopian rulers. Concerning this Asefa Jalleta stated that “the Italians attempted to use Oromo grievances over the former colonizers changing oppressive land holding system”.<sup>76</sup> Eventhough Asefa took the issue far to the extrim by taking the former relation as colonialism at which it seems natonally biased, but it has some fact

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<sup>75</sup>Informants; Kadir Galmesso, Taye Bekele and Tilahun Shiferaw

<sup>76</sup>Asefa Jaleta. p. 91.

related to the instigation the former grivience at which in the district which manifested itself in the post liberation period rebellion provoked in Cooraa district against the imperial regime.

### 2.4.2 Liberation and post liberation period

The liberation of Cooraa district is associated with the liberation of Ilu Aba Bor which became successful, by the forces of *Dajjazmach* Kabada Yohannis, *Balambaras* Gadamu Gizaw, Jagama Kello and *Dajjazmach* Masfin Silashi in the last battle at Sambe.<sup>77</sup> Before the large scale war at Sambe there were small scale conflicts and wars between the retreating Italians and the locals in Cooraa district and other districts of the *teklay gizat*..<sup>78</sup>

As we know, in 1941 Italy was defeated and the whole Ethiopia regain independence with the help of the British. And emperor Haile Selassie I restored his feudal regime once again. The response and acceptance for the restoration of the Solomonic dynasty with its old feudal order was not uniform all over Ethiopia. With respect to the study area, Cooraa district, there was a resistance against the restoration of the old feudal order. During the the five years' period of Italian occupation peasants of Cooraa district were able to enjoy a relative economic freedom over their vital economic asset, land. Because of that, some peasants of the district started to struggle against the restoration of the old feudal order in order to maintain the relative economic freedom, that they got during the period of the Italian occupation. The peasants wanted to continue being masters of their farmlands and to be free from multiple obligations imposed upon them earlier.<sup>79</sup>

There were small scale rebellions organized by local patriots of the district such as Hikaa Abba Liban of Gudaya clan; Haji Sayid of Yayya, Godu Biftu of Dalle and Shiguxii Bushen. These notable individual figures of Cooraa district were able to led the rebellion for a brief time. They denied to accept the re-imposition of the old order and openly opposed the restoration the *gebar* system. The rebellion and denial of peasants started by these individuals was not supported by the former *qoros*. Unlike the peasants, the *qoros* and other feudal officials of the district were enjoying

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<sup>77</sup>Yasin Mohammed, 2009; Bekele Kenea, 2016.

<sup>78</sup>Informant; Bekele Agonafir, Mekonnin Gudeta

<sup>79</sup>Informants; Kedir Gelmeso and Kedir Gebi

more extra rights during the pre Italian occupation feudal period. So that they sided with the feudal government against the local notables.<sup>80</sup>

The former *qoros* and other feudal officials of the pre-Italian occupation period wanted to regain their title and authority, because they were leading a luxurious life by using the resources and labor of the peasants. So that they sided with the government and attacked the local notable individual leaders of the rebellion. Local sources indicated that, among the prominent leaders of the movement Hika *Abba* Liben and Shuguxi Bushen were caught and imprisoned in Cooraa district then transferred to Bunno *Awraja*. After some unfair trial, they were sentenced to death and they were hanged in public by the government representatives in Beddelle. Whereas *Haji* Sayid was able to escape and fled to *Arsi*.<sup>81</sup>

In the post liberation period to consolidate its authority, Emperor Haile Selassie passed a land tax decree in 1942 that mainly contains three things; first the law entitled all government officials and agents to salary; second, all tax was to be collected by government agents rather than land lords. Thirdly, it abolished all 'manual labor and miscellaneous dues imposed on cultivators. Two successive land tax proclamations; Land tax proclamation 8 of 1942 and land tax proclamation No. 70/1944 were also introduced. The first declared the payment of all tax in cash rather than in kind based on the size of land and its fertility. By the 1942 tax proclamation all kinds of labor services and tribute payment expected from the peasants by the land lords were prohibited. This proclamation also put a fixed tax rate on measured and unmeasured land with the rate of 15, 10 and 5 birr for *lam*, *lam-taf* and *taf* lands per *gasha* in Ilu Aba Bor.<sup>82</sup> This proclamation did not alleviate the burden of peasants of Cooraa district even it worsened it because it was very difficult to get the cash for the peasants. During that period peasants of Cooraa district did not widely produce cash crops like coffee which is the most dominant cash crop now. In the past they were mostly producing food crops. Those products were also produced all over the near by districts. Because of that selling these food crops in local markets for cash was unthinkable. So that peasants of Cooraa district were compelled to carry their agricultural products and travel more than 120kms to Agaro to sell them for cash. Even after that long journey they might sell it if they lucky enough because most of the time the supply of food crops in the market was too high whereas the demand

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<sup>80</sup>Ibid

<sup>81</sup>Informants; Kedir Gebi and Kadir Galmesso

<sup>82</sup>Bahru Zewde, p. 128.

was too short. The other option of getting cash during that period was through selling skins and hides of different wild animals found through hunting. This also needs gambling with their life in the forest, which needs another more hardship and even sometimes leads to life sacrifices. So that, with a rare cash flow of the period the proclamation brought extra hardship than change on the peasants life in Cooraa district <sup>83</sup>

After the 1941 liberation of Ethiopia from Italy, the process of land privatization was accelerated. The 1942 Emperor Haile Selassie's government proclamation provided generous land grants for those who had resisted the Italians and for the widows and orphans of those who had died in the war of resistance. A committee was formed by *Dajjazmach* Masfin Silashi the then governor of Ilu Abba Bor for the implementation the proclamation. Identifying the people who deserve land based on the proclamation was not an easy task for the established committee. In some cases, some individuals produced false evidences to gain *Maderiya land*.<sup>84</sup>

Archival sources indicated that the then district leaders by using their position as an advantage corrupted the proclamation. They took hundreds of *gashas* of land in the name of their servants, wives, children and in the name of their grandchildren's. to make the poor peasants out of the competition for land they were selling 1/16 of a *gasha* land for birr 100. According to the decree the payment was 12 birr, but the officials were receiving 100 birr illegally to get *rist* land. In addition to this to transfer their *atsme rist* in their name the peasants were asked more money than a price to buy a new *rist* land. Hence they prefer to pay their land tax in the name of their grandparents even after they passed away.<sup>85</sup> In Cooraa district at a specific place called *Halelu* the then period governor of Ilu Abaa Bor, *Dajjazmach* Masfin Silashi himself took 7 *gashas* of land and gave it to his son Jara Mesfin.<sup>86</sup>

This 1944 decree proclaimed the tax rate of measured land to be fixed at 50, 40 and 15 birr for *lam*, *lam-taf* and *taf* land respectively.<sup>87</sup> Reputable *balabats* were selected to measure the quantity of harvest and to determine the fertility of the land in Ilu Aba Bor, and they allowed to take 2 percent as an allowance. But there was an activity of tax evasion done by those *balabats*. The total

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<sup>83</sup>Informant: *Haji* Jemal Bushura and Mamo G/Hiwot

<sup>84</sup>Yassin Mohammed, Pp.117-118.

<sup>85</sup>Appendix- 6

<sup>86</sup>Informant; Kedir Gebi and Mekonnin Gudeta.

<sup>87</sup>Bahru Zewde, p. 193.



amount of tax collected from Bunno *Awraja* at which Cooraa district was its part was around 244,313.33 birr from the peasants in the year 1957.<sup>88</sup> There were many government officials who corrupted the proclamation and gained *Maderiya land* without the criteria in Ilu Aba Bor. For example, governors like *Dajjazmach* Mesfin were rushing to accumulate land for their personal benefit. They were acquiring land in two major ways. The first one was through grant from the government and the second way was through the process known as registering for a *gibre-tal-maret* / a land confiscated from the peasants because they could not afford to pay tax. Whenever the *siso* holder failed to pay tax the land was automatically registered as a government property as a *gibra-tal-meret*.<sup>89</sup> Local sources indicated that *Dajjazmach* Mesfin had Seven *gashas* of *gibre-tel-meret* in Cooraa district at a Specific place called Halelu. This land was seized in the name of his son Jara Mesfin which later given to him to be his living place.<sup>90</sup>

Ilu Aba Bor was visited by Emperor Haile Selassie in 1951. During this period the governor was *Dajjazmach* Tassew Walalu. The emperor declared a decree which allow the landless or unemployed to buy one *gasha* of *tefl* land for five birr. But the bureaucracy and inability to get the stated amount of money the decree did not favored the targeted groups such as the landless and the unemployed. On the contrary it favored those who can afford to buy the land. Source indicated that, during the governorship of *Dajjazmach* Tassew there was a serious of land grant for the royal families. For example, prince Mekonnen Haile Selassie was granted fourteen *gashas* of land in Cooraa district.<sup>91</sup>

*Dajjazmach* Tassaw was succeeded by *Dajjazmach* Garasu Duki in 1957. He appealed to ministry of Interior for the re measurement of land to increase government control of the land and to increase government revenue. As a result, excess land is said to have been found and sold to individuals. In 1964 *Dajjazmach* Garasu Duki was succeeded by *Dajjazmach* Girmachew Tekle Hawariat. He also carried out land measurement by using the low level of tax collection as a pre text. By doing this measure some excess *gashas* of land were discovered. Sources indicate that

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<sup>88</sup> Yasin Mohammed, pp. 129-130.

<sup>89</sup> Bekele Kenea, 2016: Yasin Mohammed, pp. 119-120

<sup>90</sup> Informants; Tilahun Shferaw, Kedir Gebi and Mekonnin Gudeta.

<sup>91</sup> Informants; Kedir Gebi and Mekonnin Gudeta; Yassin Mohammed, pp. 123-125.

those land measurements coincided with the beginning of an increasing demand for coffee export. As a result, the best coffee growing districts like Cooraa came under big land lords and officials.<sup>92</sup>

During the governorship period of *Dajjazmach* Worku Enkuselassie, the 1967 income tax proclamation was introduced which abolished tithe and replaced it with new agricultural income tax. It just levied tax without considering the type of land whether it is measured land or not. While trying to implement it, a number of problems were created which dissatisfied the society. Even though various meetings were made by the governor there were an increase in complain and hesitation to pay the assessed amount of tax there was no trust among the governors and the society in Ilu Aba Bor. For example, in Cooraa district in 1972 it was only 13,986 birr that was paid from the total assessed amount of 25, 021 birr for the government.<sup>93</sup>

The other major change in the district in the post liberation period was the arrangement of the district as a *wereda gizat* in 1942. In the early times Cooraa district was divided into three, Cooraa, Nonnoo and Bunno, named after the Oromo clans settled in it. After the land measurement, the measured land was divided among nine *qoros* ruled by local *balabats* and one *beterist* ruled by direct appointees from Shewa.<sup>94</sup>

In the post liberation period a new arrangement in the administrative structure of Cooraa district was introduced in the aftermath of the liberation period in 1942. According to the new arrangement areas which were formerly divided among the local *qoros* in ten different areas were brought together and came to be known as the Cooraa *Wereda gizat*. Cooraa became one of the nine *weredas* under *Buno Awraja*. Under this new arrangement the district came to have sixty six *Qabales* and three *mikitil wereda* namely Abdela, Debeso and Halelu but later in 1969 the *mikitil wereda gizats* were folded and no more *mikitil wereda gizat* after that.<sup>95</sup>

Following this new arrangement *Qegnazmach* Xobiya was appointed as the first district leader or *woreda astedadari*. Qumbabe town, which was found in the *qoro* of *Baranbaras Gudeta Guso* holding became the center for the district. The *qoros* started to gather and meet at Qumbabe for *wereda* meeting and recreation. Hence the town started to grow commercially. Various service

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<sup>92</sup>Ibid, pp. 126-128.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid, pp. 130-131.

<sup>94</sup>Informants; Nasir Lemu and Kedir Gelmeso

<sup>95</sup>Informants; Mekonnin Gudeta and Bekele Agonafir also see Appendix-X-A, X-B and XI

provider houses like hotels started to flourish in the town. *Weyzero* Gebayneshe's, *Tej bet* was among the earliest hotel of the district. Later, others also follow the footsteps and the town started to grow. There were also some developments and improvements in the post liberation period in the district with respect to infrastructures like Education and road transportation. This issue is explained in chapter four in detail. Eventhough after the restoration of the monarchy some policy changes has been made as a national level in the land tenure system; no change was occurred in Cooraa district; peasants of the district were forced to give labour service in addition with the cash tax payment up to the collapse of the old feudal order in 1974.

Generally speaking, up to the 1974 Ethiopian revolution “peasant was an individual who labored to meet his obligation to the state and the land lord. In return, did not get the service to which he was entitled.”<sup>96</sup> It was this situation which created various rebellions in different corners of the country which engaged by different groups of society and brought the Haile Selassie's regime to an end. With respect to the study area, Cooraa district, eventhough there was no such an organized open rebellion against the imperial regime, there were discontents and individual based armed struggles against the fudal system which added a fuel for the change.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup>Tefera Haile Selassie, p. 69.

<sup>97</sup>Informant; Haji Jemal Bushura and Mekonnin Guddeta

## CHAPTER THREE

### COORAA DISTRICT DURING THE DERG PERIOD

At a country level, the 1974 Ethiopian Revolution ended the power of Emperor Haile Selassie.<sup>98</sup> It also brought lasting changes in the political and economic landscape of Ethiopia by making an end to the so-called Solomonic dynasty.<sup>99</sup> At the initial stage of the revolution, the movement for change was centered around urban centers. With the exception of some areas like Gojjam and Bale the vast majority was remained passive. Concerning this, Andargachew in his PhD dissertation stated that;

the rural populations of Ethiopia were not involved in the uprising which prevailed over the first six months of 1974. Despite that, leftist observers of the events have maintained that the peasant had always been involved in insurrectionary protests against the exploiting class and continued to do so during the uprising under consideration. In support of their claim, they often cite the armed struggle of the Oromo in Bale from 1960-1970, the 1967 resistance of the farmers of the north-western province of Gojam against tax reforms, and the thousands of farmers (mostly tenants) who were dislodged from their holdings as a result of the development of commercial farms in several areas as of the late 1960's.<sup>100</sup>

But the result of the change was not confined to the towns and urban centers. Soon it was disseminated to the rural areas of the country. After the creeping process of the coup, by using the advantage of its military superiority, the army took the situation and appointed itself as the agent of the people. The *Derg/A* committee/ selected from all the army branches was established to negotiate things with the emperor and to bring corrupt officials of the ancient regime to justice. This committee which was popularly known as the *Derg*, a collection of junior officers, later on

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<sup>98</sup> Baharu Zewde, 1991. *A History of Modern ...*, p.236.

<sup>99</sup> Ezekiel Gebisa, 2002. "Introduction: Rendering Audible the Voices of the Powerless", Kettering University, Flint, Michigan, *Northeast African Studies* (ISSN 0740-9133) 9(3) (New Series), pp. 1–14.

<sup>100</sup> Andargachew Tiruneh, "The Ethiopian Revolution 1974 to 1984", PhD dissertation, (London school of economics, 1990) p.84.

removed the Emperor from his throne in September 1974 and took power itself promising the election of a popular government in the future. The *Derg* established a provisional government and until 1987, the country was ruled by this Provisional Military Administration Council (PMAC). Immediately after assuming political power the *Derg*, started to take radical socio-economic reforms which had Marxist base.<sup>101</sup>

With respect to the specific study area, Cooraa district, the urban society and the rural peasants were under the yoke of the feudal system. Both the peasants and urban dwellers were pursuing for both economic and political change. Their engagement in the struggle for the transformation was manifested through different ways. It had a manifestation from denial of various feudal obligations up to individual based armed struggle. Markedly in the post liberation period prominent individual figures like Merdasa Flate, Shiguxi Bushen, Godu Biftu and others were engaged in armed struggle against the restoration of the oppressive feudal system. Eventhough their intrepid engagement seems insignificant as a country level; locally it was a bold eye opening and praiseworthy confrontation which put a seed for the later struggle against the imperial regime in the district which history needs to credit it.<sup>102</sup>

On the contrary an organizational form of struggle was not as such actively engaged by the society of Cooraa district. In this model there is no such a meaningful element added for the transition at its early stage. But later at the eve of the revolution in Buno *awraja*, at which Cooraa district was in it, there was peaceful demonstration in March, 1975 against *Dejazmach* Werqu Enqusillassie (*enderase* of Ilu Aba Bor *xeqlay gizat*) and other three *Awraja shums* namely *Ato* Tilahun Ferede, *Ato* Abitew Abebe and *Ato* Tadese Tafese. The demonstrators were asking the resign of those government officials for their corrupt behavior. Some people at individual level were able to engage in this organized demonstration from Cooraa district even though their number was insignificant.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Andargachew Tiruneh, p.27.

<sup>102</sup> Informants. Kedir Gebi, Nasir Lemu and Kedir Gelmeso

<sup>103</sup> Informant; Bekele Agonafir, and also see Appendix-4.

### 3.1 Reforms on the land tenure system

The *Derg*, introduced the 1975 Land Proclamation with the objective of abolishing landlordism in Ethiopia which was implemented through redistribution of the most important economic asset-land among the ordinary people.<sup>104</sup>

After Haile Selassie was deposed from power in 1974 by the *Derg*, the transformation of the country to socialism was announced in December 1974. The situation is better explained by Andargachew in his PhD dissertation as follows;

It was on December 20, 1974, that the Derg's first fundamental political and economic program, "Ethiopian Socialism", was issued. The Derg's policy statement explained that it was derived from an interpretation of "Ethiopia First" and from Ethiopian culture and religions. It further explained that even though it was a twelve-page document, it was capable of being subsumed under five basic principles: sovereignty, the absoluteness of Ethiopia's unity, self-reliance, the dignity of labor and the precedence of the public good. Elaborating the policies of the program in the economic sphere, it said that those assets which were beneficial to the public would be nationalized and those which, if left in private hands would not go contrary to "Ethiopia First", would be left in the private sector. It was also stated that land would be owned by the people and the cottage industries would be promoted .<sup>105</sup>

None of the Ethiopian regions and society remained unaffected by the revolutionary turmoil of the period. However, because of their relative organization of the military and the absence of well-

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<sup>104</sup> Dessalegn Rahmato, 1982. "Agrarian Reform in Ethiopia: A brief Assessment," *Paper Presented at the Seventh International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, Lund: University of Lund, PP. 587-595; Dula Abdu, 1978. "Land Reform in Ethiopia: A Prelude to Socialist Development". In *Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, Session B, Chicago: University of Illinois, 1978, PP. 729-740; Paul B. Henze, *Layers of Time: A History of Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa, 2004), p.290.; Bahru Zewde, *Ethiopia and...* p.240.

<sup>105</sup> Andargachew Tiruneh, p. 136.

organized political party of the civilians, the initiative to force the emperor to stepdown and take power was undertaken by the military in September 12, 1974.<sup>106</sup>

On 20 September 1974, the military government declared its manifesto clarifying its aim to build *Hibretesebawinet* or Ethiopian Socialism, whose goal was “equality, self-reliance, and the dignity of labor, the supremacy of common good and the indivisibility of Ethiopian unity”. The military government also made clear its determination to work for the people of Ethiopia under the slogan of “*Ethiopia Tikdem*” (Ethiopia first).<sup>107</sup>

Reforms were also made on the land tenure system. By Proclamation No.31 of 1975 (A Proclamation to provide for the public ownership of Rural Lands), the former feudal production and property relations were abolished and replaced by the state and cooperative private sector. This proclamation did not only abolish the former feudal relations of production between the landlord and the peasant, but it also completely abolished the commercial agriculture from rural Ethiopia. According to this proclamation “All rural lands shall be collective property of Ethiopian people and no person or business organization or any other organization shall hold rural land in private ownership”. Hence, the proclamation gave only the right of use of land and clearly stated in Article 5 that “No Person may sell, exchange, mortgage, lease or otherwise transfer his holding to another”.<sup>108</sup>

With respect to the study area, Cooraa district, after 1975 the land tenure system is completely changed and came to be in line with the above stated socialist proclamation. But the implementation of the proclamation was not smooth enough and orderly organized in line of the rules of law. Rather it was more of emotional move manifested by the new individuals leading the change. So that at the beginning it affected the basic rights and dignity of members and officials of the old regime.<sup>109</sup>

In the study area, immediately after the change the first victims of the revolution were high ranking officials and members of the old feudal political structure specifically the *qoros* and their families.

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<sup>106</sup> Baharu, 1991. p.234

<sup>107</sup> Baharu Zewde, 1991. *A History of...*, p.420; Edmond J. Keller, 1981. *Ethiopia; Revolution, Class and National Question*, African Affairs, pp. 519-549.

<sup>108</sup> Roberto Cigna, “The Ethiopian Revolution: Its Present Stage of Development”, in the *Proceedings of the Seventh International Conference of Ethiopian Studies* (University of Lund,1982), pp.523-534.

<sup>109</sup> informants; Mamo G/Hiwot, Mekonnin Guddeta and Abera Takele.

Officials of the new government believed that, those officials who were served the feudal system cannot cope up with the new system and suspected to side for the old order. Sometimes they used to call them '*gotach*' (who holds back the revolution). So that they were ordered to give up their authority. After their authority was taken away from them, all the former *gebars* peasants were started to be instigated to rebel up on them. All the land holdings of the *qoros* were taken away by the government in line of the socialist ideology to become communal property of the society and the new government officials treated them harshly. For example, they forced *qoros* like Abdisa Bulgu to travel more than 20 kms bare foot, from Debbeso kebele up to Qumbabe town of the district with no mercy. In addition to the imprisonment and the harsh treatment of those *qoros*, representatives of the *Derg* confiscated all the properties of the *qoros*, including their household utensils, cattle and sold it openly to the society without due process of law.<sup>110</sup>

To decide on almost all political related legal issues, the *Abiyot* committee was organized. This committee had seven members in Cooraa district namely Ato Awagaw Melaku the first *wereda astedadari* assigned by the *Derg* in Cooraa district right after the revolution was head of the committee, Ato Kedir Gelmessu head of the district farmers' association was a vice, Colonel Aseffa Lema from the district police he was the post revolution head of the police force in the district, and also the committee includes additional four elected members from the society namely Ato Chanyalew Worku from Shengela kebele, Ato Yigezu from Hawa Yember kebele, Ato Sileshi Asfaw from Abdela kebele and Ato Siraj Bekele from Ale Sardo kebele.<sup>111</sup>

At the initial period of the revolution this committee was giving various decisions upon the former members of the Haile Selassie government suspected of anti-revolutionary by the new government representatives. The suspected ones were given various names like *gotach* / the one who holds back and the like. One of the victims of this trial and an eyewitness informant for the present study was the former Cooraa district *wenjel mirmera shum* /crime investigator/ Ato Bekele Agonafir and his colleagues. As an eye witness account gathered from him; without any formal legal court trial 5 years' imprisonment was decided up on them. The trial process showed that in the after math of the revolution the formal judicial process was castrated in Cooraa district and it was this committee

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<sup>110</sup> Informants; Mekonnin Guddeta, Abera Takkele, Bekele Agonafir

<sup>111</sup> Informant: Bekele Agonafir and Mekonnin Gudeta.



which became law interpreter with no appeal for its decision either in the district or at the *awraja* level.<sup>112</sup>

### 3.2 Nationalization of urban lands and extra houses

The other reform brought by the *Derg* was nationalization of urban lands and extra houses. Sources indicated that it was started On July 26, 1975 based on the proclamation No.27.<sup>113</sup> Based on this proclamation urban land and extra houses were nationalized. The *Derg* allowed ownership of not more than one dwelling house and 500m<sup>2</sup> land. *Derg* nationalized different small scale industries and extra houses from different individuals in Cooraa district.<sup>114</sup>

In Cooraa district initially the urban land and extra houses of the former officials, particularly of the *qoros* were confiscated. The major target in this line was *balanbaras Gudeta Guso*, who was living in the urban site of the district, at *Qumbabe* town. Almost all of his land holdings and extra houses with the exception of his living house were confiscated. Local sources indicated that in Cooraa district totally more than one hundred extra houses, eight grinding houses, and two coffee huller machines were nationalized.<sup>115</sup>

Out of the above stated extra houses and small scale industries, 12 extra houses, one coffee huller industry and three grinding machines were nationalized from a single individual local merchant named Haji Jemal Bushra, who was one of the pioneers in trade activity of the district. There were also other individuals who became victims of this policy in the district.<sup>116</sup>

### 3.3 Peasant Associations

After the introduction of the proclamation of nationalization of urban land and extra houses, other proclamations were also issued which guide the various activities of the government, such as rural land proclamation of 1975 which eliminated private ownership of land. This proclamation was

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<sup>112</sup> Informant; Bekele Agonafir and Kedir Gebi.

<sup>113</sup> Bekele Kenea, 2016, p. 35; Bahru Zewde, *A history of Modern...*, P.243; Harold G. Marcus, P.192.

<sup>114</sup> Informants; kedir Gebi and Haji Jemal Bushura.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>116</sup> Informants; Haji Jemal Bushura and Mokonnin Guddeta

implemented by organizing students of senior high school, college and universities under the umbrella of the *Zamacha* program.<sup>117</sup>

For the smooth implementation of the program in October 1975 the National Work and education campaign for Development through Co-operation was founded. In Ilu Aba Bor the first batch of the *Zamacha* group was assigned in Beddelle warada. *Fitawrari* Haile Otoro, the then governor of Ilu Aba Bor, welcomed them by making possible preparation. In some areas of Ilu Aba Bor there was a conflict between *zamachoch* and the land lords, because the later were not interested to see the *zamach* agitating the peasants and their work towards the implementation of the rural land proclamation of the 1975. In Cooraa district there were 117/one hundred seventeen/ *zamachoch* which were assigned to implement the program.<sup>118</sup>

In Cooraa district they were arrived and settled in the open field found behind the present secondary school of the district. A committee was organized to collect available resource needed for the program and facilitate their activity. Barsene Dugda, Haji Jemal Bushura and Ato Mekonnin Guddeta were leading members of the committee which was organized to facilitate the program. They collected money from the people of the district and allocated 30 birr per individual *Zemach* per month.<sup>119</sup>

The campaign brought significant changes in the district. They organized 66 *Kebele* structure in a land covering 20 *gashas* in Cooraa district and they were also provided basic education. In addition to these they were also tried to agitate and gave socialist ideology based political education to make the peasants aware of the change.<sup>120</sup>

Peasant associations were also formed by the effort made by this campaign to implement the 1975 proclamation which was empowered to organize co-operatives, redistributing land and resolving conflicts at which the *zamach* members played significant role in organizing it. These associations were empowered for tax collection with the support of *warada* finance office.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Harold G. Marcus, ... Pp. 189-193.

<sup>118</sup> Bekele Kenea, 2016: 56.

<sup>119</sup> Informants; Kedir Gebi and *Haji* Jamal Bushura.

<sup>120</sup> Informant; Kedir Gebi, Mamo G/Hiwot and Mekonnin Gudeta.

<sup>121</sup> Yassin Mohammed, p.186-187.

### 3.4 Service Co-operatives

The other new development of this period was the introduction of co-operatives. Service co-operatives were organized accordingly based on proclamation number 71/1975, to protect peasants from possible exploitation. Various basic need materials and goods were served by these co-operatives to the peasants at a fair price. In Ilu Aba Bor there were three major branches of Ethiopian Domestic Distribution Co-operation in Gore, Mattuu and Beddelle which provide and distribute the goods to service cooperatives found in the nearby *waradas*.<sup>122</sup>

Based on the proclamation No. 78/1975, which allowed each peasant association to establish Cooperative farms, a number of Farmers Producers Cooperatives were established in various *waradas* of Ilu Aba Bor. In Cooraa district around twenty seven service cooperatives were organized. Out of these the strongest one, The Hawa Gabbaa Farmer producer cooperative was established in this line and it served up to the introduction of mixed economic policy in 1990, at which cooperatives were dissolved.<sup>123</sup>

The service cooperatives were vulnerable to contraband activities and corruption. Sources indicated that most of the time people of the district were dissatisfied by some uncomfortable rules of the cooperatives. One of those rules was the compulsory item buy system at which the seller enforces the buyer to purchase unsold items. For example, sometimes when the society went to buy sugar the seller enforced them to purchase some other additional unsold items like battery cells or any other items out of their need and plan. But in general terms it saved the society from exploitation of private merchants since it provides goods at fair price.<sup>124</sup>

### 3.5 Resettlement

Resettlement implies to a process of moving people to new locations for different reasons. Either for socio-economic or political reasons. Sources indicate that Ethiopia's resettlement experience goes back to the 1960s during the Imperial regime. What makes it different in the later period of the *derg* in 1980 is that it became a major undertaking particularly after the disastrous famine that

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<sup>122</sup> Bekele Kenea, 2016: Yasin Mohammed, p. 189.

<sup>123</sup> Yassin Mohammed, 2009.

<sup>124</sup> Informant; Bekele Agonafir and Kedir Gelmeso

occurred in the middle of the decade in 1884/85.<sup>125</sup> The purpose of the resettlement program was suspected in different manners during the period and negatively interpreted by some political groups like TPLF and OLF at the time. Concerning the issue sources indicated that;

*The immediate cause was the failure of the rainfall in the affected regions, like Tigrai and Wollo, aggravated as it was by the civil wars which prevented the movement of goods and services between the surplus and deficit areas. The only thing the regime pursued as a solution to the disaster was forcing the drought-affected people of Tigrai and Wollo in the north to resettle mainly in the western provinces of Wollega and Illubabor. The programme was carried out efficiently by the regime with the help of its mass organizations, cadres and the army. Nevertheless, the policy was not unopposed. TPLF accused the government of intending to depopulate the region and undermine the movement while the OLF accused it of intending to 'reconquer' the Oromo people of the western provinces and their land. There was also general disquiet on the part of the international community regarding the consistency of the way the resettlement scheme was carried out with the standards of human rights.<sup>126</sup>*

What ever the interpretation and the rational was behind, in October 1984 the *Derg* was launched a massive resettlement program which was aimed at relocating the famine affected area population of the north particularly Tigray and Wollo to a fertile and less populated areas of the West and South Western Ethiopia. “Starting from the late 1984, several new settlement sites were opened hastily on the western and southwestern parts of the country.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Dessalegn Rahmato, *Resettlement in Ethiopia; The Tragedy of Population Relocation in the 1980s*. 2003, p, Vii.

<sup>126</sup> Andargachew, P.349.

<sup>127</sup> Yasin, P.198.

Settlers and Settlement Schemes (1984-86)

| Rec. Areas       | Conventional  | Integrated    | Articulated | Total         |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| Wollega          | 158 837       | 84 615        | 9 830       | 253282        |
| <b>Illubabor</b> | <b>52 698</b> | <b>93 518</b> | --          | <b>146216</b> |
| Kaffa            | ----          | 81 034        | --          | 81034         |
| Gojjam           | 101 123       | ---           | --          | 101123        |
| Gondar           | ----          | 6 387         | --          | 6387          |
| Shoa             | ----          | ---           | 6 149       | 6149          |
| Total            | 312 658       | 265 554       | 15 979      | 594191        |

Source: RRC 1988

Cooraa district is one of the districts at which the resettlement program was implemented. Local sources indicated that, less agricultural population density with abundance of free fertile agricultural plots of land made the district to be selected for the program. The arrival of the settlers was warmly accepted by the society of the district. Eyewitness accounts indicated that when they arrived in the district the PAs mobilized the society and each household found in the town of *Kumbabe* was contributed food for the arrivals. In the same manner peoples found in the *Kebeles* at which the the settlers were going to settle; build huts in addition they contributed traditional farming equipment with the exception of Oxen. The government on its side gave them one Ox for each household and additional household utensils, blankets, milk powders and seeds.<sup>128</sup>

More than 17 *Kebeles* were selected for the resettlement program in Cooraa district. *Dingera, Tobo, Cibra Baja, Wayu, Didiksa, Koda, Xiphecha, Abdela/Gotu, Dale Dingera, Cireche, Sema Guracha, Bilo, Qore, Aba Goro, Kemise, Qilxu Sibo, Gombobo* were some of the *kebeles* at which the resettlement program was implemented in the study area.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>128</sup> Informants; Mekonnin Gudeta, Kiros Abraham and Mikael Kasa

<sup>129</sup> Informants; Kedir Gebi, Kiros Abraham and Mikael Kasa

In those *Kebeles* stated above the settlers were given a hut with 100 m x 50m of land at the back of the house for initial cultivation. In the first week of their arrival the local farmers were taken the responsibility of their livelihood including their security. Up to 1887 for three continuous years the local farmers were taken the responsibility of helping them to plough their land and the government was giving them aid of items like blankets, food oil, cloths, salt etc. In facilitating all the activities, the peasant association of the district played significant role particularly in restoring settlers confidence. Ato Lema Mekuriya head of the district PA and Ato Haregeweyn head of the district administration of the period are still praised by the settlers for their enormous efforts for the success of the program.<sup>130</sup>

Throughout the history of the resettlement program has been started up to the present study is conducted there is no record of inter-ethnic conflict among the locals and the settlers which can be raised as a good example which they still have harmonious relationship for more than three decades.<sup>131</sup>

### 3.6 Villagization

The other important issue which was related with the reforms of the *Derg* in this period was the Villagization program. Villagization can be defined as a process of transferring the peasants from a scattered traditional way of life to clustered villages. The settlement of peasants in a scattered hamlet was regarded as an uncivilized manner by the *Derg* and it was blamed for its vulnerability to deforestation, for soil degradation and less accessible for infrastructures'. As a remedy for this villagization was believed to ensure optimal land use. Furthermore it was believed that villagization would benefit the peasants through better access to infrastructures' like road, water, electricity, schools, grinding mills etc. than the scattered hamlets.<sup>132</sup>

Even though the motive on the government side was rationalized by the reason of making service delivery convenient, but the process was conducted through forceful means of removing the peasants from their birth place.<sup>133</sup> So that the society of Cooraa district were not happy towards

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<sup>130</sup> Informants; Bekele Agonafr, Kiros Abraham and Mikael Kasa

<sup>131</sup> Informants; Kiros Abraham, Kedir Gebi and Mikael Kasa

<sup>132</sup>Yasin Mohammed, p.203.

<sup>133</sup>Christopher Clapam, p.175.

the implementation of the program because the life style they were forced to start, in a clustered villages, was unfamiliar with the way they had accustomed for generations.<sup>134</sup> Sources indicated that there was mass dissatisfaction in Ilu Aba Bor in general and in the district in particular because of the unsuccessful operation of villagization.<sup>135</sup> Informants indicated that there were different reasons for the dissatisfaction of the peasants. The first reason was that they were not persuaded well by government representatives. It was as of a sudden with little elaboration that the peasants were forced to abandon their resident areas and forced to build the new villages using local resource. This made them to hate it from the beginning. The second main reason was that; those new villages were established far from the peasants' farm land. This made their life very difficult because it added additional distance to reach to their farm plot. This made the morning travel by carrying the farm equipment's and the night watch to protect their crop from beast very difficult since clustered way of living was far from their farm lands. The other reason was that the clustered way of living was quite different from the scattered way that the society in the district was accustomed to live for generations at which they had more relaxed space.<sup>136</sup>

Informants indicated that on the government side no effort was made to understand and comprehend some of the benefits of the traditional way of living near to their farm in a scattered manner and did not tried to accommodate the implementation villagization based on the local culture and way of life of the society. So it was failed soon when the peasants left the villages and go back to their former residences to lead their life with their accustomed residential culture near to their farmlands.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Informants; Kedir Gebi, Kedir Gelmeso and Mamo Gebrehiwot.

<sup>135</sup> Bekele Kenea, p. 82, Informant; Kedir Gebi and Mamo G/Hiwot.

<sup>136</sup> Informants; Kedir Gebi, Kedir Gelmeso and Mamo Gebrehiwot.

<sup>137</sup> Informants; Mamo G/hiwot and Kedir Gebi

## CHAPTER FOUR

### GENERAL SURVEY ON THE SOCIO ECONOMIC HISTORY OF COORAA DISTRICT

#### 4.1 RELIGION

##### 4.1.1 Decline of Indigenous Traditional Religion in Cooraa District

Prior to the introduction of both Islam and Christianity the Oromo living in Cooraa district were followers of one of the African indigenous religion practiced by the Oromo which is known as *Waqeffanna*.<sup>138</sup> Sources indicated that Oromo religion focuses on one God known as *Waq*. *Waq* is believed to be the source of all life, infinite, omnipresent and creator.<sup>139</sup>

There are various indications showing that long before the advent of both Christianity and Islam to the district there was a practice of annual journey to the indigenous spiritual leader called *Qallu*, namely *Abba Bara*, who was found in Dega. *Aba Bara* was believed to have a spiritual connection with *Waq* and served as a priest. This annual journey had been continued even after the introduction of the later two Abrahamic religions, Islam and Christianity. In addition to this there was also another evidence indicating the presence the indigenous religion in Cooraa district prior to the advent of both Islam and Christianity which was manifested in a practice of annual thanks giving ceremony celebrated locally in Cooraa district at a place called *Koda* mountain which was the most common practices of the indigenous religion exercised by locals even continued after the coming of both Islam and Christianity.<sup>140</sup>

Even though now days *Waaqeffannaa* is not widely practiced and followed by the societies of Cooraa district, there are still some elements and names associated with the practice of *Waqeffanna*. Among these one is that, the *ayana* of a mountain. In Oromo religion of *Waqeffanna* mountains believed to have their *ayana*.<sup>141</sup> This element is still manifested in a situation that some times while aged elders of the society give blessings they say “*Abdaariin Koddaa Si haa’egu*” (Let

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<sup>138</sup> Informants; Mekonnin Gudeta, Amsalu fantayehu, Momina Adem, Lense Arega and Bekele Agonafir

<sup>139</sup> Cherri Reni Wemlinger, p.71.

<sup>140</sup> Informants; Mekonnin Gudeta, Amsalu fantayehu, Momina Adem, Lense Arega and Bekele Agonafir.

<sup>141</sup> Lambert Bartels, p.112.



the *Adbar*/sprit of Kodda keep you safe) and/ or in the opposite, if somebody angered them they say “*Abdaariin Koddaa Si habuqqiisu*” (let the *Adbar* of Kodda take you away). *Kodda* is a mountain which is found in front of Qumbabe, town of the district.<sup>142</sup>

Fig- 5 Mount Kodda at which followers of indigenous religion celebrate thanks giving.



Source; Photo taken by the researcher 20/11/2018

Informants also stated that up to the *Derg* period even people with other religions used to sacrifice sheep on this mountain and organize a prayer and thanks giving ceremonies in September and

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<sup>142</sup>Informants; Mekonnin Gudeta, Amsalu fantayehu and Bekele Agonafir

May. But during the *Derg* period it was prohibited. Those practices of the society indicated that in the earlier periods before the introduction of both Islam and Christianity, the society were practicing *Waqeffanna* as a religion.<sup>143</sup> With the introduction of Islam and later Christianity to the area, those who formerly were followers of the above stated indigenous religion, started to embrace Islam and Christianity.<sup>144</sup>

#### 4.1.2 Introduction and expansion of Islam in Cooraa District

Sources indicate that Islam was introduced in the Gibe kingdoms between 1840-1870. It was during this period that the five Gibe kingdoms adopted Islam as a result of their contact with merchants of Derta, WaraSheik and also through the agency of merchants coming to this area from Egyptian Sudan.<sup>145</sup> Headed by Guma four Gibe states formed a league known as the *Arfa Naggadoota* and began to raid the *Afra Oromota*, who were not Muslims at that time and dubbed as pagans by the Gibe states Muslims before the conquest of Menelik.<sup>146</sup>

Evidences extracted from informants showed that the introduction of Islam to Cooraa district was associated with trade link that the district had with the state of *Guma*. Local sources indicate that there were frequent raids by the Guma state to the district at different periods. Even though they were unable to indicate the specifics of the battles most of the informants narrates that the *Qotas* which are still found in Debeso kebele are the remains of the defensive fortresses built by their ancestors when they were followers of traditional religions before the introduction of Islam.<sup>147</sup>

Concerning the expansion of Islam in the district, two views are forwarded by informants. The first assumption spoken by informants' states that it was introduced with the call that came from the leaders of Guma for the Cooraas' to embrace Islam in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> the former followers of the *waaqeffanna* embraced the new one by abandoning the old, at which they were celebrating annually in Degga. These sources indicated that before the introduction of Islam the *waaqeffataas* of the district were annually celebrate in Degga district where the known *qaallu* of the then period

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<sup>143</sup> Informants; Bekele Agonafir and also the researcher heard from the society, specially from those with old age, living with them in Chora district.

<sup>144</sup> Informants; Kedir Gebi, Bekele Agonafir and Mekonnin Guddeta

<sup>145</sup> Spencer J. Trimingham, *Islam in Ethiopia* (London, 1952), P.199.

<sup>146</sup> Trimingham, p.199.

<sup>147</sup> Informants; Abera Takele and Mekonnin Gudeta

was found. But later when Islamic religion was start to expand in the area the *qallu* was fled to Mettu.<sup>148</sup>

The second assumption which also spoken by informants of the society relates the expansion of Islam with the diplomatic relation need of *Ras Tesemma* with the Sudan. The informants stated that once a diplomatic letter was sent from Sudan to *Ras Tesemma* which was written in Arabic language. The letter was about the need of Sudan to create commercial relation with him. So *Ras Tasamma* searched for a translator. He got a Sheik to translate the letter for him. This event made him follow positive approach towards Muslims. Then after wards *Ras Tesema Nadew* allowed the teaching of Quran and observance of Islam for economic and diplomatic purpose in the area.<sup>149</sup>

Motivated by this suitable condition, *Sheik Abdella* selected 50 students and sent them for further religious education to Wollo. Out of these 50 students sent to Wollo the one who successfully completed the religious education was *Shik Taha*.<sup>150</sup>

After returning back to his birth place in Cooraa district at a specific place called Abdella, *Sheik Teha* started to give religious education as a first generation religious teacher in the district and their famous and successful disciples were *Sheik Habib Kotano* and *Haji Adem*. These two disciples of *Sheik Teha* were considered as the second generation religious teachers in Cooraa district. After them students like *Sheik Abdulqadir* took their footsteps as a third generation.<sup>151</sup>

In this manner and with the strong commercial link that people of the district had with Guma, Islam was able to became the dominant religion in Cooraa district.<sup>152</sup> Initially since there was no mosque at which the Muslims gather together to pray, they were praying in *Zawiya* /separately at their homes or in *Medresas* by preparing prayer place/.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Informants; *Haji Munir* and *Shik Said Negash*

<sup>149</sup> Ibid

<sup>150</sup> Informant; *Sheik Said Negash* and *Haji Munir*

<sup>151</sup> Ibid

<sup>152</sup> Informants; *Haji Munir* and *Sheik Said Negash*

<sup>153</sup> Ibid

Figure 6. The new Selam mosque which is in the process of building to replace the old.



Source; Photo taken by the researcher 20/11/2018

It was after a long delay that later in 1971 Selam Mosque was built in Kumbabe town of the district.<sup>154</sup> The establishment of this mosque helped the followers to meet to pray together and to further strengthen their religion.

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<sup>154</sup> Informant; *Haji* Jemal Bushura and *Sheik* Said Negash

### 4.1.3 Introduction and Expansion of Orthodox Christianity in Cooraa District

The third religion, next to Waqeffanna and Islam, to be introduced in the Cooraa district was the Orthodox Christianity. The introduction of Orthodox Christianity in Cooraa district was associated with the coming of Shawan Minelik forces led by *Ras* Tesemma Nadew to the area in the beginning of the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> c.

The introduction of northern culture was one of the major changes happened in Cooraa district after the occupation. Before the introduction of Orthodox Christianity in most areas of the district Islam and *waqeffanna* were the two dominant religions. After the conquest the Shewan settler soldiers started to construct Churches in different corners of the district.<sup>155</sup>

In this line the following churches were built initially in different *qabales* of the district. St. Mikael Church was first established around the area of Jimate, later taken to Qumbabe town. Humbe Medhanialem was built in 1909 funded by *Ras* Tesema Nadew himself. Next to that other churches were built successively. Abdela Gebriel by *Fitawrari* Bedane in the year 1913, Kuye Medhanialem by *Fitawrari* Endaylalu in the year 1915.<sup>156</sup>

Informants stated that initially it was only the new comers/ the Shawan settler soldiers who were worshipping on those churches on Sundays. Meanwhile some *qoros* were started to embrace the religion. The pioneers were Abdisa Bulgu of Debeso and *Balanberas* Woldegebriel Dinqa of Humbe. In this two areas of the district large number of the society were converted to Orthodox Christianity following the footsteps of the two *qoros*.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Informants; Mamo Gebrehiwot, Mekonnin Gudeta and Haile Yifru

<sup>156</sup> Informants; Wasihun Shibabaw and Mamo Gebre Hiwot

<sup>157</sup> Informants; Abera Takele and Mekonnin Gudeta.

Picture 7: The gate of St. Gabriel Church which is found in Abdela kebele of Cooraa district



Source: photo taken by the researcher during the field work on 25/05/2018.

The majority of the people who embrace the new doctrine, Orthodox Cristianity, were from the indigenous, *waqeffanna*, religion. At the initial period the society who newly embrace the religion were practicing some elements of *waqeffana* side by side with the Orthodox doctrine. Specially some practices of the indigenous religion such as the annual thanks giving ceremony celebration held at *Kodda* mountain and the annual voyage to visit the spiritual leader *Qallu* which was found

in Dega were the two major practices exercised by locals up to 1970s side by side with the doctrine of Orthodox Christianity.<sup>158</sup>

Informants also stated that at the initial period there was no regular religious teaching, so that the local people who newly embraced the religion did not have enough knowledge about the details of Orthodox religion. Being baptized and having a cross made from wood or silver around their neck were the two major practices used to identify themselves from others.<sup>159</sup>

Later the believers started gathering on Sunday *kidase* session at nearby churches and accustomed to bring bread and local *tella* for *Senbete* program at which most engaged in it. Local informants stated that fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays regularly was the major element of the doctrine which the locals were unable to practice it regularly at the beginning because it was completely different from their prior indigenous religious practice.<sup>160</sup>

Through time additional churches were built in different parts of the district, religious teachings were widely given and most people from the indigenous religion converted to this religion and it/Orthodox Christianity became the second dominant religion next to Islam in the Cooraa district.<sup>161</sup>

#### **4.1.4 Introduction and Expansion of Protestant Christianity in Cooraa District**

The fourth religion to be introduced in the district chronologically was the Christian sect of Protestantism. In Cooraa district there are three protestant sects namely *Mekaneyesus*, *Mulu Wengel* and *Meserete Kiristos*. The introduction and expansion of these three protestant sects in Coora district had separate temporal aspect. Out of these three sects the first to be introduced by the German missionaries in Cooraa district was the *Mekaneyesus* Church.

Initially the missionaries came to Buno *Awraja* to serve at Bedele *dabena tegbareid* or technic school. Later they asked the authorities of Cooraa district to build an elementary school in Cooraa district. Since the main town of the district, Qumbabe, had already a primary school the chance

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<sup>158</sup> Informants; Abera Tkele, Bekele Agonafir, Mamo Gebrehiwot, and Mekonnin Gudeta.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid

<sup>160</sup> Ibid

<sup>161</sup> Informants; Abera Takele, Getacho Ayana and Ferede Moroda.

was given to other *kebele* of the district. From the then period various *qoro gizats*, it was Abdisa Bulgu's Debeso Soro which was in need of school and had appealing at different instances. Hence this area, *Debeso* was a site allowed for them to build a school in 1972. The first teachers assigned in the school were *qes* Abera Reggasa, Ato Hikaa Ittaanaa and Ato Tamiru Ittana. In line with the formal educational curriculum they started to teach religious education once in a week. By doing so gradually they were able to recruit followers and disseminate their doctrine in the areas which were predominantly Muslims and Orthodox Christians. On Sundays they arranged prayer session. Beat by beat they started to preach the people by using the local language Afan Oromo. This helped them to be understood by the mass and able to get large number of followers gradually.<sup>162</sup>

Concerning the Mulu Wengel sect of protestant religion, sources indicate that around the year 1986 there were religious teachings of this doctrine in Debeso. But up to the 1993 there was no place of worship for *Mulu Wengel* followers. But in the stated year Birhane Abebe, Girma Abebe and Tigist Abebe started a prayer session as a family at the house of Girma Abebe around *Kodda*. Later when other individuals like Selemon Tefera joined the group they discussed to have a regular group prayer session in the same house on Wednesday and on Friday.

Since they do not have their own separate church they also agreed to go to the *Meserete Kiristos* Church on Sundays prayer. Later when internal rumor and tensions occur because of some little issues, the Abebe Metaferiya's family and their colleagues separated and started their own separate regular group prayer session in the same year. At this stage individual like, Genenew Hailu, Desalegn Amente, Dibisa Gebisa were already joined them. In this stage they grew to the stage of *Cooraa Mulu Wengel Hibret*.<sup>163</sup>

Local sources indicated that at the initial/early stage of its expansion the followers of protestant religion of Cooraa district were facing different challenges like segregation, even some times stones were thrown upon their houses by some individuals. Later, with all challenges and successes, in November 2005 the *Cooraa Mulu Wengel Hibret*, which was started by those individuals, was grown to *Cooraa Mulu Wengel Atibiya* church with full structure of its own. During this period the baptized members were reached more than 220.<sup>164</sup>

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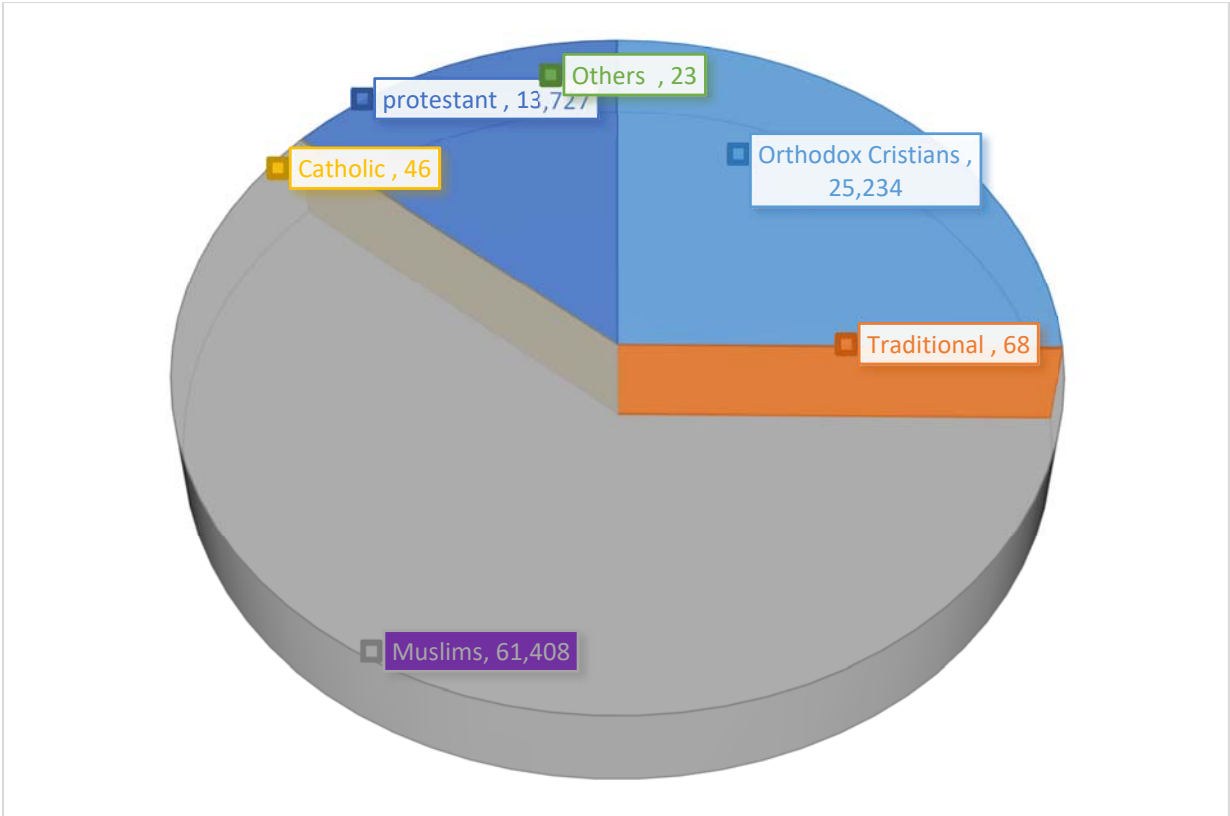
<sup>162</sup> Informants; Abera Takele and Mamo Gebrehiwot.

<sup>163</sup> Informants; Birhane Abebe, Girma Abebe and Abera Takele.

<sup>164</sup> Informant; Ibid



**Picture 8:** A piechart which shows followers of different religion in Cooraa district



**Source:** The 2007 Population and Housing Census report.

Now all different religions stated above are living together in harmony in the Cooraa district with no history of conflict.

## 4.2 ECONOMY

### 4.2.1 Agriculture

It is conventional knowledge that agriculture is an economic activity which is engaged by the majority in Ethiopia which accounts a lot more than 75% of the society. The particular, time at which agriculture, particularly sedentary agriculture, started in Maccaa Oromo is a matter of controversial issue which calls for a separate study. But to rush on some for the purpose of this study let us see some of the controversies forwarded by different scholars. Addressing the issue quoting from Deressa and Plow. Tasama stated that;

In the early years after their mass movement, the Maccaa Oromo were predominantly pastoralists keeping large herds of cattle, sheep, and goats, which formed the back bone of their socioeconomic organization. Naturally, the consumption of meat and milk constituted a major part of their diet.<sup>165</sup>... In his important historical study of the agricultural ecology of Ethiopia, *People of the Plow: An Agricultural History of Ethiopia, 1800-1990*, James C. McCann stated that the "ox-plough complex," which had its origin among the Cushitic people of antiquity in northern Ethiopia, eventually became the trademark of Semitic Christian highland agriculture and then spread in the nineteenth century to the Maccaa Oromo area in the south west, to places such as Gera, one of the five Oromo kingdoms in the Gibe basin.<sup>166</sup>

To show some of the controversy the author quoted from Eike von Haberland and *G. P. Murdock* stating that sedentary agriculture in Maccaa Oromo has a long history even before the population movement unlike the previous assumption.

It is important to stress that even in the early phases of their mass movement, the Oromo did not rely solely on animal husbandry. As G. P.

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<sup>165</sup> Tesema Ta'a, "Bribing the Land": An Appraisal of the Farming Systems of the Maccaa Oromo in Wallagga", *Northeast African Studies*, Vol. 9, No.3 (Michigan, 2002), p.105. (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/41931282> Accessed: 02-09-2018 15:08 UTC)

<sup>166</sup> Ibid p.102.

Murdock long ago pointed out the Oromo predominantly practiced farming, supplemented by animal husbandry and commercial activities, before some clans splintered from the main group on the Bali highlands, drifted away to the lowlands of the Genale Valley, and reverted to pastoralism. Indicating that the Oromo were in fact originally agriculturalists, he commented that "Back in the highlands they rapidly reverted to their earlier sedentary mode of life." Eike von Haberland has also argued that many elements of the original culture of the Oromo indicate that they were at first primarily an agricultural community. For instance, a close observation of Oromo traditions reveals that barley was the "sacred crop" of the Oromo farmers, used in cultural rituals, in marriage ceremonies, and on various religious occasions. The phenomenon of agriculturalists reverting to pastoralism is admittedly a rare event in world history, but there seems to be an agreement among scholars that it did occur in the case of the Oromo. What is more, the scholarly consensus comports with Oromo oral traditions.<sup>167</sup>

Leaving the issue of the controversy for further investigation, since it is not the primary concern of the present study, let us survey and make closer look at the agricultural practice of Cooraa district. Mixed farming was the basic economic activity among the Meccaa Oromos of Cooraa district in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. They engaged both in food crop production and have also raised cattle, sheep, goats, and chicken.

The most common crops produced in the district were/are *boqqoolloo* or corn/maize, *teff/xaafii* or (*Eragrostis abyssinica*), barely etc. Archival sources and oral sources indicated that, even in 1940s cash crops like Cooffee production for commercial purpose was not common in Cooraa district. It was later that cultivation of Coffee was further developed in Ilu Aba Bor to be one export item through Gambella to Sudan. Cultivation of coffee showed dramatic change in the Cooraa district after 1975 a project called CIP (Coffee Improvement Project) was launched.<sup>168</sup>

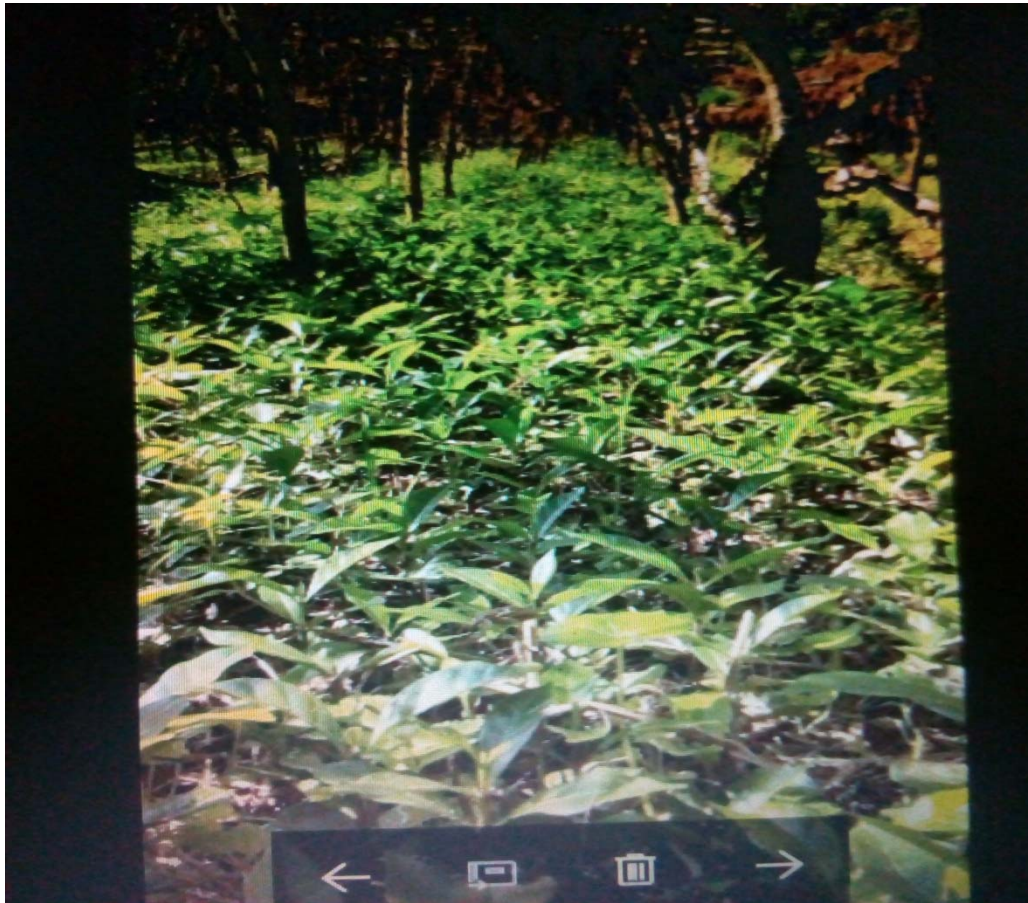
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<sup>167</sup> Tesema Ta'a, "Bribing the Land", P.102.

<sup>168</sup> Informants; Eliyas Raga, Mamo Gebre Hiwot and Befikadu Sori

The project was aimed at increasing the earnings of coffee farmers in the district through implementing extension activity, introducing improved coffee farming practices and by supplying modern and improved varieties which resist coffee berry disease. For this purpose, jointly with Jimma Agricultural research center they released various coffee berry disease resistant varieties to the farmers.<sup>169</sup>

Picture, 9-The improved varieties Coffee seedlings at Sema Yero coffee nursery sites.



Source; Photo taken by researcher during the field work. Oct 28,2018

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<sup>169</sup> Informants; Elias Raga, Mamo Gebre Hiwot and Befikadu Sori

Picture, 10- The gate of Sema Yero coffee nursery site.



Source; Photo taken by the researcher during the field work. Oct 28,2018.

To facilitate its performance, the Sema Yero and Geba nursery sites were established in Cooraa district in 1984. The improved varieties Coffee released by CIP include the following the 741, 744. 7448, 74165, 74110 and 74112. Out of the sixty-six peasant associations found in the district sixty-four of them were engaged in raising those coffee seeds.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Informant; Eliyas Raga and Nasir lemu.

By doing so the project radically transformed the traditional coffee production of the district to a better modern way which increase the productivity from 3 sucks or *kuntals* per hectare, to 12 Sucks or *kuntals* which was a radical change at that time. Because of that base/foundation now the district is the first coffee producing district in Bunnoo Beddelle zone.<sup>171</sup>

### 4.2.2 Trade

There is no credible primary or secondary source which indicates the exact period at which trade was started in the study area. Sources related to the issue are flimsy until the late 19<sup>th</sup> c. Concerning the issue Pankhurst stated that “Our knowledge of the trade of southern Ethiopia dates back historically a far shorter time than that of the northern and central province , documentation on the south being very scanty until the later part of the nineteenth century”.<sup>172</sup> However it is difficult the researcher, based on the available sources addressed the issue as follows.

Next to agriculture, trade is the second dominant economic activity in the study area. Informants indicated that, the major known market place in Cooraa district in the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century was the market of *Engelle*. This market place was located at the present day Aba Bora *Kebele*. Most dominantly merchants from areas like Guma and Wollega came and gather to this market place to buy and sell various commodities. One of my informants and an eye witness, Hajji Jamal Bushra, who was a famous merchant in Cooraa district told me that; there was no market which was equivalent to Ababora in the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> c in the area.<sup>173</sup>

Merchants from the district, from nearby districts like Gumaa, and far from the north gather in this market place to exchange commodities. A number of foreign Arab merchants from Yemen and Sudan also came to this market in search of export items like musk. Other foreign merchants also bring salt from Sudan across Gambella to this market. Indigenous commodities which are available in this market which attract the merchants were; Musk (a secretion of civet cat which is used in perfume industries), skin, wax and hides of animals. Most dominantly the foreign merchants who came to this area were attracted by hides of Tiger, hides of *Osole* and Musk. Merchants like *Haji Mohammed Fayisaa*, *Ato Negessoo*, *Grazmach Umer Abdalla*, *Caaroo Darixa* were the known merchants who engaged in buying and selling available commodities including *Zibad*. Other

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<sup>171</sup> Informants; Eliyas Raga, Mamo Gebre Hiwot and Befikadu Sori.

<sup>172</sup> Richard Pankurst, The Trade of Southern and Western Ethiopia and the Indian Ocean Ports in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries, *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (July 1965), p.37.

<sup>173</sup> Informant; *Hajji Jemal Bushura* and Mamo G/Hiwot.

commodities like *ashabo*/Salt/ *qawwee*/firearms/ were also imported abroad through Sudan and came to the market of Aba Bora/ *Engelle* across Gambella. Sheik Abdulqadir Caaroo was a known local merchant in Abbaa Bora/engele. The skin of an animal which locally known as *Osole* was highly needed by Arab merchants and they pay for it around three Maria Theresa Thaller. They came to this market mostly for this item. Later Coffee also added as an additional trade item in this market<sup>174</sup>

Coffee marketing was a recent phenomenon in Cooraa districts. Even in 1940s coffee was not a commercial item in the district. According to oral traditions of the society , at the earlier periods before the spread of coffee plantation in the district, merchants were used to bring coffee from the Gibe states particularly Gomma and used to exchange it with different commodities available in the district, mostly cereal crops.<sup>175</sup> At that time since cash currency was not abundantly available in the area those who started to produced coffee were used to exchange their coffee for other products they wanted exchange , even peoples were came from adjacent districts like Dega, Mako and Dapho to exchange different crops for coffee.<sup>176</sup>

Later in the late 20<sup>th</sup> c coffee trading at the local market give raise with the availability of its production in the district. In 1920s and 1930s Gore-Bure –Gambella trade routes became important for the export of coffee from Ilu Aba Bor to Sudan.<sup>177</sup> At the time, foreign merchants were involved in large number in coffee trading activities. This development had perhaps resulted in the revival of coffee marketing throughout coffee producing districts of the Ilu Aba Bor province including Cooraa.

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<sup>174</sup> Informant; *Hajji Jemal Bushura* and *Nasir Lemu*

<sup>175</sup> Informants; *Haji Jemal Bushura* and *Hassan Hamza*; also see Appendix-I

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>177</sup> *Yasin Mohammed, 2009.p.54*

**Picture 11.** The first coffee huller machine built by Ali Jibril



**Source:** Photo taken by the Bantalem Tsegaye during the field work ,2018.

One of the known local merchant of the district Haji Jemal Bushura, started to engage actively in the coffee market since 1945. He started buying coffee from different coffee producing villages of the district and sold to Addis Ababa, as he said at the time he was used mule and horse for transporting coffee to Addis Ababa. In addition to the local merchants, there were also Arab merchants in the district like Ali Jibril who was one of the Arab merchant who actively engaged in coffee trade in Cooraa by 1950s. According to my informant, Ali Jibril was the first person to build coffee huller machine in 1953 in Cooraa district. In 1955, Haji Jamal Bushura also built the second coffee huller machine and he gained the license to trade directly to Addis Ababa. It was



after this time that several local coffee traders participate in the market, they were buy coffee from different villages and sale to *Haji Jamal*.<sup>178</sup>

Between 1960 and 1965 total exports of coffee increased at an average annual rate of about 10% rising from 180 million to 290 million birr and earning from coffee export attained a peak in 1965 at about 188 million birr, partly as a result of an increasing in world coffee price.<sup>179</sup> However, the peasants, main coffee producers of the district not benefited from the rising market of coffee at the time. According to informant, the absence of transportation and communication affected both the producers and the traders.<sup>180</sup> However, according to Yasin 1968 the construction of all-weather road connecting Gore with Jimma which passed through Cooraa was completed.<sup>181</sup> This had an important impetus for the growth of coffee market in Cooraa district.

Sources indicated that, relatively things were better in coffee marketing during the Derg regime. Sales of coffee by farmers handled through local cooperatives and in return, a dividend was paid and agricultural inputs made available at subsidized prices in this condition, local brokers had no chance of taking the advantage of the peasants. Earlier before the cooperatives were organized the average price of coffee reached the farmers was not more than twenty cents per kg. But with the reform made by the dergue through the cooperatives the average price of coffee was around forty cents per kilogram. But later with the overthrow of the Derg many co-operatives were disintegrated and the farmers were exposed to local brokers once again.<sup>182</sup>

Initially the market was controlled by local merchants but later foreign merchants like Aruji, who was servant of Ali Jibril, also start to engage in. But all the available oral sources indicated that Ali Jibril was the first foreign merchant who came to Cooraa district and introduced various commercial activities to the locals. For example, it was him who opened the first Shop, introduced the first grinding machine and also stablished the first coffee huller machine in Cooraa district.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Informants; *Haji Jemal Bushura*, Mekonnin Gudeta and Nasir Hasan

<sup>179</sup> Shiferaw Bekele, *An Economic History of Ethiopia; the imperial era 1941-1974* (Addis Ababa 1995). P.42.

<sup>180</sup> Informant; *Haji Jamal Bushura* and Mekonnin Gudeta.

<sup>181</sup> Yasin. 2009. P, 153.

<sup>182</sup> Informants; Mekonnin Guddeta, *Haji Jamal Bushura* and Kedir Gebi

<sup>183</sup> Informant; *Haji Jemal Bushura* and Mekonnin Gudeta.

**Picture 12.** The former living house of **Aruji** who was known Arab merchant of the 20<sup>th</sup> c in the district



**Source:** Photo taken by the researcher on 11/10/2017

Sources indicated that while opening his first shop; he came and contacted with *Balambaras* Gudeta and they agreed to open it together. As an eye witness Haji Jemal Bushura told me that, he came with three *Trenta quarto* cars. It is suspected by this informant that the cars were properties of *Ras Abebe*. Ali Jibral made an agreement with *Balambaras* Gudeta with precondition that the later to build a house and the former to bring commodities to be sold in the shop. The house was built. The building of the house took more than two years because there was scarcity of

construction materials and there were no individuals who had the skill of building a house with iron roof. After the construction was completed Ali Jibral brought commodities like soap, *Abujedi* etc. but meanwhile because of incidental rain and storm the roof of the shop was taken away and the shop was closed for a time being.<sup>184</sup>

Sources indicate that Ali Jibral was able to dominate the commercial activity with the help he got from *Fitawrari* Kebede. The major problem faced by merchants during this period was absence of road. Before the construction of the asphalt road, the merchants were using horse back for traveling from place to place and to transport their goods from place to place. During those periods crossing *Gabba* river was the harsh challenge for the merchants. And at a camping site they were facing various troubles from Hyena, because the smell came out of the skin and hides attracts them. The merchants were protecting themselves by using fire at a camping site and also by firing bullets on the hyenas.<sup>185</sup> After the opening of the Beddelle-Metu road constructed by *Imbrizit* company, their challenges were minimized to some extent.

Changes in the market place and trade route was one of the source of disagreement between the people and the government in the 20<sup>th</sup> c trade activity of the district. Most of the trade items produced in the district by the local farmers was food crop. And they were selling what they were produced in the local market found in *Ababora* and mostly in the neighboring nearby markets such as *Agaro*. Since most districts found in *Bunno awraja* were producing the same item the price of food crop was cheaper in local market places. So the peasants prefer to sell their food crop products in markets found in gibe region such as *Agaro*. But in the year 1940s the peasants were prohibited to take their products to *Agaro* market places. The governors of *Buno awraja* ordered the peasants to sell their product in local markets only. But since almost all the farmers on the *Awraja* were producing the same item the price of food crops was dropped in higher rate. This incident had higher impact on four districts of found in *Ilu Aba Bor teklay gizat* namely Cooraa, Degga, Mekko and Dabo. Later they appeal to the *hager gizat minister* in 1948. The *hager gizat minister* sent a letter to *dejjazmach Xasew Walelu* the then governor of *Ilu Aba Bor* to revise the order on the best

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<sup>184</sup> Informant; *Haji Jemal Bushra* Kedir Gebi

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid*

interest of the society. So that in 1949 the peasants were allowed to sell their production any where in a market that they believed to have better price.<sup>186</sup>

In other time also the was a disagreement among local *qoros* while trying to redirect the local road which linked market places to protect their interests. *Kegnazmach* Hayilemariyam Disasa, (Head of Buno Awraja) *Balambaras* Guddeta Gusso, *Qagnazmach* Nagawo agreed to redirect the market line from Beddele through *Humbe* via *Dorenni*. This incident created a conflict among the various *qoros* of the district. But it was settled while *Fitawrari* Dinka, *Balambaras* Mohammed Dibaba and Shiferaw created a joint agreement against the idea and able to convince the rest.<sup>187</sup>

Archival sources indicated that, in 1957 there was also another complain raised by the *Buno Awraja* society while the government tried to change the rout Jimma to Gore which was primarily it was passed through Cooraa district to the newly short path through Gera. In protesting this the then *Awraja* governor *Fitawrari* Kebede Wolde Yohannis wrote a letter to *Dejjazmach* Mesfin Sileshi the then period *yager gizat* minister and was able to avert the issue and retained the former rout from change.<sup>188</sup>

Later with the development of the district various commercial sectors started to be opened by local merchants in the Qumbabe town of the district. As a base for the present day hotel sector commercial activity of Cooraa district, the pioneers were Gabaynesh Gebremeskel, Amarech Mekonnin and Fantaye Bekele. Most of the time it was head of the 10 *qoros* who came to those houses and got the then period hotel services like *Tejj*, *Areke/ katicala/*, *Injera be Shiro*. Later Gebaynesh introduced rest rooms service or *Bergos* which is one element of modern hotels.<sup>189</sup>

## 4.3 EXPANSION OF INFRASTRUCTURES

### 4.3.1 ELECTRICITY

It is obvious that electricity is one of the modern world public facilities which helps us to lead easy life. The introduction of electricity in Cooraa district is a recent phenomenon. Up to the downfall of the Imperial regime there was no electricity in the district. With the coming to power of the

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<sup>186</sup> Informants; Bekele Agonafir and Kedir Gebi and also see Appendix I, II and III

<sup>187</sup> Informant: *Haji* Jemal Bushura and Bekele Agonafr.

<sup>188</sup> Informant; *Haji* Jemal Bushura and also see Appendix-VII and VIII.

<sup>189</sup> Informants; Kedir Gebi, *Haji* Jemal Bushura

*Derg* regime also the district did not get the electricity soon. The people of Cooraa district, or residents of Kumbabe town in particular, were demanding for electricity every time. But the government was not able to provide them the service.<sup>190</sup>

Since the response from government side was not satisfactory, with the ingenuity of Ato Kiros Hadgu, a merchant and resident of Kumbabe town, people of the district started to contribute money to buy a power generator by themselves. In short period of time they were able to collect enough amount of money to buy the generator. It was with this strong effort done by the residents of *Kumbabe* town that the first diesel engine power generator was brought to the district and planted in *Kumbabe* town on 29 May, 1986.<sup>191</sup>

Picture 12. The first diesel engine power generator of Cooraa district



Source; Photo taken by the researcher during the field work. Oct 20, 2018.

The power generator of the then period was unable to fulfill the need of the whole district. Because of that the electricity service was confined at *Kumbabe* town only. So that it was only the town

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<sup>190</sup> Informants; Qadre Mustefa and Mekonnin Gudeta.

<sup>191</sup> Informants; *Haji* Jemal Bushura, Kedir Gebi and Qadre Mustefa.

residents who were benefited from it. The service was provided for only five hours a day, the generator's light was on at 7:00 AM and it was going off at 12:00 AM.<sup>192</sup> To let the scarce electric power service be accessible for all residents of the town, one light bulb only was allowed for each household with the payment of two birr in a month.<sup>193</sup>

Skilled technicians who can operate the generator were not easily accessible at that period in the district. As a chance a retired ship captain named Matebe Abegaz was found in the district and hired as the first operator of the power generator. Later he was succeeded by Qano Lulessa.<sup>194</sup>

### 4.3.2 TRANSPORTATION

Like most early traditional Ethiopian societies, people living in Cooraa district were traveling from one place to another on foot and using horse back crossing forest, rivers and valleys struggling with harsh conditions for centuries. One of the legacies of Italian rule was the development of road construction. Sources indicate that the construction of networks of gravel roads which were built to connect Bedele with Agaro-Jimma and Metu-Gore which passes through Cooraa district, which later renewed asphalt standard, was one of the legacies of Italian occupation period.<sup>195</sup>

In Ethiopia the establishment of Imperial high way authority in 1951 by proclamation No. 115/1951 marked the beginning of institutional state led road construction.<sup>196</sup> The authority was assigned to plan, design, construct and maintain the Ethiopian road network. But it was after 20 years that it was able to connect Cooraa district through asphalt road with the rest of the country. In 1970 a foreign construction company known as *Razel Frances* from France was contracted to carry out the construction and maintenance activity of Beddele-Metu asphalt road.<sup>197</sup> So that the all year asphalt road was reached at Cooraa district in 1971.<sup>198</sup>

In the introduction of new motor cars in Cooraa district Haji Jemal Bushura and Abdisa Bulgu were the pioneers one. Haji Jemal Bushura was one of the leading merchants in the district. He

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid

<sup>193</sup> Ibid

<sup>194</sup> Informant: Qadre Mustefa and *Haji Jemal*.

<sup>195</sup> Habtamu Mamo, "A history of Bedele Town, Illu Abba Bora Zone (c. 1917-2007)", MA theses, (Jimma University, History, 2017), p.42.

<sup>196</sup> Rony Emmenegger. *The roads of decentralization: the history of rural road construction in Ethiopia*. (Zurich, 2012). P.21.

<sup>197</sup> Habtamu Mamo, p.42.

<sup>198</sup> Informant; *Ato Tilahun Shiferaw Ato Taye Bekele*.

bought a Landrover car from Michelcots company in 1970 and started to give transport service for the first time in Cooraa district. Later Abdisa Bulgu, Mokonnin Gudeta and others followed his footsteps and laid a foundation for modern transport in the history of Cooraa district.<sup>199</sup>

### 4.3.3 COMMUNICATION

Although Ethiopia has been one of the countries in the world which has acquired telephone system few years after its invention, it has remained far behind other countries in telecommunication services penetration rate and development of required infrastructures. Cellular mobile was introduced as late as 1999. Telecommunications service has begun in Ethiopia more than hundred years ago and used to be administered under the Ministry of Posts Telephone and Telegraph until 1952. It was later separated from posts and became an autonomous entity under the Ministry by the enactment of Telecommunication Proclamation No. 131 of 1952. By this proclamation, a telecommunication entity, called "Ethiopian Telecommunication Board" which exclusively regulates and operates telecommunication services was established. Without affecting its functions, the name was later changed to Ethiopian Telecommunication Authority. The Ethiopian Telecommunication Authority was working on an exclusive basis as an operator and regulator until the promulgation of proclamation No. 49/1996.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> Informants; Haji Jemal Bushura, Mokonnin Gudeta and Takele Abera.

<sup>200</sup> Taye Estifanos Dubale, Multi-year expert meeting on services, development and trade: the regulatory and institutional dimension Geneva, 17-19 March 2010 telecommunication in Ethiopia Ethiopian Telecommunication Agency.

**Picture 14:** A telegram tower built in the district in 1979



**Source:** Photo taken by the researcher on 9/7/2018

The first telegraph line in Ethiopia was constructed in the years 1897 - 1899 between the cities of Harar and the capital Addis Ababa. This was extended in 1904 by a line that ran from Addis Ababa through Tigray into Eritrea and to Massawa; and the next year by a line again from Addis Ababa to Gore in the province of Ilu Aba Bor and Jimma in Kaffa. The first telephones were brought by *Ras Makonnen* from Italy in 1890, and connected between the Palace and the Imperial treasury; the sound of disembodied voices frightened the local priests, who thought it was the work of demons. The Emperor Menelik II responded to their protests with disdain, and later used the



telephone to give orders to his provincial governors.<sup>201</sup> Emperor Haile Selassie had begun the process of introducing radio transmitters to the country for civilian and military use in the years before the Italian invasion.<sup>202</sup> In Cooraa district telecom service was not known up to the year 1979. It was after the building of the telegram tower by the Japanese in 1979 that telecom service was start to expand in the district.<sup>203</sup>

#### 4.3.4 EDUCATION

In most areas of the country the traditional education provided by the church began with the learning of the alphabet was a base for modern education.<sup>204</sup> Following the Italian defeat, the country started to build up the sector, but the system faced shortages of teachers, textbooks, and facilities. The government recruited foreign teachers for primary and secondary schools to offset the teacher shortage. By 1952 a total of 60,000 students were enrolled in 400 primary schools, eleven secondary schools, and three institutions offering college-level courses. In the 1960s, 310 mission and privately operated schools with an enrollment of 52,000 supplemented the country's public school system. While reforms have been made in the aims of education, the actual structure of the Ethiopian school system has remained unchanged from that established in the 1950s.<sup>205</sup>

The national literacy campaign began in early 1975 when the government mobilized more than 60,000 students and teachers, sending them all over the country for two-year terms of service. Most critics however saw this as the government's way to silence rising opposition while at the same time creating a network of government spy in the rural areas. Generally the campaign to increase literacy remained elusive even though government reports showed improvements.<sup>206</sup>

Concerning the present study area; during the period of Haile Selassie Cooraa district was classified under Buno *Awraja*, which was one of the five *Awrajas* of Ilu Aba Bor *Teklay Gizat*. Before the advent of formal modern education in the district there were some attempts done by

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<sup>201</sup> Chris Proutky, *Empress Taytu and Menelik II: Ethiopia 1883-1910* (Trenton: The Red Sea Press, 1986), pp. 237.

<sup>202</sup> Richard Pankhurst, *Economic History...*, pp. 491.

<sup>203</sup> Informant; Demise Beyene and Mekonnin Gudeta.

<sup>204</sup> Richard Pankhurst, *Economic History ...* p. 666.

<sup>205</sup> Damtew Teferra and Philip G. Altbach, eds., *African Higher Education: An International Reference Handbook* (Indiana University Press, 2003), pp. 316-325.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid

local *Qoros*. For example, before the introduction of modern education in 1940s *Balambaras* Gudeta Gusso hired *Aleqa* Getaneh to teach *fidel* at *Bilo kebele* by constructing a separate classroom. This was the first local initiative and attempt for the road to modern education. Later Following the introduction and expansion of modern education in most districts of the country; Cooraa primary school was founded in 1949. Initially the school was not fully organized modern school. Local sources indicated that the education process was not inline with the curriculum of the period. At its initial stage the school was just delivering basic knowledge like reading, writing and counting numbers with local teachers. *Memire* Desta was the first local teacher hired at the school for teaching art (*si'il*), Amharic alphabet (*fidel*) and Ethics (*gibregeb*).<sup>207</sup>

Later since 1963 the school was started to be led by trained professionals like Meseret Ambisa. Meseret Ambisa was the first professional teacher also served as a director. In 1967 the school was developed to grade 6. The first students who took the first 6<sup>th</sup> grade national exam, which was called mostly Ministry, were Tilahun Shiferaw, Bekele Eshete, Nigatu Merga, Girma Mekonnin, Tezera Demisse and Zegeye Ayenew. The first modern education teacher was Ato Siyum Beyene. He was graduate of 8+4 policy. Next to him teachers Mengesha Kumsa and others came and the school got the shape of modern, formal primary school.<sup>208</sup>

During this period there was no a school beyond the level of grade six in the district. Because of this reason it was very difficult for student from low level economic background family to continue their education beyond grade six. Most students in the district quite their education at the level of grade six. It was very few students who were able to overcome the economic challenge and travel 115 km to Gore where the only high school was found in the *Teklay gizat* at which secondary level education was delivered.<sup>209</sup>

For the expansion of modern education in Cooraa district missionaries had also contributed a lot. In the early 1970s Missionaries had stablished elementary schools in the various rural areas of the Cooraa district. The missionaries were active in three rural *kebeles* of the namely Cooraa Hanno, Debeso Kemise and Kuyee Dabena. In those three areas modern elementary schools were built by Germany missionaries. For example, the primary school of Debeso kemise was stablished in 1971

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<sup>207</sup> Informants; Tilahun Shiferaw and Mekonnin Gudeta

<sup>208</sup> Ibid

<sup>209</sup> Informants; Mekonnin Gudeta, Tilahun Shiferaw, Taye Bekele and Kedir Gebi

Hikaa Ittaanaa and Tamiru Itanaa were the first teachers and *Qes* Abera Regasa was served as the first director of the school. Later this school was transferred to the government during the dergue period in 1975.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Informants; Abera Takkele, Kedir Gebi and Taye Bekele

## CONCLUSION

This research deals with the history of Cooraa district from 1880s to 1991. The year 1880s was taken as a turning point for the present study because it was in this particular year that the whole Illu Aba Bor, at which the district was its part, was came under the Shawan expanding force led by Ras Tesema Nadew. Long before the conquest, during the period of the Oromo population movement, it was the Tume families from the Maccaa Oromo moiety namely the Cooraas, the Nonnos and the Bunnos who were settled in the district.

Like most districts of Ethiopia Cooraa district was established in the post liberation period, with having one *wereda gizat* centered at Qumbabe town and two *mikitil wereda gizats* in it, by bringing together the former three separate clan families ruled by 9 *qoro gizats*. Before the land measurement the *qabiye* land holding system was common in the district at which the peasants were owners of their land. But after the measurement of land in *gashas* new order was established. In that new order, the whole area now lie in the district was divided among nine local *balabats* or *Qoros* and one palace *beterist astedadari*, which led the majority peasants less beneficiary and vulnerable to exploitation.

Almost all the policies related to the land tenure system in the periods during the rule of the so called the Solomonic dynasty rulers was not intended to benefit the mass peasants. Instead it benefited the few who were in the chain of the monarchial hierarchy.

The period of Italian occupation was relatively a better time for the peasants Cooraa district. The peasants were able to enjoy a better economic freedom by the new alien administration than the former native. For the first time since the occupation of the area by the Shawan forces the peasants were able to enjoy full ownership right over their land. That's why some notable local patriots were rebelled against the restoration of the former administration after 1941.

After 1941 there was a change in administrative structures of the area. One significant change which can be raised in this line was the establishment of the district in 1949. The district was restructured in wereda which had one *wereda gizat astedader* at Qumbabe and three *mikiil wereda gizats* at Abdella, Humbe and Ilaala. But there was no as such positive change in the economic aspect. The land tenure system and the land grant polices even after the restoration of the monarchy did not able to make the mass beneficiary. It favored the haves and the former *balabats*. As a positive performances of the period, infrastructures like School and asphalt road were introduced in the districts.

After the 1974 the old monarchial order was replaced by the new socialist order. Land became communal property in the district. The members of the old monarchial structure suffered from this new arrangement. All the *balabats* or local *qoros* lost all their holdings and their properties was confiscated. In the initial period the local peasants were benefited from the policies introduced by the new socialist government. In enabled them to be free from the multiple obligations and able to own land. Various infrastructures were further expanded. With the help of CIP program production and commercialization of coffee was further strengthened in the district.

However, in the later periods some of the policies of the *Derg* like forceful recruitments of the youth for *biherawi wutidirna agelgilot* (a military service) and forceful collectivization and villagization created a hatred and dissatisfaction of the society and started to seek for change. Later in 1991 at a country level the *Derg* was over thrown and FDRE was stablished at which the district was passively engaged and accepted the change.

This research is the first historical reconstruction of the district. The researcher used almost all available sources related to the topic in the reconstruction this research. But like all historical reconstructions this also has a gap to be filled by future researchers such as like the pre 1880s history of the district and the post 1991 historical facts and events which did not included in the temporal scope of the present study.

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## LIST OF ORAL INFORMANTS

| No. | Name of informants       | Sex | Age | Date of interview | Remark  |
|-----|--------------------------|-----|-----|-------------------|---|
| 1   | Abera Takkele Bulgu Sene | M   | 52  | 20/11/2010        | He is a teacher at Debeso and he is a grandson of qoro Bulgu Sene   |
| 2   | Amsalu Fantayehu         | M   | 55  | 16/9/2010         | He is a teacher at Guji elementary school and served in different kebeles of the district. Good informant on the issue of the Traditional religious practices.                |
| 3   | Ayalew Alemu             | M   | 45  | 16/8/2010         | Good Oral informant on the expansion of protestant religion   |
| 4   | Bekele Agonafr           | M   | 77  | 5/12/2010         | He has served as <i>ye mirmera kifil shum</i> in the district since 1959.   |
| 5   | Bezabh Eniyew            | M   | 69  | 7/12/2010         | Well informed about the Derg period   |
| 6   | Befikadu Sori            | M   | 54  | 10/9/2009         | A former worker of the CIP project. And also still serving at agricultural office.  |
| 7   | Birhane Abebe            | F   | 45  | 2/10/2010         | She is a teacher at Cooraa primary school and a well-informed eye witness and founder of Mulu Wengel church in the district   |
| 8   | Dhaba Nonno              | M   | 102 | 12/6/2009         | He was interviewed by the district cultural and tourism office worker Nasir Lemu. He is a well-informed informant about the history of the district before its incorporation. |

|    |                    |   |     |             |   |
|----|--------------------|---|-----|-------------|---|
| 9  | Demise Beyene      | M | 75  | 11/12/2010  | He is a guard and construction worker of the telegram tower since its establishment   |
| 10 | Eliyas Raga        | M | 69  | 16/10/2010  | A retired worker of the CIP project in the district   |
| 11 | Faaris Ejerso      | M | 92  | 18/6/2009   | Interviewed by Nasir Lemu. He is a good source of information about the history of the district before 1880s.   |
| 12 | Ferede Moroda      | M | 64  | 3/ 9/2010   | Good informant on the indigenous religious practices.   |
| 13 | Firrisa Kato       | M | 107 | 14/6/2010   | He was interviewed by the district cultural and tourism office worker Nasir Lemu. He is a well-informed informant about the history of the district before its incorporation. |
| 14 | Getacho Ayana      | M | 75  | 17/ 10/2010 | He is a farmer and good informant in most aspects of the history of the district.   |
| 15 | Girma Abebe        | M | 56  | 16/12/2010  | He was working at the district agricultural office. One of the first protestant followers in the district.  |
| 16 | Haji Jemal Bushura | M | 108 | 6/11/2010   | He came from Guma. He is the pioneers of merchants in the district. He is well informed about the commercial activity of the district.  |

|    |                    |   |    |            |  |
|----|--------------------|---|----|------------|--|
| 17 | Haji Munir Abdella | M | 69 | 7/6/2010   | He lives in Beddelle. He is well informed about expansion of Islam.  |
| 18 | Ibrahim Adem       | M | 70 | 11/12/2009 | He is well informed about the expansion of Menelik.  |
| 19 | Kedir Gebi         | M | 67 | 9/10/2010  | He is a retired teacher. He is a good informant and source on almost all issues of the history of the district   |
| 20 | Kedir Gelmeso      | M | 89 | 12/11/2009 | He was head of the farmers' association during the Derg period. He is a good informant on issues related to the Derg and the ancient history of the district.                |
| 21 | Legese Kato        | M | 98 | 17/10/2009 | He was interviewed by the district cultural and tourism office worker Nasir Lemu. He is a well-informed informant about the history of the district before its incorporation |
| 22 | Legese Rebo        | M | 90 | 16/11/2010 | He was interviewed by the district cultural and tourism office worker Nasir Lemu. He is a well-informed informant about the history of the district before its incorporation |
| 23 | Lense Arega        | F | 42 | 19/ 7/2010 | She is a teacher at Guji elementary school and well informed about the Oromo traditional   |

|    |                        |   |    |                          |  |
|----|------------------------|---|----|--------------------------|--|
|    |                        |   |    |                          | religious practices in the district  |
| 24 | Mamo Gebrehiwot        | M | 51 | 20/10/2010               | He lives in Debeso Soro kebele. He is well informed about the Derg period  |
| 25 | Mekonnin Guddeta Gusso | M | 71 | 17/12/2009 and 6/11/2010 | He is the son of <i>baranberas</i> Gudeta Gusso. He is a very good narrator and valuable source on almost all issues of the district history.  |
| 26 | Momine Adem            | F | 67 | 10/7/2010                | She is one of my informants well informed different aspects of the history of Cooraa district.   |
| 27 | Nasir Lemu             | M | 52 | 9/12/2010                | He was a teacher, a school director and served in the district cultural and tourism bureau. He conducted various researches on culture and history of the district, so he is a very good source on cultural history of the district. |
| 28 | Sheik Sayid Negash     | M | 40 | 6/10/2010                | He is a teacher at Cooraaa <i>madresa</i> / Islamic religious school. He is well informed about expansion of Islam in the district.  |
| 29 | Taye Bekele            | M | 65 | 6/12/2009                | A retired teacher. Served as a school director. One of the first generation students of the district. Well informed about  |

|    |                 |   |    |           |  |
|----|-----------------|---|----|-----------|--|
|    |                 |   |    |           | history of education in the district   |
| 30 | Tilhun shiferaw | M | 67 | 6/12/2010 | A retired teacher. Served as a school director. One of the second generation students of the district. Well informed about |

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ዎቻችንና የወረዳዎቹ ድልድል በመሥሪያ ቤታችን በመደገፈ ጥቅምት  
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ዲረዳ ከዚህ ጋር መላካችንን አናስታውቃለን ::

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1977/4/35/110/66  
ጥቅምት 7, 1967

ጸሐፊዎች ስም

በኢትዮጵያ ጊዜያዊ ወታደራዊ መንግሥት  
የአገር አስተዳደር ሚኒስቴር።

ለኢሉባቦር ክፍለ ሀገር ጽ/ቤት

ጽ/ቤት።

የሱና አውራጃ ሕዝብ ሰላማዊ ሰልፍ በሚደረግ የጠ/ገዛት አገደራሲ ደጃ / ወርቀት ዕንቅ ሥላሴና የሱና አውራጃ ዋና ጸሐፊ አቶ ጥላሁን ፈረደ፣ የሚጠቀሙትን አቶ አብተው አበበ፣ ያገር ውስተ ገቢ ጽ/ቤት ሹም አቶ ታደሰ ታፈሰ የተባሉት በደል ያደረጉ ሰላሳ ስላሳ ከሥልጣናቸው ይነሡልን በሚለት በ30/7/66 በጻፉት ማመልከቻ ተቃዋሚ ማድረጋቸውን ከጠ/ገዛት ፖሊስ የወ/ወርቀት ማመልከቻ ክፍል በቀጥታ 9107/127/1/1029/8/66 ለክፍለ ሀገር ጽ/ቤት ሲጻፍ በተመዘገበው ገልባጭ መሠረት ከፖሊስ ሠራዊት የወ/ወርቀት ማመልከቻ ወርቀት ዋና መሪያ በቀጥታ 3/1008/16/25 የተጻፈ ደብዳቤ ደርሶናል።

ስለዚህ፣ ለፖሊስ በበኩላቸው የተወሰደው አርጎን አገደ ገለጽልን አኖሰታቸዋል።

ጸ/ቤት ጽ/ቤት

ጸ/ቤት ጽ/ቤት

24/1/67

22.2.67



Appendix- VII

3

ለሱሎ ከባቸውና ርስታቸው ጥላው ይጠሩሉ። ሀብታም ዲሆን ይለያሉ፤ ሀብታም = 563  
 ቤተ ሆና ኪሣራ ይወጣለታል ዱሃ ገን ፍ / ቤት አዳቶ ኪሣራ ይገረጥበታል አድራሻው አዳታው  
 በፍትህ ብሔር አልከፍልም ሰይጣ አዳታረረ ይታሰራል።

6 55 / ስለ ወረዳ ገዛቸዋል ገርግዶ ተገግዶ ጋይሌ ሥላሴ ግንም ኢትዮጵያዊ ለአረት አገቱ ጋሽ  
 = ረት አገደበት ተደም ብለው አውጧቸው ነበር፤ በአዳቶ መሠረት ሕዝቡ = ረት አገገጃገጅ ያደረጉት  
 የገዛት ሠራተኞች ናቸው።

ይህንም አነቡ ረባቸው በአገቱ አስከ 5 ጋሽ = ረቶች አያላቸው አገቱ ሰገዘር የሌላቸው ዲሆን  
 አያላቸው አያውቀው የመገንዘብ = ረት በሚሰጥቻቸው በልጆቻቸው በአሸከርቻቸው በልጅ ልጆቻቸው ስም በው  
 የሚጠር ጋሽ = ረቶች በሰጣቸው አያሰዙገቡ ጥበኛ የሚሉት ስም አየበዛ ሂደ።


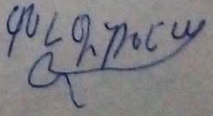
ዱሃ = ረት አገገጃገዝ የጋሽ 1 \$100 / ብር የሚሆነው ሲሆን በገዛት ውስጥ ወይም በየውጭ  
 15

ቤተ ባልታወቀ ዘዳ የሚያልቀ ገንዘብ በሕጉ መሠረት \$12 ብር ብቻ ሲሆን የሚሰጠው ገን ከ\$100  
 በላይ ነው። ስለዚህ ሕዝቡ በዚህ ድካምነት ርስት ያለውገዛትን መረጠና ዕድሉ ለቀርቦ ወገናቸው  
 ሆነ አገቱ ሰው ከአዳታ ከቀደም አዳታ ከአባት የሚደርሰውን አጽም ርስት በሰው ለግዘወር ከአርስት  
 የጋ ሁለት ጊዜ የሚበልጥ ገንዘብ ስለሚጠየቅ የቻለው ሰው ከፍሎ አዘውር ያልቻለ ገን በአዳታ ስም  
 የሚገባሩ አሉ።

65 / ስለ ግዛታችን ቤት፣ መደበኛ ነጋዴ ያልሆነውን ለአገቱ ተገ ወይም ለሁለት ተገ ብቻ ለገል  
 ጉዳይ ከብት ወይም አህል ሊሻጥ የሚሂቶትን ገብረዎች አገገጃገድ ጊዜ በደረሰና አገገጃገድ ጊዜ ደገም  
 ያለደረሰና ገንዘብ አየሰበሰቡ ገብረዎች አገደልበው ገብጋ ወጥተው የረላጉትን ሊሻጡና ሊጠቀሙ  
 አይችሉም። መደበኛ ነጋዴ ብቻ በተወሰነ ጊዜ ተረጎጦ ሕድረ ሲገባቸው ለዕለት ችግራቸው ገብጋ  
 የሚወጡት ገብረዎች ላይ ጉዳት አድርገውባቸዋል።

ጉዳት አድርገውባቸዋል የሚገባቸው በሰሥልጣኖች የሰም ዘርዘር፤

15 / አቶ ጥላሁን ፈረደ 25 / አቶ አሰሩ ወገዳግገኑ 35 / አቶ ወልደ ግርጌ ደበለገ  
 45 / አቶ ታደረጉ ገታነህ 55 / በባለቤት አድነው ኢላላ 65 / አቶ አብተው አበበ 75 / አቶ  
 የላግዳሁ ታቶ 85 / አቶ መገሸ መገሸ 95 / አቶ ፈረደ ቸርቶ 105 / አቶ ከበደ ደበታ  
 115 / አቶ አብዱላ ስምሰ 125 / አቶ በቀለ አባይነህ 135 / አቶ በቀለ ጋይሌ 145 / አቶ  
 ደምቤ አውላቸው 155 / አቶ አብዱላ ሠርጫ 165 / አቶ ይልግ ለገሠ 175 / አቶ ዘርጋ ብሩ  
 185 / አቶ ኢተሩ ገጾታ አነዚህ ከዚህ በላይ ሰጣቸው የተዘረዘሩት መሆናቸውን አግልጠውባቸዋል።









Appendix- X-A

1. 62

ለቡር ቤትወደድ ዛውደ ገብረ ገብረ  
ያገር ገዛት ሚኒስቴር  
አዲስ አበባ

ከቡር ሆኔ፣

መከትል ገዛቶች ታገፈው በወረዳ ተደልደለው አገደባቸው  
በ1953.9.9. ለደብዳቤ ገዛቶች ትክክለኛ በተሰጠ ጊዜ በዚህ ጠቅላይ  
ገዛትም በሥራ ላይ የነበሩት ረዳት አገደራሴ ፊታውራሪ/ወልደ ሰጣዕን  
ተሰማ ህፃር 13/ቀን 53.9.9. በተጠሪ 78/115/53 በተሰጠ ጊዜ  
በዳቤ ሸገነት የአቀረቡትን ድልድል፡--

አገደሁም ከቡር ደጃዝማች ገርማ ቸው ተክለ ሰጥርያት የጠቅላይ  
ገዛት አገደራሴ በነበሩ ጊዜ ታህሣሥ 5 ቀን 58.9.9. በተጠሪ 95/  
115/58 የላኩትን ድልድልና በድልድሉም መስማማትን በመገለጽ በአገር  
ገዛት ሚኒስቴር አገዛዝ ክፍል በተጠሪ 23/1960/የካቲት 8/ቀን  
58.9.9. ፎክሎር ተገቢ ጣስተዳደር ክፍል በተጠሪ 27/ጾ363/የካቲት  
28/ቀን 58.9.9. የተሰጡትን ማሻሻያ አስታውላለሁ፡--

ለመከትል ገዛቶች የተጠላ ድርጅትና ሠራተኛ በአለመደቡ የ  
ሥራ ቅልጥፍና የአስተገንቦት መሆኑን በመገንዘብ መከትል ገዛቶች አገ  
ደታጠፍ የታዘዘውን መሠረት በማድረግ በወረዳዎች በመደብ በአገገዳድ  
ጠቅላይ ገዛቶች መሠረት ተጀምርክል፡--

ይልቀገም የወረዳ ናርድ ቤት ሥልጣን በወረዳ ናርድ ቤት ላይ  
በቻ በውጭ የመከትል ገዛት መሥሪያ ቤት አገደማገኛውም የሰው መኖሪያ  
ቤት ዓይነት መከትል ገዛቶች ከሚያስተዳድሩት ሰው አገደአገደኛው አየ  
ተቀጠረ አገገዳዎች ድብደባና መኖሪያ የደረሰባቸው ይገኛሉ፡--

ሥልጣን የሌለው መሥሪያ ቤት በማድረግ ጣገሣት የተሻለ ስለ  
ሆነ፣ ተደም ሲል በነበሩት ባለሥልጣኖች የተረበውን ድልድል በበኩሉም  
ከመጣሁ የአጠናሁትንና አገገዳዎቹንም ከገጠሁ በኋላ ከአሁን በፊት ሁ  
ለት ጊዜም ከተረቡት ድልድሎች ምንም ያህል ባልተለያየ ሁኔታ መከትል  
ገዛቶችን በጣጠፍ የወረዳ ገዛትን ድልድል አጠናቅቄ አቀርቤአለሁ፡--

ከአገዛዝ ክፍል በተጠየቀው ዓይነት የአውራጃና የወረዳዎችን  
ወሰንና አተማመጥ ለጊዜው ያህል የሚያመለክት የደብዳቤ ገብረና የታጠ  
ፈትን መከትል ገዛቶች በጣገኛው ወረዳ ገዛት ውስጥ አገደተደቡ የወ  
ረዳዎችን ስም የሚያመለክት ሁለት ገጽ ከዚህ ጋር ተያይዟል፡--

(ሀ/ሀ)  
ፊታውራሪ. ወርቀ. ሰንቄ. ሥላሴ.  
አገደራሴ

1953/496/10

Appendix- X-B

| ተ/ቶ                  | የወረዳው ገዛቶ |   | የወረዳው ገዛቶ    |   | የወረዳው ገዛቶ |   | የወረዳው ገዛቶ |   |
|----------------------|-----------|---|--------------|---|-----------|---|-----------|---|
|                      | ሰ         | የ | ሰ            | የ | ሰ         | የ | ሰ         | የ |
| 10                   | ከሀፈጦ      |   | 1 / የያዩ      |   | የያዩ       |   | ያዩ        |   |
|                      |           |   | 2 / የየዎበ     |   |           |   |           |   |
| 11                   | ከ ቶ ረ ረ   |   | 1 / የዛዛቶ     |   | የቶረረ      | ✓ | ኦሎዎ       |   |
|                      |           |   | 2 / የወረቦ     |   |           |   |           |   |
| 12                   | ከ ሳ ሪ ጦ   |   | 1 / የሰሌ      |   | የሰሌ       | ✓ | ሰሌ        |   |
| 13                   | " "       |   | 1 / የሳሬጦ አልጋ |   | የሳሬጦ      | ✓ | የፀሌ       |   |
| 14                   | " "       |   | 1 / የየባካ     |   | የየባካ      | ✗ | አልጋ       |   |
|                      |           |   | 2 / የቦይ      |   |           |   |           |   |
| <del>የወረዳው ገዛቶ</del> |           |   |              |   |           |   |           |   |
| 15                   | ከ በ ሪ ሌ   |   | 1 / የሰና ሲገገ  |   | የበሪሌ      | ✓ | በሪሌ       |   |
|                      |           |   | 2 / የሰና ጌካፍ  |   |           |   |           |   |
|                      |           |   | 3 / የበልጌ     |   |           |   |           |   |
| 16                   | " "       |   | 1 / የሰና በሰፊ  |   | የአዎበር ገጅ  | ✓ | ገጅ        |   |
|                      |           |   | 2 / የአዎበር ገጅ |   |           |   |           |   |
|                      |           |   | 3 / የገሌ ሴኪቻ  |   |           |   |           |   |
| 17                   | " "       |   | 1 / የወሬ      |   | የቦረቻ      | ✓ | ቦረቻ       |   |
|                      |           |   | 2 / የቦረቻ     |   |           |   |           |   |
|                      |           |   | 3 / የቦረካ     |   |           |   |           |   |
| 18                   | ከ ሮ ፊ     |   | 1 / የአበሪላ    |   | አበሪላ      | ✓ | አበሪላ      |   |
| 19                   | " "       |   | 1 / የሰሌላ     |   | የሰሌላ      | ✓ | አባባ       |   |
|                      |           |   | 2 / የሪበሰ     |   |           |   |           |   |
| 20                   | ገገግ ሰበግ   |   | 1 / የቢገግ     |   | የቢገግ      | ✓ | ቢገግ       |   |
| 21                   | " "       |   | 1 / የወሬታ     |   | የሰበግ      | ✓ | ሰበግ       |   |
|                      |           |   | 2 / የሸጌ      |   |           |   |           |   |



## **STATEMENT OF AUTHOR**

I declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and that all sources of materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has been submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for M.A. degree at the Jimma University and is deposited at the university library to be made available to borrowers under rules of the library. I also declare that this thesis is not submitted to any other institution anywhere for the award of any academic degree, diploma, or certificate. Brief quotations from this thesis are allowable without special permission provided that accurate acknowledgement of source is made. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this manuscript in whole or in part and in all other instances, however, permission must be obtained from the author.

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Place: Jimma University; Jimma, Ethiopia.

Date of submission: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to all optimistic individuals who seek a beacon of bright hope from our past history to move forward, not to repeat mistakes.