



**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
AND HUMANITIES DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**

**LAND TENURE SYSTEM IN LIMMU KOSSA DISTRICT,  
JIMMA ZONE: ca.1890s-1974**

**BY: JIBRIL IMAM**

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**JIMMA UNIVERSITY**

**LAND TENURE SYSTEM IN LIMMU KOSSA DISTRICT,  
JIMMAZONE: ca.1890s-1974**

**BY: JIBRIL IMAM**

**A THESIS PRESENTED IN A PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY**

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As Thesis Research advisor, I hereby certify that I have read and evaluated the thesis prepared, under my guidance, by Jibril Imam, entitled "Land Tenure System In Limmu Kossa District, Jimma Zone: Ca. 1890s-1974" 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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## KEYTOTRANSLITERATIONSYSYTEM

The non-English words, names or phrases of *Afaan Oromo* and Amharic language in this thesis are written and read according to the phonetic system of *Afaan Oromo* and Amharic languages.

A. *Afaan Oromo* and related words are spelled according to the writing and reading system in an alphabet known as *Qubee*.

I. *Qubee* system has basically five *Dubbachiiftuu* (vowels), each of which is written in *dheeraa* (long) and *gabaabaa* (short) as follows:

Short	Long	Example	English equivalent
A	aa	<i>Abbaa</i>	Father
E	ee	<i>Qubee</i>	Alphabet
I	ii	<i>Dubbachiiftuu</i>	Vowel
O	oo	<i>Qomoo</i>	Kinship
U	uu	<i>bokku</i>	Scepter

II. Length in the vowels results in meaning changes

**Examples: Afaan Oromoo??**

**English**

Short-Lafaa

Land

Long-Lafaa

Soft

Short-Ana

Me

Long-Aanaa

District

III. Sequence of more than two words is possible if separated by *haadha*/glottal voiceless top/apostrophe (‘) as in *re’ee* (goat), *Bu’aa* (profit), *du’aa*(dead).

IV. *Dubbifamaa*/consonants are stressed (*jabeessuu*) or germinated by doublings similar phonemes and clustered by devoicing two similar consonants as in *aaddee* (Mrs.), *obboo* (Mr.)

V. Germinating of consonants can change theme aningas in *hiree* (chance) versus *hirree* (arm) and *sodaa* (fear) versus *soddaa* (in-law)

VI. Most of the consonants have almost the same sounds as English consonants but C, Q and X have different sounds from the English consonants.

C /c’/: represents ejective, palatal, voiceless ch as *cabbii*-ice, *culullee*-eagle

Q/k’/: de not ejective, velar, voiceless as in *Qoree* (unmarried girl/appex?)

X/t': represent alveolar, ejective; voiceless as in *fixe*(finished), *Xinnaa*(little)

VII. There are five paired phonemes that are formed by combining two different affricate letters. These are ch, dh, ny, ph, and sh from which ch and sh are the equivalent. Examples

Order	Afaan Oromoo	English
Ch	<i>Bulchaa</i>	Chairman
Sh	<i>Bishaan</i>	Water

There are three dh, ny and ph have no English equivalents

Dh: alveolar, dental, implosives; voiceless as in *haadha* (mother), *dhundhula*

(slope) Ny: nasal, palatalized; voiceless as in *nyaara* (eyelash), *nyaara*(food)

Ph/p': bilabial, ejective, stop; voiceless as in *buuphaa*(egg)

VIII. Irra butaa (nan-vocalized consonant) is not required to be followed by a vowel but followed by dissimilar consonant as in *harkka*(hand), *harma*(breast), *jilba* (knee)

B. Amharic and related words are spelled according to Ge'ez alphabet. Inevitably, there are inconsistencies in this system, which in many instances create many discrepancies but I have mainly adapted from Deressa Debu's Dissertation.

**I. The seven sounds in Amharic and Afaan Oromo are represented as follows:**

Amharic	Afaan Oromo	Transliteration
በ	ba	bä
ቡ	bu	bu
ቢ	bii	bi
ባ	baa	ba
ቤ	bee	bé
ብ	bi	be
ቦ	boo	bo

**II. Palatalized sounds are identified as follows:**

Amharic	Afaan Oromo	Transliteration
ሸ	sha	shä
ሸህ	ca	Ćä
ሸህ	cha	Ĉä
ሸህ	nya	gnäzh
ሸህ		ä
ሸህ	Ja	jä

**III. Glottalized sounds are represented as follows:**

Amharic	Oromo	Transliteration
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ቀ	qa	qä
ከ	Ka	kä
Examples:		
ቀበሮ	Qabaro	Qäbäro
ከበሮ	Kabaro	Käbäro

**IV. Dental sounds are represented as follows:**

<b>Amharic</b>	<b>Oromo</b>	<b>Transliteration</b>
ጠ	xa	xä
ፀ	tša	tsä
Examples:		
ጠፍ	xaafii	xéff
ፀሀይ	Tsehay	Tsehay

**V. Gemmination sound is indicated by doubling the consonants.**

**Example,**

ታደሰ	Taddäsä	Taddäsä
ከበደ	Kabbada	Kabbada



## **ACRONYMS**

AAU

Addis Ababa University

E.C

Ethiopian Calendar

GC

Gregorian calendar

ITL

Income Tax Law

MT

Maria Theresa

MMT

Maria Theresa Taller

PMAC

Provisional Military

Administrative Council

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I would also like to extend my special acknowledgment to Libraries of Jimma University for providing me with the necessary materials to construct this work. My special gratitude is due to Limmu Kossa District for supplying me with the necessary documents that segrateful is beyond words. Besides, I am deeply indebted to individuals who have directly and indirectly contributed to the completion of this study.

## **ABSTRACT**

*This thesis deals with Land Tenure System in Limmu Kossa District, Jimma Zone: Ca.1890s-1974. The objective of the thesis is to reconstruct the history of Land Tenure System in Limmu Kossa District from about 1890s-1974. The year 1890s was taken as the starting point because of the fact that it was the period when Limmu Kossa came under the conquest of Menelik II. 1974 was taken as mark years because it was the time when the issue of land tenure system transformed from feudal system to landnationalization. Thethesisemployedmainlyqualitativeresearchmethod. Datawascollectedbothfrom primary and secondary sources using Key Informant Interview and document analysis. This Thesis has investigated A History of Land Tenure System in Limmu Kossa District, depending on the field data that were generated from key informants and supplemented by archival materials. The Thesis considers the land tenure forms, land ownership right, continuity and changes in the landholding system and the relations between land lords and peasants. The research also considers issues of land alienation, land privatization and Qälad institutions in the situation where the main relevant perspectives argue for the abolition of the people's ownership right. The people's land owner shape regime in Ethiopia has enabled the land owners to use excessive exploitation of human labor contrary to the principles of land holding right. Moreover, this land ownership regime has aggravated the problems the country faces in its lack of technological inputs. Finally, the thesis concluded that the landlessness of the peasants resulted in the economic dependency that affected large number of the community which laid its base for today's problems.*

## PREFACE

*Land Tenure of Ethiopia had previously been written by certain scholars. Concerning the issue under discussion, none of them has produced a thesis in the study area. "Land Tenure System in Limmu Kossa District, Jimma Zone: Ca.1890s-1974" is new for the area of the study. This topic explored description of the study area, concept of land tenure, pre-1890s land tenure system, taxation system, land measurement and oppositions to feudal rule in the study area.*

*This work is classified in to four chapters. The first chapter focused on the geographical setting and historical background of Limmu Kossa. Enormous issues are raised under the geographical setting of the study area relating to its location, landscape, drainage system, peopling, and so on. Besides, factors that led to the growth and development of the district from the nineteenth to the first half of the twentieth century have been analyzed. Paramountcy?, the concept of land tenure system has been investigated. In addition, this chapter treated the existence of land tenure system in Limmu Kossa District. At the end, the chapter tried to investigate the ruling local chiefs and their ruling system.*

*The second chapter of this work has dealt with the land tenure and taxation system in Limmu Kossa District. In this chapter, land tenure system and taxation to 1941; the introduction of land measurement; the expansion of land taxation and land tenure after the Italian evacuation have been discussed. The third chapter has dedicated itself to the investigation of opposition movements to the feudal rule (1960s-1974). Under this chapter, Limmu Kossa in the eve of the opposition, the opposition, land privatization, sale and transfer, coffee production and implications of land tenure system were discussed. I am obliged to specify some challenges I faced as problems while collecting sources from written materials. I have faced a shortage of archival materials and historical literatures. While collecting oral information, the unwillingness of some informants has also been a problem. Looking for archival sources has also been a big problem for bureaucratic reasons and others. Through dedication and tolerance, I was able to overcome some challenges for the accomplishment of this research. This thesis had made use of archival sources of different personalities; informants of various ages; written materials (published and unpublished) among others. The author is hopeful that this thesis serves students, researchers, governmental and non-governmental organizations for further study on the land tenure system and its implication.*

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Historical Background of Limmu Kossa

Among the five Gibe monarchies, Limmu Enarya was the oldest of all. The process of transformation from gadaa egalitarian system to a monarchical form of administrative system among the Limmu Oromo clan was said to be under taken by a famous war leader, Bofo, who supersonic army undermined the traditional gadaa system. Bofo was known popularly by the name of his war horse called Gomol. In dealing with the history of Limmu there are sufficient traditions recorded by travelers and missionaries. For instance, Guluma presented three sources. From the close analyses of these sources, it is safe that the formation of the kingdom of Limmu was achieved through war. This situation made the process of state formation in Limmu different from its neighbor Gibe Oromo states such as Gomma and Jimma where the process of monarchical state formation was achieved not by a military victory of powerful war leaders but by a voluntary association of clan members.<sup>1</sup>

As to the time of the foundation of Limmu, Guluma referred to 1780, however, Mohammed Hassen stated that "From internal evidence, it would appear; however, that Abba Gomol founded the kingdom of Limmu-Ennary probably between 1800 and 1802."<sup>2</sup> However, it is not much convincing to conclude that the process of monarchical state formation in Limmu and other Gibe states was achieved only through war since it involves different As it is described earlier, state formation was achieved as a result of consecutive events such as the introduction of sedentary agricultural farming that laid the bases followed by surplus production and business interaction, effective military leadership as well as political marriage alliance as we shall bellow. According to Antoine D' Abbadie, the kingdom of Limmu was founded by the Abba Bokku from the Sopera clan named Bofo who was also called Abba Gomol, the name of warhorse. Abba Gomol was renowned for his brave and skillful war leader ship. To achieve his political carrier of uniting the whole Limmu clans under strong monarchical administration, Bofo or Abba Gomol started a war

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<sup>1</sup> Guluma Gameda, "Some Notes on Food Crops and Coffee Cultivation in Jimma and Limmu Awrajas", Keffa administrative Region (1950-1970s) (AAU, History, 1986), pp. 71-74.

<sup>2</sup> Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo of Ethiopia: A History 1570-1860* (Cambridge, 1994), p, 103.

against clan chiefs. Bofo fought his way from Sappa, his capital, to Kossa, Genna, Suntu, and finally to Saqa, the capital of Sigaro. Thus scoring a successive victory over Limmu clans one after the other, Bofo succeeded to unite all Limmu clans under the Sopera dynasty.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to military victory, however, other factors facilitated a conducive atmosphere for Bofo to assume supreme political power over Limmu. That is marriage alliance concluded with Abba Rebu the chief of Sigaro in Nonno. The marriage alliance was significant for two things. First, it helped to unite the Nonno and its capital Saqa, located to the East, with Sappa the center of Bofo located to the southwest.<sup>4</sup>Second, it facilitated the inheritance of political power by his son named Ibsa which marked the emergence of Monarchical authority as described below:

Bofo, powerful in war, quick to defend his interests, jealous of his power, and suspicious of his rivals, became a formidable war leader. The wealthy Abba Rebu may have tried and failed to defeat him. At least there is internal evidence which seems to suggest this. It is probable that Abba Rebu, having failed to stop Bofo's rise to power, came to terms with the young warrior and cemented their relations with the hand of his daughter. Thirdly, this marriage in or around 1802 produced Ibsa ("the light"), better known by the name of his horse Bagibo, who was to succeed his father in 1825.<sup>5</sup>

But still, Bofo's skillful military leadership could be taken as the major factor for him to assume supreme political authority over Limmu. It is said that Bofo entered into conflict with Abba Rebu, his father-in-law, and lost power until the invasion of Limmu by Gummaa. At this incident, Bofo surprisingly conducted a sudden counterattack against the militant groups of Gummaa and liberated Limmu. As a result of his heroic deed, the Oromo of Limmu including Abba Rebu rewarded Bofo once again the authority of military leadership and recognized his supreme political power over the whole Limmu. Bofo (Abba Gomol) ruled Limmu until he was succeeded by his son Ibsa or Abba Bogibo in 1825.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Guluma Gameda, "The Rise of Coffee and the Demise of Colonial Autonomy: The Oromo Kingdom of Jimma and Political Centralization in Ethiopia", *Northeast African Studies*, Volume 9, number 3, new services (Michigan state university press-2002), p.76.

<sup>4</sup> Mohammed Hassen, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, p.103

<sup>5</sup> *bid*; Guluma, "Some Notes on Food Crops and Coffee Cultivation in Jimma", p.75.

<sup>6</sup> Guluma, p.78.

As part of fulfilling the monarchical administrative structure, Abba Gomol made Saqqa his capital and introduced the collection of tribute, and reportedly all clan leaders recognized for him the right to claim over uncultivated lands, monopoly over hunting rights, all forest products. Abba Gomol also ensured a new system of market dues tax collection from merchants. Generally, after uniting Limmu under a unitary monarchical administration, Abba Gomol conducted a war of territorial expansion. He succeeded in establishing a strong state of Limmu, a strategically located state in the Gibe valley.<sup>7</sup>

What is not in dispute is that during his reign Limmu-Ennarya was the cradle of a new dynamic spirit which soon began to shape every material and spiritual aspect of the Oromo society in the Gibe region. His land gave birth to the institution of monarchy, as well as to change in ideology. In short, during the reign of Abba Gomol Limmu-Ennarya displayed fresh and vital energies which were destined to exert a strong influence on the rest of the Gibe region. Abba Gomol, the founder of a new dynasty, left his name to posterity as the first Muslim Oromo king in the Gibe region.<sup>8</sup>

Gumma was the second state to be formed in the Gibe region. As in the case of Limmu, the basis for the transformation from gadaa egalitarian to the monarchical system of administration was laid during the second half of the eighteenth century. However, the process of state formation was completed only around 1810.<sup>9</sup>

Gumma was said to have emerged in the half of the eighteenth century as one of the Gibe Oromo monarchical states. As to credible sources, the process of state formation in Gumma is related to the conflict for political power among the two Oromo tribes. Long before the emergence of Gumma as a monarchical state, there were stateless Oromo tribes who lived west of Gumma. These were the Dagoye and the Chara represented by their chiefs in their respective area. The Dagoye was organized under their chief named Sarbaroda while the Chara was organized under their chief named Jilcha. After a prolonged power struggle between Sarbaroda of Dagoye and Jilcha of Chara in the first decade of the nineteenth century, Sarbaroda was defeated and lost his life. After this decisive victory, Jilcha united the two areas and assumed the title of King. Jilcha made Chara the political center of his administration.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Mohammed Hassen, p.105.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*p.107.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

Though Jilcha laid the base for the emergence of Gomma as a monarchical state, his administration was said to be failed to preserve peace and order as the result of the flaming internal opposition. But after the death of Jilcha his son Oncho ascended to the throne in 1810 and ruled successfully for about two decades. The reign of Oncho Jilcha (1810- 1830) was said to be characterized by continuous wars against his neighbor states mainly Limmu-Ennarya, Gomma, and Gera. It seems that the process of state formation was said to be completed by Oncho. The process of establishing a sovereign state demand internal unity and the utilization of the available resources to defend against external challenges. Thus, first, he crushed all internal opponents towards his policy of unifying all the clans which subsequently assisted him to mobilize both the material and human resources against external challenges. Second, the internal achieve men the loped him to score a victory against the challenge espoused by the neighbors and subsequently established territorial boundaries under his government. He was a warlike man, violent and tyrant. His cruel nature tyranny eroded his popularity and was finally succeeded by his son Jawe.<sup>11</sup>

Written documents and oral information show that the founder of Gomma was Abba Boke. Sayyoo (located southwest of current Agaro town) was the political center of Abba Boke. According to the resources, the Oromo of Gomma as in the case of other Gibe Oromo states were ruled by the Caffee Assembly. Lost its decision-making power in Gomma Oromo political practices Abba Boke assumed power as per the election rules set in Gadaa democratic tradition but he gradually clings to the throne by achieving the power of leadership. He engraved hereditary leadership in Gomma. By refuting the Oromo egalitarian political system, Abba Boke paved the way forward for monarchal administration in Gomma.<sup>12</sup>The source shows that Abba Book had experienced a continuous conflict with his neighboring states or local leaders to expand his territory by expansions; he had controlled the land between Yaacii and Dagoye.

The Caffee assembly recognized the new area as the private property of Abba Boke. Here distributed the new land for his followers. Despite his strong ambition to control extra territories Abba Boke failed to unite the region of Qottaa with Gomma. Abba Boke was succeeded by his son Abba Manno. Qottaa was united with Gomma only after the coming to power of Abba Manno (c.1820-1840). As a result, it is said that Abba Manno was remembered as the first king of Gomma who introduced Islam and completed the process of state formation.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Geremew Haile, *Discourses of the Origin of Coffee* (Finfinne: AfricaPrintingPLC, 2015), pp.46-48

<sup>12</sup> Mohammed Hassen, p.109

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, p.110



In the history of state formation in the Gibe region, the Maccaa Oromo had ensured success by declaring war on the pre-existing Ennarya people. It was such an invasion of the weak local clans which brought Abba Boke to emerge as the first king of Gomma. In the unfolding drama of anarchy, the protection earlier entrusted by the coffee assembly had given away and the weak was paralyzed, justice became the monopoly of the strong, and those outside the circle of the war leaders and their followers suffered from the lack of safety. It was through such territorial invasion that Abba Boke had united Oromo clans like Awaalini, Sadacha, Jidda, Ennango, Ennangiya, Ennarata, and Ennanrasa and founded Gomma. This does not mean the clans of Oromo who formed Gomma state were only those Oromo clans mentioned above. Rather, it is to list some examples of the first major Oromo clans united by Abba Boke. According to informants from Gomma, the Oromo state of Gomma was formed by Oromo clans and many of them still exist in Gomma.<sup>14</sup> Generally, the nucleus for the foundation of Gomma was not the result of a military victory by a powerful war leader but by the voluntary association of clan members. The case of Jimma also suggests the same process.

Before the formation of the Modern State in the Gibe region, the Jimma Oromo was ruled by the egalitarian Gadaa democratic system of government for a long time. Jimma and the other Sadacha Oromo had their common *Caffee* as assembly at Oda Hulle, in Omo Nada. However, the Gadaa Democracy of Odaa Hule was decimated due to the inter-clan struggle between the Badi and Diggo Oromo groups. The struggle between the Diggo and Badi clans finally ended with Diggo's victory. The Diggo has got victory under the able leadership of Abba Rago who created the modern state of Jimma. Abba Faro was well known for the coordination of his Diggo clans against his enemies. His elder son and successor, Abba Magale. Was also known as a famous warrior and skillful leader who won fame in coordinating all human and material sources to galvanize military power against the Badi groups.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Geremew Haile, p.51.

<sup>15</sup> Guluma, p.71

However, the Badi groups were not fortunate to have such an able leader mobilize all their effort against the Diggo supremacy. On the other hand, the Badi could not appeal to withstand the attack of Diggo for the fact that the power of Badi was devastated by the continuous border war made with Abba Bagibo of Limmu Enarya. Using such gainful conditions, the Diggo groups under their Abba Dula (Abamagal) easily captured all the necessary sources of Badi including the fertile land, lucrative sources, and market center of Hirmata in the hands of Abba Magal. This was a major step ahead on the road to the creation of the kingdom of Jimma. This is not meant that the process of state formation of Jimma was completed by Abba Jifar I. The kingdom of Jimma was fully established during the reign of Sanna. Sanna was a strong leader, bureaucratically efficient and diplomatically skillful to divide his enemies to win victory in favor of his Diggo groups. It was in such skillful engagement that Sanna could have taken over the control of Badi's political center (*Masaraa*) of the kingdom. In such a series of inter struggle for power by 1830, a new kingdom of Jimma, Jimma-Kaka, had been established during the reign of Abba Jifar (Sanna).<sup>16</sup>

Thereafter, Abba Jifar became both the name of the king and the kingdom. After the coming to power of Abba Jifar the name Jimma –Kaka was transferred to Jimma Abba Jifar. Abba Jifar I had ruled Jimma from 1830-1854. The history of Jimma had begun to be well known during Abba Jifar I. The skill of Abba Jifar in creating the modern state of Jimma could be understood from the following statement:

As in military, so in the political field, Abba Jifar showed his high intelligence and wisdom. He had created a kingdom but soon relayed that it needed wealth and ideology which not only nourished the unity of the people, but also consolidated wealth from commerce and Islam provided him the ideology- he embraced Islam for political and economic motives rather than for religion needs.<sup>17</sup>

The above statement can show us how much Abba Jifar had the multi-directional skill to consolidate his power and the kingdom in the military, economy, and social aspects. He sociably used different mechanisms. Above all, his control of trade and favored treatment of Islam privileged his kingdom more than any other Gibe Oromo state.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ketebo Abdiyo Ensene, *Abba Jifar II of Jimma Kingdom 1861-1934: A Biography* (Jimma University,2012), p.15

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*,pp.16-19

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*

As information from different sources indicates, it seems certain that Abba Jifar I had a liberal approach towards all newly emerging religions. Primarily, Abba Jifar I became a pessimist with a strong belief that Islam had a good advantage to liberate his people and open economic opportunities for his kingdom. After Abba Jifar I (1830-1854), the kingdom of Jimma had been ruled by different successive kings. The reign of Abba Jifar II (1875-1933) was said to be a glorious period in the history of Jimma. Abba Jifar II ruled the kingdom for 58 years without interruption. During his reign, Jimma was more consolidated economically and politically as well. Trade has been expanded and Islamic religion became the nucleus of the religion and ideology of the kingdom.<sup>19</sup>

In the history of Oromo monarchical state formation in the Gibe region in the nineteenth century, the state of Gera was founded in 1835. Gera emerged after the political deeds of a successful war leader called Gunji, who assumed himself as a king. However, he ruled Gera for short and his son Tullu succeeded him in 1835. Sources state that Tullu was the famous and popular leader from among the Gibe Oromo state leader. In the words of Mohammed Hassan, “Tullu was an intelligent man, a clever politician, a warrior king and good administrator. Tullu was popular within Gera and famous in the Gibe Region”.<sup>20</sup> Like other Gibe kings, Tullu Gunji had also adopted the territorial expansion. He had fought against the neighboring states of Kaffa, Gomma, and Gumma. Above all, he has a similar ambition with Oncho Jilcha of Gumma for territorial expansion for which he faced continuous enmity from Gumma. Tullu’s war liker nature has seriously challenged his power. However, he was popular with his people. Despite his popularity, he encountered serious challenges from Abba Baso, Tullu’s half-brother whose mother was the daughter of Oncho Jilcha of Gummaa. Consequently, Abba Baso, who enjoyed the support of his grandfather (Oncho Jilcha), deposed Tullu from power, and Tullu, was captured captive. Following the capture of Tullu Gunji, Abba Baso took the position of leader ship in Gerabutin 1838 he was overthrown and exiled to Jimma.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *bid.*

<sup>20</sup> *bid.* p.20

<sup>21</sup> Mohammed Hassen, p.112.

There was no feature, which distinguishes the foundation of the kingdom of Gera from other Gibe Oromo states, and Gera was formed in the way all the Gibe Oromo states were formed. The emergence and consolidation of Gera during the nineteenth century was largely attributed to the development of agriculture well- structured social organization and trade. It was said to have been the last Gibe Oromo state to emerge as a monarchical state. Nevertheless, because of the availability of large fertile agricultural land, and industrious Oromo society it did not take time Gera to reach the position enjoyed by other Gibe Oromo states formed earlier than Gera.<sup>22</sup>

To wind up, the reason behind the process of state formation in the five Gibe states was caused by internal and external factors. Externally the need for effective political organization was seriously felt in the Gibe valley as they faced strong challenges from the Omotic kingdoms. They were concerned about their identities and voluntary association of clans and soon developed to state structure. The internal factor, however, is the prime reason than the external factor. Particularly, the introduction of sedentary agricultural farming facilitated the emergence of class society based on ownership of land and accumulation of wealth that led to the emergence of monarchies.<sup>24</sup> In describing the significance of the introduction of the sedentary agricultural mode of life for the transformation of the Gibe Oromo in to monarchical administration, Mohammed Hassen stated:

... The settlement of the Oromo in the Gibe region had a profound impact on their way of life. Of course, when the Oromo pastoralists first arrived in the region in the 1570s they were unable to take maximum advantage of the economic potential of their new environment. It was mainly after the transformation of their mode of production from pastoralism to sedentary agriculture that they were able to do this. They changed their political institutions, ideology, and mode of production to meet the demands of the new conditions. They also transformed the economy of the region through their labor on the land and their activities in trade and exchange.<sup>23</sup>

The following chapter shall attempt to demonstrate that agricultural production, the material foundation of the Gibe states, and describe the gradual progress and development from cereal crops to commercial crops such as coffee and Land is the basic resource of human society. It provides the physical space in which we all live, work and play, and from which we obtain our material needs. Land can be viewed as a physical reality; economic value; legal and cultural entity. It is the foundation of all human activity and its proper

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, p.113

<sup>23</sup> Mohammed Hassan, p.114.

management is the key to the creation and sustenance of civilized society. Land is exceptionally so important resource that the policy on land ownership affects all aspects of peasants' lives: economic wellbeing, land use decisions, efficiency in land use and social relations.<sup>24</sup> According to Belay, land has been one of the most highly valued possessions of human society. This strongly relies on the degree of the relationship between the society and the land use.<sup>25</sup>

In the case of Oromo people; they faced scarcity of land which they tried to overcome by their expansion movements. This was done through gradual and slow movements. As Merid argued, the gradual and slow movement of these people which started before the Christian-Muslim war of the 16<sup>th</sup> century erupted during the exhausted power of the two warriors.<sup>26</sup> In Ethiopia land has been central by which the rural community has been implicitly or explicitly tied to the state. In other words, land related institutions have been mechanisms where by political decisions 'have been channeled from the state to the peasant. Therefore, controller ownership of the land has been apolitical issue that has involved interest of the power full actor, the state. As indicated by different scholars, farm size is one of the determinant factors for agricultural production and the farmers living condition. Human beings are directly or indirectly depend on land. Thus; land is one of the key natural resources that should be use d properly to get sustainable agricultural development. Before the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in Gibe region land had been held as a common property by which all clan members had equal access to it. Mohammed puts this right as: "Earlier during the Oromo expansion land in Gibe region being the common property of the whole clan. With the transformation of Maccaa mode of production, land not only gained economic value but also generated struggle among the war leaders for its possession". The above information asserts the importance of competition over extensive land and the emergence of class after the transformation of the Maccaa's mode of production.<sup>27</sup>

According Ketebo during their settlement in the region the Oromo was had a nine *Sagni* (clan).<sup>36</sup> This nine

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<sup>24</sup> Belay Zerga, Land Resource, Uses and Ownership in Ethiopia: Past, Present and Future. *International Journal of Scientific Research & Engineering Trends*. (Wolkite University, Department of Natural Resources Management, 2016).p.1

<sup>25</sup> *bid*.p.19.

<sup>26</sup> Erid Wolde Aregay, "Southern Ethiopia and the Christian kingdom 1508-1708, with Special Reference to the [Oromo] Migration and their Consequences". PhD Dissertation, (London University, 1971), p.159.

<sup>27</sup> Guluma, "The Rise of Coffee and the Demise of Colonial Autonomy..."2002, p.63; Mohammed Hassan, 1994, P.48.

*sagni* not long after their settlement in the Gibe region convened under holly sycamore tree (Oda) at Hulle in the present Omo-Nada district at a specific place of Calliyaa the main objectives of call together at *Oda* Hulle to perform *Gadaa* ceremonies.<sup>28</sup> According to Lewis this nine *sagni* of the Oromo clan were under the leadership of one of great “queen” called Makahore. The local tradition asserted that when she placed boku to the ground the earth tremble and men fear an area where the Hulle *Odaa* performs.<sup>29</sup> the known clans which were settled in Limmu or Ghibe? Area were Saphera, Abuluu, Busaasee, Agelo, Awaalini, Badii, Libuu, Jiruu, Laloo, Haroojinuu and Qoree On the way of their expansion to the region, the Oromo in their pre-occupations of Hulle assembly was begun to plan a way for the possession and use of land in the region. Before the Hulle assembly and their arrival to the Gibe region the Oromo had practiced allied together in a coalition of clans to occupy fresh land. These early settlers had been vested with *qabiyyee* rights. *Qabiyyee* was a piece of land claimed by the descendants of the first occupants as their undisputed permanent possession which had to be first confirmed by the ruling *gadaa* at the. The rights of these original *qabiyyee* occupying clans, who are also sometimes known as *dagalasaqi*, openers of long grasses, were fully recognized by others. They were the first clans or families who settled on a vacant land. They would lay foliage known as *bala bufata* (symbolic leaves of occupation) to establish their precedence.<sup>30</sup> During the Macha Oromo settlement in the region, Hulle *Gadaa* continued to serve as the center for a long period up to the time of the knowledgeable and respected female *gadaa* leader called Makahore, who was overthrown by the Oromo Abba Dulas (warlords) After her, from c.1800 onward the Abba Dula *as* of Jimma like Ose Kobi (Abba Faro) and Dangila (Abba Magal) and Bofo of the Limmu sects and one d *gadaa* and established the independent hereditary state.<sup>41</sup> and Dangila (Abba Magal) and Bofo of the Limmu sects band owned *gadaa* and established the independent hereditary state.<sup>31</sup>

Both internal and external factors brought about the disintegration of the *gadaa* social organization and the emergence of the Oromo kingdoms in northern and western Oromia. In other words, the emergence of class differentiation and the rise of the Oromo kingdoms destroyed the *gadaa* system in the Gibe river valley areas. Depending on the arguments of Mohammed Hassen, Guluma Gameda describes that, there was no

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<sup>28</sup> Lewis, S. Herbert. *Jimma Abba Jifar: An Oromo Monarchy of Ethiopia (1830-1932)*, (the University of Wisconsin Press, 1965), p.37.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid

<sup>30</sup> Deresa, p.15; Guluma, “Some aspects of agrarian change in Gibe region and the rise and fall of Coffee farmers (1948-1976)”, (1994), pp.142-145&157; Tekalign Wolde-Mariam. “Slavery and Slave Trade in the Kingdom of Jimma, Ca. 1800-1935.” AAU: M.A. Thesis in History, 1984., p. 147, Dereje, 2000, p.17; Tesema, (1994), p.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*; Ketebo, p. 8.

single factor that played role in the decline for gadaa system.<sup>42</sup> <sup>32</sup>the social transformation and the disintegration of the gadaa system did not occur throughout Oromo inhabited regions. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the development of agriculture and trade, class and state formation sun determined the foundation of the gadaa system in northern and western Oromia. The Egalitarian and democratic gadaa system became in compatible with the new *moti* system (kingdom and tributary mode of production) due to the fundamental changes in the land holding system.<sup>33</sup>

The *moti* system (kingship) emerged through war, confiscation of land, collection of booties, tribute and market dues, and through the establishment of hereditary rights to ownership of property and political office in South- western Oromia, (Jimma, Wallaga and Ilu Abbabor). <sup>34</sup> The emergence of autocratic powerful leaders and their private armies led to the control of markets, trade routes and land, and the development of agricultural economy that led to class differentiation and state formation.<sup>45</sup> In the Gibe region, the differentiation of wealth went beyond the wealth of cattle in the nineteenth century when the sooressa (the wealthy merchant and landlord class) emerged.<sup>35</sup>With the emergence of this wealthy class, the principle of adopting the conquered populations through the *Moggasa* process (adoption method) forged .The institutions of slavery and *qubisisa* (tenancy) emerged. <sup>36</sup> The foundations of the five Oromo Gibe states: Limmu Ennarya, Guma, Jimma, Gera and Gomma were laid by the development of agriculture, local industry and the expansion of local and long distance trade between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>37</sup>

In the first half of the 19th century, the emergence of the Abba *lafaa* (a hereditary landlord), the *moti* (king), Abba Qoro (governor), trade chiefs, and market administrators reduced the egalitarian aspects of the gadaa to religious rituals. The *moti* continuously accumulated wealth in his treasuries within come she extracted

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<sup>32</sup> Guluma, "Some aspects of agrarian change in Gibe region and the rise and fall of Coffee farmers (1948-1976)"1994. Pp.57-59; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*,1994, p.47.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>34</sup> *bid*; Herbert Lewis, "A Reconsideration of the Socio-Political System of the Western Oromo," *Journal o f Semitic Studies*,9,(1964.), p.142

<sup>35</sup> Getachew Fule, "The Kingdom of [Yam]: A Historical Survey to 1894", (AAU: BA Thesis in History, 1985), pp. 41-45.

<sup>36</sup> Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*, 1994, pp.89-187; *Ibid*, pp.121-124.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*.

from tribute on the land and its products, his estates and commerce.<sup>38</sup> Produce extraction enabled the *moti* to create and maintain regulatory institutions like military, bodyguards, and courts.<sup>39</sup>

Generally speaking, in the Gibe region, through the process of social class differentiation, the egalitarian and democratic gadaa office was replaced by the autocratic and hereditary office of the *mootii*. The hierarchy of the social pyramid can be depicted as follows.<sup>40</sup> The *mootii* was at the higher class, followed by his councils (assemblies). Next to the councils of the state, there were Abba qoros, followed by Abba *gandas* (province administrators). Abba *gandas* were state officials who collected tribute, recruited soldiers, guarded the borders of the kingdom, and administered justice. Below Abba *gandas* there were Abba *fuunyos* who imposed tribute on the population, arrested offenders, directed *corvee labor*, collected taxes, and served as messengers between higher officials and the *mootii*.<sup>41</sup>

All officials were directly or indirectly appointed by the *moti* from the landowning warriors. Finally there were at the bottom free farmers, Qubsisa (peasants), *ogeessaa* (artisans), and slaves. In this region, there was also the newly emerging Oromo merchant class known as Afkala.<sup>42</sup> Herbert Lewis specifically studied the Jimma *moti* system and explained how its powerful organization with its monopoly of power and economic forces destroyed the Gadaa system.<sup>43</sup> The Jimma monarchy had direct power over the political economy of Jimma. The *moti* recruited his officers from among members of his family, the *sooressa* (wealthy men), those slaves who proved loyal, intelligent, and effective, and from foreign mercenaries. He directly controlled the armed forces and extracted produce. Jimma was the center of trade for extensive local and long distance trade. Merchants came to this region from Arabia, the Sudan, India, and Europe and from northern part of Ethiopia, most of the most of the kingdoms in the Gibe Regions evolved as one of the richest regions in Africa.<sup>44</sup>

With the emergence of a relative scarcity of land in the community, pioneers' descendants began to monopolize and rights and impose a special settling permission called *qubisisa* (tenancy) on newcomers who were forcibly subordinated and who annually performed labor service for a specific number of

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<sup>38</sup> Herbert Lewis, pp. 47-121.

<sup>39</sup> Lewis, *Jimma Abba Jifar: An Oromo Monarchy of Ethiopia (1830-1932)*, 1965, p.93.

<sup>40</sup> Abir, *The Era of the Princes*, pp.175-177.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Mohammed, pp.96-97.

<sup>43</sup> *bid*, pp. 89-108

<sup>44</sup> Lewis, *Galla monarchy*, 1965, pp.68-69



days.<sup>45</sup> In the case of Ethiopian territorial expansion in the second half of the 19th century is not less than what Europeans did in their colonial expansion. The longest bloody conquest war against the Oromo nation, which took place from 1872 to 1899, was due to similar ambitions.<sup>46</sup> And also the resistance they encountered from regional rulers is directly related to what value peoples give for their land. The agricultural economy of the country and the role of rural land as a basic economic resource in Ethiopia determine the land value and food security of a country.<sup>47</sup> Land is considered as a back bone of Ethiopia's economy. It is the main source of income and livelihood for more than 80 percent of the country's population.<sup>48</sup> After the existence strong monarchial state in the region, the hereditary rulers of the Gibe region had distributed newly conquered lands among upper-class of ruling families. This was a sign of collection of land in the hands of the ruling class.<sup>49</sup> In the late of the 18<sup>th</sup> the century in Limmu Enarya kingdom during the reign of Abba Dula, Bofo took the throne name, Abba Gomol and ruled the new monarchial state of the Gibe region from 1800 to 1825. Abba Gomol declared his son Ibsa, his successor in power. The kingdom reached its climax during the reign of Abba Bagibor. 1825– 1861.<sup>50</sup>

Abba Bogibo introduced land belonged to big land owners called Abba Lafaa in kingdom. Those received their estates a large amount of hectares, sometime upto 40 hectares or one *Gasha*, from the King remained the absolute owners. Abba Lafaa employed tenants, which remained landless. They were given small plot of land about half of a *fetchassa* (0.25 hectare of land) to take the yield for themselves. They had to work one day per week on a land of Abba Lafaa and forced to cultivate two *fetchassa* plots for *gultegna* which they kept one third to half production for themselves in crop sharing arrangement. They had power over peasant living on land assigned for *gult* holder and they also were allowed to covert certain hold into private tenure.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> *bid*; Mekuria Bulcha. 1988. *Flight and Integration: Causes of Mass Exodus from Ethiopia and Problems of Integration in the Sudan*. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, p.34.

<sup>47</sup> Muradu Abdo Srur, "State Policy and Law in Relation to Land Alienation in Ethiopia", PhD Dissertation (University of Warwick, Department of School of Law, 2014), p.1.

<sup>48</sup> Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855-1991*, Second Edition (London, Athens, Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press, 2002), p.191

<sup>49</sup> Pankhurst, Richard, *Economic history of Ethiopia (1800-1935)*, Haile Selassie University Prerevolutionary Ethiopia, (Addis Ababa Press, 1968).

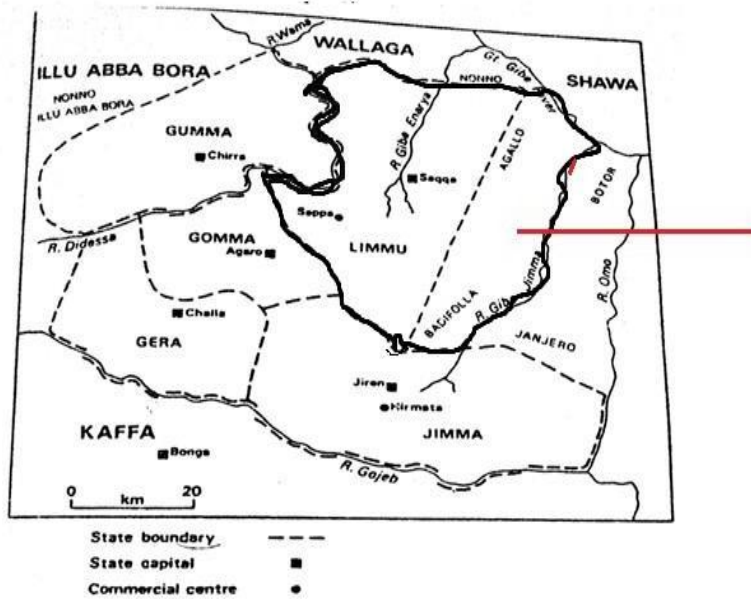
<sup>50</sup> Ibid

<sup>51</sup> Fessessu Neri, "A Case Study in Economic Geography of Gomma II and Coffee Farming Limmu, Kaffa Region", (M.A Thesis, AAU, 1988).

Mohammed outlined this as: “the greater part of the land in Gibe region cultivated and uncultivated, as well as forests lands belonged to the king.”<sup>52</sup> But the majority of ordinary population was left with small plot of land and others totally reduced to rent paying tenants. In the case of Jimma kingdom, land was the most crucial economic resource and it was acquired through conquest, purchasing, and traditional occupation and through family line. In the study area, land possession was also attained through gifts given by king in return for their religion service. Furthermore, land was rented cheaply to rich merchants

### 1.1. Descriptions of the Study Area

Limmu Kossa woreda is in which part of the former Gomma-Limmu *Awraja* and later renamed Limmu *Awraja* and part of the early Limmu-Enarya kingdom. It was presently located in Oromia Regional State in Jimma administrative zone. The district is situated at 70° 57'N latitudes and 36° 53'E longitudes. The administrative center of the district, Limmu Genet (formerly Suntu) is found 75 kilometers west of Jimma town, and 426 kilometers Southwest of Addis Ababa. The district is bounded by Chora Botor district in the northeast, Mana district in the west, Tiro Afeta district in the Southeast, Gomma and Illu Aba Bora in the Northwest, Kersa district in the south, North with Dedesa river to Wallaga and Limmu Seka district in the Northwest.<sup>53</sup>



<sup>52</sup> Mohammed Hassen, p.50

<sup>53</sup> Limmu Kossa Woreda Communication Office Report, 1980.

The total land size is about 14,622 square kilometer. It has about 44 *qäbällés* are found in the district. Rural people account for 92.18 percent of the total population and the urban dwellers count for 7.82percent. The district has an altitude ranging from 1300 m to 2700 m above sea level. The average annual rainfall is 1200mm to 2000mm. The daily range of temperature is between 10°C to 25°C. The climatic condition is *wäyna-däga* and *däga* in Afaan Oromo *Badda Daree, badda* and *Gamooji*. 39.7percent of the land is under forest coverage, 24.6 percent is under annual crops, 20.3 percent is pastureland and 15.4percent is degraded land. It has rolling character and it is scattered with several small hills. It covers extensive lowland areas, which are terminated in the west by a steep escarpment.<sup>54</sup>

The territorial coverage of the current Limmu Kossa *wäräda*, lack of inconsistency however, is not similar with that of the pre-Ethiopian Millennium, pre-1999 Limmu *wäräda* which was organized immediately after the 1941 Ethiopian liberation consisted of the present day Botor Tolay and Botor Bacho *wäräda*. It was located in Limmu *Awraja* under Kaffa provincial administration. Limmu *Awraja* was bounded in the South with Jimma *Awraja* and Northwest Naqamt southeast Sokoru *Awraja* and east with Woliso. It was separated by common boundaries with Naqamt *Awraja* in the north and Northwest. Coffee is the dominant crop and covers over 50 square kilometers of the district's land.<sup>55</sup>

Natural forests and manmade forests are predominant in the district. Xiiroo Afataa Botor Bacho (Chora Botor district) and Babiya Folla bounded Limmu Kosa with Kersa district natural forests are protected by the government and cover 93,822 hectares in ex-Limmu Kosa district. Chromic and Pellic Verisols, Orthic Acrisols and District Nitosols are the major soils found there. Wildlife includes ape, antelope, lion, panther, warthog, pig, civet cat and hippopotamus. In 2005, about 34.9 percent, 20percent and 39.7 percent of the district area were respectively arable (24.6 percent under cultivation), grazing and forest lands (including bush and shrub). The most widely cultivated crops are maize, sorghum, teff, finger millet, barley, horse bean and haricot bean. Of course, coffee is also widely cultivated. It covers 6,234.5 ha in current Chora Botor district whereas it covers 26,554.6 ha in current Limmu Kossa district.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> CSA, Population and Housing Census of Ethiopia: Results for Oromia Region, Vol. 1, part 1, (Addis Ababa, 2007)

<sup>55</sup> Limmu Kossa Woreda, Agricultural and Rural Development Office Report (2015).

<sup>56</sup> Laurent Bossolasco, "Limmu Coffee", A Study Case on Coffee (*Coffea Arabica.*), 2009, p. 52.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. LAND TENURE SYSTEM IN LIMMUKOSSA

#### 2.1. Concepts of Land Tenure System

Land tenure is generally understood as property relations among people as individuals or groups with respect to land. It is an institution or rules made by societies regarding how land is accessed and used. Accordingly, land tenure is people's relationship to land. It is also an institution through which individual's access to land and the right to use the land is determined. It also indicates the system through which the content of rights and duties of individuals with respect to land are defined. The relationship between society and land are usually either defined by customary rules or official regulations. In any cases, tenure system defined land and its property rights concerning access, control and transfer of rights with consequent duties and chains. Land tenure system is also defined as a determining factor regarding who can use what land for how long, and under what conditions. On the other hand, land tenure system is defined as the methods by which any one or any groups boat in, grasp, relocate or transmit his/ her property rights in land.<sup>57</sup>

Land tenure according to Kasim Chakiso is the relationship of people and land with its natural resources and it is the rule started either by the society or the state to regulate the land. The tenure system or tenure rule explains how property right regarding the land is functioned within the society. Italy further clarifies how access is given to rights to use, control and transfer the land.<sup>58</sup> According to Kasim, there are four categories of land tenure system. The first one is private ownership that deals with the provision of rights to an individual, pair, group or corporate where individual families may have exclusive rights to use their land as residential, agricultural or for other resources. Others can be expelled without the recognition of those who hold the right to use the land. The second type of land tenure system is the communal one. It is the land right which held commonly that exists within the community.

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<sup>57</sup> Girma Kassa, "Issues of Expropriation: The Law and the Practice in Oromia", LLM thesis (AAU,2011), p.12.

<sup>58</sup> Kasim Chakiso, "The Impact of the Exist Land Tenure on Economic Condition of Farmers: the Case Tullu Allawanso Kebele", BA thesis (Jima University,2011),p. 10.

Independently. For example, it can be grazing of cattle on a common grazing land. The third system is open access land tenure system. This type is the right to use land where there is no exact right to anyone and no one is disqualified from using the land. This type is practiced around the marine land where the access to the sea is open to everyone what about among Oromo communities.<sup>59</sup> On the other hand, Dessalegn Rahme to explain land rights as follows:

Land rights here means not only rights of control over and use of a given plot of land and the resources on it, but also includes the right to make decision on the long term sustainability of the land as well as on its disposition. The term thus goes beyond the narrow concept of tenure and extends to the intersection of environmental and land governance. Full and exclusive control flows from rights of ownership over the land, but there are other intermediate, conditional or overlapping rights each defined by law, customs or agreement. Rights often involve responsibilities which may be set by the community or social group, to which the right holder belongs, by state law, customary rules, the dictates of sound management practices or international treaties or conventions. Rights and responsibilities are robust if they cannot be overridden by any one or group including the state....<sup>60</sup>

The historical north-south distinction of Ethiopia was significantly evident in land tenure differences. In the Northern provinces of Ethiopia during the imperial period, the major form of land ownership was a communal system known as *rist*. According to this system, all descendants were entitled to a share and individuals had the right to use a plot of his or her family land. *Rist* was hereditary, inalienable and inviolable right. No user of land could sell his or her share outside the family or advance or give his or her share as a gift, as the land belonged not to the individual but to the descent group.<sup>61</sup>

*Gult* to which category it belongs was also another form of ownership right that acquired from the rulers who were empowered to make land grants. *Gult* owners collected tribute from the peasantry. Until the government introduced salaries in the twentieth century, *outright*s were the typical form of compensation for officials.<sup>62</sup> According to Pankhurst, *gult* was the land which was free of any payment of tribute that was given to nobles and others in return for their serving of the

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<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*,p.11.

<sup>60</sup> Dessalegn Rahme to, *The Peasant and the State: Studies in Agrarian Change in Ethiopia 1950s-2000s*,(AAU,2009),p. 235

<sup>61</sup> Muzamil Suleiman, "Land Tenure System in Jimma from 1880s-1974", MA Thesis, (Jimma University, 2013), p. 1

<sup>62</sup> Thomas P. O'Connell and LaVerle Berry. Ethiopia: a Country Study, Black masks Online, 2002.

state or church. It was also the land that was guaranteed by the king and was also given to the royals and churches on more everlasting basis. The *gult* holders received a type of rent or tribute paid either in kind or labor or both.<sup>63</sup> According to Hoban, concerning the *rist* and *gult*, the following was quoted:

... *Out* rights entail “fief-holding rights” whereas *rist* rights confer “land-use rights.” He adds that “in its most general sense, *rist* refers to the right a person has to a share of the land first held by any of his or her ancestors in any line of descent.” *Rist* refers to the theoretically inalienable and inheritable land right of peasants. The peasant had the right to claim rest land through both the paternal and maternal lines. The individual *rist* holder could have only an usufruct title because the ultimate title to the land lays in the “descent corporation” or the lineage. This evokes the view that under such system of land tenure of right to alienation by individuals could exist. This implies that the rest system of land holding has a communal character because of the undifferentiated complex of rights. What all this means is that many individuals could have concurrent and miscellaneous rights over piece of land.<sup>64</sup>

*Gult* gives material advantages to political power holders. It also played a useful position in the administration of land and the people reside on it. The rights which the state transfers to the *bala gult* could include negotiation; governance and the right to collect tribute. The function of *gult* in the administration of the country was also significant in armed forces recruitment. The *bala gult* simply enjoyed the right to tribute from the yearly product. *Rist* and *gult* are not different types of land tenure but separate and complementary types of land rights.<sup>65</sup>

The main economic, political, social and cultural asset in most of developing countries like Ethiopia is land. The communities' livelihood is depended on it. It helps as a base of asset that farmers used to accumulate wealth and transfer this wealth to the future generation. Land is not only the source of

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<sup>63</sup> Richard Pankhurst *An introduction to Economic History of Ethiopia*, (England, 1961), p. 179.

<sup>64</sup> Hoban, *Land Tenure among the Amhara of Ethiopia: The dynamics of the cognatic descent*, (Chicago, London, 1973), p. 7.

<sup>65</sup> Habtamu Mengistie, “Lord, Zega and Peasant: A study of property and agrarian relations in Rural Eastern Gojam”, *Forum for Social Studies*, (Addis Ababa University, 2004), p. 8.

Communities' lively hood, but also it reflects the people's culture and identity. Land related issue is the most sensitive part of over all activities that need serious attention especially in developing countries.<sup>66</sup>

### 1.1. Land Tenure System in Limmu Kossa Area before 1880s

The land holding system in Limmu Kossa was rooted back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century following the existence of state formation in the areas.<sup>67</sup> According to their land holding right, the populations of Limmu were categorized into free possessors of land, ruling class and the *Qubsisaa* or peasants. Free possessors of land were those who held land and paid tribute to the ruling class. They were rich land holder's called *Abba lafaa*. Their blood line was from the ruling clan named *Saphera*.<sup>68</sup> It was from this group that the ruling class who were called *Abba Qoros* had been recruited. *Abba Qoros* were political leaders in the structures and accountable for the security of their domains. The second groups were *Qubsisaa*, Oromo people who came through prolonged expansion movement and also non-Oromo neighboring people who moved there under different circumstances. These arrivals from the neighboring areas moved into the province mostly for preferable living conditions of the ruling elite.<sup>69</sup>

Due to its economic significant and cultivated coffee in Limmu Kossa there were different ethnic groups were settled in the district. *Shāwan Oromo*, *Amhara*, *Gurage*, *Yam* and *Dawuro* were those came and settled in the district most of the lied in the densely forested areas which is suitable for coffee farm. As informants explain, the economic significant of coffee in the national economy had a great role for number of ethnic groups were for the mass population movement the people to wards Limmu Kossa district. The other case the case of *Yam* people who were settled in some *kebele* of the district had a natural phenomenon this was particularly a disease called *yahedar bashita*, a disease that affected them in their homeland of *Fofa* which expanded in *Hedar* month. It was a plant disease that damaged *enset* (*ensete ventricosum*) and many other crops and subsequently caused famine.<sup>70</sup> These settlers were later assimilated and given name of Oromo clan called *Borana* and still today called by this name. They used to provide honey as tribute to the *Abba Qoros* in addition to their labor service provisions.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>67</sup> Mohammed Hassan, Pp.86-88.

<sup>68</sup> Informant: Ababiya Abamagal Ababora

<sup>69</sup> *bid*

<sup>70</sup> *bid*; Girma, "A History of Land Tenure System in Saqa Coqorsaa Wārāda,..."2018, p.9

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*.

Human labor was the productive means in the economy of the age and used by the ruling class for different purposes. Abba *Qoros* and privileged groups forced non-advanced social class for labor forces. The *Sooressa* were living in the district was highly engaged up on the labor service provided by these settlers. Non Oromo clan settlers provided such service were called *gabaro/garba*. They were later termed as

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Before the conquest of the Gibe region the land holding system of the region had its own traditional system. The local communities were hold land according to the tradition of the community, individual land holding system was different from the communal holding. The communal land was land not claimed or held by individual households and whose uses were left for the public. These were the grazing areas which were always elastic due to the seasonal needs of livestock and the lineage's desire to extend the frontiers of the lineage land.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Girma Mengesha “A History of Land Tenure System in Saqa Coqorsaa Wārāda,...”2018, p.9;Informants: Aba fita Aba yirga Aba lenchoo; Aba mecha Aba megal

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*,p,18

<sup>74</sup> *bid*.

<sup>75</sup> Lambert Bartels, "Studies of the Gallain Wallaga: Their Own View of the Past" *Journal of Ethiopian Studies vol.8 No.1*.(AAU Press, 1970), p.139.



Before the conquest of the Gibe region the land holding system of the region had its own traditional system. The local communities were hold land according to the tradition of the community, individual land holding system was different from the communal holding. The communal land was land not claimed or held by individual households and whose uses were left for the public. These were the grazing areas which were always elastic due to the seasonal needs of livestock and the lineage's desire to extend the frontiers of the lineage land.<sup>76</sup> Most of land which were occupied by early clan settler were refers to them as the openers of the forest, *daggalla saaqii*. Tradition also bestows on them the title of *abba cirrachaa*, possessor of the sub-soil, which they blessed for their followers. It also recognized them as *abba malkaa* if the land consisted of arriver crossing or a watering place for cattle."Finally tradition knows the mass *abba qabiyyee* "Holders of land," in reference to their precedence in acquiring land and their duties in distributing it toothier relatives and other late-settlers.

They gave the payment to the *abba qabiyyee*, who as a senior represented the will of the lineage in which they settled. The most common means whereby late-settlers got access to land was the system of allowing settlement known as qubisisa. The families of the pioneers naturally enjoyed the best available land and they also had the power to give plots to new settlers through a special procedure called qubisisa. The late settlers were called *Qubee (qubataa)*, which literally meant taking at temporary residence or a camping at a particular place with an implication that the person was agues to the area.<sup>77</sup>

The *Abba qabiyyee* took a heifer or a bull and expected occasional labor service from the *Qubee*. The qubisisa agreement imposed on the new settler, certain duties which clearly underlined the subordinate nature of status. The *Qubee* had to perform labor services to the pioneers for a specific number of days. At the initial stage the pioneers received thes labor services not a sapersonal right but symbolically as the sign of pioneers' seniority. The *Qubee* received an ambiguous occupational right usually on the frontier of the main settlements. Yet they were not evicted unless they disobeyed major traditional customs. The *Qubee* not only paid and performed labor duties for the *Abbaa lafaa* but they also fought for him when fighting begins. The relationship was affected by the sense of belonging to a common filial relation and had the character of patron-client ties. The *dagal-saaqii* or *abba lafaa* did not evict this clients from his land which turned valueless without them .The owners old them too there individuals whenever there were not enough clients on such lands. It is important to note that the late-settlers preferred settling on lands owned by the

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<sup>76</sup> TesemaTa'a, The political economy of an African Society in Transformation: The Case of Maccaa Oromo (Ethiopia). *Asian African Studies*. (Berlin: Humboldt University Press, 2006). Pp.36-68.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

rich who also had a military career, especially the war leaders, whose prestige accorded them better protection. The late-settlers were not always *Qubee*, or individuals allowed settling. Some of the land purchasers were also late-settlers.<sup>78</sup> Their junior relatives and late-settlers referred to the household of the Abba qabiyyee as *balbala guddaa*, literally "the big door," senior family, in contradiction to their own *balbala xinnaa*, junior family. Although they were juniors at home, in the areas they pioneered they were referred to as *Hangafaa*, senior, an appellation used for the eldest son in a family.

The Abbaa qabiyyee, accompanied by slaves and dependents, undertook practical procedures to acquire unoccupied land. Once they found unoccupied land, sometimes adjacent lineages shared common grazing land. Lands included in the communal land category were those with mineral water points, streams and ritual sites. Most of such communal lands lay in the frontier zone where sacrifices for the land were made. However, claims and the effective holding of the communal lands depended on the demographic and military strength of the group. "Our sources state that when *Abba qabiyyee* distributed land to lineage members ridges were in turn sub-divided among sub-lineages and families. Individual members of these sub-lineages shared land next to each other according to the closeness of their affinity. Individual holdings were shared vertically from the top of a ridge down to a river valley in such a way that all had access to land in the valley below the ridge."<sup>79</sup>

They were clearly demarcated by trees or natural features, and were referred to as an individual's and non-family members were not expected to settle in front of an individual's holdings.<sup>80</sup> The individual holding claimed by a family remained under the family control for generations.<sup>9281</sup> hence; Plowden correctly states that "each man is a master over his father's land. All of the individual holders of these lands were referred to as Abbaa lafaa, "possessor of the land"; a term which later came to mean private land owner and the land itself was referred to as *dhoqqee*. However, the farmstead and its potential and actual products were referred to as *araddaa*, which some people translated it as *rist*, the Amharic word used to denote the northern individual landholding. Cadaa law defined the *araddaa*, and the properties on them, as the private

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<sup>78</sup> W.C. Plowden, *Travel in Abyssinia and the Galla Country with an Account of a Mission to Ras Aliin* 1848. Ed. (London: Longmans', Green, and Co..., 1868), pp.309-31.

<sup>79</sup> Bartels, "Studies of the Gallain Wallaga: Their Own View of the Past ...." 1983, p.74

<sup>80</sup> *bid.*

<sup>81</sup> *bid.*

property of the producer, "*araddaa fqe' eenkan abbaa horeeti*." This means the farmstead the farm lands and the wealth derived from them were the sole property of the producer.<sup>82</sup>our informants point out various reasons why forests were burned down every year. Among others, clearing of the land off poison ous snakes and insects to obtain wild honey (*sorobduu*) to hunt wild

Animals easily and the like is easier. Land acquired in this process was known as *qabiyyee*. *Qabiyyee* literally means possession or land holding necessarily recognized by others.<sup>9483</sup>The *qabiyyee* system refers to established rights of precedence in the occupation of newly conquered land .Tradition collected by Tesema Ta'a has it that the *qabiyyee* system regulated land occupation rights within the same clan dividing the local community to generational hierarchies.<sup>84</sup>

In the pre-conquest days land sale was common among the Oromo in general. Purchasing land was another form of getting access to land. There were three types of land sales: between lineages, between lineage and an individual, and between individuals. Some lineages claimed an extensive area, but did not have enough members to occupy or defend it effectively. Such lineages sold their unoccupied land to individuals or other lineage groups who needed the land for grazing and eventual settlement. If the purchasers were a lineage group they shared the total cost of the purchase. Not all individual's necessarily contributed equally, and the land was divided among the purchasing line age group according to the individual's contributions (*gimxoobuusuu*).<sup>85</sup> Sometimes the wealthy would cover the share of the poor who in turn would provide their labor to repay their share of the contribution. Heifers, bulls, grain, or salt were used as the medium of exchange. Most often heifers were used as medium of exchange in land purchase, as a result of which the land was termed as *billiiraadaa*, "purchase by heifer".<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Plowden, *Travel in Abyssinia and the ....*, 1968,p.232

<sup>83</sup> Tassama, "The political economy of an African Society in Transformation..." 2006,p.44; Informants: Alamitu Sadambayan

<sup>84</sup> *bid.*

<sup>85</sup> Mitiku Tucho, "The Impact of Pastoralism on the Oromo of Qellem, Wallagga." B.A Thesis, Department of History, Addis Ababa University, 1983, pp 18-19.

<sup>86</sup> G.W.B.Huntingford, 1955. *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia: The Kingdom of Kaffa and Janjero*. London

Although land was sold there were exclusionary rules: some groups of people were not entitled to purchase land. Members of occupational castes, slaves, women and *gadagalee*, individuals who did not perform the customary *gadaa* obligations, were considered *hirruu*, "incomplete", members of the community, to buy land. Blacksmiths and tanners were not allowed to buy land. (*Tumtuu fi garbilafahinqartu*). They were always settled on a lineage land as promulgated in *gadaa* council. However, the black smiths could buy land in the name of their patrons. Slaves and occupational castes were excluded from purchasing land in order to make them dependent. A *gada-galee*, who did not fulfill the *gadaa* obligations and rites, was, considered unfit to buy land. Emancipated slaves obtained a portion of their master's land and some of them bought land in the name of their masters. Others moved to the frontier and bought land.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Mitiku, "The Impact of Pastoralism on the Oromo of Qellem, Wallaga." 1983, Pp.18-19; Informant: Hadasharaf Aba naim Abamagal.

<sup>88</sup> *bid*

<sup>89</sup> *bid*; Bartle, "Studies of the Gallain Wallagga: Their Own View of the Past..." 1983, p.74; Hantingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia: The Kingdom of Kaffa and Janjero...* 1956, p. 27

<sup>90</sup> Plowden, *Travel in Abyssinia and the....*, 1986, p.25

Following Menelik's expansion to the region Limmu and its surrounding was occupied under the leadership of Ras Woldegiorgis, and established his garrison center at Kossa and took imperial building and occupied major coffee cultivation area and also settled the north origin of his soldiers and officials known as Warwari they occupied major coffee cultivation land.<sup>91</sup>

Following Menelik's expansion to the Gibe region, his generals were politically imposed land tenure system and had far reaching adverse effects on the majority of southern peasants, including the Oromo people. These effects include landlessness, insecurity of tenure, tenancy, sharecropping, labor services, and endless litigation.<sup>92</sup> In areas where the ruling class were peacefully submitted to Menelik's rule like Abba Jifar II of Jimma their indigenous rulers were allowed to retain their position and their land remained in their hands.<sup>93</sup> The most successful, among these, were the present Wallaga, Jimma, and Bāniśangul regions. According to informants, Abba Jifar's agreement with Emperor Menelik was not to submit but not to introduce the *Naftanna Gabar* system, the case of Limmu area the generals of Menelik were established and military camp (garrison center), church and Christianity in the kingdom of his administration. On his part, Abba Jifar agreed to pay tribute to Menelik and local autonomy was preserved.<sup>94</sup>

In the post conquest of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the new feudal class structure in the neighboring areas of south nations, nationalities and people; wealthy landlord exploited landless tenants. Tenants, paid to land owners on as high as 50% of their produce.<sup>110</sup> During the Haile Selassie I regime (1930-1974), paid annual taxes (fifty cents per *facaasa*). As Guluma indicated in the conquered region of the Gibe region, the land hold systems were redistributed. Although, the peaceful submission of Jimma Abba Jifar paved good opportunity and helped the kingdom to be free from land alienation. Nevertheless, after Jimma came under the central government, it led to lose of huge land to the central government.<sup>95</sup> Generally, before 1974 had feudal character and more land was possessed by a few lands owning people. Poor peasants who had only small plots of land and rent-paying tenants lacked the spirit of individualism and self-motivation to cultivate coffee or food crops effectively. The tenants' labor was exploited by both land lords and kings.

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<sup>91</sup> Hantingford, *The [Oromo] of Ethiopia: The Kingdom of Kaffa and Janjero...* 1955, p.27; Mitiku, 1989, p. 19.

<sup>92</sup> Hussien Jemma, "The politics of land tenure in Ethiopian History: Experience from the South", Paper Prepared for XI World Congress of Rural sociology (Trondheim, Norway, 2004), p.4.

<sup>93</sup> Daniel Weldegebrel Ambaye, "Land Rights and Expropriation in Ethiopia," *Springer International Publishing, Springer Theses* (Switzerland, 2015), pp. 46-47.

<sup>94</sup> Mekuria, p.340; Guluma, 1996, p.58; Girum, 2013, p.9; Informants: Aba Jabal Aba Garo and Aba Temam Abdall

<sup>95</sup> Addis Hiwot. 1975. *Ethiopia from Autocracy to Revolution. London Review of African Political Economy.*

For instance, failure to fight with enemy of king, failure to pay government tax, failure to engage in curve labor and so on led to confiscation of their land.<sup>96</sup> The complex imperial land tenure system lasted with the Land Reform of 1975, which was one of the basic reasons for the outbreak of Ethiopian revolution of 1974. This brought remarkable change to the lord-servant (higher-lower) relations in the history of the country.<sup>97</sup>

The Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC) known as Derg, introduced an entirely new type of land reform, which nationalized all rural lands throughout the country.<sup>11498</sup> The Land Reform was a drastic measure that eradicated private land tenure system and replaced it with state (public) ownership, and has made transfer of land by sale, lease, or mortgage illegal. The reform abolished tenancy and exempted the tenants from all types of obligations other land lords and provided peasants with use rights.<sup>115</sup> Evidently, this was a radical departure from old-aged pre-land reform dominant subordinate patterns of relationships between the landlords and the peasants, which prevailed in the south.<sup>99</sup>

Contrary to the above assertions, some other sources allege that for the first five decades following Menelik's conquest, the majority of Oromo producers continued to enjoy ownership rights to cultivable and grazing land by paying taxes to the state agents. As stated by these sources, what the state allocated to its military, civil, and ecclesiastical employees was not land but the right to extort tribute (in the form of goods and *corvee* labor) from the land-owning peasantry known as *qutur gabbars* (number of tribute payers). The sources further inculcate that before Shoan conquest, an egalitarian pattern of land-holding had prevailed in the region. While possession was individual, ownership was vested in the lineage.

But with Menilek occupation of the region, the people fell under jurisdiction of Menelik's *malkannas* (representatives) based on different status of the subordinate commanders and there an kind file of the soldiers or retainers. Nevertheless, the *gossa* or clan owner ship continued to be followed by large percentage of the local peasantry and this militated against the development of private property. Traditional inheritance laws controlled the power of landowners to dispose of their collective ancestral

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<sup>96</sup> Lewis, *A Galla Monarchy*....1965.

<sup>97</sup> Wibke Crewett, Ayalneh Bogale and Benedikt Korf. 2008. Land Tenure in Ethiopia: Continuity and Change, Shifting Rulers, and the Quest for State Control, CAPRI Working Paper 91. *International Food Policy Research Institute*, Washington DC, 2008, p. 5.

<sup>98</sup> Hussein The politics of land tenure in Ethiopian History...p.10.

<sup>99</sup> Getachew Senishaw. 2003. Household Access To Farmland and Socio-Economic Status, MATHesis (Addis Ababa University, Department of Social Anthropology), p.50.

lands as they wanted. They point out that an individual could not pass on the land to an outsider without the approval of the kin or co-heirs (*tawalaj*) who had the right of first purchase. These sources stress that although all lands were declared state property, actually outright expropriation of the population was small. Alienation of land took place at minimal points as punishment for rebellion or gifts from peasantry. Nevertheless, none of these gifts was real gift. In all cases, there was disguised in dimidiation and force that the local people could not resist. It was to get defense from further threats that the peasant was forced to relinquish his land in favor of the *Naftanna*. All the same, despite constraints from traditional laws, this form of surplus extraction contributed to individualization of land.<sup>100</sup>

The provinces of the former Limmu Enarya was composed of the present Limmu Kossa, Limmu Saqa, Nono Benja, Botor Xollay, Chora Botor as far as western and south west Shawa were before Menelik conquest to the region they were more stable in administration and a ruling elite as well as the moderate peasant exploitation and non-*Naftanna* settlement attracted the attention of peasants and slaves of the neighboring states. However, following Menelik's expansion to the region most of the lands of the indigenous people were exploited by Woldegiorgis's Officials and newly northern arrived soldiers called Naftanna. According to James McCann stated that most conquered areas except Jimma were received and retained large numbers of northern soldier settlers, like Gomma, Kaffa, Gera Limmu and Dawuro, Jimma was exempted from and Amhara a rule had not yet reached.<sup>101</sup>

The landless peasants and victims of heavy taxation of the most of Gibe states become fascinated. This resulted in a source of tension between Abba Jifar and the surrounding Nāftāña governors of Limmu and Gomma.<sup>102</sup> This controversy was coincided with the centralization policy of Ras Teferi (Latter Emperor Haile Sillassie) begun to appointed his person in the region such as the Governor of Gomma *Ras* Desta Damtew was appointed after he was shifted from his center of Gore to Gomma latter to Jimma and at the end shifted to Sidamo this was resulted the autonomous rule of Jimma begun to decline and Emperor Haile Sillassie took over the direction of Jimma's internal affairs in 1933 from the grandson of Abba Jifar II ,Abba Jobir and appointed *Déjəzmach* Wolde Amauel as the 1st governor of Jimma.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Mahtema-Sellase, 1942 E.C.; Ketema, 2001

<sup>101</sup> Girum, History of Agaro Town... 2013, p.13

<sup>102</sup> Ames C. Mc Cann, *People of the Plow: An Agricultural History of Ethiopia 1800-1990*, London (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995) p.170.

<sup>103</sup> Guluma, 2002, p.201.

According to the informants, the arrival of Woldegiorgis's to Limmu area was led for the decline and interrupted the power of the indigenous Abba Qoros and the structure of the ruling system. With the emergence of new policy different Abba Qoros renamed with new title which is previously does not belongs to Oromo monarchy system such as *Fitawrare*, *Gerazmach*. Which was resulted new form of election was applied and the line of power succession was changed. In the Oromo monarchical system after the decline of *Gadaa* system, power was succeeded by son rather than passing to others family groups. It was completely dominated by the north origin ruling class and some other local people who were relative to the *Naftanna* officials

### **Mosque Land (*Woqfi*)**

Before Menelik expansion to the Gibe region was inhabited by the Muslim community and hence there were numerous Mosques that served it. Land belongs to Mosque service roots back to the early expansion of Islam to the region. Trade on valuable commodities in the south west region of the country contributed for the expansion of the religion<sup>104</sup>. As an institution, Mosque provides public spiritual service. The service is carried out by spiritual leaders called Sheikh. These leaders or other servants as a common peoples need incentive for their harassed. This incentive as a local custom was given not in the form of cash but in kind. The only source of income of the time was land based products. According to my informants, Mosque and its servants were given land not officially but from the belonged Muslim community and which was cultivated by the labor of peasants those obey the faith.<sup>105</sup> Not as much influenced as church affected the tenure system in the country in large, and had no support from the state. It was processed by the political structure of the district. They pass a decision on the question presented by the belonged group of the religious institution. Land was directed by this structure for the institution for the purpose of mosque building and farm lands.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Seyum Mengesha, p.21; Informants: Badhasoo Daba; Mamo Taddese

<sup>105</sup> *bid.*

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*



## Church land

The lands which occupied by Church in the region was actually possessed were donated to the church by the state or individuals in different forms. They were redistributed among the clergy either as *riste-gult* or *rist*. However, they were collectively termed *salmon* land; named after the continual service of the priests for a week.<sup>107</sup> These church possessions were broadly divided into two: lands which served as *riste-gult* and those comprising the church's *rist*. The former were the personal *rist* of the *gabbers*; however, tax was paid not to the state but to the church. Land grants to churches and monasteries were often permanent; after the grant the areas could not be regarded as state land any longer, but rather as church lands. As mentioned, secular grants were normally revocable at the king's pleasure or were valid only during an official's period of appointment.<sup>108</sup> Church lands were distributed or donated to the members of the clergy according to their status and services. The *Ya Dabir* Alaqa (head of the church) entitled *Memehar*, and had the right to collect and use taxes from church *gabbars* and also *Bala gult* and exercised the same rights.

The rest of the servants of the church at different levels were given *rist* land, the heads of rural churches, *märiyéta* (had one or two *gashas*), priests and deacons, *sämonägna* (varying from five to seven depending on the status of the church), those who gave praise, *awädash* in Ge'ez (no limitation on their number, which was anything from one hundred to three hundred for monasteries and *däbers*, and from five to ten for rural churches), servants at night, *sä'atatquami* (priests and deacons), bell ringers, *däway*, grinder, *aqabit* (a woman who ground grain for the sacred bread in the church), wood splitter, *qärafä*, and cleaner, (*antafi*).<sup>109</sup>

For instance, in former Limmu *Awraja* which Limmu-Kossa was under its administration at Qottaa Michael, a local representative of higher officials and *Yädäbir Aläqa* (head of a church) had their own *gäbbars*. One of the head of Church of Qottaa Mikael *qesegabaz* (a priest administered of the Church) Wolde Medihin Gebre Wold had his own *gäbbars*. Hence, One of the local *qoroo* whose name was Abba Bulgu Mantina pay a *nnua l* due in kinds and seven *dawulla* ( a traditional grain measurement unit equivalent to 100 kilogram) of coffee collected from the local *gabbars*. There also provided certain regular services like grinding grains by or daring his subjects for a house and field work. According to archival

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<sup>107</sup> GäbäräWäld Engäda Wäreq. *Ethiopia's Traditional System of Land Tenure and Taxation in Ethiopian Observer*. Vol.5No. 4.(Addis Ababa. 1961). Pp.24-25.

<sup>108</sup> R.Pankhurst, *Economic History*, p.135

<sup>109</sup> GäbäräWäld ,*Ethiopia's Traditional System of Land Tenure*....1961,p.25.

sources of commissionable decision of Gomma *wärädagimjabäta* bout *qéssägäbäz*. Wolde Medihin Gebre Wold, in 1947, he collected revenue in accordance of *gäbbarmärét* form the people who settled at a specific place of Ganijjii. On the total area of the land about seventeen *cabissaa* (a traditional unit of measuring land, one *cabissaa* is equivalent to 1.44 hectare).<sup>110</sup> According to the letter on number 12118/7 which sent to Kaffa province on the decision of commission wea seen it. A sit was discussed the land which controlled by *qessegebez* Gabramad hin seventeen *cabsa* of land he collected as a tribute for services, but this land was decided to return back to treasury offices.<sup>111</sup>

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ርዕን ተመልክተነዎልል :

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<sup>110</sup> Informants: Gelan Badhasoo and Tesfaye Mamo  
<sup>111</sup> *bid.*

<sup>112</sup> Agaro archive, a letter from Kaffa *Taqalay gizatts ifat bétto* Gomma-Limmu Awraja, Gomma *Wäräda gimjja bet*; Gomma *wärädagizattsifätbét* 1941 E.C. (See Appendix.IX...)

## Local Chiefs (*Abbaa Qoros*) and their Ruling System

Limmu-Koss district is one of the parts of the former Limmu Enarya kingdom, which Limmu-Koss belonged as under sub local chief and Limmu Saqqaa as the main center of the kingdom and in the later imperial political arrangements of political administration, had its own political structure under Limmu-Awraja which facilitates the hierarchy of the monarchy. It is important to raise the issue of land tenure in the district with the nature of political structure of the Kingdom of Limmu-Enarya .Following Menelik's expansion the kingdom became under the Shäwan *Naftanna* rule. The Shäwan

rulers were established their garrison center at Kossa and ruled the region and Limmu Enarya was became under the influences of Shäwan ruling structure however, the kingdom of Jimma had been points of agreement with Menelik of Shawa on both sides of rulers. On his behalf, Menelik agreed not to interfere in the domain of Abba Jifar; secondly, the army of Gobana was forbid denoted to garrisoning the province of Jimma. The last agreement that Menelik promised for Abba Jifar was related to religious cases. However, in the Limmu Enarya following the arrival of the Shäwan settlement church were constructed such as Kossa Mariam and Tekle Halima not church. However, in the kingdom of Jimma regarding the agreement, it was not to establish Christianity and churches in Jimma kingdom.<sup>113</sup> On his part Abba Jifar recognized Menelik as king and agreed to pay tribute and lastly greed to provide support to the campaign Menelik would conduct against the south-west states.<sup>114</sup>

According to the agreement, each year in November or December, Abba Jifar went to Addis Ababa to deliver his tribute to Menelik in person. In October 1886, Abba Jifar submitted his tribute including ivory, civet, honey, gold, and other local products. In 1897, he paid 7,000 Maria Theresa (MT) dollars, 4,000 ounces of gold and large quantities of ivory and honey. The political question between the two rulers, emperor Menelik and King Abba Jifar was answered by the tribute payment. More than that Abba Jifar became the agent of territorial expansion in the south west. He assisted Menelik's generals to conquer the Omotic-speaking kingdoms of the southwest. In 1894, Abba Jifar joined Menelik and his commanders in the conquest of Walyata; and in 1897, he assisted *Ras Wolde Giorgis*, *Ras Tesema*, and *Ras Demise* in

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<sup>113</sup> Oromiya Culture and Tourism Bureau, *Seenaa Oromoo Hanga Jaarra 20ffaa* (History of Oromo upto 20<sup>th</sup> century), published by History research group (Bole printing enterprise, Addis Ababa, 2016), p.228; Girum, History of Agaro town, 2013, p.14.

<sup>114</sup> Oromiya Culture and Tourism Bureau. p.228.

subjugating the Kingdom of Kafa.<sup>115</sup> Because of this agreement and the political autonomy the province gained, *Nāftāna* settlers were not garrisoned until 1932. By doing so, Jimma became an autonomous state up to the eve of Italian occupation.<sup>139.116</sup> Guluma also discussed that, the indigenous rulers of the fixed tribute paying centers initially enjoyed some autonomy from the imperial rule. By paying fixed annual tributes, they escaped the excessive

Demands of taxation and labor, and the burden of sustaining Menelik's soldiers. Social and political location was relatively minimal in the semi-independent regions.<sup>140</sup> So; there was less influence of *Nāftāna* settlement in Jimma province. However, most of the other Oromo lands of the south which failed under northern Amhara *Gult* holders, other areas lost not only land right but also identity right. The rulers and the residents under their control were changed their name to Amharic terms. As a result of this, Gäbrä Egziabher became the agent of the imperialist and made an expansion of Orthodox Christianity over his domain and the mass convert of the people toward this new religion seen as the holiness and won the attitude of the people not to revolt.<sup>142</sup> In 1881 when Moroda and his people failed to resist challenge of *Ras* Dāräsä because of lack of fire arms which they possessed, and lack of unity among local Oromoo leaders, Moroda decided to make an alliance with Shewan lord Menelik to help him in the local balance of power in his favor.<sup>117</sup>

The Shāwan-Amhara resident's intrigue to seize political power in Leeqaa-Neqamte because of Moroda's death in 1889 was foiled. Moroda's son, Kumsa, became the governor of Leeqaa Neqamte continuing the line founded by his grandfather, Bakare Godaanaa. Kumsa was baptized in 1888 with Oromiya Culture and Tourism Bureau as his godfather; his Christian name was Gäbrä- Egziabher. Jimma which became free from such influences was benefited for all the districts under its control because of the inseparable History of the kingdom from districts land lords. The entire district *Qoro* rulers were the appointees of the king of Jimma those continued their rule from the previous structure. Whatever the politics, economic and social system, there was strong bond between them. The head of the districts land lords had a councilor seat from the palace of Abba Jifar in the earlier structures. In that system the highest government organ of the structure was the King. The king was supported by the council of the state.<sup>144.118</sup> According to the

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<sup>115</sup> Guluma Gameda, "The Rise of Coffee and the Demise of Colonial Autonomy", p.53.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid*, p.199.

<sup>117</sup> Guluma Gameda, *The Rise of Coffee*, pp.51-52.

<sup>118</sup> Informants: Badhasoo Daba; Mamo Taddese.

information available; these councilors were the policymakers of the kingdom and also work on its implementation.<sup>119</sup>

King of Limmu Abba Gomol II had seats for the councils. The members of the counseling bodies are from the district chiefs. These organs are the chief of the local communities who were the relatives of the king practicing governance, judicial and military power.<sup>120</sup> Under the local chiefs of the sea autonomous states, Abba Qoros, there were subordinate classes those run the district's governance of the time. These subordinate classes had a structure from a political rule up to social activities in the community. These were Abba Gurmu (representative of Aba Qoro, who passes the messages between Abba Qoro and Balabbats.) Abba Ganda (Chairman of the domain) who were district officials who collected tribute, recruited soldiers, keep the borders of the kingdom, and administered justice; Abba *funyo* or father of Rope who imposed tribute on the population, arrested offenders, directed *corvee* labor, collected taxes, and served as messengers between higher officials and the moti.<sup>121</sup> The last political structure those known in the community were Abba Laga/ Abba Shanni (social affairs like elder which facilitate funeral ceremony.) These names used for the political structure of autonomous states and only substituted after the new political structure expanded by imperial period. These Oromo clans had a share of land according to the principle of Oda Hulle Assembly. These all had no equal proportion of land.<sup>148.122</sup> Even from these autonomous clans there were individuals with few lands those become peasants. The principle coined by Tuma Hulle considers a primogeniture line. It was out of this principle that the Oromo clans got the upper hand in the possession of land.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> Cecchi, Antonio. *Da Zeila alla Frontiera del Kaffa*. Rome: E. Loescher, 1886. P. 228; Mohammed Hassan, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*... pp. 96-97; Abir, p. 212

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid*; Mohammed, *The Oromo of Ethiopia*... 1994, p. 97; Girma 2017, p. 14.

<sup>122</sup> Guluma, Land, Agriculture, p. 63

<sup>123</sup> Mohammed, 1994, p. 111.

The base for the power strength of the Gibe Oromo was their good strategy of trade route that helped them to produce surpluses. Limmu Kossa was served as a trade route that links Hirmata and Saqqaa. As Mohammed indicates in his investigation, the new surplus and its distribution gave a powerful impetus to the political consolidation of the rich nobility of these ruling classes. This formed another social structure having a hierarchy. According to him, the rich owned most of the land and constituted the upper class. Below the rich were the free peasants, who had their own plots of land. Below them were landless tenants, who worked for and lived on the land of the new nobility. Below these tenants were slaves, who were the property of wealthy.<sup>124</sup>

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3. LAND TENURE AND TAXATION SYSTEM IN LIMMU KOSSA**

#### **3.1. Land Tenure and Taxation System to 1941**

Different study of the region indicate that Menelik II used to invade Oromo land of the Gibe region and the west Oromia began from Nonno, which lies Southwest of Shewa, Southeast of East Wollega and North and northeast of Jimma Those who wisely admitted the Shāwan imperial expansion order were relatively saved and systematically empowered to stand against their neighboring clan territories. Abba Jifar II, the well-known King of Jimma, one of the Gibe States Territories, was benefited from it as a result of to his peaceful approach to the Feudal System.<sup>125</sup> The Specific nature of the imperial administration was determined by number factors such as the level of initial resistance, the economic and political condition of the territory, the location of the province and the strategic interest of the empire.<sup>126</sup> Guluma stated that why Abba Jifar of Jimma was made a peaceful submission as follows:

Because he submitted peacefully, Abba Jifar II of Jimma was able to negotiate with Menelike and receive autonomous status for his kingdom. The details of the agreement between Menelik and Abba Jifar II are not fully documented, but it is widely believed that Abba Jifar II was allowed to rule his kingdom in return for loyalty and regulate the regular payment of fixed annual tributes from the rest of

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<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.* 97.

<sup>125</sup> Guluma Gameda, "The Rise of Coffee and the Demise of Imperial Autonomy: The Oromo Kingdom of Jimma and Political Centralization in Ethiopia." In *Contested Terrain: Oromo and Ethiopian Studies*, (Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2014). pp.93.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

Gibe States or monarchies who remained resistant to the contemporary ideological transformation and subsequently crumbled forcefully.<sup>127</sup>

The last king of Limmu Enarya Abba Gomol II from the Saphera clan was died around 1891, hence Limmu-Ennarya annexed to Menelik's empire in 1891. so study should start from 1891 following the incorporation of Limmu and its vicinity led to for the existence of under imperial administration was since the death Ras Woldegiorgis's when he came there? Who appointed as the first governor of ur study area? The governor of Kaffa in the region.<sup>128</sup>

Following the settlement of In 1886, Basha marched to Gomma and made a campaign against Abba Bora's force, and he advanced to Kire, a buffer zone between Gomma and Limmu and sent a letter to Abba Dula, the newly appointed governor of Gomma, to submit peacefully. However, the notable officials had refused. Hence, Abba Dula fled to Jimma opposing the council's eagerness to the war and he failed to make a decisive leadership when Woldegiorgis's force attacked the kingdom. Abba Bora assumed the leadership and made resistance by organizing the local people near to Malka Tijjee (Tijjee River). On this battle, neither of them was successful; it was a heavy loss for Gomma as well as Basha's army. Abba Bora was killed at the battlefield. Basha retreated to Limmu to obtain reinforcement from Woldegiorgis's force. After a year, in 1887, Basha return to Gomma with a contender man called Biru Collee; again, a battle took at a place called Bakkee Boora (battle field). However, the battle concluded with Basha's victory. The fact that the local people of Gomma were poorly equipped with the traditional weapon, small number of rifles; this accounted for the defeat of Gomma's resistance. This marked the end of the era of Gomma kingdom.<sup>129</sup>

In Gomma, the confrontation had continued due to harsh and repressive practices of the Shewan army. A rebellion broke-out in 1888 after Basha's soldiers mistreated a local warrior named Abba Basso. This aggravated the people to rebel and respond to Abba Basso's call for uprising. They attacked Basha's army everywhere and confined them into their camps. At the same time, Woldegiorgis's soldiers from Limmu reinforced the Shewan forces. Then, Demissew Mekonnen was appointed to the region, which finally subdued the rebellion and ruled the province for the next twelve years replacing *Déjàzmach* Basha.

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<sup>127</sup> *bid.*

<sup>128</sup> Informants: Mamire Shita Birahanu ; Abafita Abayirga Abalenchoo

<sup>129</sup> Alberto Sbachi, *Ethiopia under Mussolini: Fascism and the Colonial Experience* (London: Zed Book Ltd, 1985).p.4.

Certainly, the appointed Shawa governors of the newly conquered areas were a military generals those who led the imperial campaigns. However, later, immediately after Menelik conquest of southwestern region, the political administrative units were drowning by the personal will of the generals or by the irachi element on the conquest to the region. Some of the divisions maintained the previous administrative autonomous local state.

However, the Shāwan governors who were appointed could administer the region. These governors were rewarded in lieu of their achievements, which were usually accompanied with the rise of their title; they were awarded with two or more adjacent areas which previously autonomous state the regional rulers also begun to settle and control the land of in their occupied area<sup>156</sup>.<sup>130</sup> Since 1920s it seems that there was general population increase. In areas where conditions sustained new household formation and a high level of fertility, population might have grown with in a longer frame of social time. Immigration from North and the southern peoples into the Limmu was increased its pace during this time. Guluma Gameda also states that dispossessed farmers in the neighboring *nāftāhā-gäbar* areas immigrated to Limmu. They were allowed to clear forest and develop new cultivate forest coffee. This process seems to have continued in the 1930s and immigration was developed following the sky rock and also encouraged by the Italians. Yet the trouble created by the intervention of Haile Selasseies government in Jimma's autonomy (1932-36) which was conducted to expel the Italians, had their own negative impact upon the population growth of the districts<sup>157</sup>.<sup>131</sup> For more understanding, the following letter which was written to Kaffa *Ṭäqalaygizatgimjabet* on 5/6/1940EC (13/2/1948 GC) from the Ministry of Interior is invaluable:

በከፋ ጠቅላይ ግዛት ወስጥ ሐምሌ 16/ 1934 እና 1937 ዓምበ ወጣዎቹ ቸሮታኦ ዋጅና እንዲሁም  
በልዩ ስጦታ እና ልግሎት ላላ ቸወደ ማከጠዎን የመንግሥት መሪዎች ሁሉ  
ከጠቅላይ ግዛት ተባብሮ የገዘወደ ማጽፍ ፍልግ መሪዎቹ ማከጠዎን ወረዳ እና ቀበሌ እየተለየ እንዲላክ ስለሚመኑን  
ገልጾ ከሚዳቱም ላይ በቁጥር 12/2979/በ 12/48ቀ5/በ 127153/በ 12/2254ለ ጻፍነ ወደ ብዳቤ እስከ  
ሁን የተወሰነ መልስ ባለ መከጠት ያለ መታሰብ ብብት ይሆናል፡፡

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<sup>130</sup> *bid*  
<sup>131</sup> Aregawi Berhe, *Revisiting resistance in Italian-occupied Ethiopia: The Patriots' Movement (1936-1941) and the redefinition of post-war Ethiopia*, AAU, 1978. p.88.



Which was proposed to be given in the province, in different period letters were sent to identify the place of the land in which *Wäräda* and *qabalee* it was specifically found. You refused to inform us though we have written letters of no.12/2979/, 12/4845/, 127153/, 12/2254. We think over it.<sup>132</sup>

### **The Introduction of Land Measurement (*Qäläd*) System in Limmu**

The history of *Qaad*? Institution or land measurement which started during the Gondarian period that reached its height in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries of Shä? was continued until the down fall of the imperial regime in 1974<sup>159,133</sup>. Different y apotheoses were given to the history of land measurement in the South. Even though the need for land measurement was to increase government income, the nature of *Qäläd* institution in this area was not the accurate measurement and it was eye estimation and consists of individual and holders and landless peasants<sup>160</sup>. According to the informants, *Qäläd* leaders were representative of some group of individuals. *Qäläd* institution ended the holding of common receipt for different holders. The group holding of commonly and revenue system was removed and each individual separated his share of land. The earlier leaders who represent the man d pay tribute collecting from the group were encompassed under the new political structure. This works only for the land holders with the exception of landless peasant's<sup>134</sup>.

In the north, where the *rist* system was dominant, *Qäläd* was a rare phenomenon. In central and southern Ethiopia *Qäläd* became dominant. When it introduced in your study area? The *Qäläd* system continued in existence and was revised throughout the period under study (1941–1974). The process continued until the collapse of the regime of Haile-Selasseies imperial government in 1974. During this period, a number of factors can be mentioned that point to the necessity for the *Qäläd* system and land tenure reforms in Ethiopia. To begin with, there was privatization, along with the sale of land, in the southern and central parts of the Country. The process necessitated measurement as a prerequisite in order to classify and determine the size and value of the land. Moreover, the preparation of the plan that would indicate the

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<sup>132</sup> Temesgen Gebeyehu. Land Tenure ,Land Reform and the Qäläd System in Ethiopia,1941–1974,

*Journal of Asian and African Studies*,(BahirdarUniversity,2011),p.570.

<sup>133</sup> Mekuria Bulchaa, *Contours of the Emergent & Ancient Oromo Nation: Dilemmas in the Ethiopian Politics of State and Nation Building* (Cape Town, South Africa, 2011), pp.105-6.

<sup>134</sup> Informants: Mahamanuri Sada Bayan and Alemitu Sada Bayan

location and ownership of the land –whether government or private–demanded land measurement<sup>135</sup> According to the informants the *Qälad* system was introduced to Limmu area was at the late of 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century by Negus Woldegiorgis's. due to the region were free forest and fertile lands as a result a number of *Naftanna* soldiers and their followers were settled at Saqqaa and Kossa Garrison center, the early settlers in Saqa and Kossa were occupied a vast land this early settler according to the local people were called Warwari and controlled a forest land in vast diameters some Amhara informants were stated that the War were like the *aqegne abat* (founding father) originally occupied and developed into farmland and which he would pass onto descendants. In other words, the founding father appeared to have obtained ownership over the original land by occupying land found in its natural condition and by annexing his labor with it and these acts of control and of investment resulting in his acquisition of full ownership over the land<sup>136</sup>. However, Qälad measurement and distribution was started during Menelik's of Shawa at about 1879 in Shäwa, it had spread well beyond that region in the decade after the 1896 Battle of Adwa.<sup>137</sup>

After the measurement had been completed, the selling of extra land by the government was common. If the state was willing to sell a portion of *Qälad* land to individual farmers (often at a cheaper price than the *gabbar* would have paid to *mälekägna* earlier, both in kind and in service), Land measurement was also carried out due to the role of the *Qenqagn*, which literally means 'a land finder', who had a certificate of eligibility for land grants. Here, the motive behind the measurement was to get extra land. Likewise, others, probably because of personal conflicts or unhappy feelings toward the better fortune of others, made known to government officials the presence of excess land in the possession of individuals. There are a number of reports that explain how they tried at most to discover extra land.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Mekuria Bulchaa, *Contours of the Emergent & Ancient Oromo Nation: ...* pp.105-6.

<sup>136</sup> Bahru Zewde, "Some Aspects of Post-Liberation Ethiopia (1941-1950)" in *Society, State and History note 11*, pp. 176-177.

<sup>137</sup> *bid*; Temesgen, p.570

<sup>138</sup> Guluma Gameda, "Land, Agriculture and Society in the Gibe Region: South Western Ethiopia, C.1850-1974", Ph.D. Dissertation. Michigan State University, 1996, p.61

Factors necessitated land measurement were a prerequisite intended to facilitate taxation. As discussed by Guluma, the system was basically designed to facilitate the collection of taxes and the growth of imperial revenue. But it also led to extensive expropriation of *gabbar* land. The government was working vigorously to increase its income. This was done to hold a sort of balance with the increasing government expenses<sup>139</sup>. According to Bramall; Land was measured for the direct purpose of taxation .Owners would pay land tax according to the size and quality of their land<sup>140</sup>.These measurements of land classified and determined the size and value of the land. The market economy of the time, specially the increment of coffee market in the half of 20<sup>th</sup> century pressurized the land holders' commitment in coffee production.

When Guluma compare this issue with the former communal holding, he argued that coffee planting required a clear definition of property right in land and steady supply of labor. With a changing market economy and the rise of coffee, the imperial center wanted greater control over Agricultural production and trade<sup>141</sup>. From the conclusion given on the above context, it was this issue that aggravated *Qälad* system and policy of land appropriation to implement extensively in the Southern region. In addition to that it was necessitated for identifying extra lands of *xäf-märét* and preparing for sale and to settle landless peasants which is true for Shawa farmers settlement Limmu Awraja<sup>142</sup>. A letter written for one of the Limmu *Abba Qoros, Qäññäzmach* Sadam Bayan, has strongly aware the need for approval of the measured land in his domain by the Elders and *ÇeqaŞum*. This letter shows that the statistics of the land measured was needed for the head office to reach up on the amount of the land available in the district.<sup>143</sup>

The post1941 land tenure policy had various degrees of implementations. The land privatization which began prior to 1935 was accelerated in this period. The need for land reform or land policy change was for two major purposes. The first was the patency the emperor has done in order to win the loyalty of the devoted patriots. The second was the maximization of state income which was termed as Agricultural income tax<sup>144</sup>.As Kidane argued, on his return the emperor tried to win the interest of the peoples who participated in different activities of the liberation campaign of Ethiopia, he awarded land from the south of Ethiopia. He listed different orders that passed by the emperor as follows:

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<sup>139</sup> BramallC. Inequality, Land Reform and Agricultural Growth in China, a Preliminary Treatment.

*The Journal of Peasant Studies, Vol.27 No3,2000. p.30.*

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Guluma 2002,p.188

<sup>142</sup> Temesgen,p.68;Girma mengesha,p.28

<sup>143</sup> See also Appendix xIII,IV,V,VI

Emperor Haile Selassie granted land to individuals as a reward for their cooperation or to buy off opposition. Furthermore, between 1942 and 1970 he passed three orders of land grants. In July 1942 Hamle 16, 1934 Ethiopian calendar (E.C.) He passed an order that granted up to forty hectares of land to the veterans of the 1936-1941 war. On Hamle 16, 1936 E.C. (July 1944) he passed another order that granted up to forty hectares of land to all Ethiopians who served as soldiers and civil servants prior to the 1936 war and who did not get land under the 1942 order. On Xeqemt 23, 1945 E.C. (November 1952), he entitled "landless and un employed Ethiopians "to twenty hectares of Geber (taxable land) from an occupied state land."<sup>145</sup>

The land tenure system in Ethiopia underwent a series of adaptations. When we look at the course of the *Qäläd* system, lands discovered in the process of measurement should theoretically be considered government lands and there could be no claims to private rights. According to Markakis, the disposal of excess land was handled differently in different parts of the provinces. In many districts two courses of actions were followed. In some areas, the excess of land was simply taken by the government. Another areas, where the holder admitted the existence of excess land, because of the legislation he was permitted to keep the entire area of the excess land on the condition that he pay a tax and the registration fee for the land within six months<sup>173.146</sup>. Thus, it is impossible to say that the state confiscated all excess lands and government as archival reports are silent regarding the confiscation of such lands. In most of the areas, when ever land was measured and re-measured, excess and was discovered but the holders refused to accept that they had excess land at their disposal. This was particularly common in Shewa and Arsi Governorate Generals.<sup>147</sup>

The imperial government introduced *Qäläd* (i.e., a system of land measurement) in order to control land and produce here on unimpeded by intermediary forces. *Qäläd* aimed at the imperial state's attempt to find out the exact amount of land held and cultivated by each land holder. The *Qäläd* system was followed by land grants to the *gult* holders already settled, *Balabbats* and those settlers freshly attracted from the north by the prospect of the *Qäläd* system. These land grants to the *gult* holding class conferred a conditional right in the sense that land title was given to this class with the obligation to develop the land and to render administrative services to the state and to pay taxes on their agricultural produce directly to the state. To

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<sup>145</sup> Kidane Mengisteab, Ethiopia: Failure of Land reform and Agricultural crisis. *School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 1990 .p.53

<sup>146</sup> Markakis, 1974. P. 12.

<sup>147</sup> Crummey. p.224.)

the *Gabar*, the *Qälad* system resulted in loss of any residual claims they may have had<sup>175.148</sup>. The combined result of *Gabar* status and of the seizure of land via the *Qälad* system was the creation in large parts of southern Ethiopia of a social system which combined subordination, poverty, and cultural alienation. This shift from appropriation of labor services (*gult* system) to *Qälad* system showed the state's interest to directly appropriate agricultural production itself and for itself.<sup>149</sup>

Land taxes: In 1942, the state introduced general land tax that graded farmland into *lem* (fertile and being cultivated), *lemtef* (less fertile land and partly cultivated) and *tef* (not under cultivation and equivalent to empty land)<sup>150</sup>. The 1942 land tax decree was justified on the ground that the payment of tax was a guarantee of private ownership<sup>151</sup>. In 1944, this general land tax was revised and stipulated for the abolition of "any other taxes, services and fees" previously paid by those working on the land to the landed elites<sup>152</sup>. The two land tax laws replaced numerous types of in kind land taxes by a single tax in cash, to be paid not to any other intermediary, but to the state. In 1947, the state put in place the educational tax and then in 1959 the health tax.<sup>153</sup>

According to Sourness asserted that following the decree of land reformation in the first two or three years, however, collection of taxes was not carried out effectively. Besides the instability and lack of strong control of the province, variations in the amount of taxes to be collected had made the implementation difficult. While peasants in some of the highland areas were required to pay twenty birr, others were submitting only about ten birr. Such variation was said to have depended on the vagueness of the provisional bout cultivated and uncultivated lands and the reluctance of the peasantry.<sup>154</sup> Proclamation no.70 of 1944 fixed and increased the amount of tax to be levied on both measured and unmeasured lands. For *Qälad* regions the rate for a *Gasha* of land was 50, 40 and 15 birr on *lam*, *lamtaf* and *tef* lands respectively. For unmeasured lands a comprehensive tax of twenty birr was imposed on lands owned by individuals.

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<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.* 225.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.* 225.

<sup>150</sup> A Proclamation to Provide for a Tax on Land, 1942

<sup>151</sup> Temesgen. P.570

<sup>152</sup> Land Tax Proclamation, 1944; Taddese Lencho, "Towards Legislative History of Modern Taxes in Ethiopia (1941-2008)", *Ethiopian Journal of Law*, 25:2. 2012.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid*; Educational Expenditure Proclamation, 1947.

<sup>154</sup> Informants: Abbanaga Abba Maccaa; Aba fogi Aba Jilcha

The proclamation, however, was not clear as to the criterion for classifying lands *aslem*, *lemtef* and *tef*.<sup>155</sup> To help the identification of those peasants who claimed property ownership, the first registration of land was carried out in Jimma area in 1937 E.C (1944/45). Through visual assessment, peasants were directly attached to the lands which they had claimed as members of their lineages. Payment to f taxes despite the registration of lands on individual basis, for the majority of the local people land continued to be owned collectively. It was in part for this reason that elders and leaders of many Sanna? Were registered as owners of the lands in the name of "their people".

This was attributed to three major factors. First, since many of the peasants of Limmu area were most of cultivators and coffee farmers, they hoped that holding lands collectively would enable them to for cultivation of coffee on extensive tracts of land. Second, many of the peasants were not used to the idea of individual ownership of land. Close relatives thought that it would be unwise to limit their chances of access to land by making premature agreements on who owned what. Hence, they insisted on getting their lands measured collectively. The Qoro of the lineage group would be registered as representative of the community. Third, the amount of tax levied was not dependent on the size of lands, but on the number of *Qoros* lands. In other words it depended on the number of landowners registered in the tax book. Therefore, peasants chose to hold lands collectively partly to avoid payment of tax on a small size of land.<sup>156</sup> This step towards the creation of individual ownership of land through registration of previous clan lands as property of the *gabbar* was known as *medaaba* (allocation). The *medaaba*, however, was not a process of standardization or redistribution of land it was simply a measure carried out to facilitate.

Payment of taxes. The registration largely depended on the information provided by local claimants. As one of the Informant stated: "[Registration was made] depending on the information provided to the assessors (*gamachoch*) by the *gabbars*, and lands of fifty, sixty and even ninety *gashas* were regarded as one *gabbar* and *gabbars* were required to pay only twenty birr. Similarly those who had two or three *masara* were also required to pay twenty. The government did not therefore, attempt to take-over lands in "excess" of what was claimed to be the possession of individuals. As long as there was no opposition from *gossa* members, ordinary peasants could get registered as owners of large sizes of land.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> "Land Tax Proclamation," *NtigaritGazeta*, no.70, November 1, 1944; Schwab, "Decision-Making in Ethiopia": *A Study of the Political Process*, London: C. Hurst, 1972, p. 27;

<sup>156</sup> Informants: Aba olii Aba macha

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

This seems to have been due to the fact that in addition to its limited productive value, land was abundant in the region relative to the size of the population. Of course, outsiders who did not belong to any of the *gossas* in the area, except those who were granted lands by the state or by the local people before the war were not eligible for a share of land from the *gossa* property. They were forced to live as dependents or tenants of the landowners. Unlike practices in some other regions of the country, the first "measurement" of land in Limmu area neither resulted in a wholesale dispossession nor in the division of land between the State, the Church and the *Balabbats*. While the state had claimed only those lands, which were believed to have been "unsettled" by the local people, the *Qoros* received lands only as senior members of their lineages. In addition to those "unsettled" lands, the government had, of course, reclaimed the prewar *hudad* lands for itself.<sup>158</sup>

In 1947, in order to increase state revenue, the tax required from each *gabbar* land was raised to 26 birr. Peasants who were registered as owners of *gabbar* lands were requested to pay at the new rate. Again, the amount of tax did not depend on the size or the quality of lands. Every landowner had to produce birr annually irrespective of size or quality of land. Thus, both the previous and the new tax rates were not fair to those peasants with smaller size of land. The small holders were forced to pay at levels equivalent to the big land owners. Those peasants with poor lands were also required to pay the amount of tax paid by those who had well-developed lands.

On the other hand, the state also lost a great amount of income that it could have collected from land had it determined taxes on the basis of the size and quality of lands. Local governors, of course, repeatedly advised the introduction of the *Qäläd* system which they said would provide for the collection of taxes on the basis of size and quality of lands. In the words of Déjàzmach Makuria Batirgu, for instance, besides the generation of substantial income for the state the *Qäläd* would help retrieve extra lands that the government could grant to new land-seekers. It was expected that if the actual size of lands were known, peasants would also give up part of their lands for fear of heavy taxes. As we shall see later, it was such "extra" lands that were later allocated to grantees. Peasants of Limmu area were, however, against the move to measure lands with the *Qäläd*. Somerton mistook following re-measurement was related to their way of life and to nature of the tax orders as stated above<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Informant: Gelan Badhasoo; Abba Naga Abba Maccaa; Aba fogi Aba Jilcha

<sup>159</sup> GulumaGemeda, riseofcoffee, p.188; Informant: Gelan Badhasoo; Tesfaye Mamo

As land was served as an institution of income generation for the state, feudal lords collect taxes in kind and cash. As informants explain the existing tax collection system and the newly imposed one, we can judge how much land tax affected the life of the peasants. As discussed, the main goal needed for new land policy was to maximize state income. For the implementation of this policy, land holders were certified on their holdings. The table derived from the land certificate issued for the farmers in 1956 EC shows the classification of land tax that collected in different forms of revenues. This certificate shows the boundary delimitation with the surrounding holders or natural boundary from four directions. This certificate contains the description of the taxes such as Income tax, Tithe (1/10 of the yields collected), Education tax and Health tax. This tax varies from region to region.<sup>160</sup> The successive Qoros rulers during emperor Haile Selassie renewed their title with new politics as: *Mälkäha*, *Qänazmaê*, *Gerazmaê*, *Fitawrare* and even some of them were baptized and got the Baptist name like Birhane Sillassie, Gäbrä Sillassie, and the like. This was done in order to defend them on power. The bottom representatives were named as: *Endärasé*, *Çeqasum*, *Näc-läbaś*, from these

Abba Qoros of the district continued as influential autonomous power over their domains. As they resisted the introduction of military and *Näftäha* settlers in their domain, they tried to invest in their provinces, built infrastructures like bridge, roads and also provide security and police service for the effective political administration. In the case of if any crime was made in their domains they have a responsibility of keeping a security of their territory. As I was informed about the role of *Gerazmach* Abba Gero, one of Saqa Abba Qoros, it indicates that, he carefully explored the thieves' looted cows and presented to a court. According to informants, it was forbidden to enter in their domain to search anybody committed a crime unless the Qoro ruler took its responsibility. Social services were also built by their own community participation.<sup>161</sup> By the 1950s, for instance, the emperor had given 106,304 *Gasha* of land (1 *Gasha* equals 40 hectares) to royal families, the crown land and few top level land lords accumulated 28,848.5 *Gasha* rural land and 3,538,605 *Gasha* of urban land by few land lords. In 1966, the state abrogated secular *gult* including its variant *rist-gult* and *siso-gult*, requiring *gult* holders and their respective *gabbar* to pay tax in kind directly to the state.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> *bid*

<sup>161</sup> Informants: Tasfaye Mamo; Gelan Badhasoo

<sup>162</sup> *bid*.



According to informants land measurement was started in Limmu and its surroundings in late 1940s in the district with the objective of classification of land in to it productive and to fix the price of taxes in Limmu Awraja district. According to these perspectives land was classified in to three productive levels. These were *läm*, *läm-xäf* and *xäf* which refers to cultivated, Semi cultivated and non-cultivated (non-populated). This institution shared lands among the holders which were previously commonly held and tributes were paid under the responsibility of their representatives. Each land holders of the time now issued holding certificate for their land with the measured size of the land.<sup>163</sup>The implementation of the imperial policy of Emperor Haile Sillassie to control the land in the periphery areas through his policy called Agär Maqinat (making of the empire). This program contributed significantly to the alleviation of the problem of food supply furor ban centers like Jimma Agaro and the surroundings. This scheme made possible for many landless peasants from northern part of the country and the region of Shawa to arrive and settle in Gomma Awraja.<sup>164</sup>

According to a sample survey taken in Gomma wäräda in the year 1960s, coffee shared about 37.1 percent of the cultivated land, while food crops covered about 39.2 percent. This shows that the local people gave more attempts to coffee production for its income earning. This scheme made it possible for many landless peasants from Shawa to resettle in Gomma. They arrived under the government policy due to land shortage .As Yonas stated, these settlers were came from cereal crop producing areas of Shawa, as a result these people were cultivated crop production to consume the population of the different towns in the region. They were settled in different districts of Jimma and Limmu Awraja. Hence, the settlers from Saqqaa- Coqorsaa and Gera we reproduced crop products to Agaro town.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> H.W. Michael, ‘Zemacha: “An Attempt at Rural Transformation in Ethiopia”’ in *Approaches to Rural Transformation in Eastern Africa (Okoth- Ogendo,ed.)*, Book Wise Limited, 1981.p.79-81.

<sup>164</sup> P. Wood, “Regional Development in Ethiopia”, *East African Geographical Review*, Department of Geography University of Zambia, 1977, p.102;Agaro archive, a letter to Gomma-Limmu Awraja gimjja bét, from Kaffa Ṭäqilaygizat gimjjabét,Nähässé29/1939Agaro;Fileno.3247/3937,YäItiyopiyaNigusäNägästMängist Yä Limmu Awraja Gizat Tsifät bét, Nahasse,14/1944.)

<sup>165</sup> GirumYeneneh,2013,p. 33; Yonas Seifu. 2002.p.45

## 2.2. The Expansion of Land Taxation

As land was served as an institution of income generation for the state, feudal lords collect taxes in-kind and cash. As informants explain the existing tax collection system and the newly imposed one, we can judge how much land tax affected the life of the peasants. As discussed, the main goal needed for new land policy was to maximize state income. For the implementation of this policy, land holders were certified on their holdings. The table derived from the land certificate issued for the farmers in 1956 EC shows the classification of land tax that collected in different forms of revenues. This certificate shows the boundary delimitation with the surrounding holders or natural boundary from four directions. This certificate contains the description of the taxes such as Income tax, Tithe (1/10 of the yields collected), Education tax and Health tax. This tax varies from region to region.<sup>166</sup>

The above tax collection titles works for the land holders but the mass population of the peasants had threaten in different forms of taxes. From the listed information, peasants who settled on the land of land lords were also pay taxes only for their survival need under their masters. As listed, there were structures in the rule of feudal in the district. These structures played their functions through their authority. Those who owned land in common but in the name of their leaders, collect taxes from the groups. Such holding type was referred as *Aleqa ena menzir* (the leaders and the members)<sup>167</sup>. The tax was collected and passed to the above financial institutions. However, the amount collected from peasants and the Balabbats in general exceeds what is paid to the next financial institution<sup>198.168</sup>. That means peasants with low income were forced to pay what is expected from them or what they share from the proportion of their holdings. Most of the Peasants of the time pay tax not for owning lands but for their exit and entry route through the land of land owners. They were obliged to fulfill what their masters expect from them.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Informants: Abadiga Abadiko

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>168</sup> Endalkachew Lelisa, "Land Tenure, Labor Allocation and Life of Coffee Farmers in Coffee Producing Areas: The Case of Jimma and Limmu Awrajas since 20<sup>th</sup> c" in *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* Vol.8, No.7, Bule Hora University, 2018, p. 2

<sup>169</sup> Deresa, p.112; Informant: Daba Tadese

**Table 2.1: Different types of land tax payment**

Quality of land	Income tax		Tithe		Education tax		Health tax		Total	
	Birr	Cents	Birr	cents	Birr	Cents	Birr	Cent	Birr	Cents
<i>Läm</i>	15		30		13	50	15		73	50
<i>Läm-täff</i>	10		30		12		12		64	
<i>täf</i>	5		10		4	50	4	50	24	

Source: Data organized from receipt collected from private possessors when

### 2.3. Land Tenure in Jimma after the Italian Invasion

During the five year of occupation (1936-1941), Italians had tried to abolish old land tenure system mainly to win the loyalty of peasants. According to tradition, on the eve of Italian occupation the majority of land was taken back to the indigenous population. The Italian administration cut the imperial political and economic centralization such as taxation system, redistribution of land and other administrative reforms. By opposing imperial interference in Jimma, Abba Jobir Abba Dula accepted Italian domination in Jimma. During the period under discussion, the land which was given to imperial soldiers was either given back to former owners or brought under Italian control. The Italian colonial administrators did not control all socio economic activities of Jimma. According to Jimma oral tradition, some socio-economic affairs at local level had been handled by indigenous chief. Some exploiting feudal land tenure system was abolished by Italians.<sup>170</sup>

My informants claim that after Italian expulsion from the region, there were attempts by Emperor Haile Selassie and the newly acknowledged elites to push away the local *Abba lafas* from their land. There were two ways in which the local land owners were forced to evacuate from their holding. At first, they were deprived of their possession on the accusation of failing to pay taxes. This was deliberately done by burdening taxes on the peasantry to facilitate the way for the eviction. If a peasant fails to pay tax for three consecutive years, he has to lose his holding. This was done through allotting cumber some tax on them which they cannot pay. The land which was acquired by the state through this process was called the land of *gibirteli* (haters of tax).Majority of such land was sold to the state

Officials at surprisingly low price. Distortion of taxes, falsification of tax receipts and fraud receipt also

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*

compounded the hardship of peasants' holder.<sup>203</sup> Secondly, according to Haji Kelil and others, the indigenous landowners were snatched their plots by the mechanism so called reassessment of "excess land". There had never been perfect survey of agricultural land, instead tax payment based on crop produced, the numbers of cattle and family size. *Buuchano* (about 15kilogram) was traditional instrument used to pay crop tax and later developed to *guuboo* (about 25kilogram) for each crop type. Tax of the cattle was paid in *sanaga* (salt bar) for two or three cows or oxen.<sup>171</sup>

Later on, new property tax was introduced where a rich man having both land and crop had paid 2Maria Theresa Taller (MTT), ordinary men were allotted with one MTT and nothing was expected from slaves. This was later replaced by poll tax where the rich paid5MTT and for the ordinary peasant it increased to 2 MTT and 1 MTT was expected from the slaves. Once a farmer registered as rich, there was no consideration of land size; a man with 5 *gashas* paid equal amount of tax with the one that owned 10 *gashas*. All members of the family with height above *wajagra* rifle was forced today one MTT, but this type was ignored the basic property, land. Concerning the land measurement, roughly eye estimation was made where they employed the traditional measurement unit called *facasa* (0.25hectare).<sup>172</sup>

The seeking for "*tirfmaret*" had begun during the 1950s when land measuring was started. Where? Although the Mesfin's request for *tirfmaret* seems for the benefit of the minor holders, he aimed at finding more excess land for him or government officials who had close connection with him. This attempt of search for excess land was directly matched with the increasing demand of coffee farming, exporting and profit from its trade.<sup>173</sup>

Local peoples were expected to identify their lands. There were also confirmations before registration. Here the cheating was made where peasants were ordered to show all their plot of land. Based on this order peasants were trying to show or register their land which found at margin supposing the others left for them without any measure by *gamachoch*. But, when the peasants confirmed that their land was found at margin, all the rest lands were registered by the *gamachoch* as free land or the state property.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Deresa,pp.113-114

<sup>172</sup> Deresa,pp.113-114

<sup>173</sup> Guluma Gameda, "Some Notes on Food Crop and Coffee Cultivation in Jimma and Limmu Awrajas, Kafa Administrative Region 1950s to 1970s" in *the Proceedings of the third Annual Seminar of the Department of History*, Addis Ababa University, 1986, p.93

<sup>174</sup> Informant: Mahamanuri Sada

*Indarases* (government representatives) forced the local landowners to register each parcels of their lands in different places in different tax registration books and had to pay taxes for all parcels together at a time. *Gamachoch*, group of assessors, were organized at *Miktil woreda* level conducting the procedure. As taxation was fixed on the ground of estimation and visual estimation, it was improper until the introduction of better measurement known as *Qälad (facasa)* in 1955. The peasants started appealing against the *Qälad* as it hurt cattle rearing by minimizing the use of communal pasture land. But MesfinSileshi was appointed to take the responsibility of implementing land declaration.<sup>175</sup>

Experts were sent in 1950s to measure land on the bases traditional measuring units (for example rope).Abba Jabal, Jimma governor, was ordered to supervise the ongoing measurement in Jimma areas resulting in discovering some parcel of land known as *tirfmaret* (extra land). For example, 86*gashas* were relocated as *tirf* land in Omo-Nadda only. The surveyors (*qaladtayoch*) recorded the *tirf* land as *hudad*, and under government's control.<sup>176</sup>*Hudad* is a kind of *latifunda*(large estate farm), which was owned by the *malkany as*. The farm land usually consisted some 120 to160 hectares (3to4*Gashas*) and the whole farm work was performed by the *gebbar* as an obligatorytask.<sup>210</sup> The later measured lands were grouped as *maasii (lam)* to mean cultivated or fertile, *lam-taf* (semi-cultivated) and *taf* (infertile or uncultivated).Abuses by survey or sand faults by officials that were.Caused corruption and dishonesty were common during theme assortment. Though the 1930 proclamation had proved that lands were inalienable, some officials had created their own mechanisms to cheat peasantry. The surveyors designated peasants land as undeveloped extra land, exposing them to expropriation. Another mechanism they used was threatening peasants that whose land would group under fertile regardless of its type. According to my informants, the land measurement had helped the state to grasp vast plots of lands that in turn offered to the government's supporters. In this case, at least a *Gasha* of land was given in lieu of salary.<sup>177</sup>

Haile Selassie attempted to expand the basis of tax by implementing direct taxes on land and other assets. The most known attempts of reform were in 1944 and 1966 which was the time when Income Tax Law (ITL)was amended. In addition to increasing the state's power, the Land Taxation Proclamation of 1944 was aimed at specifying the rate and amount of taxation. But it was not successful as landlords inclined to pass on the cost of this taxation. It had also failed due to insufficient and unskilled manpower to

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<sup>175</sup> Deresa, p.114-115.

<sup>176</sup> Informant: Hada Shaarf Abanaim

<sup>177</sup> Informants: HajiKelil Musa; Abdulkerim Abagero.

implement the law effectively. Infrastructural problem had also affected the implementation of the proclamation. In 1966, the state decided to introduce a more progressive tax system so that it can receive more revenue. So, it proposed the number 255 proclamation which was applicable not only for agricultural sector but also to salary income and other sectors. Some provisions relating to land were to continue just as before. On the 1966 decree, exploiters of the land were also expected to pay tax.<sup>178</sup>

According to Dessalegn, there existed the rights of impermanent use where final decision over land was reinstated with someone other than the holder. The land and the holder loaded with a number of obligations. Local landlords were owned extremely large tracts of land which in turn hiring to the tenants was existed. Rural tax adding was also availed.<sup>179</sup> Peoples was forced to live under a heavy social and economic domination. A *gabbar* handed over to the land lord more than two-thirds of his produce, provided free labor to his house hold, paid taxes to the state, and contributed cash and labor to build government offices and prisons not only in the village or district where he live, but sometimes hundreds of kilometers away from his home. The *gabbar* household had no savings and scarcely survived from year to year. Accordingly, the changes in land ownership and the introduction of the *gabbar* system lowered the standard of living and undermined the economic security of the peasants.

The landlords, settlers and famine "refugees" devoted their time to idle relaxation, rarely invested their incomes in economic ventures and thus wasted resources that they extracted. Since the Ethiopian state has been built on the principle of wealth extraction rather than wealth creation, there were more disincentives than there were incentives for the peasants in the south to increase agricultural production. Coffee production deteriorated rapidly after the land was granted to Shewan nobles who set the people to forced labor.<sup>180</sup>

The rise of coffee export coincided with the alienation of land through the *Qälad* system. The system was designed to facilitate the collection of taxes and the growth of imperial revenue. But it also led to extensive confiscation of *gabbar* land. After measurement, two-thirds of the land was appropriated by the imperial government and awarded to its military, civil, and religious officials. One-third or *siso* was left to the indigenous chiefs (*Balabbats*) and the indigenous farmers. But, in reality, most of the *siso* land was allocated to the local chiefs while the majority of the farmers became tenants. The tenants were then forced

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<sup>178</sup> EdmondJ .Keller, *Revolutionary Ethiopia: from Empire to People's Republic*, Midland, 1994, PP

<sup>179</sup> Dessalegn, 2009, pp.286-287.

<sup>180</sup> Mekuria Bulcha, p.7.

to either enter into sharecropping or migrate to other places to be free from heavy taxation. Many of the evicted farmers left their villages and settled in Jimma town, where the demands of the landlords were less challenging.<sup>181</sup>

The state attempted to decrease the load of the *gabbars* by introducing different land associated proclamations that was not applicable. Even the landowners became more powerful than before. The state also introduced new tax bases on agriculture and then later sold more lands to coffee growers where both the state and investors were worsen the *gabbars* lives. Generally, the state could not make any important land reform until its end in 1974 for two reasons: one, Haile Sellassie himself and his family were owners of vast tracts of land, and any change in land reform would mean damage them. Second, peasants of the Northern provinces resisted and opposed any attempt of land measurement and Registration because of lack of information on its benefit. At the end, peasant uprising, popular unrest and most of all student movements which united on the famous motto “Land to the Tiller” became reasons for the imperial collapse.<sup>182</sup>. Yonas Tafase explains the nature of land tenure in the south and the changes it underwent as follows:

Private tenures were originally lands which were expropriated from peasants and local lords in the south and given to officials and loyal servants of the crown. All unoccupied land in these areas was also considered to be state property which, through the years, was distributed to men of influence and power in the state apparatus. Much of the land thus acquired was subsequently converted into private tenure, and Haile Selassie I's government accelerated this process by its policy of imperial land grants and by encouraging holders of state tenures to convert them into freehold. As is stated previously, the imperial regime was mainly dependent on the rural agrarian economy which was sustained by the labor of the peasantry.<sup>183</sup>

The peasantry can be seen in two ways namely: small scale cultivators and tenants. The difference between them is that the small scale cultivator was more secure where the tenants were subjected to eviction. Moreover, tenants covered the majority of the rural population during the imperial regime. As the main actor in rural production, the peasants were operating a small plot of land. A large proportion of peasants operated minimum-plots of less than even half a hectare in size but the least size of the land given to the élites or the new settlers was not less than 40 hectares *oragasha*.<sup>184</sup>

During the imperial regime, land owners were forced to lose their land possession right in two ways:

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<sup>181</sup> Guluma, 1986, pp.60-61

<sup>182</sup> Daniel, p.

<sup>183</sup> Yonas Tafase,

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*

Firstly, those who were unable to pay tax were alienated from their ancestral land and passed to the government holding. About 6,004 *gashas* of plots were reported as returned for the government in the year 1951/52. This was done mainly on the pretext of failure to pay tax. As soon as the government took the land, its old to the official slike *Déjàzmach* Mesfin Sileshi at cheaper price. The second means of land expropriation was that the issue of “excess land” that begun in the early 1950s when the need for coffee plantation increased.<sup>185</sup> Every land, for which no tax had been paid to the regime, was converted into state land thereby depriving of the holders’ rights and this tax reform limited the influence of the local landlords. The farmers therefore were no longer required to pay tribute to the local landlords, but directly to the representatives of the emperor.<sup>186</sup> Lords of the land in the newly conquered areas had the right to use run and with the exception of the crown, excluding others. After the 1941 reformation, the same rights were held by the group of *gabbar* farmers, who held land without obligations to provide services to any landlords. Tenants held particularly weak rights to the property. In summarizing the land tenure system during Emperor Haile Sillassie, the following was quoted:

Broadly speaking, the Ethiopian land tenure system during the emperors’ rule was dominated by extreme power r inequalities between land lords and peasantry. Land policy was used in as an instrument of “divide-and-rule” at the disposal of the emperors and the nobility. The Emperor reserved the sovereign right overall land with the authority to grant and withdraw land rights at all levels, and this right was exercised to keep“ are tenure of war lords, governors, and nobles personally obliged to the emperor.”<sup>187</sup>

Since the cause of the Ethiopian revolution was the *gabbar* system imposed on the peasants, land was the cause of the socio- political disagreement that led to the dawn fall of the imperial regime in 1974. The Ethiopian revolution abolished the discriminatory *Qālad* land holding system of feudal lords in the south however; state ownership of land remained intact<sup>188</sup>. The peasants were unable to lerate exploitation and meet the endless taxes imposed by agents of the state. The condition shakes the university students to demand “land to the tiller “since the mid-1960s. The subsequent political disturbance finally guided in a new political system based on the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism.<sup>189</sup> During the imperial period, the

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<sup>185</sup> Wibkeandothers,pp.10-11

<sup>186</sup> *bid.*

<sup>187</sup> *bid.*

<sup>188</sup> Yonas Tafesse, p.38.

<sup>189</sup> Thomas,p.101



development of the agricultural sector was retarded by a number of factors, including tenancy and Landsteiner for m problems as well as the government's neglect of the agricultural sector. For example, agriculture received less than 2 percent of budget allocations even though the vast majority of the population depended on agriculture. Low productivity and lack of Technological development was also factors affecting the then economy. Furthermore, the emperor's failure to employ meaningful land reform affected a system in which aristocrats owned most of the farmland and in which most farmer's were tenants.<sup>190</sup>

During the 1972–74 drought and famine, the imperial government refused to assist rural peasants and tried to cover up the crisis by refusing global aid where a large number of populations were affected. Even though the issue of land reform was not addressed until the 1974, the regime had tried to initiate programs to recover the condition of farmers. In 1971 the Ministry of Agriculture commenced the Minimum Package Program to bring about economic and societal changes. The Minimum Package Program included credit for the acquisition of items such as fertilizers, improved seeds, and pesticides, innovative extension services, the establishment of cooperatives, and the provision of infrastructure. There are two predominant soil types in the highlands. The first, found in areas with relatively good drainage, consists of red-to-reddish-brown clayey loams that hold moisture and are well gifted with needed minerals, with the exception of phosphorus. These types of soils are found in much of Jimma. The second type consists of brownish-to-gray and black soils with high clay content. These soils are found in both the northern and the southern highlands in areas with poor drainage.<sup>191</sup>

Soil erosion has been one of the country's major problems. Over the centuries, deforestation; overgrazing and practices such as cultivation of slopes that is not suitable to agriculture have eroded the soil. In addition, the rugged topography of the highlands, the brief but extremely heavy rainfalls that characterize many areas, and centuries-old farming practices that do not include conservation measures have accelerated soil erosion in much of high land areas. During the imperial era, the government failed to implement widespread conservation measures, largely because the country's complex land tenure system blocked effort to stop soil erosion and improve the land's productivity. Whether it was in the north or south, peasant farmers lacked the means to improve production because of the fragmentation of holdings, a lack of credit, and the absence of modern facilities. Particularly in the south, the insecurity of tenure and high rents killed the peasants' incentive to improve production. The land reform destroyed the feudal

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.* 102

order; changed land owning patterns, particularly in the south, In favor of peasants and small landowners; and provided the opportunity for peasants to participate in local matters by permitting them to form associations. However, problems associated with declining agricultural productivity and poor farming techniques still were prevalent.<sup>192</sup>

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4.OPPOSITION MOVEMENTT OF EUDAL RULE (1960s-1974)

#### Introduction

The question of tenancy, its scale of coverage and its exploitation is the base for political issues that resulted in peasant discontent in Ethiopia<sup>193</sup>.As Dessalegn emphasized in his study, the more the land reform put a great deal of emphasis on the assumption that the tenant was the most deprived and the most exploited member of rural society and that tenancy was the most dominant form of land holding in the country<sup>194</sup>.The forms of grievances everywhere in the country paved the way for further opposition groups. The fore front trial of *coup d'état* of 1960 by the two brothers, Girmame and Mengestu Neway had a longstanding interest in land reform and to distribute *Xäf-märét* (uncultivated land) to the landless.<sup>195</sup>

Private land ownership policy of the southern parts of Ethiopia resulted in transfer of large tracts of land especially to investors in 1950s and 1960s and made *gabbars* once and for all landless tenants. Land privatization in the era of feudalism and a patronage system of governance created favorable environment for the exploitation of tenancy to the dismay of the indigenous land-less majority. During this period, land was a patronage resource utilized to perpetuate the dominancy and hegemony of the state at the local level. Concentration of agricultural land in the hands of the few was responsible for the impoverishment of the people and weakness of the State, while putting land in the hands of many people as much as possible would bring about national prosperity and enhance the power of the government. He thought this would be achieved by distributing land to the people not through re-distribution of existing holdings but via allocation

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<sup>192</sup> *bid*,p. 104

<sup>193</sup> Saheed A dejumobi A., *The History of Ethiopia*,(London,GreenwoodPress,2007),p.27.

<sup>194</sup> Dessalegn Rahmato,*Agrarianreform*,p.22

<sup>195</sup> Harrison C, Dunning, p.272.

of Land from unoccupied areas. This argument supports the measures taken by the state in 1950s and 1960s to settle Shawa farmers in new and unoccupied regions of Arsi, Bale, and Jimma.<sup>196</sup>

During the period of the imperial Ethiopia, majority of the southern peasants and pastoralists, and indeed more than half of the Ethiopian population did not have land or control over their produce. The large scale back warded population and extreme poverty of the country in general from North to South worsened the living condition of the society. Critics pointed out rightly that the land tenure reform of the imperial regime was formulated “without extensive knowledge of existing conditions in the field.”<sup>197</sup>

From the very beginning the proportion of land holding is varies from family to family. This was combined with the increase of family members which latter led to classification among these members. When the land became decrease and decrease, they became dependent on those who were holding large amount of land in different types of share cropping. As noted by Rahma to, the other serious obstacle to economic development was land fragmentation that widespread in the country. Even though there was no much exaggerated type of exploitation from these land holders, the Peasants were provided with seeds and ox in order to cultivate and share the crop. The problem seen was these peasants were accountable to their masters only and they had no right to form any social contact with other groups. For every governmental and nongovernmental issue the land lords of these peasants were responsible.<sup>198</sup> these peasants had no right of having permanent properties on the land they are using for share cropping. When they commit any crime they were obligated to move without any compensation.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>196</sup>Gebre hiwot Bykedagn, መንግስትና የህዝብ አስተዳደር (*State and People's Administration*) (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1924) p. 88.

<sup>197</sup> Muradu, p.74.

<sup>198</sup> Informants: Abafita Abayirga; Dessalegn, p.31.

<sup>199</sup> *bid*

#### 4.1.Limmu Kossa on the Eve of the Revolution

During the transitional period three months before the proclamation of ‘land to the tiller’, with the arrival of the so called development campaign (*Zāmach*) carried out mobilization in the district. They travelled in the countryside for arrangement of the new structure. There was strong internal opposition earlier to that but with the coordination of these campaigners the revolt reached its height. In the process of forming the peasant associations, the students gained first-hand experience about the nature of the struggle between landlords and tenants. According to the informants, the objective of the call for the demonstration was to announce the fall down of the feudal system to aware the newly establishing government. However, the message of the demonstrators was inclined towards looting properties of the former prosperous merchants and land lords. Almost all rural dwellers were participated in the call of demonstration.<sup>200</sup>

On their side, the opposite groups had awareness about the demonstration and were prepared themselves for defense. Kidane also explain as the students got awareness about the struggle that, the old bureaucracy, the police forces and the territorial armies were in many areas still allied with the old establishment.<sup>235.201</sup> Similar to this argument, the *Balabbats* were well equipped with fire arms and also got support from the police commander like *Hamsalaqa* Abara Nigusé. In the daylight the equipped groups opened fire on them. From the peasants eleven people were killed and buried in one hole. Most others were failed everywhere in the forest and found later on. In response to the mass killing of the people the surrounding rural *Qäbällés* decided not to use common markets. They perceived that they never share the same market in common with their killers. As a result of this market separation, it resulted in the formation of different rural markets in rural *Qäbällés*. After a long period of separation negotiations were made between the elders of the Saqa town and representatives of the rural community.<sup>202</sup>.Such challenges were the main issues on the eve of the 1975 revolution.

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<sup>200</sup> Informant: Tadesse Wolde Mikael; Abera Negus

<sup>201</sup> Kidane, p.99.

<sup>202</sup> Informant: Abara Niguse; Tadesse Woldemikael

In the case of Agricultural development program, economic policy was not benefited the large group of the society. Farmers' association was set up to maximize their produce especially on coffee production. This was benefited the advanced group those accumulated property from feudal policy. Even though the association not included mass community, technological support from Agricultural office workers was not applied<sup>203</sup>. As Gulumadiscussed on the economic changes of 1940s to 1970s, it was the progressive change or stagnation that had been seen. His finding showed that the 1950s and 1960s economy was modern and mechanized in Agricultural reform which is capital centric at the expense of subsistence farming. The increase in coffee market as a country initiated the state to interfere in the production of coffee. In the district cereal farm lands were shifted to coffee plantation. The state also gave support. The issue of the production was market oriented and its success displaced the subsistence farmers which caused popular discontent that speeded up the revolution. According to this argument, the revolution was not due to the lack of modern and progress of agriculture but the progress had not satisfied the need of population.<sup>204</sup>

Others raise idea opposing the above argument that, despite of the 1950s and 1960s fast development of modern sector, the fast economy was still subsistence oriented and characterized by slow progress or even stagnation<sup>239</sup>. From Dessalegn point of explanation, the insufficient participation of peasant's in market economy resulted in economic stagnation. His explanation indicates that the non-participation of the peasantry in the economic system expanded the marginalization of peasants and excludes them from the share they contribute.<sup>205</sup>

Another factor for the disfavor of the peasants was the Agricultural Income Tax Proclamation of 1967 which designed to subject income from agricultural activities to a more equitable tax, based on the ability to pay, although it did not penalize those who held idle land. This intended instrument of land reform and expansion of the monetized sector, the appropriateness of which is debatable became merely another poorly implemented tax. As Brietzke's discussion, the consequences of this Agricultural income tax brought peasant rebellion in Gojjam and Bale. This tax collection varies depending up on the income individual's generate<sup>241</sup>. Abbink stated that, Ethiopian socio- economic

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<sup>203</sup> Informant: Musxafa Abakamal

<sup>204</sup> Gulumap.251.

<sup>205</sup> Warren C. Robinson and Fumiko Yamazaki, "Agriculture, population and economic planning in Ethiopia ,1953-1980," *Journal of developing areas*, xx(April 1986), pp.327-338.

and political conditions in the late 1960s to early 1970s were clearly present to produce an evolutionary situation. It would have been converted into an actual revolution with the strong ideological predispositions of situated agents, social groups, and individuals acting upon and being able to act upon the critical situation.<sup>206</sup>

Greenfield discusses the 1960 coup as it was the main motive of the revolutionaries placed great emphasis on Ethiopia's lack of progress in economic development, education and living standards. The land reform issue of this period was the longstanding wish in land reform to distribute undeveloped land to the landless.<sup>243</sup> It was the exploitation structure that dwarfed the development of their economy. The top of their grievances were erupted after the organized opposition movements spread in the country from north to south. Large scale land alienation existed for over three-quarters of a century and excessive exploitation hampered agricultural productivity and economic development in the country.<sup>244,207</sup> In April, mass strikes and demonstrations of workers and teachers unions followed, and on April 20, there was the mass demonstration of Muslims asking for equal religious rights. Eventually, the strikes and actions, all supported and partly organized by student radicals, brought down the imperial government but also were met with massive force by the newly arranged groups under the Coordinating Committee called *Därg* Amharic word "Council."<sup>245,208</sup>

As already started everywhere in the country, the study area began some movements earlier to the downfall of the regime. There were government agents called "*Hezbawi Nuro Edegét*" those sent to work on the side of the government indifferent governmental offices. It was aimed to use literates in the governmental offices and also to employ them for the government works. These groups sent from the North and especially from *Amara* people as government workers closed a chance of the local indigenous people not to participate in government work. However these people participated in opposition movement of the period. They mobilized the community about the exploitative system of the feudal administration and initiated them for change. As stated by different informants, the rural community decided not to participate in every governmental activity. They refused to be exploited by the Judges, police men and other government employees. Even when there were disputes between themselves, they agreed up on solving by themselves.<sup>246,209</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> Dessaegn Rahmato, "Peasant Agriculture," p. 182.

<sup>207</sup> Abbink, p. 338

<sup>208</sup> Informant: Abba Näim Abba Faji

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*

As the well informed informant Abba Jihad discussed about this issue, the police station remained empty from the action of these movements. In addition to such mobilizations there were chained groups of Heroes who confronted against the interference of the alien groups in the administration of Jimma Autonomy. These were struggled in the form of band it. The net work of these bandits was found in Gomma, Mana and Saqa districts.<sup>247.210</sup> Some of the well-known Heroes were; Lulessa Enangia, *Gerazmach* Garo, Hassen Aba Tibba. A Hero of Mana called *Gerazmach* Garo made stiff resistance against *Ras* Mesfin Silashi

The army of *Gerazmach* Garo was well organized and well equipped. His wife, Jimmity played strong role in the campaign with *Ras* Mesfin Silashi and killed about five military forces from opposite side. There was a local poem that describes her role saying:

*[Dubartiin hin faannoftu Jimmittiitu baroo baasee  
Warri Giraazmaach Garoo Qamisiisassaabbattee*

*Dhiira shangalaaffattee, yaa tokkichummaakoojettee.*<sup>248</sup>

Women never become Hero but  
Jimmity did, The wife of *Gerazmach*  
Gar of old edherdress and By killing five  
people, she said: Oh! My liveness.]

*Gerazmach* Garo arrived in Jimma to confront *Ras* Mesfin. While he was preparing himself to attack Mesfin, he saw a tapeworm. He used traditional medicine to prepare himself to confront the war of his opponent. Information was reached him by back biter. Then Mesfin bombarded the station of *Gerazmach* Garo in the camp.<sup>249.211</sup> Another hero of the time was from Gomma called Luleessaa Innaangiyaa who devoted his time confronting the system. In Saqa the revolt began after the overthrow of Aba Jifar. The well-known hero was Hassen Abba Tibba. Hassen was *Guddifacha* son in the palace of Aba Jifar. His revolt was against the occupation of the power by the newly arrived *Endärasé* rulers from Shawa and Limmu. He opposed the representatives and other workers those came to run the mission of the emperor. A person known by nick name called *Abba Silki* (telephone worker) served in Jimma as telephone worker. He was Hassen Abba Tibba that slaughtered him showing his grievance on the surrender of Jimma. Peoples had a poem regarding to the cruelty of his measures taken as a following:

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<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*

*Hasan Abbaa Tibba nama balaa* A dangerous man, Hassen Aba Tiba

*Akkasa 'aa ciibsee Nama qala.*<sup>250.212</sup> Slaughters man slumbering as a cow.

He refused also the submission of other local chiefs to the military campaign of the emperor. Abba Bulgu Abba Jobir was one of the submitted local chiefs that allied with the force of the emperor in order to an next he force of Hassen Abba Tiba.

## **4.2.Land Privatization, Land Sale and Land Transfer**

The free flow of land between various individuals, state and individuals, and state and institutions under the imperial state started with the restoration of the imperial regime. This free flow of land access is a partial benefit to distribute the concentration of land in the hand of few groups. Some individuals argue that private ownership of land is the only solution ensures tenure security. However, there might be severe property insecurity for the marginalized group while there is a greater security for the few. This privatization which issued as a land reform mechanism by the emperor was accelerated to shift unoccupied areas by men of influence and power in the state apparatus.<sup>251.213</sup> From this context it is clear as the act of the emperor confiscating peasant land and settling or occupying it by various parts of individuals and institutions. Cohen and We intrigue describes; the peasant movement from North to the South in different regimes had seen to realize this policy. Following such policies there were different groups of people those arrived in Saqa during the imperial and post imperial eras. For example, Shawa farmers' settlement as a case of land pressure of shortage, Church holding, Amhara and Tigre farmers' settlement in the *Därg* period due to drought were emerged. This settlement was done on the margins of the district while only the Church settled in the town. However its holdings were given from the remote distant<sup>214</sup>

The above discussed policies of privatization also encouraged land sale. Temesgen verified that the Ministry of Pen wrote to the Ministry of Interior and Finance on 9 January 1952, the need to sell government lands to the people.<sup>253.215</sup> Dessalegn support a private holding of land rather than becoming a servant of land lords. According to his argument, peasants have to have the private land possession in

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<sup>213</sup> Informant: Aba fogi Aba jilcha

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>215</sup> Yigremew Adal, Review of Land holding Systems and Policies in Ethiopia under the Different Regimes, *EEA/ Ethiopian Economic Policy Research Institute WorkingPaperNo5/2002*(December 2002), p.6.



order to win their necessity question.<sup>254.216</sup> This indicates that households may fail to command access to sufficient food because of inadequate landholding, off-farm employment opportunities, access to creditor other inputs, and that people who face any of these inadequacies constitute the vulnerable groups in the society. According to the oral traditions of the district, in Saqa district even in the post liberation land was sold only to the land lords themselves but not to outside of the lineage. Few land parcel holders were forced to sale to the large owners through different mechanisms.<sup>.217</sup>

This private ownership pattern was the most common pattern, affecting over 60 percent of Ethiopia's peasants. It was predominant in the southern provinces of Arssi, Bale, Gamu-Goffa, Illubabor, Kefa, Harar, Sidamo, Wellega, parts of Shewa and parts of Wollo. This type of tenure pattern was developed after the Christian High land Kingdom, under Emperor Menelik II expanded to the South between 1875 and 1898, which was followed by expropriation of land from the southern peasants to accommodate troops, administrators, church leaders and other settlers from the North.<sup>.218</sup>

Lands under private tenures were private not in the strictly capitalist but in the specifically Ethiopian sense of the term. That means the holders have the right of collecting tributes and other land resource outcomes but had no permanent control. What the state had granted and virtually all land under private tenures was originally state property, the state could take away, and in so far as the authority of the state was concerned, the dignity of private property was not recognized in principle or in fact. The attempt was made in different ways including selling of lands under its disposition.<sup>.219</sup> Crewett and Kor f, discuss that, state ownership of land provides negative consequence on land productivity. This hypothesis shows that private ownership is more effective than other form of land rights regarding maximization of the produce.<sup>.220</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Cohen John and Weintraub Dov, *Land and Peasants in Imperial Ethiopia: The Social Back ground of a Revolution* (Van Gorkum, Assen 1975), p.35.

<sup>217</sup> Mulat Demeke, Fantu Guta and Tadele Ferede, "Agricultural Development and Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), Building a Case for more Public Support: The Case of Ethiopia, Prepared for the Policy Assistance Unit of the FAO Sub regional Office for East and Southern Africa", working paper No. 02(Rome,2006) p.14.

<sup>218</sup> Kidane Mengisteab, *Failure of land reform and Agricultural Crisis: school of oriental and African studies*(University of London, 1990) p.47.

<sup>219</sup> Temesgen P.68

<sup>220</sup> Crewett *et al*, "Land Tenure in Ethiopia: Continuity and Change, Shifting Rulers, and the Quest for State Control", *CAPRI Working Paper 91*. International Food Policy Research Institute (Washington DC, 2008) p.5

In the case of the district a head, private merchants were engaged in the land acquisition. They bought and able to buy land from the *Balabbats*. Shamsu Abba Muhammad has sold 600m<sup>2</sup> of land to 50 birr in 1962. Similarly, his brother, Abdulqader Abba Muhammad had sold 375m<sup>2</sup> of land to 50 birr in the same year. It was the time after this events that the competition over land owning increased and including merchants were involved in land purchase. There was also a land registered to the government owner that was sold to individuals especially government officials. Others use in the form of mortgage.<sup>259.221</sup>

### 4.3. Coffee Production in the Study Area

In the 1960's when the coffee demand increased, not only indigenous coffee farmers that were attracted towards coffee production but also migrant laborers and government officials. It is during this period that large number of laborers came to the area and participated in coffee production and marketing. Hence, *Limmu Awrajas* were the major coffee producing areas of south-western part of Ethiopia, different people moved from their homeland to this *Awrajas* for different purposes. Many factors might have pushed these people to migrate to the study areas. For instance, population growth, lack of employment opportunity, poverty, and famine, scarcity of land in their homeland areas and etc. The rapid growing of coffee plantation attracted this community. Most of them came to the area as seasonal workers in to both state farm and local peasants' farms. However, during imperial period such migrant workers did not settle in the village of the study areas. But, they returned to their homeland at the end of the coffee season.<sup>222</sup>

According to Yonas, these migrants could be categorized into two: long distance and short distance migrant's. Thus, from this historical fact the long distance migrants were those who came from northern and central part of Ethiopia at of different time. For instance, they came from the regions of Gonder, Gojjam, Wollo and Showa in the 1930's. Others came to these *Awrajas* in around 1950's and 1960's due to the growing of coffee price and development of different in restructure such as transportation, communication, road and rail network facilities. During the period under discussion, the Guraghe of Sodo was perhaps the largest group who came to these areas from far away region. The short distance migrants, particularly from today's Southern Nations Nationalities and peoples' region of Kafficho, Dawuro, Yem, Hadiya, Kembata, Walyata and others migrated to Jimma and its environs. Young

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<sup>221</sup> Yonas Seifu, 2002

<sup>222</sup> Ermias Demere, "Productivity study of resource and income in the growing farms of Kaffa administrative region" M.Sc Thesis, AAU, 1985

unmarried men moved to the rural and urban areas of Jimma and its surroundings to live temporarily for the purpose of getting money for marriage, education and other purposes.<sup>223</sup>

It was also during 1960's that the imperial government declared the resettlement scheme and many landless peasants from Showa region came and settled in the study area, particularly, in the districts of Mana, Deddo and Omo Nadda. It was in the *Derg* era that some Southern peoples such as Dawuro began to acquire lands in the villages and settled down. At first, most of them came to Jimma and its surroundings as laborers in the state farms, which offered those houses and some small plots of lands in the workers' village. They earned some money as salaried laborers on the state farm and finally bought lands in the area from local farmers. They made intermarried with the local population and many of them were converted to Islam. As a result of this, the present day inhabitants in the study

Areas are made up of diverse ethnic groups.<sup>224</sup> Informants also say, first these populations came to this area as a seasonal laborers from different area to work on coffee during coffee planting and harvesting periods. But later when some of them returned to their homeland and others started to live permanently in this area<sup>225</sup>

As many sources state, farmers were formerly used traditional ways of farming. Labor intensity was very high since coffee is much labor demanding crop. The main activities performed in the state coffee plantation are weeding, hoeing, fertilizing, pruning, and mulching, planting and reducing shade and etc. with simple tools, such as *matchet*, pruning scissors, sickle, axes and others. The average labor input in state plantation is more than peasant farming. But during the harvesting season there is generally shortage of labor in peasant farms as well as state plantations. According to Ermias, this condition has been observed specially in three districts of Gomma, Limmu Kossa and Mana. They spent on average 55 birr/ ha, 50.27 Birr/ha and 101.62 birr/ha, respectively.<sup>226</sup> The rich farmers had

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<sup>223</sup> Daniel Ayana. "Coffee and Food Production for self-sufficiency: the case of W. Wollagaan outline."

*In processing at the third annual seminar of department of history (AAU, 1986).*

<sup>224</sup> Tibebe Seraj, "Impact of Resource allocation of cash and food production on household food availability in coffee growing areas: Case study of Mana district in South west Ethiopia" M.Sc. Thesis, (Agricultural University of Norway, 1996).

<sup>225</sup> Ermias, 1985.

<sup>226</sup> Daniel Ayana, 1986.

more and modern farm tools than poor farmers. Most of the time, the major source of income of peasants in coffee growing areas was obtained from coffee sale. They used the income for purchase farm tools and other purposes. These farm tools used by coffee farmers are quoted by Daniel as: “Local ploughs (*maresha*) for ploughing land; hoe (*gasoo*), fork and hand cultivator used for weeding, holing and digging; Axe, slashes and shovel for clearing and cutting; sickle for weeding and harvesting the crops.”<sup>227</sup>

In the study areas peasants usually used different sources of labor force for food crops and coffee production. For instance, they used family labor (core labor), hired labor, seasonal labor and pool labor known as *Daboo*. The hired labor came from the surrounding villages during coffee plantation and harvesting. But, seasonal laborers came from distant areas due to need of money, climatic change and overpopulation. The wage for seasonal laborers per man per day varies from year to year and place to place. They were paid either in cash or in kind in harvested coffee. For instance, laborers get one kilogram of coffee out of every ten kilos they have collected. *Daboo* is a form of laborer exchange by households for mutual benefit during peak times of agricultural season. It is a system of helping each other, which households utilize in crucial times such as illness and imprisonment of head of the household, birth of a child during a peak agricultural season. They worked in turn for daily on each member's farm during planting, weeding and harvesting time. Each member prepared meal to be consumed by the members of *Daboo* in his/her turn. The length of the daily working time was decided by the members. *Daboo* covered usually from two to six or from seven to nine hours.<sup>228</sup>

#### **4.4. Implications of Land Tenure System**

It was largely considered as an obstruction to the country's development in general. It was made the most important cause of political grievances that led to the overthrow of the regime. Lack of necessary legal framework and enforcing institutions, land concentration for political reasons in the hands of absentee land lords and its underutilization, unchecked and exploitative tenancy, tenure insecurity including arbitrary eviction, fragmentation of holdings and other problems are noted as features of the then Ethiopian land tenure system. Access to and control over land was largely in favor of aristocrats, feudal lords and other influential persons who had good relations with the political

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<sup>227</sup>Tarekegn Ararso. “The Economics of Coffee Industry in Ethiopia with a Special Reference to Kaffa Region” MA Thesis, (AAU, 1985).

<sup>228</sup> Shimelles Tenaw, K.M. Zahidul Islam and Tuulikki Parviainen, “Effects of land tenure and property rights on agricultural productivity in Ethiopia, Namibia and Bangladesh,” Discussion Papers no.33, University of Helsinki, 2009, P.5.

leadership. Poor peasants, minority groups, and women were among the disadvantaged groups in the then rural land tenure system.<sup>229</sup>

Land tenure safety determined by governmental laws and agricultural policies, which in turn influence farmers' profit and land use decisions. The land tenure plays one of the fundamental roles in shaping farmers' land-use decisions. Farmers' decision affected if they are not sure for how long they would bellow to use the ownership right. Especially the tenant cultivators are unwilling to make investments in land management if they do not secure land tenure rights that make them exposed to eviction by landlords or government. If property rights are absent and if land tenancy is insecure, farmers do not care much about the land use and though concentrate on short terms profit and exposes land to

Degradation. The lack of land ownership restricts the farmers' access to credit that are required for improved land practices. This lack of access to credit forces them to go for traditional land-us practices, despite their willingness to change. Land tenure directly affects food access at the household by controlling access of resource donations and indirectly affects the food security at the regional or national level through food availability and also food prices. Access to food has three important dimensions like sufficiency, sustainability and exposure. Excessive political intervention which facilitated land amassing by favoring land lords and government elites had serious effect on the peasants. Tenancy, share cropping, eviction and labor services were also other effects of imposed land tenure on the peasants.<sup>268.230</sup>

## **Tenancy**

A mass of peasants were reduced to the status of a class of landless army who forced to work as tenants for the government officials and local land lords. Though the mass were tenants, the economic burden was on the shoulder of the tenants. This was because, the peasants in the south as general was insecure though they were paying exploitative taxes and tributes. The tenants in the region were obliged to live under the continuity of uncertainty and excessive dependence on the northern landlord sand also on the local landlords or *balabbats*.<sup>269.231</sup>

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<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.p.7.*

<sup>230</sup> Informant: Abba naga Abba maccaa

<sup>231</sup> Informant: Suleim an Shesharif; Abbanega Abbamecha

## **Sharecropping**

Many landlords also had registered officially as taxpayers and thereby dispossessed those farmers of their land rights where the indigenous farmers then became tenants who practiced sharecropping. Sharecropping was expected from the tenants to convey a large share of the produce to the newly existed landlords to maintain the right to use their own land for survival unless eviction to continue. The tenant was also exposed to arbitrary difficulty for product contributions and labor services. Sharecropping was a heavy burden which both economically and politically exposed the tenants to the power of the land lords. It was the condition where the *abbalafa* received a lion share of the produce of the tenants. The amount that the landowners grabbed from their tenants ranged from one-fourth to two-thirds and even to some extent it was beyond this. Using their unique social position, land lords and *melkegnas* (governors) pressed as much as they could on their tenants. Before 1975 declaration, land lords in the south were engaged in snatching the tenants' production than farming themselves. Share cropping was a vital means of exploitation and controlling the tenants. It was also a political instrument that provided the landowners with the power to suppress the tenants and laborers.<sup>232</sup>

## **Eviction**

It was especially during Haile Sillassie regime where the poor peasants had been exposed to displacement that created further tenure insecurity. The most cause of eviction in Jimma was the introduction of modern coffee farming where the government and officials were involved in coffee farming. The landlords were involved in displacing tenants for two reasons: firstly to rent their land out to the rich and secondly to farm the land themselves using modern agricultural methods.<sup>233</sup>

## **Labor services**

Another mechanism of exploitation was the obligation of the tenants to render labor services for their land masters. A land lord has full power over his tenants to force them to give all kinds of labor services without any compensation. Such a labor duty which was termed by some scholars as "on market coercion" was an extension of land owners' authority over the land less cultivators by the virtue of the political backing

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<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>233</sup> Wibke Crewett and others, p. 8.

secured and ownership of the land to be rented to the tenants.<sup>234</sup> Even though the land looks fertile and also as witnessed by many travelers, the living standards of the peasants were in harsh condition even during the coffee farming. During the harvest of coffee every producers seems sufficiently self-sustaining as he wears, eat and live better. But when we see the condition of peasants closely, the prevailing condition reveals the reciprocal where many peasants were leading their life miserly. But, it was quite important to mention that the peasants of Jimma where in better living standard. But still it is surprising to see some times the adverse effect of cash crop, coffee, in the region. Poverty of the peasants was attributed to two major things by the officials of Hailesilassie, mostly MesfinSileshi. Firstly, it was because of the peasants' (i.e. indigenous) weakness as their perception. And most probably it seems true that the second cause of food shortage in the *Awraja* under discussion was the expansion of coffee farming where due attention was given to the coffee farming than food crop farming.<sup>235</sup>

It was true that the peasants of Jimma were not working effectively, not because of their laziness a theirs was due to the fact that the peasants became pessimism to their holding right of their properties, especially the land. And additionally, peasants were not attributing their poverty to their laziness, rather for them poverty was as a result of the control of the productive and fertile land by the greedy officials, existence of anti-grain-wild life, lack of suitable land for food crop production, coffee diseases and in fertility of soil.<sup>236</sup>

The poor quality of soil fertility and the alarming growth of population increase were also seen as the cause for food shortage in the area under discussion. Unutilized lands were not conducive for food crop production. This was because of: natural condition where high annual rain causes excessive soil erosion leading the soil to leached one. Because of its acidity and reddish-brown the soil itself was not conducive for food crops other than coffee production. Here the options for the peasants are only two: first, using fertilizers which they cannot afford it. And secondly, shifting cultivation which was not allowed yet as the coffee production had left less important plots for crop. There was also fragmentation of land into pieces. Concerning this, Guluma had stated the following:

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<sup>234</sup> Guluma, 1986, p.92.

<sup>235</sup> Informant: Abbanaga Abbamecha

<sup>236</sup> Gulumma, "Some Notes on Food Crops and Coffee Cultivation in Jimma and Limmu Awrajas, Keffa administrativeRegion," 1986, p. 95.

In the 1950s and 1960s the fields around the homestead were put under coffee plantations. The spontaneous and unplanned distribution of coffee plantations had created unnecessary “pockets” of west land and favored the prevalence of anti-grain wild animals-like apes and monkeys. Peasants refrained from using such pockets of unutilized land for food crop production because, economically, the yield would not justify the labor spent on it. They claim that as the result of unnecessary fragmentation of the fields in the past, according to the wishes of the landlords, they cannot protect their crops from the wild animals. It is not without reason that the problem of wild animals loom.....<sup>237</sup>

There was also considerable increase in population growth where it mounted the price of food crop. As the ever growing populations need of food crop could only met by increment in food crop ,in Jimma it seems difficult to increase food crop; because large tracts of land was under the coverage of coffee plants. The rest plot was not conducive for food crop production.<sup>238</sup>

Even though the control of price for coffee and food crop have gained “equal attention” officially, it appeared more effective on coffee than food crop. Coffee farmers sell the coffee either to *sebsabi*(collector) merchants, who lesellers .As the collectors and who lesellers were selling it to the government at a fixed price, they in turn were buying from the peasants with a very low price. Because of their indebtedness on merchants’ through the money they had taken from the merchants during the hardship, peasants were forced to continue their elation with the merchants. Despite the acknowledged price of food crop, coffee farmers were obliged to buy food crop with a very high price. For example, officially known price of *teff* in 1963/64 60 per quintal; but sometimes it cost about 160-175 per quintal. What the coffee farmers could save was spent mainly buying grains. This condition was discouraged the coffee farmers. Since the peasants attention was to food crop production rather than coffee farming, the attention that given for coffee was decreasing. Traditional way of coffee production was also another problem of coffee farmers. At last but not least, coffee disease was the most problem of the region.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Informant: Mustafa Abamagal

<sup>238</sup> Guluma, 1986,p.95.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.



## Conclusion

The basis of land politics in Jimma general and in the district in particular, has long history of private ownership. The right of land holding passed from generation to generation through lineage. In addition, the nature of land tenure in the district has been dependent on the nature of changing political system. The formation of the *mootii* (kingship) system and the establishment of strong rulers influenced the economy of kingdom. The kings also played a role in dominating the indigenous people in order to impose their will. The conquest of the district by Menelik in 1880s resulted in exploitations it was experienced in different areas.

The conquest of Limmu also resulted in the domination of settlers from north. During Hailesilassie, with the expansion of the newly appointed government officials, land exploitation and land transfer became major issues. The emperor used new policies of land tenure system in order to maximize income from the area putting it under his loyal governance. The officials were allowed to amass huge tracts of land from the district. The land reform program of 1975 provided peasants engaged in agriculture with land access. New Peasant Associations (PA) were organized under the new land proclamations. With this new Peasant Associations land possession of the peasants was recognized.

The thesis therefore, explored the land tenure system, land ownership right, continuity and changes in the land holding system and the relations between land owners and peasants. The research also considers issues of land alienation, land privatization and *Qälad* institution which led to land privatization. The study covers the period from 1880s to the coming to power of military aristocrat, Dergin 1974.

“Land to the tiller” questions had been the consequence of peasant grievances everywhere erupted by Ethiopian students. The land question issue and other accumulated problems finally led to the removal of imperial Haile Sillassie Regime in 1974. The *Därg* nationalized rural land on March 4, 1975. Subsequently policies like co-operative work prevented agrarian and envelopment and made peasants living condition so difficult. Such past injures may have contribution in today’s life of the peasants. Even though land proclamation of 1975 provided peasants with the access of land which is not practiced earlier, land has been remained in the hands of few people. Moreover, lack of the introduction of mechanized farming under the study area led to large-scale economic problems which resulted in revolving poverty and subjected to tenancy. The overall implication of this study is that the debate over future rural land tenure policy options in Ethiopia needs to seriously consider the historical

experience of the past and ever negative consequences of private ownership of land and land concentration. Thorough analysis of historical experiences required not only to bold on key events of the past, but also to gain a better understanding of the land question and current debate over land tenure policy options, particularly the possible social and political consequences of hasty privatization in the country.

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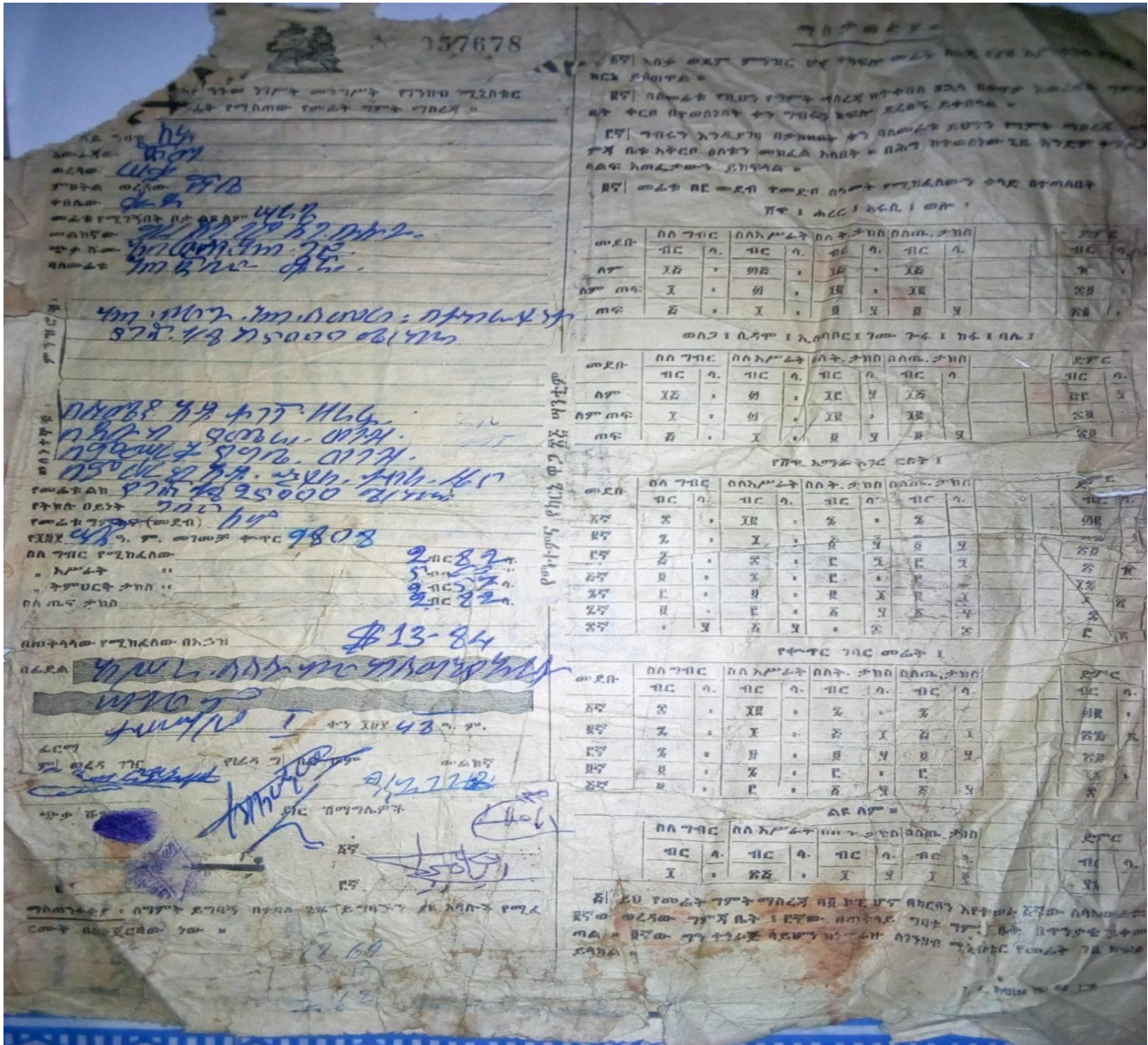
No	Name of oral informants	Age	Sex	Date of interview	Place of interview	Remark
1	Abamacha Abafita( <i>Obbo</i> )	60	M	014/05/2021	Babu	Elder and well Known informative
2	Ababiya Abamagal( <i>Obbo</i> )	72	M	05/05/2021	Gennet	Elder and well known informative
3	Abafita Abayirga ( <i>Obbo</i> )	93	M	05/05/2021	Gennet	Elder and well known informative
4	Abamecha Abamegal ( <i>Obbo</i> )	60	M	05/05/2021	Gennet	Elder and well known informative
5	Alamitu Sadam Bayan( <i>W/ro</i> )	65	F	06/05/2021	Gennet	Elder and well known informative
6	Ababiyya Aba Lulässa( <i>Obbo</i> )	75	F	13/05/2021	Babu	Elder and well known informative
7	Abaolii Abamacha( <i>Obbo</i> )	81	M	04/05/2021	Ambuye	Elder and well known informative
8	Aba Jabal Abagaro( <i>Obbo</i> )	92	M	06/05/2021	Gennet	Elder and well known informative

**List of Oral Informants**

9	Abaolii Abamacha( <i>Obbo</i> )	75	M	11/05/2021	Gennet	Elderandwell knowninformative
10	AbafitaGelan( <i>Obbo</i> )	75	M	11/05/2021	Gennet	Elderandwell knowninformative
11	AbbaSambiAbbaBashu( <i>Obbo</i> )	63	M	17/05/2021	Ambuye	Elderandwell knowninformative
12	Aba TamamAbdalla( <i>Obbo</i> )	90	M	13/05/2021	Ambuye	Elderandwell knowninformative
13	AbbanagaAbbamaccaa( <i>Obbo</i> )	93	M	24/05/2021	Jimma	Elderandwell knowninformative
14	Abafogi Abajilcha( <i>Obbo</i> )	72	M	24/05/2021	Ambuye	Elderandwellknowninformative
15	AbdulkerimAbage ro( <i>Obbo</i> )	81	M	18/05/2021	Babu	Elderandwell knowninformative
16	AbaNäimAbaFaji( <i>Obbo</i> )	63	M	24/05/2021	Ambuye	Elderandwell knowninformative
17	AbaraNigusé	92	M	19/05/2021	Babu	Elderandwell knowninformative
18	AbadigaAbadiko( <i>Obbo</i> )	81	M	14/05/2021	Ambuyye	Elderandwell knowninformative
19	Badhasoo Daba ( <i>Obbo</i> )	81	M	11/05/2021	Genet	Elderandwell knowninformative
20	Daba Tasesse	92	M	17/05/2021	Ambuyye	Elderandwellknowninformative
21	GelanBadhasoo( <i>Obbo</i> )	81	M	11/05/2021	Babu	Elderandwell knowninformative

22	Hadasharaf Abanaim	75	F	18/05/2021	Babu	Elder and well known informative
23	Hadasharaf Abanaim (W/ro)	70	F	06/05/2021	Babu	Elder and well known informative
24	Kelil Musa ( Obbo)	75	M	18/05/2021	Babu	Elder and well known informative
25	Muhamanuri Sada Bayan ( Obbo)	63	M	05/05/2021	Genet	He well informed about the history of land tenure of the distinct.
26	Musxafa Abakamal (Obbo)	75	M	23/05/2021	Ambuye	Elder and well known informative
27	Mamo Tadese (Ato)	90	M	11/05/2021	Genet	Elder and well known informative
28	Mamire Shita Birhanu (Ato)	63	M	06/05/2021	Genet	This person is priest of saint Marry Church in Gennet town. He has good information and has a good knowledge of passing information through oral traditions.
29	Suleiman Shesharif (Obbo)	64	M	24/05/2021	Jimma	Elder and well known informative
30	Tesfaye Mamo ( Ato)	90	M	14/05/2021	Babu	Elder and well known informative
31	Tadesse Woldämikael ( Ato)	63	M	19/05/2021	Babu	Elder and well known informative

# APPENDICES



Appendix.IX: this voucher (Dec. 1948 E.C.) addressed different types of tax paid by Abbabo son Abagero. These different taxes included land tax (2.82 birr), Aserat tax (5 birr), educational tax(2.57birr) and health tax(2.82)birr.



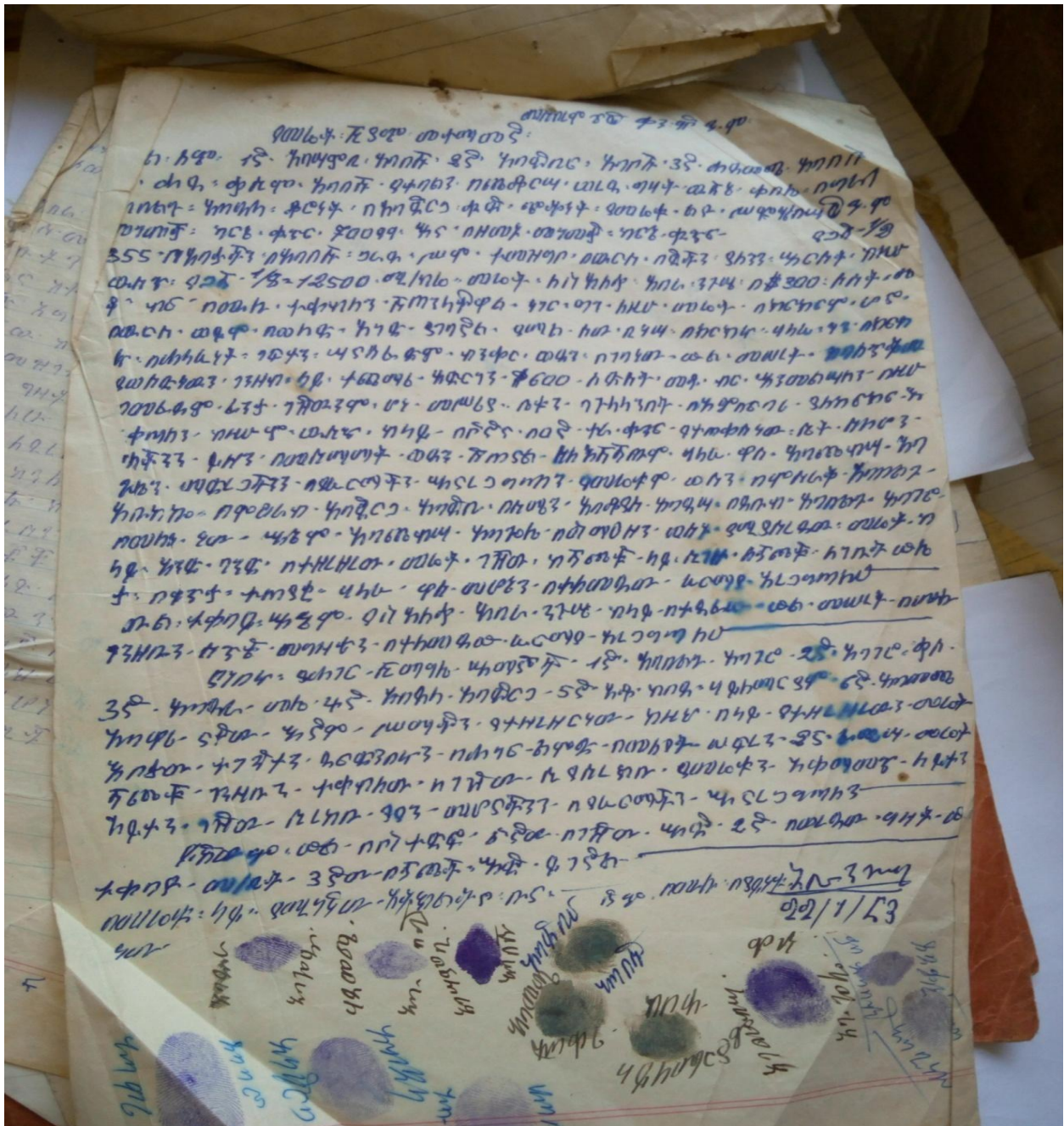












Appendix.V :is a deal of land sale between Abbayimbi Abeshu and Hadakasim Abeshu and shi'alekaAbera Niguse12,500m<sup>2</sup>with 500birr.







