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THE PEOPLE OF ETHIOPIA:
DRAFT OF A TEXT FOR THE FRESHMEN
OF HAILE SELLASSIE I UNIVERSITY

by

Georges C. Savard

Dissertation Committee:

Professor Francis A.J. Ianni, Sponsor
Professor James R. Sheffield

Approved by the Committee on the Degree of Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

THE PEOPLE OF ETHIOPIA:
DRAFT OF A TEXT FOR THE FRESHMEN
OF HAILE SELLASSIE I UNIVERSITY

Georges C. Savard

The dissertation illustrates the utilization of ethnography in the university curriculum of a developing nation. It consists of the draft of a textbook for Ethiopian students which deals with their own culture and insists on the human aspects of development, emphasizing continuity in change.

The textbook discusses, first, the need for ethnography, even in situations where people question the value of their traditions. This need depends mostly on the fact that genuine development involves human beings whose cooperation is absolutely essential. Cross-cultural communication, one of the keys to success in development work, is greatly facilitated by ethnology.

A brief enquiry in prehistory follows. It reveals the three fundamental stocks that have contributed to the peopling of Ethiopia: cushitic, negroid and semitic. The classification of Ethiopian languages confirms this view of the origins of the contemporary population.

Three culture areas are then described. First, the ensete area, which characterizes large regions in southwest Ethiopia. It offers

interesting examples of built-in mechanisms which facilitate, for rural folks, cooperation and adjustment to change at various levels, especially urban and national. The Gurage and the Sidama supply most of the data utilized for the ensete culture area.

The plough area, typical of the northwest, is the traditional Abyssinian area. It represents a most interesting laboratory of human groups at various stages of development and of integration in the national community. This area is like a microcosm which reveals its complexity only under close scrutiny. The Tigre and the Amhara obviously dominate in this area, but many smaller groups are found which must not be neglected.

The cattle area links Ethiopia with East Africa and the rest of the vast cattle lands. This culture area reveals a way of life--the pastoral--which is different, yet one with which practically all Ethiopians have some familiarity since cattle are found over very large parts of the country. The cattle area, however, exhibits very distinct characteristics and its population, often considered most backward by outsiders, offers remarkable possibilities for development. Some of the most radical changes in the traditional patterns of production and cooperation can be observed in these lowlands. The 'Afar supply most of the materials utilized for this area.

A brief conclusion to the textbook points at the positive value of pluralism today. The dissertation ends with reflections on the role of anthropology in development education. Cultural relevance is not envisaged as a cure-all formula but is seen as a necessary accompaniment to a generalized effort for development. Education remains a key factor of development, but only when it is of the right quality. To discover

the kind of education needed in developing countries is a most urgent and difficult challenge, which the nationals themselves are beginning to meet.

The People of Ethiopia is one such effort. It will have to be adapted to various audiences, continuously up-dated and utilized in conjunction with other available teaching aids. The chapters are followed by glossaries and points for discussion and numerous readings are suggested.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sincere thanks and appreciation are expressed to all who cooperated or assisted in any way in the completion of this dissertation. So many scientists and friends have contributed importantly to this work that it is impossible to enumerate them all.

The Ford Foundation and the Faculty of Arts Teaching Materials Committee of Haile Sellassie I University have supported the long preparatory work which went on in Ethiopia, with the cooperation and judicious advice of colleagues, in particular Professor Sven Rubenson, Dr. Gerry Despatie and Dr. Anis Samaan-Hanna, Dr. Marvin Bender, Dr. Siegfried Pausewang and Woizero Gennet Bissate, Miss Ivy Pearce and Mr. Louis Plamondon.

Special gratitude is extended to field workers who, like Dr. William A. Shack, Dr. Allan Hoben and Dr. John Hamer, have shared their knowledge with the writer; to the numerous informants who have given him priceless insights into Ethiopian culture, especially the late Abba Bourako, Sheikh Mohamed and Bitwoded Ali Mirah; to his colleagues of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Haile Sellassie I University; to the administrative personnel of this University whose countless services were so useful; and, above all, to generations of students who have always been an inexhaustible source of inspiration.

For their very valuable advice and constant help warm appreciation is due Professor Walter E. Sindlinger, Professor James R. Sheffield and

Professor Francis A.J. Ianni of Teachers College. To Mrs. Helen Hardy, many thanks for her cheerful and high powered efficiency in solving problems of typing as well as scores of others. Finally, to the Society of Jesus, without whose support this work could not have been completed, the writer wishes to express his gratitude.

PREFACE

One of the paradoxes brought to light recently in developing countries is the failure of modern education to fulfill the naive expectations it generated too easily some twenty-five years ago. Another paradox turned into a symptom ailing the Third World is the reluctance, commonly found among the educated, to spend even only a few years away from the most attractive urban centers, in the less favored zones of their own countries.

Western education alone does not bring development. Each developing nation must define now, and very realistically, what kind of education it considers most effective for development. This dissertation implements, in only one of many possible ways, the following proposition: all efforts to transmit--not to teach--new skills, new values and new attitudes to students in developing nations must be related to a solid knowledge of their own cultures and to a capacity to distinguish cultural configurations that are assets for development from cultural patterns that must resolutely be abandoned.

The need, in some countries, for immediate and drastic political reform must not cloud the fact that changes capable of affecting whole populations, not only their leadership, although extremely complex cannot be left to the vagaries of chance alone. This dissertation aims at laying the groundwork to support social change in Ethiopia. It is written for the Freshmen of Haile Sellassie I University, Ethiopia, to help them understand how knowledge of their own culture can facilitate

genuine development.[1] Suggestions for adaptation of this text to classroom use are submitted in the conclusion.

Changes in the climate of education all over the world make the topic of this dissertation most appropriate and timely. The Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind, The limits to growth, concludes with these words:

> Our present (world) situation is so complex and is so much a reflection of man's multiple activities, however, that no combination of purely technical, economic, or legal measures and devices can bring substantial improvement. Entirely new approaches are required to redirect society toward goals of equilibrium rather than growth. Such a reorganization will involve a supreme effort of understanding, imagination, and political and moral resolve. We believe that the effort is feasible.[2]

If the exponential curves of growth described in The limits to growth are going to be held in check there is hope for the developing nations to accelerate their development process to the point, perhaps, of enabling them in an unknown future to catch up with the more developed ones. This will require radically new approaches to education, especially in the Third World where the prospects are bleak.

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[1] Education for development is going through a process of self-criticism long overdue. In Germany, it is said, for instance, that books on Latin America do not convey an educational image that corresponds to reality and do not form a critical awareness. In England, geography textbooks are criticized for stressing the existence of various ways of life while failing to foster understanding of the various people. Studies of Swedish and French public opinion toward the Third World have also revealed views on development that may be shared by people in developing countries although they are superficial and incomplete, e.g.: development means all kinds of material goods. For more information on these questions see Development Education Exchange, 72/1 (1972), pp. 4,5 and 10.

[2] D. H. Meadows and others, The limits to growth (New York: Universe Books, 1972), p. 193.

What is needed for the Third World is, in fact, a revolution in education; a revolution that will require sophisticated planning and enormous funding. But even if the world is still spending seventy-eight times more per soldier than per child (five to nineteen years of age),[3] some gains must be recorded: the goals of education in developing nations are now more clearly identified. The recent evolution of education has been dominated by the recognition of the importance of relating education policy, planning and development to social and economic progress. The "producers" of education, the schools and the universities, are more closely related than ever to the "consumers" of education, industry, commerce and private individuals.[4]

In India, the Education (Kothari) Commission Report has clearly and firmly related education to the imperatives of socio-economic development. But unfortunately "the value of the report has been mostly symbolic because many of its capital recommendations have not been implemented."[5] This was perhaps only a momentary failure. Also, at a different but related level, one can note how slow and painful were and often still are the efforts of American educational institutions trying to cope with the problem of Black and other inter-ethnic educational

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[3] Survey of International Development, 7 (February, 1970), 3.

[4] OECD Observer, no. 27 (April, 1967), pp. 13 and 17.

[5] Personal communication from the Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, 6 March, 1971.

programs.[6] The American Indian organization "Teaching and Research in Bi-cultural Education" has opened promising avenues of development in education. But these are only beginnings in the most affluent of all contemporary societies.

In Africa, until a few years ago, very much remained to be done in terms of adapting education to the local realities and to the actual needs of concrete populations.[7] Seminars were held, e.g., in Addis Ababa (on the Role of a University in a Developing Society, 27 February - 3 March, 1967) and at the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland,[8] but with little tangible results. Significant innovations in education cannot come about in Africa without considerable research and the full backing of the Government machinery. However, there are signs of change: research institutes have multiplied rapidly lately, and with enough vigor to allow for the creation, in 1971, of a permanent Secretariat for the Conference of Directors of Economic and Social Research Institutes in Africa.[9] The cooperation of Governments was not

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[6]The Spring 1971 issue, XL (2), of the Interracial Review was devoted to this problem.

[7]During the colonial period, accommodation of education to the African reality characterized many schools, especially rural schools. See Stephen P. Heyneman, The conflict over what is to be learned in schools: a history of curriculum politics in Africa, Eastern African Studies II (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, 1971), pp. 9-49.

[8]See J. D. Turner and A. P. Hunter (eds.), Educational development in predominantly rural countries (Morija, Lesotho: Morija Printing Works, 1968).

[9]There are eighty-six research centers in thirty-eight African countries actively involved in CODESRIA'S activities. African Studies Newsletter, V, 2 (1972), 28.

so widespread although a few African states have endorsed some forms of educational "revolution" (see p. 203 below).

But there are no beaten paths to follow. Every African country represents a new and singular challenge.[10] The dissertation will illustrate, for Ethiopia, the contribution that anthropology[11] can bring to higher education in a developing country. Since an Ethiopian anthropologist might be more sensitive to some of the issues raised and better adjusted to this particular hour of Ethiopia's history, the writer hopes that, in the near future, an Ethiopian scholar will tackle the task; as for him, he is fully aware that he is only setting a few stones on ground where quicksand abounds.

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[10]Ready-made solutions usually fail because of the singularity of every concrete situation. See Carl K. Eicher, "Some problems of agricultural development: a West African case study," Africa in the seventies and eighties: issues in development, ed. Frederick S. Arkhurst (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), p. 220.

[11]Anthropology will be used in its most generic meaning, including social anthropology, ethnology and, occasionally, also archeology and linguistics.

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INTRODUCTION

The attempt to draw an adequate socio-cultural picture of the Ethiopians is a challenge that a reasonable and prudent man would rather decline; especially if he is not an Ethiopian himself: ያገሩን፡ ሰርጾ፡ ነገሩ ፡ነው:: "It takes the native ox to root out the native grass." This text was written for the students of Haile Sellassie I University to help them understand their own culture better and discover in it the dynamic sources of vitality that alone can make socio-cultural change genuine and lasting. There must be real value for survival in some of the cultural traits and social institutions that have supported the people of Ethiopia through many centuries. The challenge now is to find how the Ethiopian population can best and most profoundly continue its growth and development.

Before attempting to answer this challenge, however, a number of questions come to mind. What kind of change is meaningful in terms of development? What is development, as opposed, for instance, to growth? Should the past be forgotten as much and as fast as possible? Should there be some continuity in change? How far is a cultural revolution possible? These are crucial problems which the anthropologist, in his capacity as an anthropologist and, often, as an outsider, cannot solve for the concrete population he is studying.

Development and Change

He may indicate what he understands by development, explain it perhaps in terms of the "humanization" of living, the complex processes that can improve life for man, helping him, for instance, to utilize his talents, his health, his time more fully, giving him access to more convenient housing conditions, to more nourishing foods, to leisure for more contemplation, more pleasant, artistic or useful activities, etc. One can readily sense how difficult it is, in describing development, not to let one's values creep into the picture. The important point, here, is that development is not only quantitative increase. It may be so, but it must first of all be the kind of change that benefits man himself, that improves his living at all possible levels.

The notion of development once clarified, it remains for the anthropologist to decide what he is going to do next. Should he forget about development and pursue pure research irrespective of its relevance for change? Or should he assume that he can identify what changes are desirable for a population and take the responsibility to promote them? It was once fashionable to imagine the social scientist as an independent observer, one who could collect, classify and interpret social facts without his own values entering into play at any point. Less idealistic but still overwhelmingly interested in the pursuit of truth for its own sake are the scholars who choose, after identifying their own preferences, not to worry about the relevancy of their research for development. For the first time today, in the history of the profession, there are anthropologists who share absolutely opposite views. They look at the attitudes described above as naive or presumptuous; they are interested in action and in change. They will prefer, for instance,

to study the nature of power than the rituals of a nativistic cult. In the U.S.A., they have launched the "Anthropologists for Radical Political Action" and they want to use their profession for revolutionary social change.

Activist stance versus scholarly objectivity are extremes seldom found in a pure state. It is indeed healthy that scientists be attracted differentially by these poles and The People of Ethiopia does not purport to resolve the controversy. The writer's position is that Ethiopians only are entitled to determine the course of change in Ethiopia. His role is one of support, helping the agents of development to see some issues more clearly, to understand some basic facts more fully and always to keep in sight as many of the essential elements as possible. Furthermore, the writer's view on change is that it is omnipresent. There is really no static moment, no real immobility in life, even at the simplest stage of development. Moreover, there is usually some continuity in change: what was, often, has much to do with what is and what will be.

These problems are too complex to be solved with simple formulas; nothing in human society is reducible to a few easily isolated elements. However, in this text the writer focuses mostly on socio-cultural realities and he does it in full knowledge of the incompleteness of the analysis in the hope that students will be encouraged to continue, on their own, the study of Ethiopia. This knowledge of the country, although obviously insufficient to accomplish change, is nevertheless an absolute prerequisite for effecting meaningful reforms. Without this knowledge, development planning even in purely technical areas can be distressingly artificial and doomed to failure. Africans who

have never forgotten these basic realities are now speaking louder: Onye amaghi ka oha eburu ja ghara ama nna ya, "If a person fails in the knowledge of self, he shall be carried beyond his father's gate."[1]

Procedure and Implications

Ethiopia encompasses such a variety of groups that it is impossible to do justice to all of them in a single text. The People of Ethiopia attempts only to introduce the student to the vast field of Ethiopian ethnography. That some important groups will not be dealt with adequately, and that some small groups will not even be mentioned is unavoidable.[2] The writer has selected groups about which he had more information as a result of his own field work or of that of other field workers. He was not interested in the collection of exotic stories but in the gathering of facts which are significant for the people themselves and which may also help them understand problems of development better. The writer has relied on personal observation for most of what he wrote about the 'Afar[3] among whom he spent six months in 1963. For the other groups he had to rely on brief visits; these were

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[1]Nigerian proverb cited by Mazi E.N. Njaka, Africanism, Issue, no. 1 (Fall, 1971), p. 12.

[2]For a more exhaustive coverage one should consult the surveys of the International African Institute, London. In the Ethnographic Survey of Africa three books deal with Ethiopia: Ernesta Cerulli, The peoples of southwest Ethiopia and its borderland (1956), G.W.B. Huntingford, The Galla of Ethiopia. The kingdoms of Kafa and Janjero (1955) and I.M. Lewis, Peoples of the horn of Africa (1955). A fourth book, The central Ethiopians, has been written by William A. Shack and will be published in the near future.

[3]In 'Afar and in a few other cushitic words like fi'ema (association), for instance, the apostrophe represents a glottal stop.

sometimes rendered more valuable by the information gained from scholars whose contributions to the field of Ethiopian studies will be acknowledged in the appropriate chapters.

The People of Ethiopia will offer the opportunity to become acquainted with what Comhaire calls Ethiopia's "bewildering variety of ethnic groups."[4] This discovery, or rediscovery of Ethiopia will be done in a dynamic context: the ethnological present and its ordination to development. Knowledge about particular groups will reveal more about all Ethiopians and ultimately enrich knowledge about human nature and society; this knowledge will in turn help the reader come back with greater understanding to the infinitely complex realities of contemporary Ethiopia. This is one kind of dialectics that can help identify and resolve the contradictions of contemporary life.

A few more points. Transliterations: the spelling of well known and readily identifiable Ethiopian words, or names, will be kept unchanged; words in all Ethiopian languages will be romanized according to the phonetic system of the Webster Collegiate Dictionary with the unfortunate occasional loss of a few non-English sounds. These words will be underlined usually only the first time they appear in the text; unless their meaning is made clear by the context, they will be explained. Difficult words will be capitalized in the text and defined at the end of the chapter in which they appeared first.

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[4]Jean L. Comhaire, Urgent research in Ethiopia, Bulletin of the International Committee on Urgent Anthropological Research (Vienna, Austria), no. 8 (1966), p. 33.

A text like this one will need constant revision and up-dating. To that effect the contribution of all is indispensable. Abebe Bekele[5] and Haile Wolde-Michael[6] have described the excessive dependency of Ethiopian students and the need to develop a new spirit in the schools of Ethiopia, a spirit of freedom and creativity to help form new ideas and attitudes that will generate new institutions. The heroic tradition of warlike ancestors must be translated now into intellectual and motivational courage.

The student is expected to do a lot of hard and honest thinking because this text will raise more problems and ask more questions than it will dare answer. It will afford an opportunity to develop the kind of thinking and attitudes needed by the new Ethiopia. Fanon, in his conclusion of The Wretched of the Earth, has insisted on the fact that Africans do not want to copy Europe, or America, they want to build a new world of their own: "It is the question of the Third World starting a new history of man."[7] His idea is splendid but he does not tell the reader how he is going to realize it. One is left alone to figure out the itinerary that should be followed; Fanon ends where his followers are beginning.

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[5]Abebe Bekele, Some major problems in the curriculum offering in elementary schools of Ethiopia. (Addis Ababa: Haile Sellassie I University, 1969). (Mimeographed.)

[6]Haile Wolde-Michael, Social dependency in Ethiopia and its consequences for learning, Ethiopian Journal of Education, 4, 1 (1970), 4-15.

[7]Frantz Fanon, The wretched of the earth (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1966), p. 254.

In The People of Ethiopia the author will explore, first, some of the reasons to study Ethiopian ethnography that he found to be most meaningful for the Ethiopian students themselves. The second chapter will outline the present knowledge of prehistory on the origins of the Ethiopian people. The third, fourth and fifth chapters will explore, each one in a different way, the human realities of a particular culture area and will indicate the potential for development that can be found in the attitudes of the people and the institutions they have created. The conclusion will focus on problems of concern both to anthropologists and educators, like cultural relevancy and ethnic studies; it will also stress the urgent need for more research of a similar nature.

Chapter I

WHY STUDY THE PEOPLE OF ETHIOPIA?

While any amount of emphasis on the study of Ethiopia's mineral resources, the inventory of its woods, the listing of its birds, the classification of its plants, rivers, mountains, etc. raise no objections it is rather strange to find people who entertain doubts about the importance of ANTHROPOLOGY[1] and in particular ETHNOLOGY for Ethiopia. Why should Ethiopians study Ethiopians? Don't they know themselves enough? And what is the use of noting differences that tomorrow will have disappeared forever?

These questions are more difficult than they appear to be and the student who asks them will be satisfied rather by learning more and more about his countrymen than by being told why he should do so. The dissertation itself is the only adequate answer to the question asked in the title of this chapter. However, an attempt will be made here to orient--and challenge--the reader from the start. Some principles will be repeated, at the risk of sounding platitudinous because they are often taken for granted, and many who say they accept them do not in fact put them into practice.

Now, to the point: Ethiopians should study Ethiopians because they do not know each other enough and this ignorance is a serious

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[1]Words printed in capitals are briefly defined at the end of the chapter.

hindrance to development. In other words, there will be no development without the active cooperation of people, the grass roots, and one way toward getting this cooperation is knowing the people well. One of the conclusions of the development decade is that development depends primarily not only on technology, capital, specialists, natural resources, but on ordinary men and women or, as an expert in development economics has put it, on these non-conventional inputs that are the productive workers.[2] The role of this "human element" is being recognized increasingly as a most crucial factor of development.[3] In this context, ethnology is not a luxury since genuine development is not the result of manipulation, or passive subjection, but of the people's willingness to change, an effect that may require considerable time and effort on the part of the development agents.

The Importance of Manpower Resources

Manpower here means not only the number of people at different levels of education, but also their values, beliefs, behavior patterns, etc. To understand the importance of these human resources more clearly, consider for instance, the needs of two countries with a population of one million, each planning to increase the Gross National Product threefold. One nation may forecast to raise its G.N.P. from one hundred million to three hundred million. The other nation may plan to raise its G.N.P. from one thousand million to three thousand million. To achieve

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[2]W.A. Terrill, Human organization and methods in Turkey, Human Organization 24, 1(1965), 96.

[3]R. Weitz, From peasant to farmer: a revolutionary strategy for development (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 175.

these goals, each nation will have to triple its capital investment. Of these two, the more developed one will have to double its natural resources, while the less developed of the two will need to increase them by a small one fourth. However, the more developed nation will need just an insignificant increase of its human resources while the less developed one will really have to double its manpower resources.[4] These are eloquent figures and they say clearly that, in the early stages, development depends very much on manpower. One must never forget the paramount importance of what was called the "human capital formation," whether it be to carry on a malaria eradication program or a campaign for the utilization of better foods.

No matter what change has to be introduced, it is always the people, men and women, who will be the key factor deciding if the innovation will be carried out or not. It is the people who have to understand what is happening, and who have to be motivated to change; for without such understanding, no deep and lasting transformation can happen. To change the landholding systems, improve the farming methods and develop the industry, what is needed above all, is the manpower capable of achieving these aims; not only, of course, administrators able to carry on programs of land reform, but first and foremost people who will agree to adjust to new conditions and make the most out of their own potential.

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[4] Allan F. Matthews, Resources and norms in development planning, International Development Review, IX, 2 (1967), 11.

Resistance to Change

A difficulty one frequently faces while trying to implement development projects is the reluctance of the people to accept change when it affects their lives; not only superficial change, like the adoption of new styles of dress, but changes that require new mental schemes, new values, for example: acceptance of the need for planning, recognition of the value of manual work, the necessity to take some responsibilities or share them with others. These are vital changes without which there cannot be any real progress. Unfortunately, among people who want development there are many who are reluctant to accept such essential changes.

Several factors create MISONEISM. One such factor is the lack of communication between development agents and local communities.[5] This is a problem that does not result only from the multiplicity of languages, but more so from the attitudes of the people involved. There can be no fruitful communication except between people who respect each other. If a development agent lacks the basic respect for the people he is trying to help, his efficiency will be curtailed. An unnamed community was once cited as having followed carefully all instructions received concerning the building of pit latrines. They had done a perfect job apparently; and after three months, a government inspector found the latrines still in beautiful condition. How could they be so clean? The answer was simple: The people were not using the new latrines, but keeping them for their guests!

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[5]See Erskine Childers and Mallica Vajrathon, both from UNDP/UNICEF Development Support Communication Service (Asia), Social communication components in development programs, summary paper prepared for the Society for International Development Eleventh World Conference, New Delhi, November 14-17, 1969. (Mimeographed).

Another explanation for people's refusal to change is that they look on any form of change as something alien, a foreign product. People often resent change, because they cannot see how they could accept such a change and at the same time maintain their identity. Too often, people are told to change this and that. They are instructed to boil milk and their drinking water, to spray their plants, go to night school, wear shoes, take vaccinations, etc. They are almost always told what is wrong with their age-old habits and how they must change to new ideas and ways of life. All this tends to undermine their confidence.[6] They become confused and they react by developing a certain conservatism perhaps as a form of self-preservation. They see no solution to the dilemma: either remain what they are and face the consequence of being considered conservative, or give up their old habits and hope to modernize themselves completely. They get tired of being told what they must change and never being advised about what is good enough to preserve in their own culture. To help them maintain confidence and self-respect would surely make it easier for them to accept change.

The case of some American Indians is very enlightening on this point. Disillusioned and depressed after the conquest of their lands by the white man, many had lost their reason for being, their fundamental

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[6]Wallace speaks of individuals who will not abandon a conception of reality, even when they know it is useless, until they have been able to construct a new "mazeway." Meanwhile they are in the "dilemma of immobility," they cling to a disordered system and cannot face the anxiety of abandoning it although they find less and less satisfaction in it. This type of "marginality" can cause serious personality damage. See Anthony F.C. Wallace, Culture and personality (New York: Random House, Inc., 1961), pp. 161-62.

motivation. How could they prove their courage and maintain their values in a world where hunting, long and difficult expeditions, even war were outlawed? Some of them began to vegetate and ultimately reached the point of extinction. Others adjusted to the new circumstances and channeled their energies into innovative endeavors contributing, for instance, efficient skill in the construction of "high steel." In the process, they regained dignity and happiness. That was a tremendous step forward made possible by the discovery that they could preserve their identity and be modern at the same time. One of the phenomena of the acculturation of some American Indians is the fact that they did not lose their Indianness, no matter how "American" they became.

Who would blame anyone for remaining faithful to himself while accepting change, Ethiopians less than anybody else. Ethiopians whether they are students, soldiers, marathon runners or diplomats abroad, remain Ethiopians. An Ethiopian youth studying in the United States was glad to say that a group of fellow Ethiopians got together in Chicago for a feast of raw meat. Why not? Japanese students in Paris still relish Japanese food and often rate it higher than the renowned French cuisine. There is something in one's traditional culture that is more meaningful than anything else no matter how good, something that makes life worth living, something which gives one a sense of fulfillment, happiness and integrity.

Creative Syncretism

Clearly, one of the major difficulties development workers face is getting a population to adopt new ideals. In order to help people

transfer their loyalties from traditional goals to modern ones it is necessary to understand their present culture as well as the ideals to be introduced to them. This is precisely what President Julius Nyerere is trying to promote in Tanzania. ". . . It is not just a question of nationalizing banks and establishing public ownership over the main sectors of the economy. He is engaged in radically transforming the ideas, traditions and policies hitherto accepted by most African leaders."[7]

In the Arusha Declaration Nyerere says:

> Everybody wants development, but not everybody understands and accepts the basic requirements for development. The biggest requirement is hard work . . . The energies of millions of men in villages and thousands of women in the towns which are at present wasted in gossip, dancing, and drinking are a great treasure which could contribute more than anything we could get from rich nations.[8]

But how to fit new ideals into the traditional structure? Is it not enough to know the aims of modernization without trying to understand the structure of a tradition since most of this tradition may die out gradually? Why worry about the continuation of a past already sentenced to death? The question is important because real change takes place on a continuum, not by leaps and bounds. Before an expert tells farmers to modify their farming techniques, he must know why they have been following certain methods, otherwise he may make a fool of himself by suggesting senseless changes. Agricultural specialists have learnt,

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[7]Colin Legum, Tanzania steps up the pace of change, Toward Freedom, 16, 4(1967), 1.

[8]J.K. Nyerere, Uhuru na ujamaa: freedom and socialism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 244-45.

sometimes too late, that before teaching cultivators they themselves had to be taught certain essential facts that only experience in a particular region can reveal. Again before trying to modify the relationship between the sexes, or trying to modify the patterns of marriage, it is necessary to know why men and women behave in their particular fashion. People will respect only those who respect them. Many expatriates who came to Ethiopia have been condemned for superficial performance because they acted as total strangers amongst the populace.

It is easy to pass for an outsider in Ethiopia. even if one is an Ethiopian. But how to be accepted by the people in order to be of use in their development programs? Only by understanding a population thoroughly can one be able to communicate with it and help it conduct various development projects. Here are not meant elementary mechanical contributions like that of tire repairman or baker, nor transitory cooperation like that of a politician who finds a group relatively cooperative for limited action: these are types of momentary cooperation, far different from the one that requires change involving a modification of people's values and ideals. Changing one's values and habits honestly is not an easy process and it can be done only in certain privileged circumstances. For additional evidence just observe the great number of Ethiopians who have been trained in the sciences. How far have they gone in changing their traditional habits of thought and action? What is their attitude towards rhetorical ability? Toward programming and the efficient use of time? How much do they respect institutional rights when these conflict with personal relationships?

One conclusion to be drawn now is that in order to accelerate real and lasting change, in any group, it is of paramount importance to respect its identity. Without recognition of the personality of the individual, communication is bound to be imperfect and frustrating. The Ethiopian employees of the Chemin de Fer Franco-Ethiopien, in Diredawa, know within twenty-four hours if a new manager is from southern or northern France, and this makes a lot of difference to them. Similarly, although this may seem strange to some of you, a government agent should know that a Tigre, an 'Afar, an Amhara and a Sidama group will react very differently to a standardized approach that would not keep into account the various personality traits of each group.

Cultural Identity

True, there are people who, apparently, do not care about their own identity and hope even to conceal it. Some Ethiopians, for example the Agaw, choose to identify themselves with the Amhara, others like the Mao wish to be considered as Galla. This may be a loss in terms of human diversity and richness, but it is accepted with apparent willingness by the people involved and need not be discussed here. The global process of nation building, however, is a much more complex phenomenon in light of the fact that there are so many groups who are still firmly attached to their native culture, language and creed.

Here is a good illustration. A professor from Addis Ababa visited the Asmara Expo, in January, 1969. He was fortunate to be accompanied by three young educated Bilen: a University student and his sisters, one a high school student, the other a telephonist who speaks Bilen as well as Amharic, Tigrigna, Tigre, Italian, English, some Arabic and

French. They were eating in the splendid Sidamo hut of the Ethiopian Tourist Pavilion when the professor asked what they liked most at the Exhibition. After a moment of reflection they answered: "Our culture." It was indeed a pleasure to visit with them the Bilen exhibits, but there was only one reason for sadness: they were unable to hear the beautiful Bilen music! These were true Ethiopians still conscious and proud of their roots. They reminded the professor of a Gurage General--who should be more faithful to the country than an Army General?--who belongs to the Gurage Association and thus continues to help his ETHNIC GROUP.

The loudest objection raised against ethnology by students preoccupied with political unity goes like this: To stress group differences is to encourage ethnocentrism, an excessive attachment to one's group. The point may be valid if group differences are insisted upon, not however if differences are merely, but properly, acknowledged. In Dilla, some years ago, a Gurage had to walk several miles to meet members of a Gurage iddir[9] while his Amhara neighbor had to take the same trouble to meet members of the Amharä iddir. It was a fact, and as a fact had to be accepted, although things might have been different in Addis Ababa.

How should one concerned by the goal of national unity look at these two associations in Dilla? Does this ethnic consciousness of the Amhara and Gurage help, or harm, the nation? This is indeed

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[9]A voluntary fund-raising association for funeral services.

a complex problem and there is no easy answer to it, the solution depending on the level at which one stands: that of the small local government, of the nation state or even, of the large international community. Cooperation has a survival value and, in the seventies, one is easily tempted to agree with Nyerere who wants to extend the spirit of cooperation, to broaden it, making it possible for more people to be participants in the circle of cooperation: from the family outward, to larger and larger groups. Tribal solidarity has positive value, not tribal exclusiveness. Ideally, the tribal spirit of mutual aid should be extended to all members of the nation and even, as president Julius Nyerere once put it, to all neighboring countries.

Turnbull, in his conclusion of The lonely African has this to say on the usefulness of tribalism:

> The formalization of differences at a ritual level is what makes successful contact possible at other levels, removing hostility and allowing each tradition to continue to flourish side by side. It is when difference is not formalized in this way that it is expressed through overt hostility. The danger lies more in detribalization for this creates a hiatus and leaves lacunae that no concept of nationhood can fill overnight.[10]

National integration implies learning to work and cooperate, not only with friends, but with all citizens; for this, the capacity to accept others as they are is needed. Acceptance is really meaningful when it means accepting people who are different. The threshold of tolerance must be lowered to the point where it is possible to accept people of

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[10]C.H. Turnbull, The lonely African (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1962), pp. 246-250.

different faiths, races, classes, occupations or group affiliations. This is basic, because when one speaks of Ethiopians he speaks of a diverse collection of types.

Ethnocentrism

Unfortunately, few people are conscious of this broad diversity of ethnic groups. Blaten-Gaeta Mahteme-Selassie, a prominent Ethiopian, read a paper at the Third International Conference of Ethiopian Studies about the "typical Ethiopian."[11] And who was this typical Ethiopian? A Christian highlander, perhaps the Amhara grandfather of the Amhara writer! This was indeed a remarkable Ethiopian, but it was not the typical Ethiopian. Of course, it is natural for each individual to think of himself, of his relatives and even of his neighbors as true Ethiopians. However it is an oversimplification which narrows the concept "Ethiopian" down to a limited group of countrymen. On the contrary, an educated student should see in Ethiopia not a vague entity dominated by one's group, but a reality rich in various, useful and beautiful elements. Asmaron, in Gada, makes this point very clearly:

> (The) cushitic culture (of the Borana) reflects the African dimension underlying Ethiopia's cultural heritage. It is therefore important to re-examine the influence of the Gallinna speaking Ethiopians on the rest of the nation. For too long Ethiopian studies have been dominated by semiticists and orientalists whose knowledge of Africa was very limited and who failed to see the fundamentally African nature of the Ethiopian complex of cultures. They approach the problem with the assumption that the

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[11]Blaten-Gaeta Mahteme-Selassie Wolde-Maskal. "Portrait rétrospectif d'un gentilhomme éthiopien," in Proceedings of the Third International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa, 1966, III (Addis Ababa: Haile Sellassie I University, 1970), p. 61.

> "real" Ethiopia is the Semitic-speaking, Orthodox-Christian, monarchical culture of the northwestern provinces. The extensive orientalist literature on Ethiopia is heavily biased in the direction of making comparisons across the Red Sea and fails to give commensurate attention to the cultural bonds which become apparent when we carry out comparisons across the Nile. There are hardly any institutions in Northwest Ethiopia which do not exhibit an intimate connection with the Cushitic cultures which were present throughout Ethiopia long before the appearance of Semitic influences. Cushitic languages and cultures today cover the entire southern half of the nation. Furthermore, the semitic cultural veneer of the northwest provinces is not very deep. Even Amharic, the national language, which is structually a Semitic language contains a vast amount of Cushitic vocabulary.[12]

A brief digression on the causes of ethnocentrism will be useful here. It is in the nature of culture to unite men and, at the same time, to create separations between them. Why? Because culture is the complex of solutions that a group of people have agreed upon to solve the problems of living. Since there were always many alternate solutions, one cannot expect to find cultural uniformity everywhere. How to express grief after the death of a loved one? The traditional Amhara expresses his sorrow in rather dramatic ways, the Englishman manages not to depart from his customary self-restraint while the Japanese will try to muster enough self-possession to be able to smile. How to greet a friend? Shall a man kiss another man? Some think that a hand shake is the "normal" way to greet a friend; in England it might be too much, in France it might be inadequate! Many think that

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[12]Asmarom Legesse. Gada, three approaches to the study of african society (Boston: Boston University, African Studies Center, 1971), p. 1/003.

a kiss is a "natural" expression of friendliness, but in Lapland, some prefer to rub each other's nose, and they do not entertain the slightest doubt about the appropriateness of this means of communicating their feelings.

Except sophisticated persons who have enjoyed much traveling or done considerable reading, most people believe that their way of behaving in such matters as eating, dressing, etc., is the most "natural" way. For the man who is used to dressing in conservative Western style, a tie is necessary and to such a person, people without a tie do not look fully dressed. One's culture is extremely helpful in telling how to behave, in many circumstances, but at the same time, it creates barriers between one and others. An Ethiopian used to eating with knife and fork, may feel a little out of place in a very plush Tokyo restaurant where all patrons are using chopsticks. And, of course, for most Japanese, there is no doubt as to the "superiority" of their sticks, nor is there any doubt, in the mind of a Canadian as to the "superiority" of knives and forks. Both sets of cutlery may be the best in their different culinary, or cultural contexts, while Japanese and Canadians might keep thinking they have found, independently, the best solution to the problem of eating.

The same phenomenon can be observed in a variety of circumstances. An Amharic-speaker says: "A cold caught me," never doubting that another way to look at the same predicament would be to say: "I caught a cold." If a professor dies at Haile Sellassie I University, most expatriates will ask spontaneously: "What did he die of?" hoping to hear about the disease, or the accident, that caused the death. But ask a devout Moslem, like Fatuma: "How did your father Hussein, die?"

and she will think of only one answer: "Because Allah took him away." She will find rather rude and scandalous any probing into the secrets of divine Providence.

The amount of misunderstandings possible in cross-cultural communication is very great indeed. X tends to say immediately what is on his mind, while Y, on the contrary, would estimate it naive to allow his interlocutor to know exactly what he thinks. Again, for a Brazilian, the conversational distance tends to be very short, he likes to get close to the person to whom he is talking; too bad, if this is an Anglo-Saxon, because this poor one will feel very ill at ease: by his own standards, to converse at such close range is too familiar, even vulgar. The point must be clear now: cultural behavior is capable both of uniting and separating people.

Here is one final example which shows the painful reality of these cultural barriers that men have unconsciously erected around themselves. Bob is an American student coming to Paris in the 1950's. He comes from a country where people like to express friendliness by inviting their acquaintances to their homes. Most naturally, Bob expects the French to invite him for a meal at their homes, just as in the United States, American families sometimes foster foreign students for the duration of their stay there. But in France, people do not think along these lines. They expect the visitor to make the first move. They leave it to him to express his feelings; they would not take the initiative for fear of embarassing him. They will tend to wait and if the visitor shows friendliness, he will be treated warmly. Now imagine the nighmares of Bob who does not know these things: he curses the French for their lack of hospitality, while the French are wondering how an American

can be so unkind as not to take the initiative! Who should be blamed under the circumstances? The answer will depend on one's own cultural background, on the culture with which one identifies most. In fact, no one should be blamed because no one is guilty, except perhaps in the sense that educated people should be open-minded, able to realize the limitations of their own culture and to give credit to other cultures as willingly as they do to their own.[13]

Evidently, cultural characteristics, or ethnicity, cannot be erased at will: some Ethiopian students abroad like to celebrate Enkutatash[14] because it affirms the identity of which they are proud. However, these differences may change with time, through the people's cooperation and usually not by any amount of force. How would one, for example, "force" a conservative Tigre husband to give more freedom to his wife?

In the preceeding discussion on why Ethiopian students study the people of Ethiopia the most fundamental answer underlying all views on the question was: the need to communicate, the need for mutual respect and trust, for cooperation between men and women concerned with the development of their country. It will be useful now to begin the study of Ethiopian culture and to observe how this study can contribute to the work of development.

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[13]For more examples of communication failures in cross-cultural contexts see E.T. Hall, The silent language (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1959), and A. Vanderbilt, Etiquette (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1972), pp. 862-74.

[14]Ethiopian New Year.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Anthropology	The science of man.
Ethnic group	Group characterized by some or all of the following differences: racial, cultural, social and historical.
Ethnology	The scientific study of ethnic groups.
Misoneism	Hatred, or intolerance, of anything new or of any change.

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Statement of the National Museum of the Philippines: The Culture and Folklore of the Philippine National Minorities

The Filipino people are composed of cultural-linguistic groups basically alike but historically differentiated by isolation and by unequal exposure to Christianity and Islam. Those that escaped both influences are the indigenous religious groups usually found inhabiting the mountainous and marginal areas of the country. Together with the Muslim peoples of the southern Philippines they constitute about 10 percent of the country's population. These so-called "non-Christians" are the National or Cultural Minorities.

The Cultural Minorities are not "primitives" or the inferiors of any one. True, their life-ways may be different but the reason is simply that their local customs--some derived from the Great Traditions of the East, some locally developed--have proven to be satisfactory and functional. This viable combination of adapted and indigenous culture traits has enabled them to maintain their unique cultural identity in the face of the great transforming and leveling forces of Christianization and westernization.

Today the Cultural Minorities are faced with a third force: modernization. This world phenomenon is something they neither can nor wish to escape. They are adjusting to modernization by learning new ways and skills that equip them to live in an industrializing society.

Of necessity some of the old ways have been abandoned. Not all, however, need or should be abandoned. For the traditional cultures have a core of human values and achievements that remain relevant and desirable in the face of rapid social changes. Many of the artistic forms, ideas of mutual aid and family organization are values that the Cultural Minorities have maintained in a marked degree. The Cultural Minorities can contribute to nation-building by sharing these basic human achievements and thereby preserving for all Filipinos their roots in the Asian version of the visual and performing arts--woodcarving, weaving, metalworking, and folk-dances--they are bringing to the nation a measure of wealth and renown.

2. Tribalism as one of the main factors for disunity in Africa

People concerned about development and national unity should be aware of this problem and should strive to subordinate ethnic affiliation to loyalty to the nation. Even in industrialized countries people retain a number of simultaneous identifications; for instance, Baptist, Irish, New York, labor union, Democrat, Bowling Club within the broader loyalty of a United States citizen. Properly directed, tribal loyalties need not conflict with national loyalty. But the main question remains: how can a person maintain his identity as an individual and at the same time give his allegiance to a Federal Government? This is made more difficult in Africa since many nations have been formed more or less arbitrarily be Europeans who neglected to take into consideration the existing tribal boundaries. See Ali A. Mazrui, "Current sociopolitical trends," Africa in the seventies and eighties: issues in development, ed. Frederick S. Arkhurst (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), "retribalization" is discussed on pp. 49-53.

3. Cultural Communication

Understanding the culture of the people with whom one works can spell the difference between success and failure in introducing new ideas and methods. See Conrad M. Arensberg and Arthur H. Niehoff, Introducing social change: a manual for Americans overseas (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1964), pp. 1-8.

4. African Influence

The influence of African cultures on the acquisition of skills, personality characteristics and social structure. For an emphatic approach to the question see S. H. Irvine and J. T. Sanders, eds., Cultural adaptation within modern Africa (New York: Center for Education in Africa, Institute for International Studies, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1972), pp. 93-162.

Chapter II

THE FIRST MEN WHO LIVED IN ETHIOPIA

Prehistory, this branch of human knowledge concerned with what happened before man started writing his historical records, speaks of the great antiquity of man in Ethiopia and, more specifically, about the ancestors of today's populations. It can help to validate the claims to citizenship of Ethiopians who, because of their physical features, their linguistic characteristics or even only their occupations, could be the object of more or less subtle discriminatory practices. Prehistory in Ethiopia is still in its infancy and its conclusions are very often tentative; nevertheless some ARCHEOLOGICAL evidence is available which can support attempts at nation building.

This chapter will sketch summarily the process of formation of the Ethiopian population indicating some of the most substantial facts about which there is little doubt and pointing to a few major problems that future researchers may succeed to elucidate. Also a brief look at the classification of Ethiopian languages will add probability to the suggestions made.

The Peopling of Ethiopia

The first inhabitants of Ethiopia were undifferentiated racially because races, like languages, are the product of isolation and evolution; in fact, races appeared at a relatively recent epoch of

man's history.[1] These remote ancestors were tool-makers known from the sites excavated by archeologists and prehistorians. The stone tools, amburabush, that some Gojjame of the Blue Nile Valley know well are the only witnesses of this epoch. In a few years, perhaps, scientists like Clark Howell, from the University of California at Berkeley, may put pieces of the puzzle together and reveal more of the prestigious past of man in this part of the world. Washburn, one of today's greatest physical anthropologists, used to tell his students at the University of Chicago: "We owe a great deal to these first Africans since Africa was the scene of more than half of human history."[2] Modern man has a considerable African heritage.

There is no agreement on whether or not the bushmen have, settled, sometime in the past, in what is now Ethiopia. It does not seem impossible, however, that some of the depressed groups found here and there, in small pockets in the midst of the Ethiopian people may be related, if not to the bushmen perhaps to one of the oldest strata of the population, perhaps the East African hunters. Some of these "remnants" could be the Watta of Lake Zwai, the Wayto of Lake Tana and may be some

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[1]It is useful to distinguish two concepts of race. The first one, biological: a race is composed of a group of people characterized by a set of physical and inherited traits. This concept, utilized as a classificatory device, has been found practically useless. There is also the social concept of race: the artificial grouping of people under a racial label, but for social reasons. This writer remembers a time when educated Ethiopians would insist on their belonging to the white race; however, there are many Ethiopians, now, who identify with the black race.

[2]Lecture notes, University of Chicago, 1958. Washburn also explained that modern man is physically more closely related to the African ANTHROPOID apes than to the European, or the American, simian apes.

other rare groups of hunters like the Bone or the Mijan who live among the Somali, the Manjo or Gomaro of Kefa, the Koighi found among the Magi, the Bando and Yirdi among the Miekin, the Gabra of Borena, the Dume of the northwest of Lake Stefanie, may be even the Masongo.

Cushitic Speakers

Les's problematic and much more significant for Ethiopia's contemporary population could be the seven fossils found in Kenya some forty years ago. They might represent the population that gave rise to the cushitic speakers of Ethiopia. Today's cushitic-speaking populations are found in Ethiopia, Egypt, Chad and North Africa. Their ancestors might have come from East Africa and moved north and northwest where their presence has been clearly identified. In Ethiopia they would have little by little built up the cushitic family of people. Leaky, interpreting his 1929 find, laid the ground for these hypotheses in the following fashion.

He excavated, in Kenyan soil, seven skeletons that dated back to about 11,000 B.C. These men were CAUCASOID,[3] very close in appearance to the modern Berbers and different from any fossil men ever dug out in the area; they manufactured tools that could not be related to any INDUSTRY already in existence there, but that were similar to tools found in the Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia) and dating about 9,000 B.C. Most typical of the tools characteristic of this industry, called Kenya Capsian, (even, of course, in North Africa), are the

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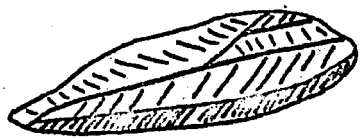
[3]Cheikh Anta Diop, the Senegalese historian, said in a personal communication he believed these fossils were negroid.

backed blades (Figure 1). Leaky called these men "paleo-hamites"[4] and suggested that they may have been immigrants coming from El Tabun (Israel) where similar skeletons were found. These so-called paleo-hamites may have moved from East to North Africa during the two thousand years between the dates given above and, if some of them had decided to settle somewhere on the way, they may have become the ancestors not only of the Berbers but also of the Agaw, the Sidama and the multitude of cushitic speakers found in Ethiopia.

Figure 1 BACKED BLADE



It is appropriate, at this point, to note the cushitic contribution to the development of the Ethiopian culture. The cushitic speakers responded positively to innovations brought from outside, and they also exhibited considerable creative energy themselves. Francis Anfray, archeologist and chief of the French Mission to the Ethiopian Institute of Archeology, was already saying in 1965: "The more we dig in the first millenium before Christ, the more we discover the role of local influence (as opposed to Saba's, South Arabia) in the elaboration of the Aksumite culture."[5] In Ethiopia there are possibly thousands of cave paintings,

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[4]The label "paleo-hamites" is not a happy one. The words "hamite" and "hamitic" were too often used in the past in association with traits like pastoralism and also with some kind of presumed superiority, intellectual or racial. Fortunately "hamitosis" is a disappearing illness. As will be seen below, linguists have coined new names that seem much more satisfactory.

[5]Personal communication.

over ten thousand phallic stones, about which little is known but which certainly testify to the vitality, in more than one sense, of these ancient cushitic speakers. These are facts that help put in a more exact perspective the contribution of the other migrants, the negroes who came from the west and the Sabeans who came from the land of Sheba.

Negroes or Nilotic Speakers

A second important addition to the make-up of the Ethiopian population was contributed by the negroes who would have come from West Africa[6] at a time when the Sahara enjoyed favorable climatic conditions with rain, moderate heat, etc. During their eastward thrust the negroes who invaded Egypt three times, without success, must have pushed also into Ethiopia. Nowadays, negro groups are found mostly in the western part of the country, but in the past, they may very well have penetrated deeply into the interior as evidenced by the scattering of negroid features one observes in the population of today. The coming of the negroes to Ethiopia could date back to 3,000 B.C. at the latest,[7] and it was most probably accompanied by the introduction of agricultural techniques which the local population, apparently, adopted willingly. The contribution of the negroes to Ethiopian prehistory has not been sufficiently stressed in the past, but it is now being more and more clearly acknowledged. For instance, in his recent writings, Eike Haberland

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[6]G.P. Murdock, Africa: its people and their culture history (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1959), p. 170.

[7]Murdock, Africa, pp. 67 and 187.

underscored the African character of Ethiopia's culture. He even maintained that the Solomonic monarchy "far from emerging as a direct successor to the Aksumite monarchy is, in fact, a typically African divine kinship."[8]

Semitic Speakers

The Sabeans are late comers who formed the third layer of the Ethiopian population. It is now recognized that there was not only one migration from south Arabia to Ethiopia, but many. Migrations have been happening from time immemorial and in fact are still taking place. The south Arabian civilization was highly developed in terms of trade and manufactures but, like the historical highlands of Ethiopia, it never had a fixed center. A climax was reached around 1,000 B.C. and in subsequent years, especially around 500 B.C., the most important population movements toward Ethiopia took place. The interaction processes between the immigrants and the local population is not yet completely understood and Anfray wonders at the fact that the inscriptions found in Ethiopia and written in south Arabic script are clearly better than those--much more numerous found in Arabia.[9] If one cannot credit the south Arabian migrants with creating from nothing a civilization in Ethiopia, one must nevertheless, recognize that their role was considerable: extensive cities, remarkable buildings, monolithic steles unsurpassed at the time, delicate and elegant pottery, metal crafts, a script (to be

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[8]See the book review, by A.K. Irvine, of Eike Haberland's Untersuchungen zum Athiopischen konigtum, in Africa, XXXVI, 3 (July, 1966), 328-29.

[9]Francis Anfray, Aspects de l'archéologie éthiopienne, Journal of African History, IX, 3 (1968), 345-66.

completed later by the addition of vowels) and, perhaps, a special art of music writing unknown then in the Middle East and even in Egypt.

The study of the prehistoric gestation of the Ethiopian population cannot be complete without reference to the development of the Ethiopian languages. Language and culture are intimately related and they can tell a lot about each other. Yet a particular culture and a particular language are not necessarily bound together in permanence. There are people who keep their language and adopt an alien culture, e.g. the Dada Galla growing ensete in the lake Wonchi area; and there are other people who keep their culture while adopting an alien language, e.g. the Raya Galla of Wollo. One must be careful, therefore, in evaluating the significance of a particular language in relation to a given culture.

Linguistic Evidence

Language classification, nevertheless, can reveal very much about a) relationships of the languages among themselves, and often also even about b) the interdependence of the speakers of these languages. Two related languages, like e.g. Tigrigna and Tigre, would normally indicate that their speakers belong to populations that--originally--were parts of a common ancestral linguistic stock. A linguist finding himself in a new settlement, e.g. in Gamu Gofa, could probably, from the speech of the settlers, trace their relationship with the region they came from Gondar, or perhaps Menz.

In Ethiopia, there are some eighty-three languages and two hundred DIALECTS. If all the languages traditionally spoken by the people were languages of the semitic family, one could conclude that the Ethiopian population of today is apparently derived from semitic

speaking ancestors; if Ethiopian languages were all derived from Bantu languages, the conclusion would be different and would suggest entirely different hypotheses on the origin of the Ethiopian population. A look at the classification of Ethiopian languages,[10] however, will reveal three important linguistic families. They are: the cushitic, semitic and nilotic families and they correspond to three major facts of Ethiopia's past: a) the presence, on this land from time immemorial, of a non-negroid population, whose ultimate origin is still unknown; b) the coming of negroes, mainly from the west; and c) the influx of Sabeans from the east.

One conclusion can be drawn at the end of this very short survey of Ethiopia's prehistory: today's population plunges very deep into the past. This in itself means little unless it is accepted consciously as an indication of legitimacy and solidarity for all the elements that come into the making of the new nation.

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[10]Marvin L. Bender, Outline of a classification of Ethiopian languages, 6th rev. version, Language Survey of Ethiopia, (Addis Ababa: Haile Sellassie University, Feb. 1, 1971). (Mimeographed.) In this classification, the semitic and cushitic families are lumped together in the Afroasiatic super-family. A.N. Tucker (Babel en Afrique, Atomes, no. 248 (Nov., 1967), pp. 646-51), uses Erythraic instead of Afroasiatic while Murdock still uses Hamitic, all terms revealing the mysterious origins of that linguistic stock. The language survey has promoted the Omotic group, found in former classifications, to the rank of the Omotic family. The writer cannot see the consequences of this change in terms of population movements. One must wait for new data which will likely add to the present knowledge without contradicting it.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Anthropoid	With a somewhat human form. Monkeys are simian apes, that is apes with a monkey form, e.g. with a tail.
Archeological	Related to archeology, a science concerned with all the products (e.g., artifacts, architecture, etc.) of ancient populations.
Caucasoid	The "white race" as understood by the man in the street. It is used here without any connotation of superiority and it is meant only to indicate obvious physical differences that allow to distinguish some people from others. Students of East African prehistory, e.g. Sonia Cole, have found it necessary to introduce this principle of differentiation.
Dialect	A specific variety of a language showing sufficient peculiarities of pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary to be considered a distinct entity, yet not sufficiently distinct from other dialects to constitute a separate language (dialects are mutually intelligible); usually applied to local dialects with a geographic basis.

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Abyssinian history and the challenge of Islam

> Our study of Islam in Ethiopia has been dominated throughout by the history of Christian Abyssinia. Nowhere has there been any escape from it. In fact, Islam in the region would have no history without Abyssinia. Now that we have approached the end of our historical study we may consider how it came about that this monophysite Christian fortress was able to survive and become, as Professor A.J. Toynbee has put it, 'one of the social curiosities of a latter-day Great Society.' He instances as peculiarities of modern Abyssinia: 'The survival of her political independence in the midst of an Africa under European dominion; the survival of her monophysite Christianity in the borderland between Islam and paganism; the survival of her semitic language between the hamitic and nilotic language areas; and the stagnation of her culture at a level which is really not much higher than the level of the adjacent tropical African barbarism.'

From J.S. Trimingham, Islam in Ethiopia (2nd. ed.; London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1965), p. 143.

2. Habeshat

Until a few years ago it was generally thought the Habeshat were a leading tribe in south Arabia, they had lands on the African coast and were engaged in the incense trade. By the fourth century they had become the subjects of the Aksumites as can be seen from Ezana's trilingual epitaph. However, Irvine contends that no tribe by the name of Habeshat either existed in Arabia or was responsible for all that has been attributed to it. Habeshat would have been a geographical term designating a country west of the Red Sea, possibly with Axum as its administrative center; by the sixth century Habeshat meant Abyssinia for everyone. See A.K. Irvine, On the identity of Habeshat in the South-Arabian inscriptions, Journal of Semitic Studies, X, 2 (Autumn, 1965), 178-196.

3. The meaning of "Ethiopianism" for American negroes

See K.J. King, Some notes on Arnold J. Ford and New World Black attitudes to Ethiopia, Proceedings of the First Annual Conference of the Historical Society of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, 30 April - May 2, 1971. (Mimeographed.)

4. The Peopling of the Horn

George P. Murdock suggested that highland farmers, mostly cushitic-speaking, discovered the advantages of pastoral life, sometime before A.D. 1,000. They would have then invaded the Horn in three successive waves and from these would have originated, in turns, the Galla, the Somali and the 'Afar. On the other hand, Herbert S. Lewis, after a careful study of written sources as well as oral traditions, found among the Galla and Somali, and of the evidence supplied by comparative linguistics came to a different conclusion: the order of penetration into the Horn should be reversed: the first to enter would have been the 'Afar, then the Somali and finally the Galla. These three would have belonged, originally, to a single community found in southern Ethiopia - northern Kenya. See G.P. Murdock, Africa: its peoples and their culture history, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1959), c. 41: Herbert S. Lewis, The Origins of the Galla and the Somali, Journal of African History, VII, 1 (1966), 27-46; I.M. Lewis, The so-called Galla graves of Somaliland, Man, no. 132 (1961), pp. 103-06; H.C. Fleming, Baiso and Rendilla: Somali outliers, Rassegna di Studi Ethiopici, XX (1964), 35-96.

5. The meaning of "Ethiopia"

See E. Ullendorff, Ethiopia and the Bible, (London: Oxford University Press, 1968) and Tadesse Tamrat, A review of Ullendorff's Ethiopia and the Bible, Addis Reporter, I, 12 (March, 1969), 14-16.

Chapter III

THE ENSETE CULTURE AREA

The study of Ethiopia's past is, along with Ethiopian languages, one of the most advanced sectors in the field of Ethiopian studies. Ethiopia is justly proud of having a rich stock of historical records and challenging prehistoric sites, however, it is not the purpose of this dissertation to investigate Ethiopia's past and the reader must now turn its attention to the present, or more exactly the ethnological present, that fluid reality which keeps changing even if, sometimes, almost imperceptibly.

Ethiopia's large cultural spectrum is beginning to appear with greater clarity. The scientific field work that began with anthropologists and sociologists like Shack and Levine, in the late fifties, has continued with increasing productivity, in the sixties, and is now supplying highly needed knowledge about Ethiopia's culture. The following chapters will deal with three major culture areas.

But, first, what is a culture area? To visualize a culture area the reader can imagine him/herself travelling in space toward Africa and suddenly being able--at about ninety miles from the earth--to distinguish significant differences between large areas of the continent. The desert zone, in the north, would obviously attract attention, but so would the heavy forested central area, the mountain zone of the Horn, also the long belt covering the eastern third of sub-Saharan Africa and running up from the southern tip of the continent as far north almost as Khartum: the east Africa cattle area. Such well characterized regions can be

called culture areas, or areas grouping contiguous ethnic groups that exhibit a number of common cultural traits sufficient enough to identify the particular areas as distinct cultural units. The culture area is a cultural and geographical entity. It may allow for differences such as can be found in sub-cultures; but the culture area enjoys a marked cultural homogeneity that distinguishes it from the surrounding culture areas. This concept has been used first by American anthropologists who found it helpful as a classificatory tool and as a means to study the cultural history of the American Indians. Anthropologists have found the concept meaningful also in African studies; it will be used here, not because it is adequate as a classificatory device for complex cultural data, but because it is the best principle around which to build a broad synthesis of the Ethiopian people, a synthesis which of course will have to allow for exceptions.

In order to identify the main culture areas of Ethiopia one will have to ask the following question: Where are the most important areas characterized by different sets of ECOLOGICAL patterns, that is, different types of interaction between habitat and life, human or animal? In this perspective, a cultural area is one where the environment, the technology, the methods of production, the values and beliefs of the people, and their main institutions have become so interrelated that a typical way of life has developed. Three such areas will be described: the ensete or false banana area (Chapter 3), the maresha or plough area (Chapter 4) and the cattle area (Chapter 5).

Characteristics of the Area

The ensete area can be called also the HORTICULTURE area or, with Simoons, the southern vegetative center. Although considerable socio-cultural and economic differences can be observed in it, the ensete area remains at least in some regions like the Gurage country, a good representative of the ideal culture area; the fact that the ensete area is also the home of one of the few plant cultures in Africa confirms this judgment.

The ensete area spreads south of the Addis Ababa, Jimma, Gore road, west of the lakes (including Derasa territory), north of Bako and Maji, on both sides of the upper Omo river and east of a line linking Gore and Ukwaa.[1] The altitude of this plateau is between 5000-8500 feet. In the lower regions, the weather is pleasantly warm, throughout the year, with relatively little variation of temperature between day and night. The traditional inhabitants of the high plateau look at the ensete area as an unattractive and unworthy scrub country, but for the ensete people it is indeed the best home for man.

Cushitic languages have proliferated astoundingly in this area and are spoken by practically every group except the Gurage. There are large communities of Moslems and Christians, but traditional religious beliefs survive with the spirits playing a very crucial role for important segments of the population.

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[1]For an illustrative map see William A. Shack, The Gurage (London, Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 3.

Until the advent of the national central government, many of these groups had known only non-centralized or SEGMENTARY, systems of government. Others, especially from the Ometo group, like the Zola, Gofa, Badditu and the better known Welamo, Janjero and Kefa were ruled by kings. Shack,[2] writing some years ago, estimated the population of the ensete area at two and a half million. Today a prudent estimate would reach from four to five million.

It is difficult to characterize the soils of this area. In some parts of Gurage land, for example, the soils are poorer than in the maresha, or plough, area, but in other regions they are rich. Melak Mengesha, former head of the Debre Zeit Agricultural Experiment Station, once stated that in the Sidamo and the Gurage areas the soils were very fertile because they were not exhausted as in the northern highlands where cultivation dates back several centuries.

The relief also differs from that of the plough area: it is not plateau like but mostly rolling country. Large cultivated fields are scarce and several species of grar, acacia, kulkwal, euphorbia, kentcheb, cactus, to a lesser extent meka, bamboo, and more recently the eucalyptus tree are characteristic of the area.

The patterns of settlement, also, are in contrast with those of the maresha area. Here, instead of villages, one finds a homestead type of settlement. Individual farm holdings are not large, about the size of back yard gardens where small numbers of relatives are grouped

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[2]William A. Shack, Some aspects of ecology and social structure in the ensete complex in southwest Ethiopia, the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland XCIII (1963), 74.

together. Villages exist of course, for example, among the Gurage where they formed effective units of defense when tribal warfare was common.

Characteristic of the ensete area is the high density of population. This may be observed clearly even from a rapid look at aerial photographs of that zone. Shack estimated the average density at 7.8 persons per homestead in a newly settled Gurage village. In older settlements, the figure was much higher. It should not sound impossible, therefore, to find in some areas four hundred and fifty persons per square mile.

The average individual land holding for cultivation is relatively low. Among the Gurage, the size of a plot is between one acre and 2.5 acres.[3] In northern Ethiopia, surplus land was needed to enable farmers to support the army and the central government. Fortunately, among the Gurage, the methods of regulating the allocation of land prevented any individual from exploiting land resources at the expense of others. A man hoping to sell land had to offer it first to members of his lineage, then to members of the more closely related lineages, then to members of his district, and so on, by order of decreasing proximity. It was very unlikely that the same individual would have qualified for many deals.

Among the important crops of the area are bokolo, maize, mashilla, sorghum, nug, an oil seed and coffee, the cash crop. But above all is ensete. Until 1971, this region has not known serious starvation, thanks

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[3]The most important unit of land measurement is the gasha, theoretically forty hectares, or about one hundred acres. For a comparison of land-man ratio between the Gurage and other groups see Table III in Shack, The Gurage, p. 45.

primarily to the abundance of ensete, the staple diet, and to the quality of the ecological adaptation developed in the southwest. However, ensete is almost pure starch, without proteins and it has low nutritional quality. But when combined with dairy products (ensete farmers usually keep cattle to produce the manure needed to fertilize their gardens), it can become a valuable staple. A good instance of the value of ensete as a staple food may be seen perhaps in the fact that some cattle areas record a population increase when ensete cultivation is introduced to them. The Kofele area, near Shashamane, illustrates well the phenomenon. Ensete in the southwest could be compared to rice in traditional China: the ensete culture is truly a plantation culture.

The Tree

The ensete, enset ventricosum, is indeed an extraordinary tree. The more one learns about it, the more one understands the attitudes of the southwest people toward it: these range from very pragmatic concern for a plant that has prevented starvation, among the most densely settled populations of the country, to affection and even mysterious respect.

The ensete is a root-tuber, characterized by its large leaves and the absence of a trunk; it manufactures starch in its root and STEMS. Depending on the altitude, this starch-making process can take from four to ten years. Hence patience, special care and arduous work is required from ensete cultivators. The extraction of food from the fibrous stems and the fermentation of the starch in earthen pits are only part of a complicated cultivation process which no doubt gave to its originators as well as its present day cultivators great pride, confidence and to some extent even a sense of superiority.

One must realize that these are not only romantic feelings. The ensete, for long, was perhaps the most solid cog in the wheel of the traditional Ethiopian economy. With proper tilling and manuring, ensete gives a higher and more dependable yield than any other crop in Ethiopia. Speaking not in terms of yield, but of stable support for an economy, it was said that ensete is the best in Africa, largely because it can be stored for a very long period of time.

From a purely biological point of view, the ensete is amazing. Here is a plant that REPRODUCES only VEGETATIVELY, but with a spectacular proliferation: one plant can give as many as one thousand offshoots. Ensete offers also a remarkable number of varieties. For instance, in Janjero alone, sixty-eight different kinds were actually counted; there may be many more in other parts of Ethiopia.

Uses of Ensete

People depend on ensete for many necessities of life. First of all, ensete is the staple food.[4] An edible substance is obtained from the stem of the long leaves and also occasionally, from the root. The "bark" can be used as fuel and, for construction purposes, as an insulator between layers of thatch. The leaves can be utilized for wrapping objects to be protected against moisture, for lining the pit in which food is left to ferment, for supplying additional plates when, on feast days, the guests are very numerous, for providing fodder and finally, even clothing as in the case of the Basketo, the Ghibe and a

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[4]From here on data collected by Shack, The Gurage, will be frequently utilized.

few others.

Many more utilitarian needs of man are served by the ensete. The fibers, left over after the food has been extracted, are dried and utilized to manufacture rope, or sold to make paper bags. Most important of all, medicine is usually extracted from the root of special ensete trees called the Ensete of the Kings; one of which is the Astara, better known perhaps because it is used to prepare potent abortives.

Less concrete but equally significant are all the uses related primarily to belief and ritual. Seeds can be read to predict the future. Food prepared according to certain rites is served on feast days or offered as a tribute to one's superiors. More subtly even, the ensete plantation that consists of tall and strong trees is a source of increased prestige for its owner. Status is linked to the kind of ensete one is working with; the degree of maturity of a plant indicates the degree of maturity of the man engaged in cultivating it.

No wonder, if such an extraordinary plant has had a profound influence on the people who owe their survival to it. The ensete has entered into the myths explaining the origins of the world and it has been used to justify certain aspects of the actual social structure. For the traditional Gurage, for example, ensete was created by God even before the first Gurage and, since this first "proprietor of the earth" was a free man, no women, artisans or slaves were in the past allowed to own land.

For many ensete cultivators, ensete constitutes the best gift one can think of when obliged by custom to make an offering to fellow humans or to spirits. Therefore, the loss of one's ensete is the worst calamity. To force hesitant laborers to participate in corvée work, one

simply has to threaten the men that their ensete will be cut off unless they work. In some parts of the Gurage country, for instance, when a road has to be built with the help of communal labor, a neighbor who neglects to supply his share of work will be punished by having to feed with his ensete the whole crew of corvée workers; this punishment is sufficient to prevent reluctant participants from becoming defaulters.

The Ensete at the Heart of a Culture Complex

The ensete culture supports a multiplicity of relationships between man and his staple crop. These relationships are to be found at practically all levels, from the basic material culture to its more spiritual forms, like religious behavior. The ensete culture is unique in Africa, because it is the only planting culture characterized by such a complex web of associated socio-economic values. Among the southwest people it plays the role that yam, the starchy root, plays in Micronesia or that the cattle play among the Nuer. The ensete area is a typically Ethiopian culture complex since ensete is not grown for food anywhere else in Africa. The value of ensete is so great that, for centuries, it has imposed itself to northerners who migrated to the southwest.[5] The adoption of ensete by farmers coming from the plough country, an interesting case of ecological adaptation, was a judicious decision because ensete is a sturdy plant capable of resisting heavy rains and relatively long dry spells. Once planted, it endures with a minimum of care and is not too vulnerable to its few enemies: worms, beetles and hogs. Ensete growers have often helped with food their

[5]It is only recently that northern migrants, for example in Welamo, have turned to large scale farming of other crops.

less favored neighbors who occasionally got threatened by famine. Lately, however, ensete plantations among the Kambata, for example, have been considerably affected by new diseases, a fact which points to the need of agricultural experts familiar with the little honored but precious ensete tree. Dagnatchew Irgu indicated some years ago the need of intensive research on a) ensete diseases,[6] b) means of reducing the length of its growth cycle and c) methods that could help the farmer do away with transplanting.

The Gurage

The generalizations offered on the ensete culture area must not hide the fact that there are differences between one ensete population and the other. Not only differences of vocabulary, as in the nomenclature concerning the tree itself, the cycle of growth, etc., but also in patterns of social and economic organization. One group, however, can be chosen as a representative of the ensete area if it reveals, in some of its traits, aspects that are characteristic of the whole area. Such is the Chaha Gurage group, one of the "Seven Houses" of western Gurage. The following description refers to the "ethnological present," this continuum which keeps changing as social scientists do their best to draw an accurate picture of it.

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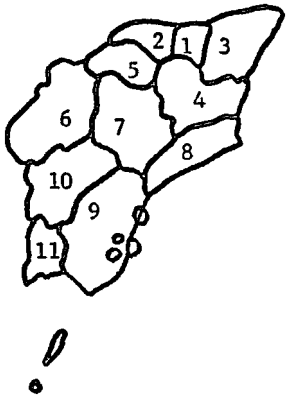
[6]This was a timely recommendation. William Shack told the author in a personal communication, Nov. 9, 1972, of an epidemic which ruined, the year before, most of the ensete plantations in Chaha country. The nature of the disease has not yet been discovered.

Land

One of the awraja (provinces) of western Shoa is called Chebo and Gurage (figure 2). At its broadest, the Gurage land can be ninety miles long. The terrain is semi-mountainous and one third of it only would be, according to the people themselves, suitable for habitation and cultivation. This is a handicap one must keep in mind to realize what great industriousness it took the Gurage to exploit their land to the maximum. In the past, this part of Ethiopia was one where movement depended very much on the seasons. During the rains internal travel became sometimes impossible because the open grass plains were saturated with water, several inches in depth. The opening of an all-weather road to Endeber and the recent installation of telephone lines have changed life in parts of the interior which, for centuries, had been completely isolated during the long rainy seasons. But the Gurage were not completely at the mercy of nature and in fact, Gurage land was never cutoff from the rest of Ethiopia. Historical records, dating back to the fifteenth century, reveal the existence of old trade routes which are still in use today.[7]

[7]For a map showing the favorable position of Gurage land with respect to the main nineteen century trade routes, see Mordechai Abir, Ethiopia: the era of the princes (London: Longmans, 1968), p. 45.

Figure 2 LOCATION OF CHEBO AND GURAGE AWRAJA IN SHOA



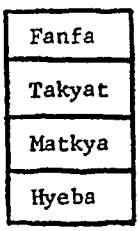
1. Menz and Gishe
2. Merhabete
3. Yifat and Timuga
4. Tegulet
5. Selale
6. Jibat and Mecha
7. Menagesha
8. Yerer and Kareyu
9. Haykoch and Butajira
10. Chebo and Gurage
11. Kambata

The Gurage population has illustrated amply what people can do to overcome environmental hazards. Perhaps, there is something in the mental make up of the Gurage that helps them overcome difficulties more easily. One thing is certain: although the traditional Gurage believed in a female "guardian spirit," Damwamwit, who cared for the welfare of all of them, and although they could make ritual offerings to her and other spirits who had to be appeased more or less regularly, it is a fact that the Gurage approach to the environment was more secular than supernatural. It seems that the Gurage were conscious of their personal responsibility vis-a-vis the world and of their freedom to modify and improve it. They did not have rites associated with the agricultural cycle and also did not relate the use of land to ancestor-worship. For them, land was a rather personal concern and the failure or success of a farmer depended basically on his own rational behaviour. A prayer may have helped, but first and foremost it was individual work that would bring success. All that is useful to remember if one wants to understand the Gurage well, even now, after many of them have become Moslems or Christians.

The economy of the Gurage is based on land, and they might well say, like the Menominee Indians of Wisconsin: "In land we trust." While in some parts of Ethiopia the fields and the home can be separated because of the land system, the fertility of the soil, or some other factors, such is not the case in Gurage land. Here the field and the homestead form an inseparable unit: a man cultivates the soil adjacent to his homestead. Also he usually owns land close to a relative's landowning. He will seldom own more land than he can use, because the control over land cannot be achieved by money only. Village and grazing lands are corporately owned by kinsmen and cannot be appropriated by individuals.

A Gurage could survive indefinitely on a small plot of land because he practices a kind of semi-shifting cultivation made possible by the use of manure and the rotation of crops. This is obvious in the topography of the fields: they are usually rectangular and divided according to the four stages described below of ensete growth, each section of the land taking its name from the plant grown on it (figure 3). Some space is left (often twelve square feet) between the plants to be used for secondary crops especially cash crops, and also for food storage pits.

Figure 3 THE ENSETE FIELD



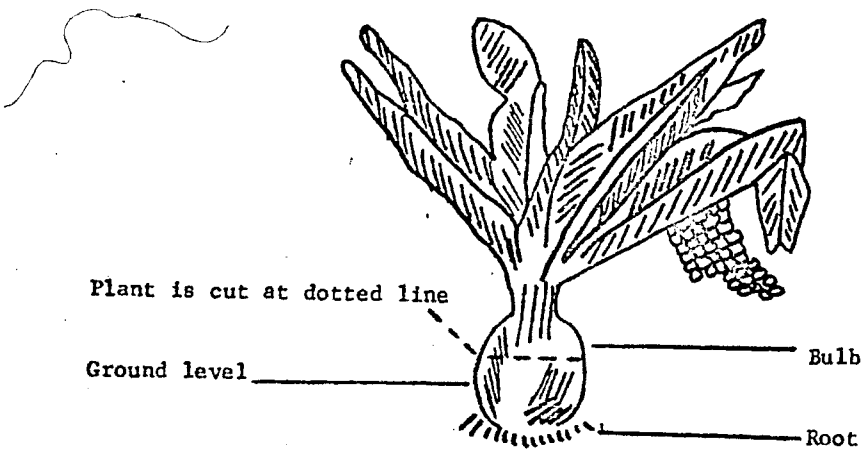
Each plant stays two years in its original section. The whole cycle takes eight years.

The Ensete Cycle

Since the Gurage refer to ensete plants as if they were humans, one can say that the cycle of ensete begins with the birth of ensete babies. The original aspect of the reproductive process, however, is that it is vegetative and not sexual. Here is how it happens.

A strong and healthy plant is taken from among the trees that have reached the second stage, or the Takyat (figure 4). The tall leaves are cut and the Takyat is removed. The only thing left then are the root, which will be shaved and a small part of the bulb or pseudo-stem. The core of the bulb is removed, probably to prevent it from outgrowing the shoots that should be as numerous, and equal in strength, as possible. Afterwards, the flat top surface is chopped with a knife and the openings filled with earth, or round stones, to make sure the shoots will grow separately. Finally, the Takyat root is replanted in a well manured pit dug close to the homestead. Within a couple of months, hundreds of sprouts will appear. These are the new born ensete who, hopefully,

Figure 4 PREPARATION OF THE TREE FOR VEGETATIVE REPRODUCTION



will grow to maturity. But, of course, some may die and for this reason, like Gurage babies, they will not be given a name until they have passed the first critical weeks. After two or three weeks, the plants that have survived, now called Suma, are transplanted to a well sheltered plot not far from the house where they cannot be endangered by stray cattle or excessive sunshine. In fact, the Suma will be protected by a layer of green leaves (the ones that were cut from the Takyat generator) carefully set upon a light framework of rods, or sticks. Gradually the Suma will grow and, after about six months, they will look like miniature ensete. This is the moment when they enter the growth cycle in the real ensete garden. But, of course, the Suma cannot be moved into their own section before the space has been cleared for them: in the ensete agricultural cycle, planting immediately follows harvesting, and not vice versa.

Transplanting

This is done in a way reminiscent of what can be observed at the university where the graduates must move out first, in order to make place for the freshmen. In the ensete fields, however, the process is quite laborious. The first trees to go are the mature ensete called Hyeba. They must be harvested when they reach maturity otherwise they will lose their food value, will become coarse and decay rapidly. Now once these "venerable" ensete have been removed from their section, the pits they occupied will be freshly manured and prepared to receive the Matkya, who will be transplanted from their third section into the Hyeba section. This will leave room for the Takyat who will be promoted to the rank of Matkya by being transplanted to the Matkya section. Again,

that will leave the first section open for the new crop of Suma, who will become Fanfa by moving into the first section of the ensete garden. In this way, the plants will rotate to a new grade every two years. All the Suma planted in the same season will be kept together--including even those among them who may have become "sick"--until the termination of the cycle and will, therefore, be harvested together after eight years. To make sure that the supply of food will be sufficient and constant, most Gurage family will start a new ensete cycle every year and will have, therefore, two overlapping cycles to give them the assurance that the food supply will be maintained above subsistence level.

Division of Labor

The ensete do not require much attention once they are moved. But transplanting and harvesting are arduous tasks that require the cooperation of all adult and adolescent males. The labour force will generally be divided along lines that correspond to the age groups of the plants. The young men are responsible for transplanting the Fanfa and Takyat and the older men for the Matkya and Hyeba. A very significant fact here is the absolute need of outside help every ensete cultivator requires: no Gurage can do his transplanting and harvesting alone because some plants are so heavy that they require two or three men to move them. This is when kinship ties, real or fictitious, become very important; just as when a man builds his house, among the Sidama, and requires the help of the men of his lineage to erect the central pole.

The rhythm of work, during the active season, is very accelerated and involves practically all members of the community. A man would have to have a very good reason to be allowed to stay away

from the fields at that moment. During planting and harvesting, men and women soon after breakfast leave their homes for the fields where they will spend the whole day. Labour is made easier by constant talking or singing and by frequent coffee breaks during which roasted grains are munched. Likewise, the Moslems chew ch'at and stop working at the regular prayer times. There is no lack of incentive for work among the ensete cultivators and their moral is kept high, thanks perhaps to the great value they set on their staple crop.

Women are mostly occupied in the preparation of food, which begins, after the men have brought the tall ensete leaves and roots. Sometimes, men strip the thick outer bark of the stem to allow easier separation of the stuff to be decorticated.

The extraction of the edible substance from the ensete is carried on in a rectangular area marked off by knotting together the leaves of the plants to enclose the floor on which women will perform their work. The ground is covered with leaves on which the starchy food substance will be collected. Scraping boards are laid up, resting on planks transversely set across the ensete plants. Women sit in front of the scraping boards, holding with one foot propped high on the strip of ensete to be decorticated and using both hands to move the bamboo scraper up and down. This is a strenuous work that young girls do not do. Easier jobs are reserved for them like collecting the food substance and setting it to dry.

The best food comes from the root which has to be whittled into small pieces. The operation can be done by one or two women who use a sharp edged piece of bone, or wood, to do the quick chopping. Once the edible starch has been obtained it is wrapped up in ensete leaves and

deposited in clean pits where it is left to ferment for as long as the quality hoped for, or the family needs, will indicate.

By-products

Fibre is a by-product of the food-processing of ensete and can be used to obtain cash. The quantity of fibre that can be extracted from one ensete, however, is very small, about two pounds, the value of which was, in the late fifties, from $0.08 to $0.12. The size of the family and its social obligations will determine the quantity of ensete which should be grown. Estimates vary on how many plants are needed to feed an adult for a year. Some, like the Sidama, say they need few; others like the Gurage, seem to exaggerate their consumption by saying that fifteen to twenty plants are needed. Remembering that two thirds of the plant are inedible, a fair estimate might be twelve to fourteen plants per person. Moreover, the higher the status of a man, the greater his social obligations will be.

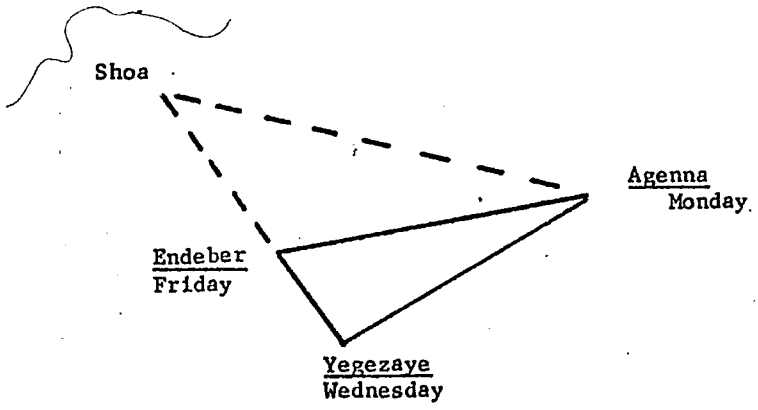
Other crops, besides ensete, are important in Gurage land because they are bringing in a more and more valued commodity: cash. These additional crops are mostly: coffee, gesho, hops, peppers and ch'at.

Marketing

As regards agricultural production, Gurage holdings can be divided into three sections: one used for home consumption, a second for the local markets and the third for the nationwide cash market. The market system is still very important for the Gurage, because it fulfills valuable functions, many of them noneconomic, for the people. The market is a meeting ground for kinsmen who value their primary relationships highly. As Shack pointed out, on the market day past

reunions between the AGNATIC and AFFINAL kin are recalled and new determination of kin allegiance is asserted. The market meetings, always blessed with considerable amounts of beer and raw meat, supply ideal social circumstances that favor the establishment of new relationships. These gatherings can serve as useful time-markers for people and as privileged moments for the expression of political and ritual realities. At the market, religious and civil chiefs exercise their authority in an informal atmosphere. Here important ceremonies are announced, TABUS are reinforced and recently initiated adolescents, boys and girls, make their official entry into the adult world. In fact, the market stands as one of the important institutions contributing to the maintenance of law and order in Gurage society: it helps maintain the integration, in time and space, of large segments of the population. Here is a good example offered by Shack showing how the Gurage of Chaha (in Endeber), the Ezha (in Agenna) and the Ennemor (in Yegezaye) are kept in a perpetual cycle of interaction.

Figure 5 MARKETING CYCLE



The Gurage do not only circulate between small interclan or inter-tribal markets, they also migrate to large towns, especially to Addis Ababa. These migrations, which are usually only temporary, date back to a remote past when Gurage were travelling hundred of miles on business trips and enjoying the reputation of skillful traders.[8] The number of Gurage migrants increased very much after the proclamation in 1929 of the Land Act, which made taxes payable in money.

It is rather strange that these migrations have not brought about more change in Gurage land itself. It seems that most Gurage men migrate just to acquire cash, and perhaps sometimes to escape from traditional controls and obligations. It is as if the discovery of urban civilization did not bring them much they considered necessary in their own land; they seem to have learned, in towns, little that they would consider useful at home, for example, in terms of modern techniques. This is changing, however, thanks mostly to the Gurage voluntary associations described by Fecadu Gedamu. These associations are not only helping Gurage migrants to survive more easily in Addis Ababa, they have also allowed the opening of new roads into the interior of Gurage land,[9] and the introduction of factors of change like schools, hotels, stores, etc.

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[8]Cecchi was so impressed by their performance that he concluded they could be the descendants of clever Jewish ancestors.

[9]About one hundred thousand people contributed over $800,000.00 for the construction of the road from Alem Gena to Butajira. There were ten buses running on it, in 1970.

The Gurage and Development

The Gurage are a small group, perhaps slightly more than 350,000,[10] but with an impact on the economy of the nation that goes far beyond their size. They represent very precious potential for the nation with their manual skills, sense of cooperation, organization, and their relatively high incomes. The agricultural season takes only about three months of their time and for the rest of the year many of them are free to indulge in other paying occupations, most of the time in towns. They can adapt fast and well to urban living. They know no tabu on trade or manual work--two of the important prerequisites for development--they are not inclined to begging and tend to rely more on their own associations than upon government patronage. Municipal authorities would like all migrants to towns to exhibit these characteristics.

One of the great qualities of the Gurage and one that is extremely precious, in times of transition, is their adaptability. This trait goes back to the first colonists who came from the north and settled in the south: the northerners became southerners in all aspects of their culture except language.

Shack described in detail this extraordinary example of ecological adaptation.[11] The people from Gura knew only plough cultivation, their kinship system was bilateral, political leadership was concentrated in the hands of elders of a landowning kin group, and Christianity was the official religion. Now, after settling in Aymellel, the colonists

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[10]Rodney Needham, Gurage social classifications: formal notes on an unusual system, Africa XXXIX, 2(1969), 153.

[11]See Shack, Some aspects of ecology.

discovered progressively the mal-functioning of their own institutions, they saw the need for their social system to undergo radical changes. Cereal cultivation gave way to ensete. The kinship system evolved toward unilineality and patrilineality. The largest territorial and political unit became the exogamous patrilineal clan with the clan chief at its summit. Although Christianity has persisted from the beginning in places like Muher, Zwai, Midrakept (south of Zukwala); in other regions, for example among the Chaha, it seems that Christianity was submerged by traditional cushitic cults. It is possible that some Christian rites did not agree with accepted Sidama practices, for instance, the legitimization of political leadership by the representatives of the gods investing the new leaders with special ritual powers; this consecration, in the north, could be done only by the Abuna for a Christian Amhara, or Tigre, leader.

The ancient Sidama should not be forgotten in that adventure of Gurage ecological adaptation: in fact they were the ones who influenced the conquerors who had set it as their goal to prevail upon the southern people. But the Gurage retain, in their own right, an important part in this beautiful and long human drama. There is much more about them than is implied in the minimal tribute traditionally paid to the beauty of their womenfolk and the willingness of their men to accept doing menial tasks.

The Sidama and their Voluntary Associations

The Gurage have supplied a good example of a culture with built-in mechanisms of cooperation. A Gurage could not survive, for example at harvest time, without the help of others; also a great part of Gurage

success in towns is explained by their capacity to cooperate among themselves. Their VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS are good models of traditional institutions that can be turned into instruments of socio-cultural change, but of course they are not unique in the Ethiopian tradition. There are, for example, the ekub, a wage-pooling association, known also in many other parts of Africa; the iddir, a cooperative association, originally intended to perform funerary services but answering now, expecially in Addis Ababa, a variety of needs at different levels: communal, tribal, or professional; important also in many rural areas are the debo (or djegui), a group usually formed for economic reasons, for instance, among the women weavers of Gondar; and the welfal (or wenfel), created by the members of a community who wish to help each other without remuneration, for example, for the building of a house, a road or a school, etc. One must note also the more religious associations like the sembete which may consist only of a group of parishioners bringing food to church on Sunday and, especially, the mahaber, a religious confraternity associated to the cult of a particular saint but playing also some purely social functions for example, strengthening friendship ties, etc. There are similar associations all over Ethiopia although they are not so functional everywhere.[12] In Mymesham, Adwa wereda, there is much cooperation during ploughing and harvesting and this is celebrated by many feasts during which the women sing and dance the

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[12]They are said to be less important among the Tigre and the Amhara. See George P. Lipsky, Ethiopia: its people, its society, its culture (New Haven: HRAF Press, 1962), p. 141. In Gondar, for example, the relatives, and not the traditional associations, were responsible for burials.

traditional gwayla around their working husbands. Among the Kambata the village iddir is called sera and functions for funerals, house building, ploughing harvesting, settling of small disputes, etc. The Kambata clans have wider and stricter associations, the ilemo covenants, by which clan members guarantee each other help in time of need. The pastoral 'Afar also have their associations, for example the fi'ema.

The cooperation organized by people who get together to perform a certain task, or achieve a particular goal, is something well known in Ethiopia especially at the horticultural level of adaptation. People have experienced the survival value of cooperation even if they do not go as far as the Borana who never fight among themselves. Now, before studying the Sidama associations in detail, the reader must note two facts: first, the voluntary associations are not always voluntary in the sense that people are free to join them, or not. Sometimes the social controls forcing people to join an association are extremely powerful. In a Gurage association, it may work like this: if one refuses to pay his share, two "guests" will be sent to be fed by him; if he persists in not paying, four "guests" will be sent, then eight, and so on. Fecadu Gedamu[13] enumerated the following controls that concur to keep the voluntary (or rather compulsory) associations running: 1) the fine, 2) the curse and the blessing, 3) ostracism, 4) informal

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[13]Fecadu Gedamu, Outline of a paper on voluntary associations, prepared for the Seminar of Social Research Fieldworkers in northeastern Africa, June 6-7, 1969 (Addis Ababa: Haile Sellassie I University. (Mimeographed).

sanctions and, in last recourse, 5) the modern law. One could say that some of these associations are voluntary in this respect: they were not imposed by the government, but organized by the people themselves.

A second fact to note is the changing nature of the associations, especially those found in towns. The urban environment is very heterogeneous, often fluid and may cause great stress on traditional social or mental structures. In 1969, a letter to the editor of Addis Reporter[14] complained bitterly about the Addis Ababa iddir: the officers would abuse their power, imposing too heavy fines, the members coming from very different backgrounds would not fit together, etc. The writer was concluding that Funeral Homes would be of more use to the population, than the iddir.

On the other hand, the success of some associations that have managed to adjust to modern conditions is a good indicator of their importance especially, for transitional societies. The Yedebre Raguel Iddir, in Addis Ketama, founded a little more than twenty years ago, has multiplied its members twenty fold and has assumed modern functions like contacting the Municipality for services, electricity, water, etc. The Alem Gena-Soddo Wollamo road construction association administers a capital of over a million and a half with the help of more than one hundred employees. They have some thirty buses running on the new one hundred and fifty mile road. Ten towns have started along the road and will be strengthened in future by factories, schools and clinics and--this is perhaps more important still--the administration has been honest and efficient.

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[14] Letter to the editor, Addis Reporter I, 41 (October 31, 1969), p. 3.

Voluntary associations are important institutions in a developing country. In urban conditions, they help supply fictional kinship ties to compensate for the loss of the actual kinship ties. Often also, in the country as well as in towns, they may begin as self-interest groups, but if they grow normally and especially if they are properly oriented, they can develop into associations that have considerable social influence. In order to be used as instruments of socio-economic change two conditions need be fulfilled: first, group cooperation must be encouraged by the traditions or, at least, the values of the groups.[15] Second, the associations must be approved, at the top by a government who sees in their growth not a threat, but an asset for the nation. These conditions find their application in the case of the contemporary Sidama voluntary associations. They will be described here with the help of an anthropologist, John Hamer, who spent two years with the Sidama. His report, which will be used extensively, in this section, is entitled: Voluntary associations as structures of change among the sidamo of southwestern Ethiopia. Unfortunately only a small minority of the Sidama has been affected by these changes.

Historical Background

In 1893, Menelik incorporated Sidama[16] land into the Empire. He divided a part of the territory between officers and soldiers of the army

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[15] Note that in the CLASSIC PEASANT SOCIETIES, because of their stratified and authoritarian structure, submissiveness to a superior is emphasized while cooperation between equals is not encouraged. In these societies, therefore, associations may not be appropriate instruments of change.

[16] Sidamo will be used to designate the Governorate General and Sidama the people found in the Sidama province, around Irgalem. They call themselves Sidamawa and say they speak Sidamawa.

and he effectively reduced the status of many Sidama to that of serfs. In 1930 and 1935 Emperor Haile Selassie introduced some reforms aiming at the elimination of the most crying abuses of feudal servitude, in particular by removing the power of taxation from the hands of local chiefs and entrusting it to the central government. In the course of the following years, three systems of social control have been, with unequal vitality, competing with each other. First, the traditional GERONTOCRACY in which the government is the responsibility of an assembly of elders, the songo; it exercises authority at all levels: clan, sub-clan, district and village. This system was still predominant in the rural areas, when Hamer did his field work some years ago. The second system of social control is formed by the remnants of the feudal aristocracy composed mostly of non-resident land-holders who nevertheless, yield much power at the local level controlling, for instance, in towns: a) the appointments to important offices, like judgeships, and b) the strategic posts for business. Their power can be challenged only by the administration of the central government which forms the third system of social control in the area. It is this new bureaucracy that is really involved in the process of modernizing education, health, agriculture and commerce. Hamer saw in the efforts of these professionals and in the attempts of the Emperor to centralize the government the only forces at work against pre-Italian war feudalism.

It is coffee which has set into motion a series of changes that have brought, only recently, the Sidama out of their traditional isolation into the impersonal marketing system that is part of the national infra-structure. For some three generations, they belonged to a nation-state without participating in its economic life. Now they have entered a new

era by activating their relationship not only with the northern country, but even, indirectly with the world. How did that happen? In trying to answer that question one discovers another example of ecological adaptation, similar to that observed among the Gurage. This phenomenon can throw light on the process of development in the whole country. But the reader must know first where the Sidama started from.

Traditionally, land ownership rests in the clan which allows its clansmen to take as much uncultivated land as they need. The basic local unit is the NUCLEAR FAMILY which occupies its own land and cultivates it. Non-clan members may receive rights to use land and are treated as kin, except for not having to observe the marriage exogamy rules. Some twenty to twenty-five households, or nuclear families, structured around a core of MALE AGNATES, make a village. In the past, only at the time of digging, or harvesting, was it necessary for the male agnates to help each other. The exchange of labor needed was never considerable except for big projects like the construction of roads, or houses, and funeral ceremonies when men had to be drawn from entire districts. On these occasions hundreds, or thousands, of men would be divided into groups of forty to fifty, called chinancha, and which were under the direction of a district leader, the moricha. The chinancha were the only associations larger than the family circle.

The New Associations

Then what happened? After World War II, coffee, which was growing wild in the past and was exchanged only internally, became a cash crop. New religious beliefs were introduced to the Sidama and the existence of other kinds of associations at work in Ethiopia came to

their knowledge. These three events were to begin a quiet but deep revolution in Sidama life. Here is how it worked.

The commercial cultivation of coffee was accepted not only because coffee grows easily in the area, but because it pays well and also because the Ministry of Agriculture helped the farmers to measure up to the new challenges: drying stations were set up, instructions were given to the prospective coffee-growers and assistance was even provided to facilitate the marketing. But these innovations were to have important repercussions on traditional life, especially as regards settlement and work patterns. Since ensete plantations had to be preserved and since coffee yields well only every other year, people discovered that to maintain a regular level of income they had to increase the size of their farms. This caused numerous encroachments on both private and public property and a multiplication of disputes over land.

Work patterns were also affected because of the necessity of careful picking in order to insure a continuous full yield from the coffee plants. When the berries are ripe (between December and February), they must be harvested rapidly because of possible damage by sudden hail storms and because also of competition from members of the family who may be tempted to pilfer the bush in order to be able to get cash from petty traders. One can understand the wife who feels she needs coffee to be able to buy certain household items which her husband does not wish to spend money on. Yet if the coffee plant is to be kept in good condition the harvesting must be done properly and on time; usually, the solution for the coffee grower was to obtain the help of close agnatic kin or one or two immediate neighbors who would do the picking within two to four days. After that, the danger of spoilage

was passed and the owner could take his time to prepare the crop for market. In most cases, however, this was too small and unreliable a group for coffee harvesting.

That is why the new work associations were created. They stand half way between that of the small team of coffee harvesters and the larger chinancha. It is a more functional group because it allows the members involved in reciprocal exchange to enjoy more freedom of movement: they do not have to wait too long before being able to return to their own farms; (a chinancha member had, sometimes, to work on other people's farms for a week at a time). The new associations are also less expensive to supply with food and less likely to breed trouble. The members of the new associations are more congenial and more likely to avoid the bickering that often characterized the chinancha.

Along with the introduction of coffee as a cash crop, the acceptance of new religious belief was also important in the development of the associations. Protestant churches[17] entered Sidamo after World War II

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[17]The two principal denominations involved are the Seventh Day Adventists and the Sudan Interior Mission. In a personal communication, (10-XI-72), Hamer wrote he was not convinced that the Church's teachings were too important, other than to support Protestant ethic tendencies such as self-denial, hard work and thrift which it seemed to him were traditionally part of Sidamo culture. The main point about the Church influence, as he saw it, was that it set the people apart from the majority of the Sidama population because by swearing allegiance to Christ they were forced to give up certain fundamental beliefs like sacrifice to ancestors, acceptance of polygamy, participation in mortuary rituals, etc. These were so fundamental a part of Sidamo culture that, in the eyes of most of the people, to give up these beliefs was tantamount to withdrawal from the Sidamo way of life. Therefore, the Christians had no alternative but to create their own organizations for reciprocal labor exchange.

The role of the Adventist Church in promoting change, among Latin Americans, is mentioned in John M. Donahue, Circular migrations among migrants in southern Peru, and Nancy Foxworthy, Dominicans within the the Seventh Day Adventist church, (both Teachers College, Columbia

and attracted some less conservative Sidama. These converts often proved to be more open to new ideas, more motivated for accepting even purely social or economic change. But, at the same time, they found themselves ostracized to the point of being excluded from traditional work groups. In order to survive, the converts had to form their own work associations, first of all for building their houses. This was a very significant step away from tribal traditions: the new groups were no more formed of kinsmen, but of men who had not even worked together previously. New structures were created in a way reminiscent of what happened when Mohammed gathered, under the banner of Islam, believers who belonged previously to a number of tribes.

Friendship was replacing kinship as a principle of association. These groups were found to be very convenient also for preparing the gardens and for harvesting coffee. Thus were the modern Sidama associations born. Gradually, they were going to gain wider acceptance, even ultimately by the traditionalists[18] themselves. It developed progressively: first, it became clear that the new Christians were not struck by death as a penalty for not offering sacrifices to their ancestors; second, these

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University, 1972, mimeographed publications). Foxworthy writes that joining the Adventist Church is a means of social mobility among Dominicans living in New York City. The Church literature emphasizes the need for personal growth: just joining the Church is not enough. Articles in the monthly international Church magazine discuss health issues, child rearing practices, personal relationships and give general information. Foxworthy adds that the church provides opportunities to develop leadership talents: within one church, fifty people were holding offices (elders, deacons, secretaries, teachers, etc.) Donahue shows that in Peru the Adventist Church provided its members with extensive and intensive networks of relationships linking town and country together.

[18]"Traditionalist" is substituted for "pagan."

converts were prospering outside the Sidama community and it was evident they would not go back to their fathers' beliefs; and third, they entertained progressive ideas and enjoyed a different type of organization that seemed more suitable for the new economy. Results: not only did the traditionalists begin to readmit the Christians into their midst, but the traditionalists even asked to be admitted into the new associations. Nowadays, the Sidama work associations are composed of traditionalists and Christians who have recognized their common interests in mustering an efficient labor force for the production of their cash crop.

Ability to Change

It must be said also that the Sidama were mentally prepared for that kind of evolution. Their folklore and mythology reveal a high valuation of wealth and a genuine concern for exchange practices. Legends always indicate respect for wealth, a quality associated often with bravery and oratorical ability, always with prestige. The concept of money is not new to the Sidama, it existed in their old tradition of exchange,[19] even if this was only exchange of a subsistence and occasional nature. At present, the Sidama have become more dependent on coffee, they need cash to pay taxes, to buy clothes and ensete seedlings. And here again they have modified the traditional ideas to suit their actual needs: they added the idea of rotation to that of exchange. All men contribute $0.20 to $0.40 on work days and cast lots to determine who

[19]Cattle and butter were exchanged for cloth, prepared ensete for milk; iron, an all-purpose "money," could buy anything.

will get the total sum. Only after all members have received their share can a man participate again in the drawings. This system enables them to obtain the cash they need to fulfill their most important commitments.

Tests for achievement motivation were administered to Sidama children and comparison with a control group of American youngsters showed the Sidama group to have a higher level of need-achievement. This concern about fulfilling one's needs and doing better than the others had much to do in the development of the associations. There were, however, some traditional traits that were no more appropriate in the context of the new economy. The ancient leadership, in particular, had to be changed. While the ritual leaders and the elders accepted subordination to the local land lords and officials it was important to develop a more dynamic type of leadership, one capable of facing the bureaucrats and the representatives of competing groups at different administrative levels.[20]

Such were some of the factors at play in Sidamo society and the circumstances in which the new associations developed. The real test came when the Sidama met their first and fundamental challenge: the middleman. Individual farmers had always been selling their coffee to traders from the northern highlands, whom they indiscriminately called

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[20]The moricha could not act without the consensus of the elders, but the new association officer--although still accountable to the members of the association--must enjoy a relative autonomy of action because he has to negotiate with officials outside his association. In dealing with government officials, at the local or the national level, he has to use his knowledge (usually, he had some years of formal schooling) and experience to make on-the-spot decisions without having been able to consult association members. These are indeed previously unknown privileges and responsibilities, they form a new basis for interdependence between youth and elders who still control the allocation of land, etc.

"Amhara." These middlemen would truck the coffee to Addis Ababa where they usually fetched a far better price than the one they had paid themselves in the coffee country. To take in their hands the coffee trade, therefore, was the first aim of the Sidama coffee growers. This hope had no political overtones, it was the legitimate desire of producers to reap a profit more proportionate to their work. Here is a brief description of how two associations developed almost under Hamer's eyes.

Two Associations

Association A began in 1962 with each member contributing $2.00. The first project consisted in organizing a store with the most important commodities like kerosene, clothes, blankets, soap, sugar, etc. Sales were made with profit and the business developed so well that a young leader, with a mission background, was able to obtain from the Ministry of Community Development a loan of $1,600.00 for the purchase of a mill for grinding corn. In 1964-65, the mill was averaging $4.00 to $18.00 of profit per day and in 1965 a dividend could be paid to each one of the 183 members. They bought a truck in order to be able to travel across the country and to buy directly from the farmers.

Association B started in 1964 with thirty-four men investing $1.20 each. At first, they offered the services of the association (all of the members, or only some of them) to anyone needing labor. The money obtained was used to increase the capital of the association until such a time when they would be able to a) open their own coffee trading center, b) buy a truck and c) deal directly with the coffee wholesalers of Addis Ababa. They also planned to distribute part of the profits to the initial share-holders and keep the rest to establish a fund for interest-free loans to needy members.

How did it all work out? Not without opposition and, of course, from those who stood to lose if the associations were to gain their point. But, with the support of the central government officials, the associations survived! Here is an example of what happened. An association representative brought several sacks of coffee to the mill of a local "Amhara" merchant. Shortly afterwards, the representative came back to claim his ground coffee. But the merchant, who had withheld a couple of sacks, accused him of asking for more than his due. All that, in fact, was only a show of force, apparently planned by the merchants, to frighten the associations.

What could the association representative do? Bring the merchant to court? Impossible, because this merchant had strong political friends. The representative, therefore, decided to go directly to the Ministry of Agriculture in Irgalem. The agricultural agent understood the case. Backed by national authority, he intervened with the merchant and the coffee was returned! But the middlemen did not accept their defeat readily: They organized coalitions among themselves to threaten the Sidama associations either with legal sanctions or with physical force. They even appealed to high officials in the provincial administration on the grounds that the Sidama associations were instigating opposition between the population and the merchants. The government warned the middlemen to be careful because a) the Sidamo have the right to dispose of their property as they wish and b) there is no evidence that they have broken the law.

Some results

This victory of the associations was a definite step forward in the process of modernization. It is clear that a small number of kinsmen could never have bypassed the local middlemen, because the middlemen would have used their own kinsmen employed by the police, or the court, to control the situation. But the associations were not so easy to defeat because a) their members represented a variety of kingroups and localities and b) they formed a tangible unit, easy to identify and to negotiate with.

Hamer mentions also a few other by-products of the process of association-formation, some of which have far reaching non-economic consequences, mostly educational and motivational. First, the contacts with the central government have broadened and matured the views of people concerning the country and its development. During the 1965 election campaign, for example, the members of the associations behaved very differently from the more conservative non-members. These, while discussing the candidates running for seats in the Parliament, were talking in terms of personal loyalities: would this candidate reward his supporters? Did he come from a leading family? etc. The association members, on the contrary, were focusing their interest on issues, they were worrying about the candidate's views on new roads, new schools, medical help, about the extent to which he was likely to serve the community. They also thought that a good man, if supported, could do something of value; but the nonmembers kept fatalistic views of the future: the behavior of a candidate after his election would be written in his character and be determined by Magano, the sky god.

Interesting also was the shift of values that took place among the association members. Their joining an association began with the awareness that the world is changing and that work can bring in the needed cash. Later on they realized the complexities of marketing, of borrowing and of bookkeeping. Later still they understood the need to seek assistance from the central government; through their contacts with the bureaucracy, they learned about the new political system and discovered, not without some surprise, that effective cooperation was possible with people they had viewed at first only as an overwhelming local obstruction group.

Among the association members more subtle changes can be observed in their values. They are more interested in the world beyond their local horizon than are often people living in large towns: they tend to ask more questions about the world beyond the frontiers of Sidamo and even beyond the frontiers of Ethiopia. Moreover, practically all of them insist on having at least one of their children educated.

Very significant, no doubt, in terms of the future development of the area is the growth of an achievement orientation among the association members. It was a common belief that the good things of life: land, health, wealth, friendship, manliness, power, influence are all in short supply. This theory of the "limited good" has become pervasive lately. It may have been reinforced at the time of the conquest, and ever since by the increase of population and the decrease of available land. It is no wonder if many complained about the "greed of today's people," if there were many manifestations of jealousy, accusations of sorcery, disputes about land, etc. But now another view of the world, another approach to concrete problems is gaining ground. The idea of achievment does not sound too unfamiliar to Sidama who have believed, from time immemorial,

that a man can become wealthy not only through good luck or inheritance but also with the help of his own character and work. The success of the associations has proved that men can control, to a certain extent, their destinies. Association members have realized that with education, with economic and political action, they can improve their status. They are also beginning to socialize their children with the revived idea of expanding opportunities.

Here are now, in summary form, the significant characteristics of the Sidama associations:

1. Contrary to what has happened in Europe where voluntary associations originated in towns and spread to villages, in the Sidama country the associations began with the farmers and were only partially influenced by town-dwelling Amhara and foreign missionaries.

2. The voluntary associations of the Sidama (as well as all voluntary associations) can supply useful structures not only to bring about urban change but also to facilitate the transition from tribal and semi-peasant systems to more inclusive national, economic and political systems.

3. The Sidama work associations can duplicate, in some fashion, traditional roles and relate them to new ones; they can contribute to the modification of traditional motivations and provide the basis for learning of new techniques that will help people cope with the problems of modernization.

4. Finally, because of the variety of talents distributed among the members and because of the need of participation from all, the Sidama associations form an ideal set-up for socializing new ideas and techniques.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Affinal	Related by marriage. Affinity is the relationship with the consanguine relative of a spouse or the spouse of a consanguine relative.
Agnate	A consanguine relative in the patrilineal, or male, line.
Clan	A unilinear and often exogamous kingroup whose members cannot usually trace their descent, with accuracy, back to the clan ancestor. Radcliffe-Brown defines the clan as a corporate group whose members a) control property, b) are represented by an assembly of elders and c) assemble periodically for the performance of ritual sacrifices.
Classic peasant society	A society characterized by the existence of a) markets, b) relationships with a central administration and c) a cultural tradition that is not merely tribal but could even be called a great tradition (great in quality, importance and the number of people it affects). In this perspective, one could say that the Sidama were, until recently, only semi-peasants.
Ecology	The set of mutual relationships existing between an environment and the organisms found in it.
Gerontocracy	The rule of the elders. The old men, the heads of families are the natural guardians of the traditional wisdom and they are expected to govern society well. Some may have magical powers and, therefore, more prestige.
Horticulture	Cultivation of domesticated plants for food, without the help of the plough.
Nuclear family	The social group consisting of a married man and his wife with their children.

Segmentary system	A social system in which descendants of ancestors constitute separate groups at each ascending generation. These groups can act corporately, or not, depending on the identity of the people involved. To be activated the groups must occupy symmetrical positions in the genealogical system, or must be equally connected to the nearest sibling ancestors.
Social structure	The established pattern of internal organization of any social group. It involved the sum total of the relationships which exist between the members of the group with each other and with the group itself. The set of relationships that keep people together.
Exogamy	The rule prescribing marriage outside of one's group.
Stem	Any axis which develops buds and shoots instead of roots.
Tabu	A prohibition whose infringment results in an automatic penalty; a prohibition resting on some magico-religious sanction.
Vegetative reproduction	Reproduction of a plant by its vegetative parts.
Voluntary association	A group freely organized by citizens for the pursuit of some interests in contrast to a state established agency.

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Among the Gurage, a number of minority groups can be identified; they are all designated by the generic term fuga and they are divided in at least four different occupational groups: the wood workers, the tanners, the blacksmiths and the potters. Would it be correct to speak of these traditional endogamous groups, characterized by certain occupations, as castes?

2. Many Ethiopians have long had a minimal understanding of the Gurage culture. What significant ideas about them would you like to share with your fellow Ethiopians?

3. Could one relate some of the Gurage characteristics to their family life or their child-rearing habits? See Dorothy N. Shack, Nutritional processes and personality development among the Gurage of Ethiopia, Ethnology, VIII (1969), 206.

4. Have other ethnic groups in Ethiopia been influenced by the Gurage? In which ways?

5. The Sidama value qualities that can be acquired by personal effort, for instance, eloquence, bravery, wealth. Can you say that, in recent years, the Sidama have gained confidence in themselves?

6. Contrast the values and interests of the lowlands Sidama with those of the middle and high altitude Sidama. Is there any similarity with the plough area Qolla-Dega differences? (See pp. 84, 85 and 104).

7. The Sidama clan and residence patterns are flexible enough to allow strangers to be adopted as clansmen. Can these adopted clansmen receive land and participate in decision-making? Is this arrangement unique in Ethiopia?

8. Compare the role of cattle for the Nuer with the role of ensete for the Gurage. See E.E. Evans-Pritchard, The Nuer: a description of the modes of livelihood and political institutions of a nilotic people, (2nd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968).

9. How relevant for Ethiopians are some experiences carried on in other parts of Africa? See Kenneth Little, West African urbanization: a study of voluntary associations in social change (Cambridge, England: the University Press, 1965); J. Middleton, The significance of urban associations in the process of modernization, Abstracts of the African Studies Association Tenth Annual Meeting, Nov. 1-4, 1967, p. 29; Simon Ottenberg, Development of credit associations in the changing economy of the Afikpo Igbo, Africa, XXXCIII (1968), 237-52.

10. Discuss the role of the Sidama at Osaka Expo, 1970.

The Ethiopian pavilion was one of the most popular of the Expo, so popular that it made a profit even after having paid all the expenses. Its popularity was explained by the fact that, contrary to all other pavilions, it was staffed by a large number of nationals (there were some forty Ethiopians) and that it displayed the only traditional structures of the whole Expo: two splendid Sidamo huts.

The original plan provided for three huts, but at the last moment it was decided to build only two and make the third building a modern one (unfortunately the roof of that one leaked abundantly during the rains while the huts were completely rain-proof).

Twelve Sidama experts were flown to Osaka; it was quite a memorable experience for them, only two of which had already travelled enough to see Addis Ababa. The Japanese, who built the Expo on the site of a bamboo forest, are also famous for their bamboo artistry. They welcomed the Sidama builders very warmly; these, in fact, were a sensation: they were photographed from arrival to departure. All phases of the work which lasted forty-five full days were duly recorded. In particular, Japanese construction experts spent two days on the spot photographing and noting all details of these beautiful huts that stood without a central pole. Admirable also, but less conspicuous, was the courage and determination of the Sidama builders. In spite of great and numerous difficulties they completed the work just in time for the opening of the Expo.

These men who had left the heart of the ensete culture area for one of the greatest urban centers in the world were admired for their skills and also for their remarkably pleasant personalities. Once their work done they were interviewed for television and radio programs and they even went on shopping sprees in Osaka. Four Sidama stayed in Japan until the end of Expo '70 and came back to Ethiopia with a lump sum of money. They used it to buy cattle . . . They were still true Sidama!

Chapter IV

THE PLOUGH CULTURE AREA

The preceding chapter introduced the reader to one of the key culture areas of Ethiopia. It must be obvious to anyone who has some experiential knowledge of this country that very much has been left out of the too brief description offered for the ensete people. The culture area classification scheme fails to match adequately the living realities. But this is the fate of attempts at dividing life phenomena into discrete categories. One has only to remember the difficulties encountered by physical anthropologists when they try to define human types in purely physio-biological terms: their "races" overlap continuously. This thought, it is hoped, will remind the reader that the realities designated by "ensete area" or "plough area" although substantially different are not different in absolutely all respects: there is on-going interaction between them at various levels of contact, e.g. individual, occupational, etc. and this process is carried on also with elements from the "pastoral area." One should expect exceptions within each one of the three great culture areas. The larger the area described, the broader the generalizations made, the greater the risk of oversimplification. Now clearly warned the reader can, hopefully, proceed.

The present chapter attempts to describe the maresha, or plough area, in its essential traits. Literature on Ethiopia is relatively rich in studies pertaining to this area. There is much ground still left untouched, but when one considers how much less has been written about the other two areas the relatively privileged situation of the

plough area becomes evident.

Many authors writing on particular aspects of Ethiopian life have found it necessary to preface their work with a sketch of the Ethiopian population. They often repeat very uncritically statements made by other writers and end up producing repetitious and inaccurate pictures. This chapter will not attempt to give a complete overview of the plough area but will focus on aspects of the area that are important and less adequately covered in the existing literature.[1] Once the area itself has been characterized the composition of the population of one governorate general will be focused upon.

Characteristics of the Area

The maresha, or plough area corresponds roughly to the dega country of traditional Abyssinia that is the land between about 8,500 to 11,000 feet above sea level. Its southern limit coincides more or less with a line running from Addis Ababa to Jimma, Gore and Gambela. The majority of the people inhabiting this area speak a semitic language and they are mostly engaged in agriculture using the oxen-drawn plough. However, within this area one also finds, besides the Galla, a few minority groups who speak cushitic languages and use hand tools for ploughing. Most people in the maresha area belong to the Orthodox

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[1]The following books offer very pertinent material on the plough area: C. Clapham, Haile Selassie's government (London: Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd., 1969); D.N. Levine, Wax and gold (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965); G.P. Lipsky, Ethiopia: its people, its society, its culture (New Haven, Conn.: HRAF Press, 1962), M. Perham. The Government of Ethiopia (London: Faber and Faber, 1948); P. Schwab, Ethiopia and Haile Selassie (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1972); F.J. Simoons, Northwest Ethiopia: peoples and economy (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1960); E. Ullendorff, The Ethiopians: an introduction to country and people (London: Oxford University Press, 1960).

Christian Church and for centuries have been acquainted with a centralized form of government. This is an area where most of the population own land through tenure systems based on kinship. The kin group is normally the land owner.

The soils are rich and arable. They were formed by outpourings of lava measuring sometimes several thousand feet in thickness. The relief is characterized by vast expanses of flat land into which water has occasionally cut deep gorges,[2] so deep that sometimes standing on the edge of a plateau one actually looks down to the mountains. Here is a typical illustration of a cross-section of the terrain. An inverted view of the diagram below would represent a more common mountain landscape.

Figure 6 HIGHLAND PLATEAU

These physical features had considerable influence on the patterns of movement and settlement of people. In the maresha area the population is usually not very dense compared to that of some ensete areas and one can see vast expanses dotted with few habitations. Villages exist however and were probably justified by the needs of cooperation on large

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[2]More than 52 per cent of the surface of Ethiopia loses over 2,000 tons of soil per square kilometer (some 5,180 tons per square mile) every year. See Mesfin Wolde Mariam, An Atlas of Ethiopia (Asmara: Il Poligrafico, 1970), p. 16. The Rift Valley was not formed by erosion, of course, but by movements of the earth's crust.

fields and by the dangers of hostile attacks. But these villages, frequently found widely separated by open fields, often suffer from social isolation. The maresha area is also a grass country good for horses and mules. Trees are not as common and valued as in the ensete area; some trees however seem to be typical of the maresha area, for example: tedh, juniper, kosso, hagenia Abyssinica, gulo, castor-oil, the giant lobelia and also a late comer the eucalyptus. Agriculture is characterized by food crops, mostly grasses yielding grain (cereals) and edible seeds of legumes (pulses). Cold-resistant plants like telba, flax, temesh, rye, and toughest of all gebs, barley, can grow at altitudes of up to almost 15,000 feet,[3] the upper limit of agriculture in this area. But the most typical plant is teff, eragrostis Abyssinica, a species of love grass, celianensis, which is also found in Ethiopia under the generic name sar. Teff has a wide range of habitat and over a hundred varieties of it are found in Ethiopia; it can grow in hot lands but does better on the highlands. It was given preference by the plough farmers who considered it a food superior to fruits, roots and green vegetables. This is another interesting case of culture influencing the environment. Had the highlanders entertained different values, today's people would see as many trees, even ensete trees, dotting the northern as well as the southern landscape.

Plough agriculture is also characterized by its emphasis on seed reproduction (non-vegetative) and broadcast sowing; some planting of seeds in holes can be done, but on a very small scale, usually for garden

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[3]For comparison remember that the main University campus in Addis Ababa stands at about 8,800 feet.

plants. Rotating field crops and fallowing exhausted fields are common; however some of the practices widely used by the ancient farmers of south Arabia seem to have been more or less forgotten by their descendants, the plough farmers. Extensive irrigation, for instance, except for special crops and on some modern farms does not exist. Simoons says the largest irrigation works he discovered in the northwest were found in an Agaw village, Bilaza. Terracing also is not common, even on slopes with a gradient of as much as 45° and although cattle breeding is an essential feature of plough agriculture, manure is seldom applied to the fields. Instead, in a place like Debre Berhan, the top soil is burnt to help vegetation growth. Although gye, soil burning, represents a considerable waste of time and labor one must not underestimate the value of this practice. During the experiments carried in Debre Berhan burnt soil yielded more than fertilized soil.[4] This anomaly could be explained by the fact that a six-week drought had adversely affected the fertilized plots which need more moisture than the burnt ones.

Differences within the Area

As mentioned above, within the plough area considerable differences can be observed from region to region. Land tenure, for example, differs sometimes very much: we can see large families rotating fields among themselves and others that keep subdividing the family land among their descendants. There are also important variations in the nature of

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[4]Tesfaye Tessema and Dagnatchew Yirgou, "Experimental demonstration of fertilizers of farmers' fields at Debre Berhan," in Progress report on agricultural research activities, ed. Melak H. Mengesha (Addis Ababa: College of Agriculture, Haile Sellassie I University, 1969), p. 49.

sedentary and shifting cultivation. The latter term is not used consistently in the literature but is of significance here since all northern farmers are not "sedentary" cultivators.

Some are farmers who follow a complicated system of rotation of fields which varies from place to place. Near Gondar, for instance, farmers distinguish between red and black soils, the latter being so fertile that they are seldom left fallow. On the other hand, for the Gumis and the Kumfel (see pp. 89 and 91 below) the personal rights of an individual to a field lapse when after a number of years he abandons it. In between these two extremes stand the SWIDDEN farmers who often add the cultivation of burned lowlands to that of the highland fields. Swidden cultivation is practiced in western Wollega and gives higher yields than sedentary cultivation. The government will perhaps recognize the advantages of swidden farming and help the numerous farmers who find in it the additional source of income with which they can ultimately acquire the status and security of sedentary farmers. This is a striking instance of versatility on the part of people usually considered very conservative. Swidden farming requires specific organizational and operational patterns of work. First of all, it demands a concerted effort of large groups often including non-relatives. Foremen are chosen for their experience, knowledge and leadership abilities. The swidden teams operate on lands that occasionally have to be rented and they follow a cycle of rotation of fields that can be as long as eighteen years. One may ask if in some areas this is not a much better way to prevent soil exhaustion than the more respected traditional

sedentary farming?[5]

Among the most serious hazards that may force the plough farmers to abandon their lands temporarily, or may even cause very serious starvation, are droughts and locusts. These evils are still an actual threat and farmers have sometimes had to develop wonderful industriousness to manage to survive. In Harena, a short distance north of Quiha, Tigre, farmers grow seventeen kinds of wheat, each one of different durability and each one harvested at a different time. Through cumulative experience the farmers in Tigre have developed this type of guarantee against bad times. A number of historical sources reveal how glory and sacrifice were combined in the existence of the Ethiopian farmers.[6]

The People of Begemder

Since all plough governorates general cannot obviously be studied in detail one will be singled out, Begemder, and observed for the human picture it has to offer.

Many Ethiopians who do not hail from Begemder have ready-made ideas on this governorate general. When speaking of the importance of feelings centered on one region, as opposed to feelings for an ethnic group, or a tribe, one tends to treat the region as a rather homogeneous

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[5]For more on this fascinating topic read Karl Eric Knutsson, Ploughland and swidden, a paper read at the Third Meeting of the Social Research Fieldworkers in Addis Ababa, June 5-7, 1968. (Mimeographed.)

[6]For a brief supplement on the vital issues of war and payments that constantly plagued farmers in the north, one can read about the problems they had to face in the 1930's in Grotanelli's description of Wayto farmers (Simoons, Northwest Ethiopia, pp. 50-51). Also Selomon Deressa and Gedamu Abraha have mentioned the importance of battles in a "long bloody and circular history." See Non sequitur, Addis Reporter, I, 28 (July 11, 1969), 13-17.

block, that is, a group of people sharing the same needs, aspirations, etc. The bigger the region, of course, the more chances of overlooking minorities. And this is precisely what the writer wants to avoid here. This chapter aims at correcting the easy mistake of forgetting a segment of the population for reasons like the fact that this particular group is not large enough, or is not influential enough, or is living in isolation, or is just not well known! The reader is invited to begin this brief survey of the Begemder human population with an open mind, anxious to discover facts of importance for a better understanding of Begemder, of course, but also of the whole country. Certain processes at work in Begemder can shed light on happenings in other parts of Ethiopia. It is suggested that this section be treated as an essay in understanding people, all people; an essay that could transform the approach to similar conditions found in all other governorates general.

Begemder, bordered in part by the Tekezzay and for a short distance the Blue Nile rivers, is about the size of Ceylon. It is thought to be the homeland of the Amhara,[7] but it is also now the home of many other groups. Each one of these will be considered without neglecting even the smallest and least developed ones. A nation cannot afford to forget its minorities and anyone living with the boundaries of Ethiopia is as much a citizen as any Addis Ababan. If one studies the ethnic groups of Begemder governorate general, one will discover men and women who are genuine Ethiopians and should therefore be given equal opportunity

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[7]Amharic was spoken for the first time, in the late twelfth century, in a cushitic-speaking region, according to the East African Language Survey Group. See Haile Sellassie I University, Recent Events and Activities, Nov. 6, 1969, p. 6.

to participate in the building of an all-Ethiopian community. Some of them live in rather inaccessible districts and the reader will have to span in his mind distances that are not yet covered by roads.

Some writers still speak today of the "Ethiopian type." This is debatable even if one wishes to refer to the highland people only. A rapid look at the Begemder population with its diversified array of racial, linguistic and cultural differences will illustrate very well the complexity of the Ethiopian population even within one province; in it can be seen the result of powerful social forces that have built up the modern population in the course of centuries. There were invasions, not necessarily armed ones, from the west; there were large-scale migrations within the land itself with the attendant biological MISCEGENATION and extensive cultural exchanges. There was also, finally, a constant diffusion of cultural traits borrowed from three great religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

A list of the people of Begemder,[8] including even the smallest ones, reveals the following groups some of which are more numerous and important--economically and politically--than others: three negro groups: the Gumis, the Hametsh and the Datch; three cushitic-speaking groups: The Qimant, the Agaw and the Kumfel; three minority groups: the Jabarti, the Felasha and the Wayto; two semitic-speaking groups: the Tigre and the Amhara.

When describing some of these groups it will be necessary to venture out of Begemder because some of them, for instance the Tigre, cannot be discussed satisfactorily without reference to other regions

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[8]Simoons, Northwest Ethiopia, pp. 23-55.

like Eritrea, or Shoa. The nature of the terrain in the northwest explains the geographical isolation of some groups and also the persistence of cultural differences among them. A factor also has been particularly effective in maintaining cultural barriers: the notion of ritual impurity. This is a religious principle which makes contact with people of a different religion a source of contamination; one should not share food with them, or even be touched by them.[9] This notion that peoples of other religions are impure, or tabu, was extended to all peoples belonging to outside groups who were thus considered as ritually impure. Hence the separations between groups which have lasted for centuries.

While getting acquainted with the Begemder people the reader should keep in mind the questions of ACCULTURATION, the process by which people's cultures change, and of Amharaization, a vital, difficult and very interesting problem. The list of Begemder people opens with the negro groups.

The Negroes

First, the Gumis who appear to be wholly different from the highland Ethiopians. They scarify their bodies for decoration and dress as the Sudanese do. Their women handle heavy loads with the help of carrying sticks in the manner of the ancient Egyptians, the Kunama and Barya. Like the Sudanese across the frontier they raise all their structures above ground: houses for people, huts for goats, coops for chickens and even the storage bins. Snakes are much more of a threat

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[9]For a forceful description of the extremes to which faithfulness to ritual purity can lead, one should read the narrative of the Book of Maccabees (II Maccabees: Chapter 7). One is told how seven brothers were executed, one by one, under the eyes of their mother because they refused to eat forbidden food.

from them than for the majority of the Ethiopian people.

The material culture of the Gumis is relatively poor: they have practically no domestic animals besides sheep, goats and chickens; and no domestic plants besides sorghum, used for food, and cotton for cash. This must be attributed, in part, to the very difficult ecological conditions in which the Gumis find themselves and it explains also why their agricultural methods differ from those of the highlands.

Their economic organization is simple; since they do not have markets they must rely on visitors and travelers to exchange their goods and they themselves have to manufacture all they need. Hence they entertain a positive view of the few craftsmen that are found among them. Their social organization appears to be simpler than that of the Nilotes, but perhaps field research will reveal a lot more than is known now. Because they were for many years prey of slave traders they have had little chance to develop politically. Their religious organization is not very elaborate. Their tribal god is concerned exclusively with the Gumis, the Datch and the Hametsh. Spirits, trees and other elements of nature are the object of ritual activities and tabus. The Gumis believe that by avoiding work they can sometimes placate the mysterious and powerful beings that can affect their existence. This labor-avoidance precept makes more sense when we reflect that they have very few ceremonies, or holidays, and that these are held only at the opening and the closing of the agricultural season. There is no organized clergy among them.

Simoons has compiled an interesting list of reasons why the Gumis have become Christians. His list is certainly not an exhaustive one, but it does throw some light on the complex set of circumstances that have sometimes motivated people to become Christians. There may have

been an authentic appreciation of Christianity behind the decision of the converts, there was also, apparently, a strong desire to be respected by the Amhara and if possible to be equal to them.

Finally, it is useful to note the lesson in survival given by the Gumis. Pressed between two cultural giants, Moslem Sudan and Christian Ethiopia, they have resisted acculturation to the point perhaps of hurting themselves.

The Gumis have established a patron-client type of relationship with the Datch, a subject people living in their villages. Although the Gumis are by national standards a very small minority, and one that is far from the top of the social scale, they have nevertheless managed to assert their superiority over somebody else! Unfortunately practically nothing is known about the Datch, except the fact of their existence.

A third group of negroes, the Hametsh, give an example of rather rapid acculturation. They migrated from the Sudan some fifty to sixty years ago and settled among the Kumfel. Within this relatively short period of time they have been able to adopt many of their hosts' agricultural practices and tools; they have learned Agawigna, and have become Christians. Like the Gumis, the Hametsh offer a significant example of negro-Ethiopian contact situation, but a situation very different from the one that obtained during prehistoric times when the Negro invaders initiated change on the highlands

The Kumfel seem to be another immigrant group which has grown roots in Ethiopia (in Simoons' classification they fit with the cushitic speakers), even stronger roots than those of the Hametsh. The Kumfel

may have been part, until a not too remote past, of a Negro population: some of them, in fact, exhibit characteristic Negro features. They keep few cattle, but quite a lot of goats, sheep, chickens and beehives; the shelters for these animals are raised above the ground as in the Sudan. The Kumfel have also been using the plough for the last fifteen to twenty years and they cultivate crops similar to those found in Gumis country; a few are traders and craftsmen. Victims of the slave trade in the past, the Kumfel are now considered a low caste. Only time will tell what will be the lot of the Kumfel.

Another small group must be mentioned: the Wayto (a minority, according to Simoons). They used to speak a language totally different from that of all other Ethiopians, and Grotanelli suggested that they were of nilotic origin.[10] The Wayto are to be found around Lake Tana, especially in the north and the south; altogether, they may not number more than four to five hundred.[11] They are few indeed, nevertheless they represent an interesting element to be considered in the study of the changing Ethiopian population. Two facts single them out in Begemder: first, they were hippopotami hunters,[12] until not very

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[10]See Simoons, Northwest Ethiopia, p. 50. Grotanelli's argument is supported by the fact that the nilotic origin of the Barya and the Kunama of Eritrea has been clearly demonstrated.

[11]A group of British students who worked in the south of Lake Tana during the summer of 1968 counted 265 Wayto, including the infants.

[12]Groups of traditional hunters can be found in many parts of the country. These people, who often enjoy a healthier diet than farmers, have survived until now in such a variety of conditions and places that it makes it difficult to speak of a common ancestry for all of them. They are called Wayto by the Amhara, Watta by the Galla, Manjo by the Kefa, Kwayejo by the Gimirra, Mijan, Tomal or Yibir by the Somali, Fuga by the Gurage, etc. Some of them may be racially different from

long ago and, second, they seem to have roots in Begemder.

Today the Wayto cannot be distinguished from their Amhara neighbors by their physique: they are not negroid. Remembering Grotanelli's description of the plight of the Wayto farmer as late as the nineteen thirties, one will admit that their survival is quite a feat.[13] Nevertheless they are among the most despised people of Begemder and it is no wonder that some of them who are working at the Bahar Dar Textile Mills prefer to conceal their identity.

However, the situation is improving for the Wayto: except for marriage, discrimination is diminishing; a change which could be explained by the fact that the Wayto have become very much like their neighbors. Presently there are no hippopotami left in Lake Tana, thus the Wayto cannot easily transgress food tabus. Consequently their eating habits conform to those of the Amhara. Likewise, their brand of Islam has become more orthodox and so have their occupations. For instance, they refrain from activities frowned upon by the Amhara like pottery,

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the majority of Ethiopian populations; however, this is often very difficult to assess for lack of reliable data. Although the origin of each group should be determined separately, their growth may have proceeded along roughly similar socio-historic paths. As hunters they were despised because they ate tabu foods, thus they were discriminated against and remained unassimilated with their neighbors; at the same time their numbers may have been supplemented by other outcasts from the groups among which they lived. Very interestingly these groups of hunters were also helped to preserve their identity through the beliefs of those who were discriminating against them as unworthy or potentially dangerous. For instance, in Galla country the friendship of a Watta could make travelling safe for visitors; also the Wayto of Lake Tana, as well as the Manjo of Kefa, were never molested in time of war.

[13] Simoons, Northwest Ethiopia, pp. 50-51. Wayto farmers were facing such predicaments that they could seldom make both ends meet. They had to fight for land renting rights, let alone land holding rights.

blacksmithery, leather work and they have now become more and more involved in farming. In fact, the day seems close when being a Wayto will have lost all its derogatory connotations and therefore its meaning.

The Old Chushitic Speakers

The Qimant, the largest Agaw-speaking group in Begemder, are a mysterious and ancient stock that seem to have kept the imprint of countless past cultural influences. The last effort to Christianize them dates back to 1948; it was apparently successful. Nevertheless they still observe the Sabbath, Saturday as well as Sunday, and celebrate traditional as well as Christian feasts. Their non-Christian customs, more or less observed today, should be studied in order to throw light on Qimant origins. It is not impossible that the Qimant were converted in the past to one great religion, Judaism or Christianity, and that they have gradually under the stress of isolation returned to more ancient forms of worship, a phenomenon well known in South America under the name of folk Catholicism. What we observe here, of course, could be called folk Christianity of folk Judaism.

The Qimant are well off by Ethiopian standards.[14] For a wedding, an ordinary man may have to pay $200.00 and a rich man $600.00; for a teskar, the commemorative celebration for the dead, it will be about $120.00 and $250.00 respectively. For birth and baptism, together, they may spend from $20.00 to $30.00. Cash comes to the Qimant by

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[14]Ethiopia has a per-capita income of approximately $64.00 a year. See Peter Schwab, Ethiopia and Haile Selassie (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1972), p. 5.

means of farming. In the Kerker area, thought to be the cradle of the Qimant, the farmers are most active working sometimes as many as ten hours a day. Their farming methods are similar to those of the Amhara and, unlike the Felasha, they have enough land.

Two weaknesses of the Qimant lie in the fact that they do not administer their business with success, and that they are not skillful craftsmen. They often fail to plan their production and consumption well: in the same year, they can have right after harvest too much food and at a later date not enough. They look down upon the Felasha who nevertheless do much of the skillful work for them. Not so long ago some of the Azezo Qimant (Asezo is approximately eight miles from Gondar, Begemder's capital) were still entertaining the thought that the Felasha were man-eaters.

The strength of the Qimant might be their openness to new ideas. They do not reject change, part perhaps because many of their religious ideas coincide with those shared by highland Christians or because their language is not written and therefore easier to give up.

According to Aleka Taye, the Beja in the ninth century were pressing both on the Axumites and their rivals, the cushitic-speaking Agaw of Lasta.[15] The latter moved out of Lasta and settled, some in Damot, others in Halhal Bogos. The Damot group was composed of seven brothers who, after seven months of exploration decided to elect Damot as their home. The Seven Agaw Houses are still remembered by the people,

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[15]Aleka Taye, Ye Ethiopia hizb tarik (Addis Ababa: Commercial Printing Press, 1955). Sven Rubenson, in a personal communication, (Oct. 13, 1971) expressed doubts that the Agaw ever moved that far south.

but Lasta[16] is not.

The Agaw could be compared to poor elder brothers who live in inhospitable lowlands that no one else wants. Their hot, dry, locust-infested and disease-ridden thorn country has left its imprint on both men and the animals: they are smaller in size and slighter in build than those of the plateau, a good example of the process of racial differentiation. Their chief occupations are agriculture, which they practice like the Amhara, and trade thanks to their strong horses which are capable of carrying heavy loads over long distances.

The Amhara who have great respect for intelligence, especially when it can display cleverness, say that the Agaw have nine hearts: "If an Agaw tells you something, do not believe he has told you everything." The Agaw seem to value work on the farm; however, in Sahala, they have no professional craftsmen. Agawigna is spoken today in places like Wag in Lasta, Quara and Sahla in Begemder, Temben in Tigre, Bora Selawa in Rayana Azebo and Damot in Gojjam.

Two Minority Groups

The Felasha[17] who number some fifteen to twenty thousand are often said to be descended from the Jews who accompanied Menelik I to Ethiopia. The foreigners like to use the words Felasha, or Black Jews, to designate this small group that calls itself beite Israel or

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[16]Aleka Taye finds a confirmation of his hypothesis on the origin of the Agaw from Lasta in the fact that, in Agawigna, the suffix "ta" means "belonging to" and is found in the name of Agaw settlements like Chiranta, Aguta, Marita.

[17]Much of the up-to-date information on the Felasha has been supplied by Veronica Krempel from the University of Berlin.

Israelotch, a name that other Ethiopians however would sometimes apply to themselves. Their neighbors call them kayla (a word related perhaps to a cushitic root meaning: "do not trust us,") or attenkugne (do not touch me), to underscore their willingness to remain in isolation. The word Felasha, apparently borrowed from Geez, means: "He who comes from outside." There is no need to translate "outside" by "overseas" and instead of explaining their presence in Ethiopia by a problematic migration from Israel, one could say with Leslau[18] that the original Felasha were probably a part of the Agaw population converted to pre-Talmudic Judaism by Yemini traders. Jewish sources, except for some light tales, have nothing to report on this supposed migration of Jews to Ethiopia. If one looks at the modern Felasha, one immediately discovers that they are very close if not identical, physically, to their neighbors; they often resemble the Agaw Bogo (Bilen). Culturally, except for religion, they are also quite similar to their Amhara neighbors. The languages they speak supply clues about their origin: they speak Amharic, or Tigrigna, but they pray in Geez and in Agawigna; some Felasha festivals and feasts bear Agaw names and there are a few Felasha in Semyen who speak Agawigna dialects. All these traits point to the genuine Ethiopianness of the Felasha and to the unfairness of the legendary prejudices entertained against them.

Felasha religion is characterized by old judaic rituals which are difficult to observe today even in Israel: for example, the feast of the Tabernacles (now celebrated with suka, tents, used for meals)

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[18]Wolf Leslau, Felasha Anthology (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951), p. xliii.

and especially the stress on ritual purity illustrated by the postpartum tabu and the seven-day isolation period enforced on menstruating women who have to retire into temporary huts.[19]

However, all that is changing thanks in some measure to the influence of modern Israel (perhaps some two thousand Felasha have been affected). Young Israelis have come to help the Felasha modernize themselves and quite a few Felasha have secured education in Israel. Some of them who came back to Ethiopia after long years of training abroad were discouraged by the low salaries they were offered and decided to leave their country for good. The Felasha have lost, among others, good nurses in this fashion. Acculturation seems to be accepted willingly by the Felasha, even by the elders. This is, of course, a very recent development because they were in the past, so attached to their tradition that they had been accepting all kinds of humiliations in order to be able to keep their identity and their ritual purity.

The Felasha have a well deserved reputation for political courage that goes back at least to the tenth century when Yodeth, an Agaw princess, who had embraced the Felasha faith, ruled the country for forty years. In the sixteenth century, however, they were subjugated after bitter fighting and were deprived of the right to possess land.

The loss of the right to own land left them, more or less, like

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[19]A woman has to stay in the "hut of malediction" (house of blood) for forty days, after the birth of a boy, and eighty days, after that of a girl; a striking way to mark the blessing of children! These periods of forty and eighty days are also found in the Ethiopian Orthodox baptismal rites.

foreigners in a rist[20] country. The Ethiopian Constitution has given the Felasha their full citizenship rights, but it has not succeeded, as yet, in ABROGATING all the age-old customs. Of course, a rich and well educated Felasha could perhaps own land in Gondar. But for the ordinary Felasha it does not seem to be possible to own land even in the village where he lives as a weaver. A few people descended from the soldiers of Menelik II own land, but these are very few, perhaps one in a thousand. And with the Governor's approval some Felasha have tried to settle on non-cultivated malaria-infested land. Unfortunately, once the Felasha had improved their newly-found lands, people have appeared who claimed for themselves the ownership of these lands. Many Felasha live insecure of the future: when this writer, in April 1969, visited the inhabitants of a small village, three miles from Gondar, on the way to Aksum, he was told they owned the land on which their huts and synagogue were built, but they had no land to cultivate. About 1968, a landlord had expelled them from the land they had been farming. Their only source of income, at the moment, was pottery and they

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[20]The distinction between rist and gult rights is important. A rist right is a perpetual right to cultivate part of the land first held by a linear ancestor. A gult right is different: it is the right to exercise certain functions (for instance of administrator, judge) and enjoy certain privileges (for instance obtain services, collect taxes) in a particular territory; these rights are matched by obligations toward the superior who granted them. The rist right is a right to cultivate and is transmitted to all recognized biological descendants of an ancestor settler. However, the gult rights are given by a ruler who needs to enlist supporters for his secular undertakings or to obtain spiritual help. When a gult is given to a church it is forever, but the son of a lay gult holder would normally need an official confirmation of his gult right to be able to keep it. The rist land cannot be sold or willed like movable property; it could be temporarily given to a tenant, lent to a friend or traded for a more conveniently located field, but it cannot be removed from the control of the corporation formed by the descendants, male and female, of the first settler.

exhibited very lovely, even if crude, articles for sale. They said they would buy land if they had enough money. Later on, the Gondare guide told this writer they would not find a seller no matter how hard they tried.

One important reason for refusing to sell land to the Felasha is that they are often considered as evil-eyed people; Kayla is synonymous with buda and both words connote evil powers. As Tubiana once remarked,[21] although the Felasha avoid very carefully all forms of sorcery they are considered as evil-eyed persons by many of their Christian neighbors. Why should the Felasha be evil-eyed? Largely, it seems, because of their occupations. Unable to rely on farming and uninterested in trade (because it would endanger their ritual purity with, for example, long trips on the Sabbath) they had to turn to handicraft and manual arts in which they now excel. They are skillful in forging iron, weaving and especially pottery. Some of them also supply firewood to the Gondar population. The Felasha are well known for their faithfulness to their religious beliefs and their willingness to adjust to modern conditions. Presently, there are more and more Felasha who enter the educational system and who try to participate in Ethiopia's social and economic development. However, it is still true that the worst insult for anyone, in some parts of Ethiopia, is to be called Felasha.

The Jabarti are a second minority group, one that illustrates well the difficulties of social analysis in Ethiopia. With the Jabarti

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[21]In a lecture delivered at Haile Sellassie I University, Addis Ababa, in February 1964.

one associates Moslems, and with Moslems a variety of people representing different backgrounds and social conditions: some Moslems are native Ethiopians, others come mainly from Arabia, Yemen or the Sudan; some are poor, others wealthy; some speak Arabic, others Agawigna, Tigrigna or Amharic. In the past there has been inter-marriage between leading Moslem and Christian families, but at the same time there has been also widespread anti-Moslem feelings for fear of the possible collusion between Ethiopian Moslems and their fellow believers outside the frontiers of Ethiopia. Some Jabarti lived together in well fortified villages while others were scattered among their Christian neighbors. All these historical and social forces have contributed to make the reality covered by the word Jabarti very difficult to define. Simoons confuses the issue when he considers the Jabarti as a distinct ethnic unit.

Here is how some of the main varieties of Jabarti could be identified. First, Jabarti is the name given, generally, to Ethiopian Moslems living in the old Christian areas where they form sometimes up to one-tenth of the population. This applies to Begemder and other regions like Dessie. However, in parts of Eritrea the word Jabarti designates a Christian converted to Islam. Unlike the Felasha, the Jabarti have rights equal to those of the Christians, some of them can even be high government officials. In Gondar people usually speak of Islamotch when they refer to rich native Moslems who are increasing in number, keeping stores and settled mostly around the mosque in Kedame Gebaya and in Addis Alem, south Gondar.

Another group called the Jebeli count very poor members amongst themselves. They are Arabs, or sons of Arabs, who sometimes married

Ethiopian women. Their nationality is not Ethiopian and usually they live in cities; the very poor ones work as coolies, or they beg and rely on the help of their richer trading "brothers." A third interesting and most successful Moslem group is that of the Yemeni Arabs who are expert at foreseeing the needs of the population and can store a great variety of goods in their shops so they can sell the accumulated merchandise when it is most profitable to them.

The Jabarti as a group have been able to exploit through Islam their acquaintance with the outside world and thus counteract the handicaps they had to overcome in Ethiopia. In the past they were often deprived of land rights and forced to turn to weaving and trading for survival; for this reason, many of them are prosperous today although in some provinces their social status remains low. This is not the case, in Eritrea, where many of them own land. In Begemder some have turned to farming and do their work in a fashion that does not distinguish them from Amhara farmers except for crops like tobacco and ch'at that they are likely to cultivate beside the more traditional crops of the north. Their religious life is patterned on that of typical Islamic communities but with less intransigence on matters like prayer and fasting.

The Semitic Speakers

The Amhara, like the Tigre, have succeeded the Aksumites. When and how remain open questions whose answers cannot be found easily. One thing is clear: the close association between the Amhara tradition and Christianity. To understand the importance of Christianity in the Amhara culture, it is not sufficient to catalogue and

interpret the various external manifestations of the Christian faith in the Amhara world; it is also necessary to try to fathom the depth and strength of faith in the hearts of the traditional Amhara.[22] However, this is a delicate task that will not be attempted here, it is only mentioned as a warning for the non-believer not to underestimate the significance of the Christian faith for the traditional Amhara. It must be remembered that religion has played and is still playing a very important role in the lives of the Amhara population. As in medieval Europe religion follows man in his day to day existence but especially at the time of life's great crises.

One should not however exaggerate the responsibility of the Church for many traits found in Ethiopia's culture. People sometimes resist modern Church teaching, for example in the tekelile, marriage with a crown but without communion, commonly practiced in Addis Ababa. More important is the survival, even among Christian Amhara, of traditional beliefs in magic and spirits. These are phenomena one should expect to find associated with religious behavior and they are good reminders of the complexity of the Christian fact on the highlands.

Coming back to the point made above, it must be clearly understood that to assess the religious situation properly one must go beyond the surface deep into the hearts of the people. The number of Christian churches dotting the landscape, for instance in some parts of Arusi, does not necessarily correspond to the intensity of Christian life any

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[22]For a good study of Ethiopian Christianity today see Sergew Hable Selassie, Chairman of the Publication Committee of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, The church of Ethiopia: a panorama of history and spiritual life (Addis Ababa: United Printers, 1970).

more than it would in other Christian lands.

The traditional economy of the Amhara is based on mixed agriculture, farming and herding. The Amhara have always shown reluctance to devote themselves to trade or handicraft. This is a trait which they share with many others, among whom the traditional Castillans of the high plateau of Spain: these highlanders were proud of their role in the defense and administration of Spain and they used to look with contempt on the people of Barcelona, for example, who were traders.

In Ethiopia it would be a mistake to associate the Amhara to the highlands only. Some of them have settled in the lowlands and there are quite important differences between the highland and the lowland Amhara as one can observe, for instance, between the Debre Berhan people and their Morete neighbors. These differences, of course, are useful to know, although they may look trivial in comparison to the similarities --language, faith, food--that exist between dega and golla, lowland, Amhara. Ecology explains many of these discrepancies. The soil of the highlands is less fertile and produces crops that bring smaller cash returns. For example, barley may sell at $3.00 to $4.00 per dawala (100 litres) while teff may bring $8.00 for the same quantity. Gesho, hops, and berbere, red pepper, both mid-lowland crops pay well. Moreover, building a house is more expensive in the cold highlands because of the investment in construction materials like eucalyptus wood, and grass which usually come from the lowlands. Generally speaking, the lot of the highland farmer is often difficult: he may have most of his children going to school, some of them no doubt with the intention of making a better living than their father in future; he may also have less support from his wife who may not share his work in the field and

and might even be lured by the life that she has discovered in the small roadtowns.

In the past, the Amhara have played with the Tigre an important role as rulers. The Amhara seemed to excel in political manoeuvre and although often divided by regional interests, often weakened by their own poor, often capable--for reasons of political expediency--of bringing some non-Amhara within their ruling circles, they all seemed to agree on their right, or their mission to lead Ethiopia. A discussion of the extent to which the "Amhara Rule" has marked the country does not belong to this text, but the fact is too important not to be underscored.[23]

With the Tigre, the Amhara have forced the country to open its eyes on the outside world. For centuries Christianity has permitted a certain movement of ideas and people in and out of Ethiopia. Until recently, the monasteries and churches have supplied the paintings and manuscripts for the museums, or the archives, and supported the schools of the country; these schools, although more literary than functional, played an important secular role in traditional Ethiopia by the diffusion of the Amharic script which proved to be very useful in courts and government circles. The Amhara have had a decisive influence even on the external and physical appearance of their northern highlands: they have really landscaped their land. They knew the plough and believed in the superiority of cereals over root crops: they did not value trees, like the southerners, who sometimes venerated

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[23]For a penetrating study of the problem see Clapham, Haile Selassie's government (London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1969).

them; they showed no interest in the ensete, although it could have easily grown in most parts of the north. Many of these economic choices may have been conditioned by the rejection of Islam and of the cultural traits associated with it, in particular foods. Since Moslem favourite dishes and animals are often associated with the hot lands, the Amhara developed a liking for the cold lands cereals and barley malt-beer; they adopted the horse and the mule as their symbols for power and rank.

These opinions have sharpened the cultural contrasts between highland and lowland populations; also between northern and southern Ethiopians; they have even made it hard for the Amhara to settle in the less attractive and less developed lowlands. However, these limitations do not weaken the contention that the Amhara have been responsible for numerous innovations. Misoneism is an ailment in Ethiopia, yet it should not allow one to forget very important changes engineered by the Amhara. They have grown from a small collectivity to a large and influential group, no matter how heterogeneous, not only by the natural population increase but also by the assimilation of members of other ethnic groups, especially perhaps the Agaw and a number of Galla. Some groups have participated very actively in this process of assimilation: they have often accepted a new faith and a new language, new dresses and new foods, they have even sometimes modified their genealogies to make them more relevant to the new situation.

Amharaization is still going on in many parts of the country: Where one word of Amharic could not be heard ten years ago, for instance in some parts of the Awash valley, now one can hear it echoed a hundred times. But not only are the Amhara speakers becoming more conspicuous

in many regions, there are also numerous people, not born from Amhara parents, who choose to be identified as Amhara. Many Agaw, for example, have given up their Qimant language and would be insulted if they were not considered as Amhara. The Amharaization process can help build up the nation and more so if it is not imposed by force. Shack alludes to this problem as it is understood by Gurage elders.[24]

A nation, in the process of building itself up, needs some kind of model which corresponds more or less to the ideal citizen. The former British colonies have their models and so have the former French colonies. In transitional situations there is need for a cultural image that can be reproduced by people; that is how it becomes possible for non-Amhara to join the Amhara group. However, keeping in mind the long term development of the whole country and the fact that strict Amharaization may be unacceptable to some ethnic groups which enjoy more power and confidence in themselves, one is strongly inclined to suggest that Amharaization should give way to Ethiopianization, and very soon.

Ethiopianization does not mean only the employment of Ethiopians as opposed to expatriates, but especially the granting of equal opportunities to all Ethiopians regardless of their tribal origin or ethnic differences: the basic qualification for any job, or responsibility, should be that the applicant is an Ethiopian, no matter his creed, ethnic background, shade or color. Ethiopianization can be called the process by which traditional members of the various ethnic groups progressively become integrated into one nation thanks to education, the relinquishing of some outdated customs and the adoption of more

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[24] Shack, The Gurage, pp. 80 and 203.

appropriate values and habits. In becoming better informed, more tolerant of others, more active in development work any one can become a true Ethiopian.

This Ethiopianization will require of course, from all the parties involved, a willingness to compromise with others. Only a most backward group would reject change totally, and only a cruel central government would abandon this group to its ignorance and fears. The difficulty of the problem resides in choosing the kind of compromise that must be agreed upon in order to allow minority groups not only to preserve their identity, but also to become part of the national fabric. There is no simple formula for this problem, the solution varies with each individual case. However, it would be enlightening to study the possible role of the churches and the much more evident role of the urban institutions: how could they foster Ethiopianization, as described above, by providing possibilities for education and equal work opportunities for all; also by encouraging a greater tolerance of religious and other differences amongst Ethiopians? All these are questions that remain to be answered.

There is one more category of people found in Begemder: the Tigre.[25] And before going further, a clarification about the word Tigre. First, there are the Tigre proper, the people who live in northern Eritrea between Nakfa and Keren. These people speak Tigre

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[25]They call themselves Tigrawot (plural), Tigraway (singular) and their governorate general Tigray. Foreigners and Amharic speakers alike frequently refer to them as Tigre. This is also the usage followed here.

and comprise a number of subtribes like the Maria and the Mensa. Second, the inhabitants of the governorates general of Tigre and of Eritrea, the Tigrawot, who will be called Tigre here and who speak Tigrigna, or Tigrinna. The Tigre of northern Eritrea will not be mentioned again in this chapter. The Tigre of the governorate general of Tigre and those of Eritrea differ somewhat, for ecological and historical reasons, yet they share many traits in common, for instance, they are often more clannish or willing to cooperate and less secretive than the Amhara. When speaking of the Tigre, however, these distinctions will be ignored although one should not forget that regionalism can play a vital role for the Tigre, as well as for all other large ethnic groups. The Tigre from Adwa and Agame, for example, are conscious of not belonging exactly to one and the same group.

What can history and ecology tell about the Tigre? One fact stands out clearly: their close association with urban life. The Tigre, or their immediate ancestors, have witnessed the beginnings of civilization (always urban, if not industrial) in Africa, south of the Sahara. This long familiarity with towns may be related to a certain versatility and adaptability of the Tigre; and even if there were no verifiable relationship between town life and these two characteristics it is sure that they agree very well together.

The Tigre are found in both high and lowlands where they always manage to find some means of survival although not always without friction with the local population. They are often educated, capable of speaking many languages and apt to succeed in a variety of fields, for example, as barbers, drivers, engineers, accountants, businessmen or mechanics. They seem to have familarized themselves with town

manners a long time ago.

A second characteristic of the Tigre is their sense of belonging. Those of Eritrea, especially, look at themselves as the chosen people of Ethiopia, as a people that has not lost its so-called purity by inter-marriage with other groups. They think of themselves as the genuine Habesha. For them, Habesha is a word used to designate all that belongs to the Tigre tradition, for example, sasnet Habesha, megib Habesha, mera Habesha used for dance, food and marriage. Likewise, locally made cloth will be called kidan Habesha and native work, serah Habesha. Tigrigna itself is called Kwankwa Habesha. Some Tigre of Manamir will use the word Habesha as synonym to Christian, but most Tigre, especially in Eritrea, appropriate it for themselves.

Combined with the consciousness of their identity is a strong attachment to their freedom. It is pointless to blame modern populations for crime supposedly committed by their ancestors and all the Tigre of Eritrea cannot be held accountable for the occupation of their land by the Italians. The case of the Thai[26] under Japanese occupants and the recent history of Czechoslovakia show how complex the situation of an occupied population can be; on this subject it can be added, that in Eritrea, the official government paper, published by the Imperial Ethiopian Ministry of Information is still printed in Italian. But there is also a daily newspaper, Unity (it was called Time until 1962). Unity has two sections: The first one, Hibret, is written in Tigrigna, and the second one, El Wahda, is in Arabic. (These last two names mean unity.)

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[26]Thailand means "the land of the free."

Generally speaking, the land of the Tigre is poor and this condition of the soil has enormous consequences for the people. Agriculture, except where irrigation can truly work miracles, is not vigorous. On the contrary cattle are very important; to possess cattle is not only an economic, but also a social asset.

The traditional Tigre share cultural traits common among East African cattle people. Many of the Tigre, for instance, travel much. They seem to have developed a certain familiarity with movements made necessary by wars, migrations, pastoral life and occasionally by the sheer impossibility of farming their land because of lack of rain; sometimes if a season is particularly bad they will leave their fields to go beg for work from distant relatives who happen to be farming in better areas. More significant is the fact that in parts of Tigre a tenant farmer may be better off with oxen than with land.[27] In Enderta, for example, a landowner can conclude an agreement (sometimes in writing) with a farmer who has oxen, with conditions somewhat like this: one-fourth of the crop for the landowner and three-fourths for the farming tenant. Some agreements will even specify the kind of services to be rendered by the landowner. Of course one may disagree on the appropriateness of calling this farming laborer a tenant but the point here is that a farmer may accumulate power and money without owning land provided he has oxen.

The Tigre remain sociable in their contacts, direct in their

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[27] In these places land is not a lever for political power as in Gojjam for instance; a poor man is defined by his lacking animals, not land. Information obtained from Daniel Bauer in a personal communication.

speech and respectful of their strong family ties. Strangely enough and sometimes even among the most progressive Tigre one finds little egalitarianism between the sexes. This may have something to do with the wish not only to keep the wife at home, but to keep her purely and simply. In fact, the rate of divorce is very low in some Tigre communities and this may be related in part to the tradition of the DOWRY. The possibility of losing much of it may constitute for women, who often do not inherit land, a strong deterrent to divorce. Tigre customary law penalizes the party responsible for divorce and shows some additional severity for women.[28]

The problem of social integration exists also among the Tigre. There is room for a better fusion of the diverse groups, not only the small ones like the musicians (singing women, players of tcherawata) but also the large ones too, like the Moslems. Tabus are losing ground and more and more people who in the past could not have interacted freely are now behaving as equals, thanks to the greater range of possible associations at work, and of possible mates for marriage; now a young Christian Tigre can marry a Bahay Amhara girl.

One more aspect of Tigre culture must be mentioned because of its originality and of its relevance for development, although it does not prevail in Begemder: it is the village system of communal land ownership.

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[28]Here is a partial list of the traditional Tigre Customary Codes: Sirat Adikeme Kilgae, Sirat Sciowate Karnescim, Keren Highi Indaba Beite, Highi Logo Chewa, etc. Some customary codes seem to be quite ancient. Highi Logo Chewa, for instance, the customary law of Logo Chewa, a district between Hamasen and Serae, in Eritrea, is said to have been written during the reign of King Fassil and revised, first at the time of Yohannes, then during the Italian occupation and finally during the British occupation.

Ownership is communal when the rights to land are held in common by the members of a group defined by descent only, or defined by descent and the occupancy of a territory. The first type is the family system, so important to the traditional highlander that it has come to be associated with Ethiopianness: a Gojjame, for instance, will look down as kegn, colonized, on the southern Ethiopian who does not enjoy this type of tenure. A reform of the communal family system is one of the elements most crucial for the development of Ethiopia, so fundamental an element in fact that the Swedish government has made it a prerequisite for an area (Chilalo, Arusi) which was to be the object of a bilateral agreement for regional development. The reluctance of the Ethiopian government to implement this clause of the contract may well lead in a near future to the withdrawal of all Swedish aid, not only to the regional project but to all Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian land tenure is most complex[29] and therefore difficult

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[29]The only thorough study of the family land system in Ethiopia can be found in Allan Hoben, Land tenure among the Amhara of Ethiopia (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973).

Here are some other important sources on the subject:

A) Monographs on Ethiopian Land Tenure, published by the Institute of Ethiopian Studies and the Faculty of Law, Haile Sellassie I University, in association with Oxford University Press, Addis Ababa:

a) Land charters of Northern Ethiopia, translated from Amharic and Geez with an introduction and notes by G.W.B. Huntingford, 1965.

b) Land tenure in Chore (Shoa). A Pilot Study, by H.S. Mann, 1965.

c) State and land in Ethiopian history, by Richard Pankhurst, 1966.

B) Reports of the Department of Land Tenure in the Imperial Ethiopian Government Ministry of Land Reform and Administration, for instance, the Land tenure survey of Wollega province (October 1967).

C) Papers read at the Seminar on Agrarian Reform sponsored by the Ministry of Land Reform and Administration, 25 November - 5 December 1969 (Addis Ababa:

a) Taxation of unutilized land in Ethipia, by Fesseha Ezaz.

b) Role of agriculture extension agents in land reform, by Awgichew Kassa.

D) Experiment Station Bulletins, published by the Imperial Ethiopian College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts, Alemaya:

to change.[30] A good illustration of this point, but not from Begemder, is supplied by the Tigre village system of communal ownership. It corresponds to the second type of communal ownership defined above. Here is a brief sketch of the village system describing how it functions in Decamare, Eritrea.[31]

The land of the village amounts to some twenty-three square miles distributed in the following way: one-fourth for pastures and the rest for agriculture, divided roughly into three parts: first, the irrigated and more fertile land; second, the soil which is good, fertile but not irrigated, and third, the poor soil. This land is owned by the village as a group; no individual can own land privately. There are rules which establish the rights to land in the village. To enjoy land in Decamare: first, one must be descended in the male line

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a) Land ownership in Hararge province, no. 47.
b) Land tenure in Bate. no. 49.

E) Ethiopia Observer: occasional articles:
a) The land system of Ethiopia, by Mahteme Sellassie Wolde Maskal, I, 9 (1957), 283-301.
b) Ethiopia's traditional system of land tenure and taxation, by Gebre-Wold-Ingida Worq, V, 4 (1962), 302-399.

[30]See Harrison C. Dunning, Land reform in Ethiopia: case study in non-development, U.C.L.A. Law Review, XVIII, 2 (1970), 271-307; also the chapter on Communal Land Tenure in Ethiopia by J.C.D. Lawrance and H.S. Mann in F.A.O. Land Policy Project, mimeographed in Addis Ababa, (1964), pp. 1-21, (each chapter has its own pagination). Raanan Weitz indicates clearly how land reform is only "one link" in a complex chain of activities for rural development. Land redistribution alone can easily fall short of its most economic and even social targets. See R. Weitz, From peasant to farmer: a revolutionary strategy for development (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), pp. 156-159.

[31]The same system is found in Tigre as far south as Maichew, but without the periodic redistribution of lots. Personal communication from Daniel Bauer, June 1970.

from one of the ancestors who founded the three enda, or descent groups:[32] Mahare, Mahio and Aradom, (a man whose mother's village is Decamare but whose father's village is somewhere else cannot obtain land in Decamare, a blacksmith, also, would have no right to land share); second, one must be married at the time of the distribution of the village land; finally, one must have paid his taxes to the Government. Families are not differentiated by size and large ones, therefore, are at a disadvantage. A widow is entitled to one-third of her husband's share. Note that in northern Ethiopia the land owners are often called ristenyatat and the land holders makhelai-alet, people amidst. These landholders may be either tenants whose payments cannot be refunded, or people who have deposited money with a landlord in exchange for the right to utilize a piece of land, a right that can be exercised as long as the money is not returned. In Hamasen, money can buy land but if the buyer does not belong to the enda group, although he can transfer this land to his children, neither he nor they will ever become ristenyatat, they will always remain makhelai-alet.

In Decamare, land is redistributed among qualified village residents every seventh year. This reshuffling of land holdings is a difficult job because of the relative scarcity of land (there are two hundred and fifty or so people entitled to a share of it) and because there is much competition between the three descent groups. Settlement of conflicts is the responsibility of the government official who heads the village, the dagna.

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[32]The enda is a kinship group which consists of many families claiming descent in the male line from a common ancestor who has given his name to the enda.

Here is how the dagna proceeds to organize the redistribution of village lands. First he asks each enda to send its representatives, that is a number of elders who may, or may not, be given assistants to help them. The enda representatives and the dagna then divide the prospective sharers into, say, a dozen groups, each consisting of some twenty to thirty family heads. Now the groups must appoint representatives and send them to the dagna.

If necessary the land will be redivided into small plots to be apportioned to the sharers; this is done independently in each one of the three zones mentioned above. The measurements are usually done by pacing and the corners of the plots are marked by stones. It may take a whole week to carry on this work for which no one receives payment. At the end the elders must verify if the measurements and divisions have been done properly.

The next step will be the actual assignment of the plots to the farmers entitled to share them. First the irrigated section. All its newly measured plots are divided into twelve sub-sections and these will be ranked, from the best to the worst, according to the quality of the land. The lots will be cast among the twelve groups. In the past, groups were identified each one by a different club; now the elders would rather write the names of the group representatives on pieces of paper and draw the name of the winner by chance. The first group to win will get the best sub-section of irrigated land and so on. Lots will be cast until each group has received its share.

After the plots of the irrigated section have been distributed then the non-irrigated section is treated in a similar way, except there is no need now for casting lots: the group which won the last lot in

the first drawing will now be allowed to choose the best plot of land.

The poor soil section, instead of being sub-divided may be kept for grazing. If this is not done, individual families may keep some of their fields fallow for the same purpose. More work remains to be done indeed since the sub-sections have to be shared by the members composing the groups. The same system is used once again: representatives are chosen, lots are cast and plots apportioned to individual farmers who will be able to utilize their portion of land for seven years.

The actual system is much more complex than indicated in the above sketch. The purpose here was only to draw the reader's attention to the cyclical redistribution of land, an exclusive feature of the Tigre village communal ownership system, and to allow for some suggestions to be made concerning its value in terms of development.

The village system of communal land ownership is certainly a very egalitarian system, but that is almost the only favorable feature one can point at. The disadvantages outweigh the advantages very clearly. The system is a)time consuming; b) unfair for large families which are not given more land on account of their size; c) unfair for bachelors who by working on their fathers' lands, by renting land outside or by working as share-croppers can seldom make enough profits to support a family when they get married; d) detrimental to good upkeeping and improvement of land--trees can be cut, the soil left to wash away--because no farmer is interested in working for the benefit of the one who will succeed him on his plot at the next redistribution.

One can see easily why this system should be changed. One must remember, however, that the farmers whose lives have been conditioned by it, for perhaps hundreds of years, will hesitate to do so. Each one

is haunted by the fear of getting stuck with a piece of land of lower value while a rival perhaps will be able to hold on to a rich plot as long as he likes it. It may take one generation to change these attitudes and some changes, for example about values, like money, etc. should come first to prepare the major revolution in land tenure.

Such are some of the elements entering into the picture of the plough area. The human cross-section of Begemder gave an idea, but only a highly schematized idea of the variegated and extremely interesting population that has succeeded the Abyssinians of history and legend. Only a warm and empathic contact with the people themselves can give the student of ethnology the insight and the depth of understanding that every Ethiopian would like the others to have of himself. People, the highest expression of life, are ineffable just as life itself.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Abrogation	Annulment by an authoritative act.
Acculturation	The process of becoming adapted to new cultural patterns. The assumption of culture through contact, especially with a people of higher civilization.
Dowry	Money, goods, etc. which a woman brings to her husband in marriage.
Maresha	A farm implement used to cut, turn up and break up the soil. Plough.
Miscegenation	The mixture of different racial stocks through physical interbreeding. It is the primary process in amalgamation.
Swidden	Slash and burn cultivation.

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How important are the depressed groups of Ethiopia? What place do they occupy in the literature and what role can they play for development?

2. What are some of the economic and social consequences of the prejudices entertained against certain ethnic groups? What means would you suggest to reduce prejudice? Who should take the initiative?

3. Levine in Wax and gold has indicated some aspects of the Ethiopian character without bringing the problems of land tenure into the picture; how relevant is Hoben's research on land in Dega Damot to an understanding of the Ethiopian character?

4. Are Christianity and Islam capable of validating and supporting efforts for development? How?

5. The significance of the spirit possession cults: do they reflect, in some ways, social conditions like the hierarchical structure of the society, the inequalities between "classes" and the sexes, the frustrations of people? Which of these cults actually perform a service to society and should therefore be tolerated?

6. Marriage appears to be more stable in some districts of the north. What factors contribute most significantly to this phenomenon: the dowry, the customary laws or the religious beliefs?

7. To what extent is "regionalism" or "provincialism" an obstacle to development in a governorate general like Gojjam or Tigre?

8. Who are the Jabarti, for you, and what role do they play in Ethiopia's economy?

9. The gap between rural and urban life. How can it be bridged effectively? Where can Ethiopia find some successful examples?

10. Cases of socio-cultural change that represents positive steps for development, either in the civil administration, the judiciary or the educational system. How were specific changes made possible?

11. The cumulative impact of history on Ethiopia and the most urgent requirements for development.

12. Is marriage often arranged without direct involvement of the future partners? Would it be a socio-economic relationship in which infatuation and emotional involvement play only a secondary role? What kind of emotional relationships are there between the spouses? Can they live separate lives (like running separate businesses)?

13. To implement land reform plans one could try to change the people's attitudes while trying to retain, at the same time, their feelings of security. How could that be done? How could the masses be reached? What would be the role of the mass media? Of the voluntary associations? What kind of organizational framework would be needed?

Chapter V

THE CATTLE CULTURE AREA

Some years ago the writer was interviewing an "Adal" in the semi-desert valley of the lower Awash river. After answering so many questions the old man said: "Now you know me very well, but I still do not know you! You must also tell me about yourself." Later on, during the same period of field work, another elder terminated a conversation with these words of wisdom: "Mutual understanding is like rain, it gives life. As long as we do not know each other we are like fields exposed to the sun and all dried up."

These men could have given an impression of aloofness and extreme restraint, but inside they were warm and eager to communicate. These traits contrast deeply with the usual portrait of the "Adal" that so many Ethiopians and foreigners alike have kept in their minds for so long. The "Adal" are called Danakil (singular: Dankali) by the Arabs, Teltal by the Tigre and they call themselves 'Afar, the name that will be used here. Writer after writer have repeated views on the 'Afar that were based on particular historical circumstances or just impressionistic feelings of travelers who never exchanged words with them. They have said: "For the Adal it is better to die than to live without killing." They have also popularized tales of cruelty. These methods of reporting were faulty because very often, for the sake of creating sensation, they produced caricature instead of a true picture; they exaggerated to make a point clearer, selected incidents to prove it and omitted others, etc.

It is a fact that the 'Afar are warlike, but which important group in Ethiopia is not proud of its past prowesses at war?[1] Even now, the standing army of Ethiopia is one of the most considerable of the continent. The 'Afar have been accused of cruelty, but honestly, no group can claim a clean record on this matter. The more civilized a nation is, the more cruel some of its members can get. True, there is still some occasional skirmish between 'Afar and Eisa, they still raid and counter-raid. But the situation has been improving due in part to the civilizing influence of Islam, as will be explained below, but also due to the slow, overall development processes of the country.

The 'Afar are not only one of the many pastoral people of Ethiopia, yet they are a very representative one. The writer has spent considerable time[2] among them and will utilize his field data extensively to illustrate this discussion on the cattle area. It is important to add that among the pastoralists of Ethiopia one must also count the camel people. These will be described very briefly, along with their lands in the introductory section on the culture area. For the rest of the chapter, however, the cattle area proper and the camel area will be lumped together under the label "cattle area."

Characteristics of the Area

The Cattle Area Proper

If one recalls the importance and size of the cattle area that

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[1] In some Tigre groups a man who had killed a lowlander was praised and given a name beginning with Hanta.

[2] Seven months (February to September) in 1963 and one or two week-long field trips every year from 1964 to 1971.

covers almost the whole eastern third of the African continent, from the southern latitudes up to and including Ethiopia, one realizes better the significance of this area. Ethiopians are proud of their seventy million head of cattle, but little have they done, until now, for this great source of wealth.

Cattle people, as their name implies, center their life on their herds. Their culture is essentially a herding culture, which focuses activities and beliefs on cattle: these are the source of power, prestige and security. The cattle herds are to pastoralists what the banks are to more urbanized folks: reserves of capital to be increased incessantly and from which to draw in time of need.

The cattle area proper is not easily defined as to its boundaries, partly because its population is far less dense than that of the farmers and partly because it is much more mobile. The Eisa, for example, who live mostly around the Addis Ababa-Jibuti railway, nevertheless roam further north every year in search of grazing lands. Often, some of them will cross the Awash river and reach the Assab road. The cattle people who frequently practice agriculture as a secondary activity are, in fact, only semi-pastoralists and often more nomadic[3] than the pure pastoralists for reasons that will be explained below.

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[3]People often equate pastoralism and NOMADISM. However, these two types of life are often not always found together. Sedentary life can indeed be associated with pastoralism: there are ranchers, in developed countries who never quit their homes and there are cattle people who manage to live on the same spot all year round, while a sufficient number of their own can roam about with the herds in search of good grazing grounds; they manage, in this way, to keep a permanent balance between pastoralism and agriculture. One can even imagine a small group of hunters and gatherers who, finding themselves well supplied in a particularly favorable environment, would stay there and would really not need to move about in search of supplies. In fact, nomadism cannot be attached to pastoralism any more than to food gathering.

Remembering that the boundaries of the cattle culture are fluid one can note the following as the main cattle areas of Ethiopia: the middle and lower valleys of the Awash and Omo rivers, the Arusi and Borena countries, perhaps the highlands of Bali and certain parts of the Baro bulge. A good part of these are Qolla (below 5,500 feet) areas often infested with malaria and, in the west, the tsetse fly.

Among the cattle people one can count some 'Afar, Somali, Galla, Gelaba (near Lake Rudolf), Nuer and many others. The majority of the cattle people are Moslem and practically all of them speak cushitic languages, the only exception being the Tigre of the northern lowlands. Traditionally, at the tribal level, the political organization was segmentary. That did not prevent the formation of powerful Moslem states[4] and of their diminutive equivalents, the sultanates. The latter have mostly disappeared today but those left can still carry on useful functions in certain circumstances.

The cattle people travel long distances in search of pastures and also in order to go to important markets. Their reluctance to sell cattle should not be exaggerated, however, even when one recalls the case of the Awasa Meat Packing Project which failed for lack of meat on the hoof to be processed. In fact, one could cite also the case of powerful Arusi cattle owners who are willing to sell some of their animals, but who will show great reluctance to do so until they are offered what they consider a fair price. Here, as in farming, the question of price is crucial, people will not just give away their most precious

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[4]G.W.B. Huntingford, The Galla of Ethiopia (London: International African Institute, 1955), pp. 19-22.

source of wealth! There is need for education of course, but also for economic incentives and controls, more incentives for the rural areas, more controls for the towns, for instance, laws preventing exhorbitant house rents.

One other characteristic of the cattle people is the complexity of their social and political organization. The Galla, or the ancient Oromo, for instance, developed a most involved political system based on five periods of eight years.[5] The foundation of this system, the Gada calendar, compares with the most complex methods of computation of time. The Sidama also have developed a social organization which is just beginning to be known, but does not seem to be lacking in sophistication either.[6]

The patterns of residence of the cattle people differ usually from the village type of settlement found in the north, but with a close resemblance to the homestead type of the southwest. Even semi-nomadic Somali and 'Afar live in rer and buDa[7] that are agglomerations of homesteads resembling small villages. "Hamlet" might be the best word to designate these agglomerations of huts where close relatives live in groups together with some friendly neighbors. Neighborhood cooperation is usually intended to facilitate economic survival; hamlets are formed by groups of families, not necessarily related by kinship, that

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[5]See Asmarom Legesse, Gada: three approaches to the study of African society (Boston, Mass.: Boston University, African Studies Center, 1971), pp. 234-250. (Mimeographed.) To be published by the Free Press in 1973.

[6]See John H. Hamer, Sidamo generational class cycles: a political gerontocracy, Africa, XL, 1 (Jan., 1970), 50-70.

[7]In buDa, D is a flapped d.

have agreed to graze their herds together. The proximity of water and pastures is a determinant factor for the location of these hamlets which can sometimes multiply and form a large settlement. It is the absence of a fixed center, a church or a mosque, a market place or a transportation station, that allow the occupants to vacate the place entirely whenever it suits them.

The natural vegetation consists principally of large grass savanna and occasional acacia trees. With irrigation, a variety of plants can grow, for example, bokolo, sorgum and mashilla, maize; recently sugar cane and cotton have become important cash crops. The pastoralists tend many domestic animals beside cattle, especially sheep, goats and sometimes horses, mules and camels. Here there is a great variety of possible combinations depending on ecological adaptation, wealth and the values associated with each animal.

The Camel Area

This area is much less considerable than the cattle area, both from the point of view of geography and that of demography. It must be mentioned separately, however, even if it is included in a discussion of the cattle area with which it often overlaps.

In the camel area are found the pure pastoralists who are not engaged in agriculture and who herd mostly camels and goats. This is the area of independent pastoralism, the desert or semi-desert running from Hargeisa to Massawa, Sahil and Agordat in the province of Keren, Eritrea, the Ogaden and south Bali. Some of the lands in this region are known as the hottest ones in the world. The pure pastoralists are relatively few in number and it is difficult to identify them by name, in Ethiopia. They often appear to be fractions of larger groups who in turn can be

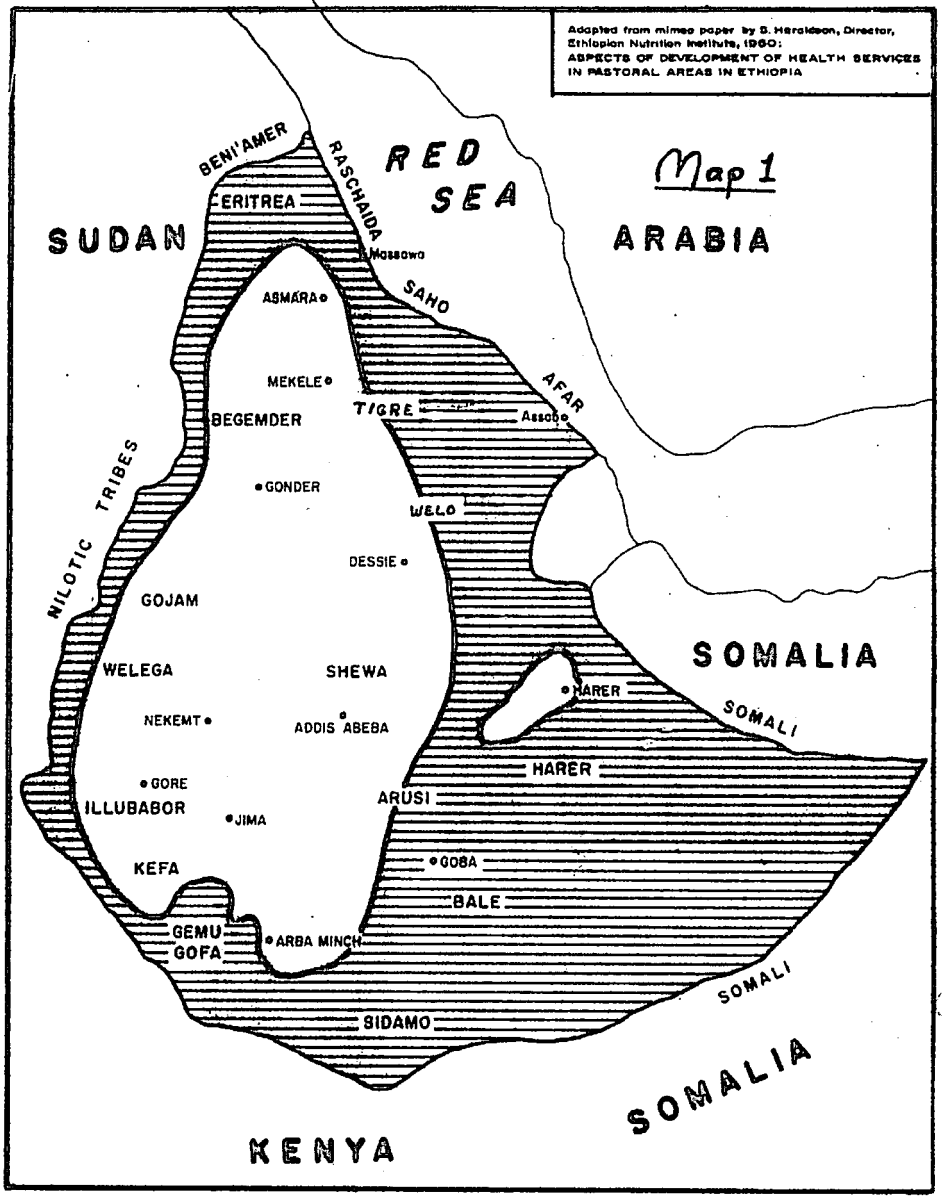
classified as semi-pastoralists. The writer was told that an 'Afar who came to Aysaita (map I) had never seen bread in all his life: he knew only milk and meat and belonged to a minority group of pure pastoralists who did not show any interest in agriculture.

It is not possible to establish conclusively whether the independent pastoralists of Ethiopia are all Moslem. Those who are, however, usually follow SUFISM and many of them still adhere to some of the old cushitic beliefs and rituals.

The socio-political organization of the camel people tends to be much simpler than that of the cattle people. They are more egalitarian and they like to establish bond-friendship ties to supplement kinship ties. These independent pastoralists do not travel extensively like the cattle people proper. Their diet consists mostly of milk, butter and occasionally meat. Hence they rely mostly on internal exchanges and do not visit markets. Their residence patterns, or their local organization, do not differ fundamentally from that of the cattle people proper but seem to be more conditioned by kinship relationships. I.M. Lewis has explained how genealogical relationships structure not only the interaction of different segments of a tribe but also their actual distribution on the land.

Sporadic fighting between neighboring groups has not disappeared altogether. In Arusi and Sidamo, for instance, a year seldom passes by without some serious local skirmishes. It is the same with the 'Afar and Eisa, the Mursi and the Hammar and with many other groups. The basic explanation is ecological. These groups compete for grazing grounds and always risk to appropriate not only the neighbor's pastures but even his animals. When the writer asked an 'Afar why his people were

PASTORAL AREAS IN ETHIOPIA



fighting with the Eisa, he replied: "Because they are our neighbors." The fights of course are not cruel compared with modern acts of warfare where the fighting gets to be so impersonal except, occasionally, for guerillas. The sophisticated modern soldier is a professional killer who is expected to destroy an enemy he has no knowledge of. The pastoralists, on the contrary know their opponents almost as well as football players from different teams know each other. Their aims are very concrete and limited, they want to recuperate so many head of cattle, or kill so many "enemies" in retaliation for losses they previously suffered. This is the only way justice can be administered in the absence of regular courts. Unfortunately, this is also a vicious circle where murder calls for murder and where bloody FEUDS may last indefinitely.[8] Blood payment can sometimes halt the course of vengeance, but only when the people involved realize that their group interest is better insured in this manner.

One can expect people who had to fight regularly for the integrity of their territory, their herds, their own groups, etc. to have developed a high sense of physical courage. Here one touches upon values that have wide currency in the highlands as well. In appendix A and appendix B can be found two texts that characterize attitudes very well anchored in pastoralist mentality; these have survived in the folklore of many farming populations indicating, perhaps, the age-old affinities of all Ethiopians with pastoral life.

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[8]See E.L. Peters, Some structural aspects of the feud among camel-herding beduins of Cyrenaica, Africa, XXXVII (1967), 261-82.

"Pastoral Power." The Cattle People and their Potential for Development

The pastoral people of Ethiopia represent a great asset for the country, not only in terms of human resources for the future but also in terms of their actual contribution to the present day development.

At the inception of his research on the 'Afar the writer has heard painful remarks, among the elite, suggesting that it would be better for the country if the pastoralists would abandon their language, their religion and even their way of life. The popular jargon with some so-called development agents was "sedentarization" of all nomadic or semi-nomadic groups. But this was an illusion. The few countries that tried sedentarization such as those in north Africa found it to be an extremely costly operation, both in terms of capital and of manpower investments.[9] Where the sedentarization schemes have been more successful, for example, in central and north U.S.S.R., the experts have concluded that pastoralism must still be recognized as a legitimate way of life. Also, they have realized that some areas are better exploited by pastoral people, even in the developed countries.[10] Indeed, not every part of the earth is fit for cultivation. If some people are better prepared to exploit non-arable areas it is much more rational not to interfere with them. They will always be in minority: Mesfin Wolde Mariam once suggested that less than ten percent of Ethiopia's population would

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[9]Robert Capot Rey, Problems of nomadism in the Sahara, International Labor Review, XC (1964), 472-87.

[10]T.A. Zhdanko, "Nomadism in central Asia and Kazakhstan," in Inter-regional study tour and seminar on the sedentarization of nomadic population in the Soviet Socialist Republics of Kazakhstan and Kirghizia (Geneva: International Labor Organization, 1966), pp. 48-62.

live in pastoral areas, that is 53.7 percent of the total land surface.[11]

Equally well established is the fact that pastoralists are often more open to change than settled farmers. The rapidity with which some populations of central Africa have moved from pastoral life to agriculture is astounding.[12] Experience with the lower Awash 'Afar these last years has confirmed this point. An expatriate expert working as an F.A.O. Extension Officer in the Awash delta was amazed to discover that some desert people were catching up so fast with the concepts of modern agriculture that it became a tremendous challenge for the Government to try to support them efficiently.[13] Familiarity with risk, insecurity and hardship may help pastoralists to invest more willingly in new ventures.

Today, if one is interested in seeing something new, in traditional Ethiopia, he should study the lowland pastoral area where profound changes are in the making. Increased economic productivity is noticeable indeed,

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[11] Imperial Ethiopian Government, Statistical abstract 1970 (Addis Ababa, Central Statistical Office, 1970), p. 11.

[12] P.F.M. McLoughlin, Some observations on the preliminary report of the culture and ecology in East Africa project, American Anthropologist, 68 (1966), 1004-08.

[13] In the early 1960's, on the irrigated lands of the Awash delta not more than 1 or 2 percent of the farmers were 'Afar. In 1970, about 40 percent of the farmers were 'Afar. In the same area, the surface devoted to cotton has increased enormously, it would have reached sixty square miles, in 1972. The Addis Ababa Bank loaned $1,200,000.00 to Awsa Farmers in 1970. They paid 8 percent interest and returned, practically without exception, the money they borrowed. In 1971, the Addis Ababa Bank loaned $2,000,000.00 to the same farmers. In 1972, the Addis Ababa Bank loaned $2,000,000.00 again and the Commercial Bank an additional $800,000.00. Some U.S.A. businessmen have expressed their intention to build a ginning factory in the Awsa district of the lower Awash valley.

but social change is also proving more and more important and may even become most significant in the long run. The remarkable fact is the meeting of nationals belonging to different cultural traditions and working side by side. Although geographical proximity, among other factors, will explain why some groups dominate the labor force at Wonji, or at Dubti near Tendaho, it is a fact that workers coming from many parts of Ethiopia sweat together, share common forms of entertainment in organized fashion and compete formally with each other in field production. Their way of life is not easy and it is sure that many would give it up if they had other alternatives. Nevertheless, economic and socio-cultural change is taking place in the home of Ethiopia's pastoral people. This is a realistic answer to one of the challenges facing the Ethiopian Government: the mobilization of the people, the participation of all Ethiopians in the national effort for development and unity.

The 'Afar

The pastoral areas of Ethiopia shown on map 2 are inhabited by a variety of ethnic groups, the most important of which are the people of the Horn[14] and the Galla[15] In view of the limits set for this text and of the field experience of the author, the 'Afar (map 3) have been chosen to represent the cattle area. Here follows a broad outline of some aspects of their culture.

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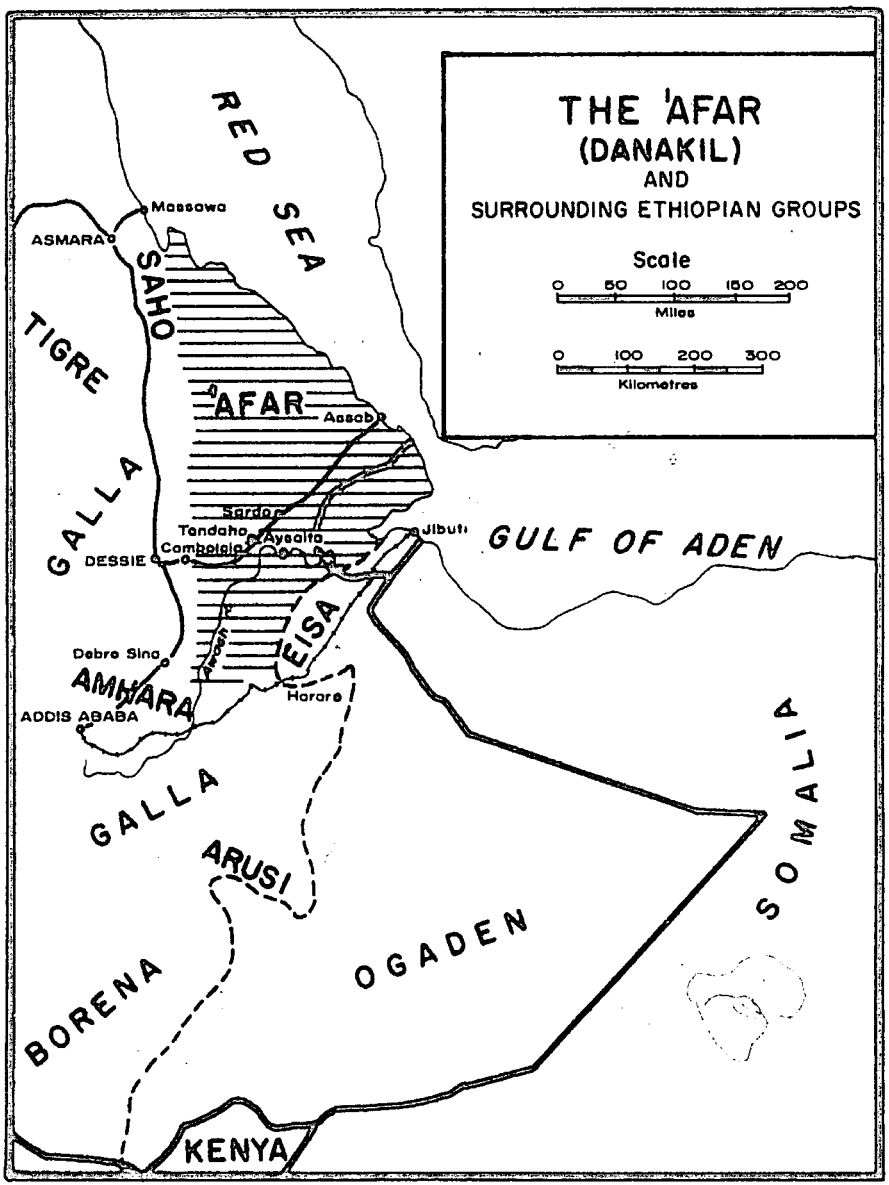
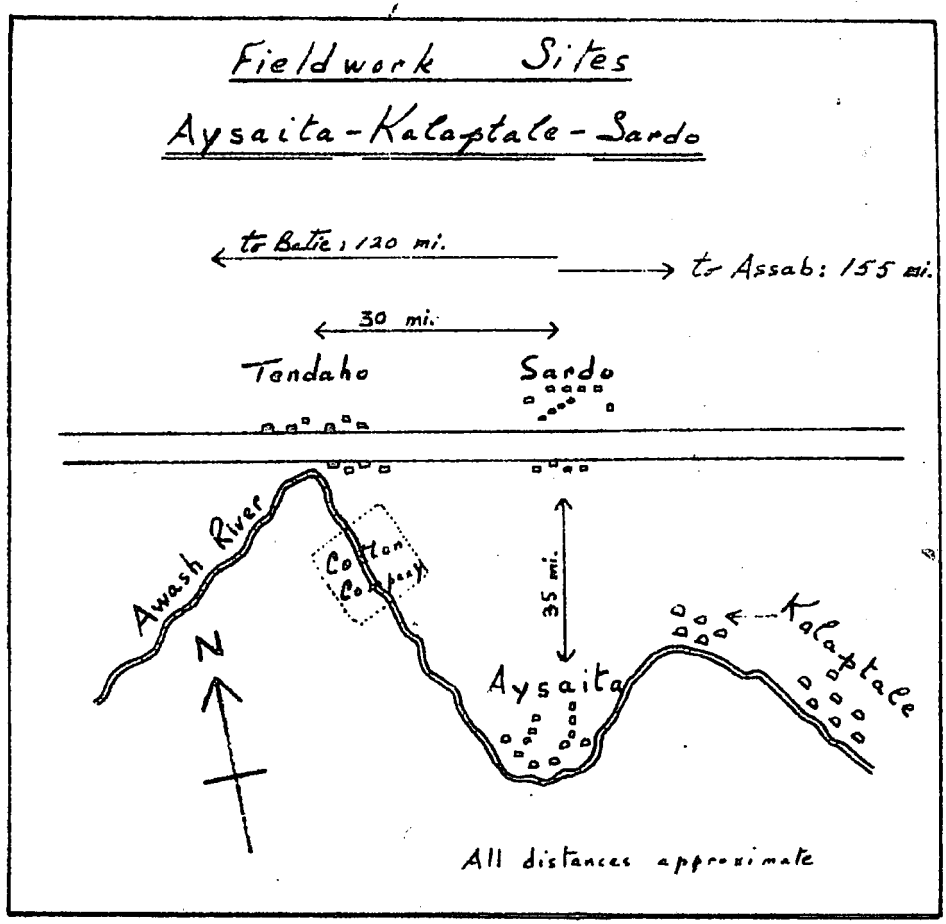
[14]See I.M. Lewis, Peoples of the Horn of Africa (London: International African Institute, 1955).

[15]See G.W.B. Huntingford, The Galla of Ethiopia (London: International African Institute, 1955).

Map 2


THE 'AFAR
(DANAKIL)
AND
SURROUNDING ETHIOPIAN GROUPS
Scale
0 50 100 150 200
Miles
0 100 200 300
Kilometres
RED SEA
Massawa
ASMARA
SAHO
TIGRE
AFAR
Assab
GALLA
Sardo
Tendaho
Ayesaita
Combolcha
DESSIE
Djibuti
GULF OF ADEN
EISA
Awash
Debre Sina
AMHARA
Harare
ADDIS ABABA
GALLA
ARUSI
SOMALIA
BORENA
OGADEN
KENYA

Map 3


Fieldwork Sites
Aysaita-Kalaptale-Sardo
to Batie: 120 mi.
to Assab: 155 mi.
30 mi.
Tendaho
Sardo
Awash River
Cotton Co-operative
35 mi.
Aysaita
Kalaptale
N
All distances approximate

The Herds

It would be impossible to understand the 'Afar well without understanding their companions: the cattle and the other domesticated animals that make life possible in the desert. There is a strong alliance between man and beast in these arid lands, each one depending on the other for his, or its, survival.

First, the cattle. They are one of the most precious possessions of man in 'Afar land. They are mostly descended from the Ankole cattle, so famous for the sweep of their horns. These long-horned cattle were grazing in the Sahara, 5,500 B.C., but they are now found only in a few isolated parts of Africa. The 'Afar are proud of their cattle and they own thousands and thousands of them. This is, of course, a great contrast with the patterns of cattle ownership in other parts of the country where in Kefa for instance, a single cow can be the property of many different owners.

When a child is born he is given a cow by his father. Some 'Afar can afford to do more, and a chief can give as many as six cows to a son and three to a daughter, to get them started. These cattle will multiply and constitute the main source of wealth and security the children will take with themselves when they get married. On the wedding day, the father usually gives one or more cows to the child who is getting married; moreover he supplies all animals necessary for the wedding feast.

Each cow has a name which will be given to the calf also; adult males are not named. It takes three years for a cow to become mature and pregnancy lasts nine months. Tuberculosis is the most serious threat to the bovine population and the 'Afar after isolating the

diseased animals, refrain from drinking their milk.

Each household tries to keep a number of milch cows with their calves to insure the sufficient milk ration of all family members. All other cattle are sent together with the herds of other families to available grazing lands. It takes four cowboys per one hundred cattle. Most families manage to make satisfactory arrangements that will involve some of their relatives, or friends, in long treks across the country in search of grass and water. Very often also the family herd will be divided into many fragments which will be grazing independently thus minimizing the risk of losing all of one's cattle as a consequence of an epidemic, a raid or some other hazard of life.

When there is no more grass available around the camp (that is for more than 6 miles in any direction) then the family must move or send the cattle away. In this case it is useful to have goats for the supply of milk. These goats are tough creatures that can eat almost anything from a banana peel to the coarse rope used instead of bed-springs. They can stick with a family almost any place and although their milk is far from being tasty as good cow milk, it is thought, nevertheless, to have medicinal value. Their life cycle is short: nine months for maturity, three months pregnancy and one and a half months of nursing. All females have names and are considered too precious to be sold. Children are usually in charge of goats and, although they may give away a very young kid, they will usually refuse to sell a mature goat. Twenty goats can be exchanged for a cow and forty for a camel. They are also used as payment for marriages. Children are given a goat, at birth, and bring with them whatever progeniture it has produced, when they get married. Goats travel shorter distances than

cattle. A show worth seeing is the operation "river crossing" with a herd of goats. A shepherd must swim across first with the he-goat. Then the goats are thrown into the water six or eight at a time, at a spot circled by swimmers. Once they are ready for crossing, each swimmer takes two or three in tow and tries to cross as fast as possible for fear they may be carried away by the current.

The fat-tailed sheep, common in Ethiopia, but rare in the territory of the 'Afar and Eisa, seem to be better swimmers. They are never sheared by the 'Afar and give more milk than the goats when they have their young. They are much less numerous than the goats and are reserved for special occasions like feasts, or sacrifices.

The king of the desert is the camel, a most extraordinary animal. The 'Afar need the camel for transporting their goods and every family that can afford it will own at least one camel to allow it to change residence when the need comes.

In a country where temperatures as high as 168° F. have been recorded in the shade,[16] the camel is a model of adaptation. Its body temperature is much more flexible than that of man. While our temperature can fluctuate less than 2° F., for camels it can get as high as 105° F. in the daytime, and as low as 93° F. at night. Because of this adjustability, the camel sweats very little unless wool is sheared on its back in which case it could sweat 60 percent more. Besides its remarkable physical characteristics which allow for special grazing, longer itineraries,

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[16] Lewis M. Nesbitt, Desert and forest (London: Jonathan Cape, 1934), p. 351.

heavier chores, and its different life cycle (four and a half years for maturity, twelve months for pregnancy and seven months nursing) the camel shares some common functions with the other domesticated animals. It can be given as a gift at birth and become part of the wealth brought to marriage. Its milk is highly appreciated, rich in fat and proteins, but for the writer, not as tasty as cow milk. One camel-man is usually responsible for twenty camels at most.

The donkey, a native of the arid lands of Asia, does well also in the desert; some of its wild relatives, the wild asses, are found in the region of Sardo. But the donkey is more difficult than the camel to control. If it escapes the eye of its owner, it can run away and get lost very easily. Donkeys are sturdy, they can tolerate as much water loss as the camels (25 percent of body weight). But donkeys lose water three times faster than camels. A camel could go seventeen days without drinking (only a week if vegetation is very dry) and drink back 25 percent of its weight in ten minutes. But a donkey could go without water for only four days and in two minutes it could drink back 25 percent of its weight lost.

Living conditions

The physiology of man does not allow for such feats. For him, sweating is the only way to cool his body and it is possible to lose almost 1.1 pound of sweat in an hour, that is about one quart. If the loss passes 5 percent of his body weight, about one gallon, his physical condition rapidly deteriorates. At 12 percent the blood has lost water and becomes too dense to be pumped into the heart. This loss results in "explosive heat death." The camel is saved from this by maintaining his blood volume despite the water loss.

When a highlander travels in the desert, he should drink about half a gallon of water per day, especially during meals. He should also take salt tablets to recuperate the losses incurred in sweating. He may even need vitamin K tablets in case of nose bleeding during the hottest months.

These practical details were mentioned to give the reader an idea of what it means to survive in 'Afarland. On certain days, it is already hot at 7:30 A.M. as it can be in Addis Ababa at 1:30 P.M. during the hottest months; it is sometimes difficult to walk in the sun before 5 P.M. No wonder if an outsider who happens to stay temporarily with the 'Afar, worrying about his reserve of water, pills, etc. will feel very much admiration for these men, women and children who without any help from science, or the modern art of living, are able to survive. When this writer was sweating, just waiting for a touch of a breeze, unable to do much else, he marvelled more than once at the sound of their voices: they were talking, even laughing! And sometimes, at night, a young woman would sing softly while doing her last chores.

To complete this picture the reader must remember that many 'Afar have to travel long distances in search of pastures and also to get essential commodities like maize for bread, pieces of clothing, wood or weapons. When the writer was in Sardo a small caravan, arho, appeared; they were four men, three women. They had taken five days to travel from Madebla, which is near Afdera in the lake Julietti area. Kadir, seventeen years old was able to sell a goat for $1.20. With this money he paid an old debt of $0.40 and bought twenty measures of grain with the remaining $0.80. Hasna, eighteen or nineteen years old, also the mother of a three-year old child, was so exhausted when she

reached Sardo that she could not continue as far as Aysaita with the rest of the caravan. She could hardly keep standing on the rocks and was literally unable to walk any more. After a few days of rest she sold her two goats and with the cash obtained managed to buy the following items: tobacco (10¢ for a large ball), sugar, honey, dates and some earrings for her daughter, a black veil, mussana, for herself, a small teapot and some coffee for her father. When the five members of the arho began their return trip, they estimated it would take them about ten days because the donkeys were loaded and tired. The writer accompanied the arho on a short distance and while walking one of the men began to tease the younger girl, who was about fifteen years old, saying that they would give her as a wife to the frenji, foreigner. She immediately answered: "No." As he was sweating under the sun and walking with difficulty on rough terrain the writer did not care for a long explanation. Yet he wanted to know why she refused to emphatically. And her answer came very naturally: "Because I love my country!"

Women can come to Aysaita for Madebla twice a year only, but the men do the trip more often. The 'Afar also change the location of their camps, once to three or perhaps more times in a year. Figure 6 shows the moves of a family as they could be observed in the course of a few years. The figures represent distances from Addis Ababa, in miles, on the Assab road between two small settlements, Waransoh and Mille, on the Assab road.

Figure 7 VARIOUS LOCATIONS OF A HAMLET ON THE ASSAB ROAD

Waransoh					Mille
289.8	295.8	301.5	301.8	307.8	309
	April 1966 and 1967	April 1969	April 1968	Dec. 1967	

Social Organization

The social organization of the 'Afar has not been fully described yet. Chédeville[17] produced the best study to come from the Bureau d'Etudes of Jibuti, French Territory of the 'Afar and the Eisa; missionaries, protestant and catholic, have also contributed knowledge, especially in the field of linguistics like Father Paul, O.F.M. Cap., from Jibuti and the Reverend Mahaffy, from Senafe, Eritrea. Whether one should approach the study of 'Afar social organization through kinship, or through some other angle like that of associations, alliances, networks, etc. is highly controversial. The writer has chosen the classic social anthropology approach for a variety of reasons. First it was the most realistic way, at the time of his field work, to obtain substantial information from the 'Afar: they were interested in talking about their ancestors and relatives. Second, it allowed to form some kind of comprehensive, although incomplete, picture of the society. Third, it allowed for the integration of numerous social facts, in particular the system of PREFERENTIAL MARRIAGE, the CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE which to this day has remained very significant although a considerable number of exceptions are tolerated. As a social anthropologist the writer was struck by the inappropriateness of the label "patrilineal" when applied to a society which gave such great importance to the woman's descent group. Comparisons with relevant studies in Africa revealed similar phenomena in other African societies and showed the wealth of differences that can be contained in a simple expression like "patrilineal society."

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[17] E. Chédeville, Quelques faits de l'organisation sociale des 'Afar, Africa, XXXVI (1966), 173-196.

At the risk of making the following enumeration needlessly heavy here are some of the relevant references bearing on this topic. Vansina[18] has described a social structure based on a combination of BILATERAL groups with shallow matrilineages and Kopytoff[19] has found enclaves of MATRILINEALITY inside PATRILOCAL residential Suku groups. Among the Dinka[20] the lineages of priests and warriors form a strong nucleus of DOUBLE-DESCENT groups related through women with different complementary functions. In a similar way, the role of women in the organization of descent among the AGNATIC Turkana[21] reflects the utility of subsidiary non-agnatic ties even in a society where agnation is of prime importance. And, speaking of the Tutsi, Maquet[22] writes: "Ego lives in a COGNATIC as well as an agnatic world." Jack Goody[23] has summarized how men like Rattray, with the Ashanti and Rivers with the Toda, were baffled by this problem and how Fortes' analysis of the growth cycle of domestic groups, among the Tallensi, illustrates one way of reconciling the permanent structure of unilineal descent groups with divergences introduced by the "biographical aspects" of kinship.

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[18]Jan Vansina, Research among the Tyo (Teke) of Brazaville, Africa, XXXIV (1964), 375.

[19]Igor Kopytoff, "Family and lineage among the Suku of the Congo." in The family estate in Africa, edited by R.F. Gray and P.M. Gulliver (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), pp. 83-116

[20]G. Lienhardt, Divinity and experience: the religion of the Dinka (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), p. 9.

[21]P.H. Gulliver, The family herds (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1955), p. 50.

[22]J.J. Maquet, The premise of inequality in Ruanda (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 61.

[23]Jack Goody, "The fission of domestic groups among the LoDagaba," in The developmental cycle in domestic groups, Cambridge papers in social anthropology, no. 1, edited by Jack Goody (Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 55.

A central fact is that the 'Afar preferential marriage is the cross-cousin type. The kinship structure of a population where cross-cousins are preferred marriage partners entails necessarily two systems of descent although considerably more importance may be given to only one of the two. This kind of duality is not new and it has many faces. For instance, in some of the most advanced, yet traditionally patrilineal societies, the kingroup is often more functional for the woman than for the man: she counts more on her relatives while he counts more on his friends.[24] Ethnological records reveal that in warriors' societies women have often more influence on day-to-day life than their absentee husbands would like to recognize. In Africa, the importance of the woman's lineage can be seen in a society long after matrilineality has given place to patrilineality, or even after a system of double descent was superseded by a bilateral system; it must also be clearly associated, as noted above, with cross-cousin marriage, the preferred type of union in a large region of Central Africa. Cross-cousin marriage is very common among matrilineal people[25] but it is also known to some others.[26]

Kinship and 'Afar Social Structure

It must be emphasized, at the start, that patrilineality is the

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[24]Helen Icken Safa, The female-based household in public housing: a case study in Puerto Rico, Human Organization, 24 (1965), 135.

[25]L.P. Mair, "African marriage and social change," in Survey of African marriage and family life, edited by Arthur Phillips (London Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 81.

[26]F.B. Livingstone, Prescriptive patrilateral cross-cousin marriage, Man, no. 59 (1964), p. 56, and L. de Sousberghe, Cousins croisés et descendants: les systèmes du Rwanda et du Burundi comparés à ceux du Bas-Congo, Africa, XXXV (1965), 396 ff.

principle structuring the whole 'Afar kinship system: the 'Afar reckon descent through the male line, the clan founders are male and their sons, or grandsons, can serve as points of reference for further divisions of the clans, e.g. into sub-clans, lineages, and so on down to the domestic units.

The all important social unit, in terms of corporateness and permanence is the clan, afa. It is usually seven to ten generations in depth with descent reckoned in the patrilineal line; it is also exogamous (although there are exceptions), dispersed and headed by an hereditary chief, mokabantu. Patrilineal descent is an important operative principle and it plays a considerable role also on the mother's side. It will be necessary to come back to the clan, in greater detail, after the other important units that compose 'Afar society have been briefly mentioned.

The clans are grouped together into larger units the writer calls tribes, kido, and which consist of people descended from a common ancestor;[27] the tribesmen, however, cannot usually trace their ancestry accurately back to the founder. The TRIBE appears to be an extension of the clan. It is usually associated with a certain territory although tribesmen may be found in other tribes' territories while they may constitute only a minority on their own land. Some tribes intermarry among themselves and form endogamous units of a sort. With the cross-cousin marriage rule, indeed, two sources will be enough to supply husbands and

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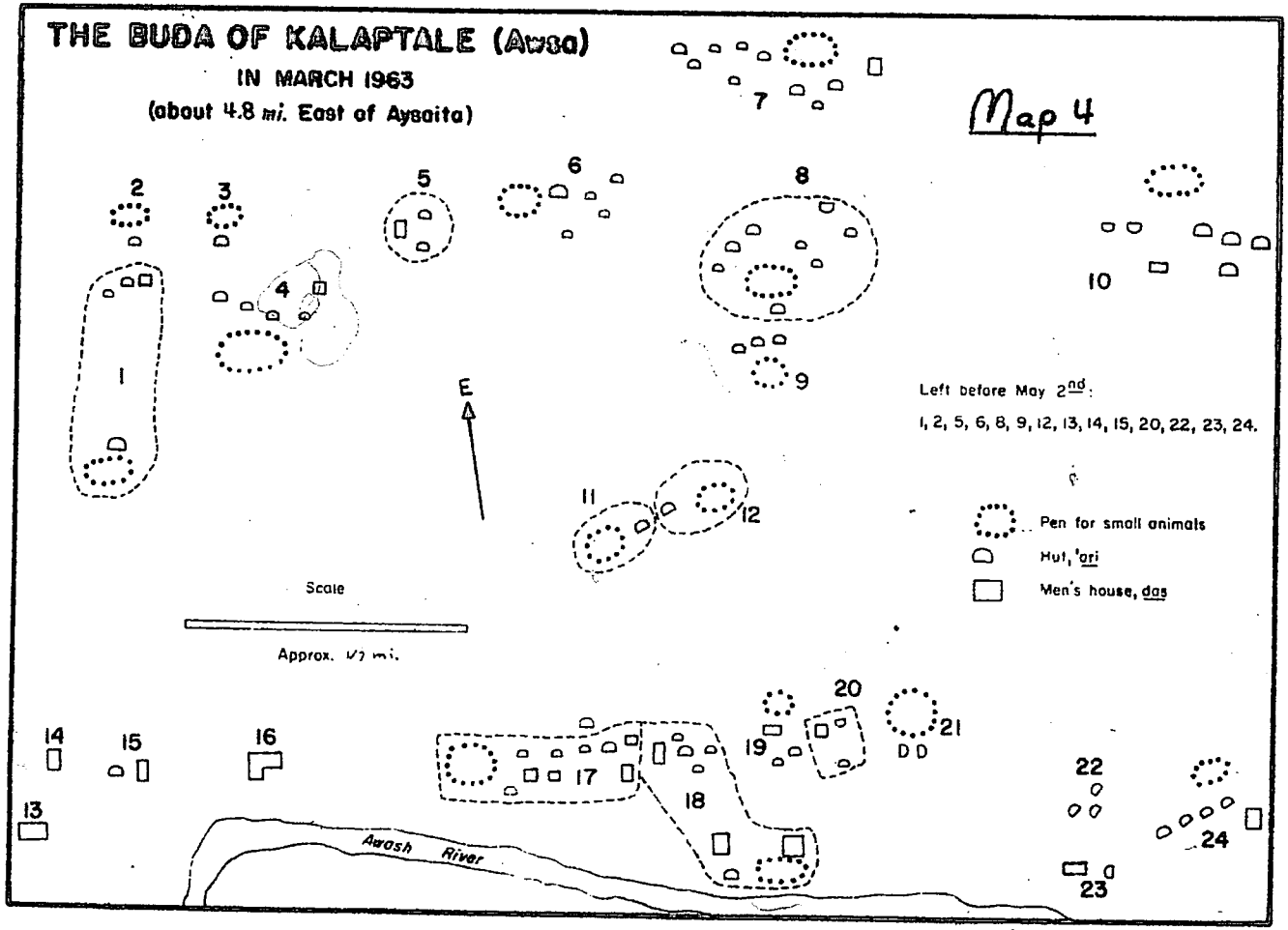
[27] J.S. Trimingham disagrees on this point. When he writes: "What little sense of unity the 'Afar possess as a people has nothing to do with kinship" he must be talking of the whole 'Afar population, not just of one tribe. See John Spencer Trimingham, Islam in Ethiopia (2nd edition; London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1965), pp. 174-75.

wives for even a large group of people.

The clan is composed of a number of EXTENDED FAMILIES, called buDa, which can vary considerably in size and cohesiveness. They consist of living people who trace their descent from a common male ancestor. Some of these buDa can count up to four generations, sometimes, with most of the property held in common by all buDa members, men and women alike. A large buDa may split up into two or three different residential buDa during the dry season, but without losing its corporateness.

The smallest domestic group, also called buDa, is not only less numerous but sometimes even less stable than the larger buDa. The children, if the father has more than one wife, will live with their respective mothers, each of whom owns her hut, often in different localities. A number of small buDa--homesteads--form a larger dwelling group, the hamlet, which is again called buDa. When a group of hamlets are found in close proximity to each other usually because of the availability of grass and water, they form a more or less permanent settlement called ganta. Map 4 shows the twenty-four buDa of a ganta called Kalaptale. Of these twenty-four, only ten were left at the peak of the dry season and, in many cases, with only goats and very few cows.

Figure 8 A HAMLET, OR RESIDENTIAL BUDA, COMPOSED OF SEVERAL SMALL DOMESTIC UNITS, OR HOMESTEADS


THE BUDA OF KALAPTALE (Awsa)
IN MARCH 1963
(about 4.8 mi. East of Aysaita)
Map 4
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
E
Scale
Approx. ½ mi.
Left before May 2nd:
1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 20, 22, 23, 24.
Pen for small animals
Hut, 'ari
Men's house, das
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
Awash River

The Extended Family (buDa)

It is now possible to go into more details and study, first, the extended family. It groups descendants, men and women, from a great grandfather (and his wife, or wives) and is a unit in itself although its members may not all live together. It forms a socio-economic whole the parts of which exist only potentially. For all practical purposes, it is a single group where there is full solidarity between all members, especially at the generation levels. The grandchildren call each other brother and sister although they will probably intermarry later on. When the daughters have been married for one, two or more years, they may leave their buDa to join, or form, a new residential buDa; but most of their cattle will remain with their own buDa herd, as security. However, the married daughters, sometimes, can stay in their buDa: that is when the husbands prefer to join the important families of the wives instead of taking them to their own poorer relatives, especially for instance when the wives belong to the ruling tribe, the Aydahysso.

The father, or grandfather, has the supreme authority, but the father's brother is a key figure who embodies the interests of the family especially in the preparation of marriages. Aydahysso widows can always head the buDa of their deceased husbands. Among other tribes, if the head of the buDa dies, his wife can become the head of the buDa only if she belongs to his clan. She will be succeeded by a son of her husband or, if he had none, a daughter.

People who are not descended from the head of the buDa can marry into it but they do not belong to it. The children belong to the buDa of their father and also to that of their mother if it differs from the father's. Later in life, when they wish to be identified with one

particular buDa, they will choose the one in which they grew up.

The Clan (afa)

Families are integrated into units which were called clans (p.146). But that was an oversimplification. Some clans, the smaller ones of course, may be composed of discrete extended families. But, in the larger clans, the families are grouped together in lineages which are attached to the clans. The lineages thus form an intermediary grouping between the extended family and the clan. Figure 9 shows how groups are formed among descendants of Haral Mais, the ancestor who came from Arabia and is considered the father of one of the most important sections of the 'Afar people. It moves back from one family, formerly residing in Sardo, whose head is Guhmed Mohammed (the 'Afar put the father's name first) and indicates at the appropriate levels the points at which divisions were made. Note that Afkae and Ma'ad were brothers; Ma'ad is the father of the Ma'a Sarra and Afkae of the Afkae Sarra. These two tribes intermarry and form a unit called Afkaek Ma'ad.[28] Haral Mais is thought to have had many sons, some of which became the ancestors of the Adoimera (the Whites, e.g. the Adeali).

Thirteen clans were counted in one of the important tribes, the Ma'a Sarra. In one of these clans, the Saiddo, there were six maximal lineages. Within one maximal lineage there were two minimal lineages, one of which must have numbered about a hundred people plus some ten wives belonging to other lineages. The second minimal lineage was considerably smaller, perhaps half as large as the first one. That gave some one hundred and fifty people for one of the six maximal lineages of one

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[28]In Afkaek Ma'ad the suffix k means "and."

clan. A clan could count then from eight hundred to one thousand members, but it seems to be usually smaller. Much more sampling is needed to allow for better estimates.

Figure 9 THE DESCENDANTS OF HARAL MAIS

ANCESTORS	GROUPS and LEVELS OF SEGMENTATION	NAMES OF GROUPS
Mohammed	nuclear family	Mohammed's buDa
Guhmed	extended family	Guhmed's buDa
'Ali		
Mohammed	minimal lineage	Diggirari (nickname)
Saidi		
Hummeda	maximal lineage	Hammedo
Ma'ada		
Saidi	clan	Saiddo
Hummed		
Hannikis		
Abbakeri		
Ma'ad		
Abbakeri		
Ma'ad ... Afkae	tribe	Ma'a Sarra/Afkae Sarra
'Ali		
Ahmed		
Arbahim		
Moday	confederation of tribes	Modaito
Haral Mais		

The clan enjoys much active autonomy, in part because it is found in a relatively small territory which can be travelled by its members and because, perhaps, its own cohesion protects it from outside interference. But each clan is not associated with a particular territory. It is the tribe that is, in a certain way, localized. Within the tribal sector (one must remember that no tribe is found exclusively in its own territory) the clans wander at will.

The clan has its own chief, the mokabantu, whose power is usually inherited. All members contribute money to help the group face its

obligations in time of crisis. Normally, all problems concerning members should be solved at the clan level. If compensation for murder, dia, must be paid, this is the unit responsible for it (although friends and relatives could help with their contributions if they wished). If revenge must be exercised, only members of the clan are entitled to kill, but they could be helped by members of their tribe who inhabit the territory of the murderer if this one has fled to a distant spot not easy of access to the members of the clan that was offended.

One must note that the children of clanswomen are also considered clan members, through their mothers, and they will be expected to help the clan occasionally. For instance, referring again to a murder, during the first few days after it was committed, the maternal relatives are allowed to kill the murderer. This fact can be understood only in the perspective of the marriage rules explained below; it does not imply any sort of bilaterality.

The Tribe (kido)

A tribe is a group of related clans. Tribes are descended from ancestors who cannot always be reached through straight genealogies. Some tribes are dispersed all over 'Afarland, like the Maandita for instance, who can be found in Massawa, Tajjurah (north of the Gulf of Jibuti) and Dire Dawa (on the railway line, some three hundred miles east of Addis Ababa). The chief of the tribe, called mokabantu (usually inherited status), cannot always contact all his people and is sometimes replaced by an assistant in the remote parts settled by his tribesmen. According to Trimingham[29] his authority is extremely vague and limited

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[29]Trimingham, Islam in Ethiopia, p. 175.

since all important decisions are made by the "general assembly" of the tribe.

The tribe is the largest unit in which kinship bonds are recognized. All tribe members are uncle's sons, ammi beda, and there are definite obligations which bind tribesmen to each other although these are likely to crop up only in times of emergency. When a man is sick, or in danger, he can always count on his tribesmen and women to give him help. The tribe stands very well on its own. It is, for all practical purposes, self-contained. Often there is intermarriage between its various clans. Tribesmen have a strong sense of individuality and pride.

The tribes present considerable differences in terms of origins (ethnic composition) and degree of development. Some tribes have a longer past than others. By cross-checking a few genealogies the writer came to the conclusion that some eighteen generations before the present ruler, that is about the fourteenth, or fifteenth centuries there was an important migration from Arabia. Haral Mais is thought to have come and brought with him the knowledge of Islam to the less educated population of the Ethiopian coast. And the legends go on to say that he found tribes who did not even know how to make fire and who accepted him willingly as their ruler. It is difficult to say where these coastal 'Afar would have come from.

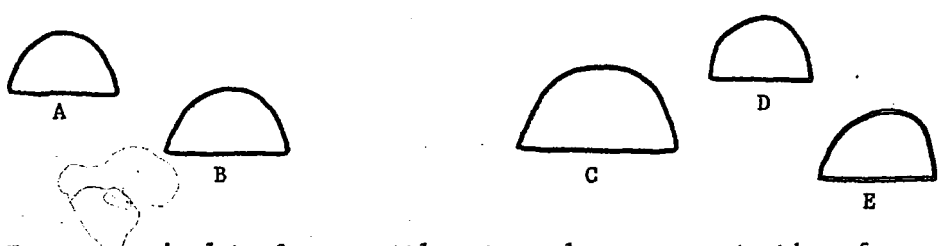
The Dwelling Groups: Homesteads and Hamlets

The smallest dwelling group is the one formed by a woman, owner of her hut, with or without her husband, children or guests. Sometimes two co-wives live near each other, but in different huts, and form a composite group. For clarity sake I call each woman-centered group a

homestead.[30] A number of homesteads whose members agree to cooperate economically, usually to herd their flocks together, form a hamlet. Neighbors unrelated either by kinship or affinity can be included permanently in a hamlet.

The hamlets vary in size and stability. Some may consist of two homesteads only and some may count nine and more. In the larger domestic groups there may be enough members who can take care of the wandering herds to allow the others to stay at home all year round. This arrangement, however, does not prevent the 'Afar from displacing their homesteads once in a while, usually for very short distances, that is from two to a hundred yards. Other homesteads may have to move long distances, two or three times a year, independently from each other, therefore causing the dissolution of hamlets and the formation of others, different in composition. The hamlet is a social, not a geographical unit. In Figure 10, A, B and C form part of the same hamlet; D and E of another.

Figure 10 TWO HAMLETS



Two or more hamlets form a settlement: a larger concentration of population usually based on the proximity of water or grass. One

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[30] Gulliver, (The family herds, p.49), uses the word "house" for the same type of dwelling unit.

can see isolated homesteads, in 'Afarland,[31] but the hamlet seems to be the basic dwelling unit. It groups a socially and economically well integrated number of kinsmen, affinal relatives and plain neighbors. The latter are usually close friends from childhood of the "father" of the hamlet: they herded their flocks together as children and they still enjoy working together although they are not related at all by kinship.[32]

The hamlet is headed by the eldest valid man and, occasionally, as will be explained below, by a woman; it can be split into two spatially separated parts (just as the same family can have both a city house and a country house) and it is named variously, after its male head, or his wife, according to the interests of the speakers and their ties with either one. For instance, the hamlet of one of the daughters of the Sultan of Awsa is sometimes called the hamlet of Ahmed, her husband, who is a very important political figure in the Sultanate; but it is most of the time called by her own name. People use the name that is more significant for themselves, that is: her friends and relatives will call it by her name, and his friends and relatives will call it by his name. If one drives through the Sardo area, on the Assab road, during the rainy season, he may have the surprise to discover that most of the important buDa of the region are named after prominent 'Afar women.

The membership of the hamlet can vary very much, and this illustrates well the alliances formed between patrilineal groups. Sometimes,

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[31] E. Chédeville told the writer, in a personal communication, that one can see many of those in the French Territory of the 'Afar and the Eisa. This scattering of dwellings allows each homestead to be the only one to use its part of the scarce pasture lands.

[32] Neighbors form part of the social fabric; see R.G. Abrahams, Neighbourhood organization: a Major sub-system among the northern Nyamwezi, Africa, XXXV (1965), 171.

among a multiplicity of clans, or tribes, represented in one camp, one can distinguish a clear dominance of two intermarrying units.[33] The complex dwelling group that results from such a combination could perhaps be seen as a "marriage group." Its members keep in close contact with their fathers' and mothers' clans. Some know their cognatic kin for a few generations back, but beyond that it is always the male line that they remember better.[34] In any case, each 'Afar has two allegiances which transcend the hamlet and are extremely significant for him: they are his patrilineal and matrilateral kin. The respective importance of each one, as it can be observed in the region of Awsa, must now be explained.

Kinship Relationships and the 'Afar Woman

The 'Afar considers his clansmen as his nearest allies; they are his true kin and they are ready, if need be, to die for him. These are the real brothers with whom one enjoys strict rights and obligations. But, traditionally, inheritance comes from the father and will be divided among his children; therefore the paternal brothers are also potential enemies. On the other hand, one expects no trouble at all, but only help from his matrilateral relatives. They have no right to the paternal inheritance and will not compete for it. They have no strict obligation to contribute payments for men of the father's clan, but they usually do so willingly. If someone is murdered, from the patriclan, the

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[33]Sousberghe, describing the cross-cousin marriage rules of the matrilineal Pende has noted also how two lineages can, for generations, supply each other with preferred partners; see Cousins-croisés, p. 405.

[34]They all know many male ancestors: five or six is a minimum, often eight or nine and sometimes even more.

matrilateral relatives can help avenge the victim, they can even kill the murderer if they find him within a few days after the murder. There is, therefore, real complementarity in the roles played by the kin group and the matrilateral and affinal relatives. That is what the 'Afar want to express when they say that one is linked to his father's lineage by his bones and to his mother's by his bowels. The affinal links always provide useful subsidiary social bonds and they often give rise also to political obligations since there is usually only one chief heading the small lineages within each clan. We can see, perhaps, an illustration of this solidarity of the patrilineal and matrilateral relatives in the etiquette of the extended family par excellence, the "great buDa" of Sultan 'Ali Mirah where the only surviving daughter of the illustrious Mohammed Hanfere Ilelta kisses the hand of everyone descended from Ilelta, either through man or woman.

Within the polygynous families, it seems natural for children to give great significance to their ties with their own mothers. This may be dictated by very practical considerations. For instance, a young man who cannot get shelter with his father, because his father is changing residence too often, or is staying with a new wife, will nevertheless be always welcome at his mother's homestead. Also children born of the same mother form very close alliances among themselves. These uterine alliances can last through life and even create such an unshakable solidarity between brothers that they may refuse to divide their inheritance among themselves. In certain circumstances these alliances can also have great political significance. For instance, when the Central Government, in the past century, launched a campaign against one of the sultans of Awsa, his brothers--by the father--were used against him, because it was clear that his uterine brothers would

have never fought against him. Here is a principle of filiation that is essential to any understanding of 'Afar kinship.

Naming is another index that reveals the importance of the mother in 'Afar society. A son can give his mother's name to two, or three of his own daughters. Until recently, all children born of Aydahysso women were given their mother's names (instead of their father's) as second names. It was only when the men were granted special titles by the Central Government, or when they went to Mecca, that they publicly took their father's names as second names. Even nowadays many important men in Awsa, whether they were born of Aydahysso mothers, or not, are still identified by their mother's names instead of their father's.[35]

There is one other factor that could contribute some light on the position of women in 'Afarland: it is the privileges of the noble Aydahysso woman. As much as informants can know, she was always powerful in 'Afarland: she could inherit, she could prevent her husband from taking a second wife, she was never beaten by him. She is also associated with the custom of kissing hands which is so conspicuous in Awsa. Some Aydahysso women are the effective heads of their buDa, a position they maintain most easily if their husband married a second woman and can be the head of another buDa somewhere else. But it seems that even with their husband at their side, the daughters of a sultan

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[35]See M. Albospeyre, Les Danakil du cercle de Tadjoura, Cahiers de l'Afrique et l'Asie, Mer Rouge - Afrique Orientale, V (1959), 142. In the French Territory of the 'Afar and the Eisa, only illegitimate children take their mother's names.

could effectively lead their buDa.[36] The Aydahysso women, therefore, have enjoyed great privileges as desert women and, fortunately, some of these privileges have recently, if only sparingly and belatedly, been extended to their 'Afar sisters.

It is too early to conclude to the existence of matrilineality among the 'Afar previous to their submission to Islam, a case well documented for the Tuareg.[37] Nevertheless the importance of matrilateral and affinal links observed among the patrilineal 'Afar highlights one of the basic realities of life for this group of Ethiopians.

Cross-Cousin Marriage

Many of the points mentioned above on the role of women and of their descent groups in a patrilineal society make much sense when one looks at the preferential type of marriage among the 'Afar. Cross-cousin marriage has obvious economic value in "simple groups, living close to subsistence level where usufructrights over land are determined by kinship ties."[38] To describe the 'Afar case, one has only to substitute "cattle" for "land" in Kehoe's text. Cross-cousin marriage, however, is equally important for socio-political reasons.

The 'Afar population is most diversified and divided; except for

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[36]Mordechai Abir, in a personal communication, mentioned the existence of women sultans on the Red Sea coast during the early nineteenth century. Although there is archival evidence to prove this fact, neither Chédeville nor this writer have been able to discover oral traditions about these women sultans.

[37]For an interesting comparison with the Tuareg women see R.F. Murphy, Social distance and the veil, American Anthropologist, 66 (1964), 1262.

[38]A.B. Kehoe, A worm's-eye view of marriage, authority and final causes or what underlies structure and sentiment, American Anthropologist. 66 (1964), 406.

a few sultanates, political unity resides in the kinship group, a feature which Trimingham associates with the cushitic tradition.[39] The basic units as we have seen above are: the extended family, the clan and the tribe. Save for a few notable exceptions these units would be perilously weak, if left alone, and they must be reinforced with the help of affinal links. Thus, with cross-cousin marriages dual organizations can be created which will a) supply groups with most needed commodities in the desert: wives and brothers-in-law, and b) allow the individuals composing these groups to fuse together their loyalties to both father's and mother's clans. In some circumstances only a certain number of tribes will marry with another limited number of tribes. Sometimes also marriage agreements can be concluded between two sets of large clans, both sets being parts of the same tribe; but this seems to occur far less frequently and also to have less survival value for the 'Afar because it reduces his affiliations to one tribe only, that of his father and his mother being the same.

The conjugal tie, always weakened by obligations toward the extended family, often cannot in a patrilineal society separate a woman from her own group. The Somali, neighbors of the 'Afar, have experienced that even high marriage payments do not necessarily make for a stronger incorporation of wives in their husband's groups: marriage does not prevent always, but sometimes even provokes war or feud between two groups of affines. The Somali, therefore, discourage marriage within a tightly integrated political unit as a potential source of conflict and they themselves try to marry into groups with which they have little

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[39] J.S. Trimingham, Islam in Ethiopia, p. 148.

agnatic connection.[40] The 'Afar, instead, do not spread their affinal links so widely except for marriages following the first one. A few 'Afar have married two, even three, of their cross-cousins, but in general only one wife is a cross-cousin. The others can belong to various tribes, often however with a marked preference for some tribes in particular.

The ecological pressures and the demographic void of the 'Afar desert give high value to the economically accessible[41] and fairly stable[42] cross-cousin wife. When one marries a relative one is not expected to offer any payment, except of a token nature, since the affair is concluded within the same family.[43] Moreover, the stability of the union is ensured by the solidarity of these two groups which are bound together by the mutual obligation of supplying husbands and wives to each other. Marrying a patrilateral cross-cousin is definitely

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[40] I.M. Lewis, Marriage and the family in northern Somaliland, East African Studies, no. 15 (Kampala: East African Institute of Social Research, 1962), p. 39.

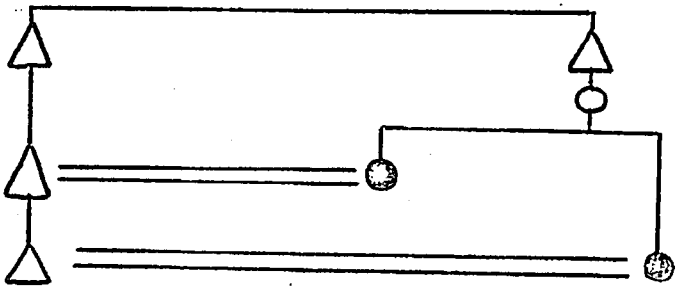
[41] Marriage payments made by 'Afar men vary very much according to the quality of the woman: Is she a cross-cousin? Was she married before? Does she belong to a more respected clan? They usually pay part in cash and part in kind. Some have paid $1.60 in cash and $3.20 for clothes. If animals are given, one cow may be enough, or three goats and one sheep. A husband who loves his wife can give her more, for instance on the occasion of the birth of a child. Among the Fulani (Hopen, The pastoral Fulbe, p. 91), low payments express the solidarity of the groups involved in marriage, or the sentiments of affection between the parents of the spouses; but the low payments are rather infrequent. The Somali pay much more (Lewis, Marriage and the family, pp. 15-16).

[42] The stability of cross-cousin marriage is suggested by the fact that there are relatively few divorcees among those who married according to the 'Afar rule. Using his own limited samplings the writer would suggest that only 20 to 25 per cent of cross-cousin marriages end in divorce.

[43] The writer was told, however, that marriage payment was exceptionally high in the Thio region between Massawa and Assab, on the coast.

the ideal first marriage for the 'Afar and this is made easier by the fact that all classificatory cross-cousins[44] are marriageable. Here is how one could summarize briefly these wide extensions of the cross-cousin relationship: A girl can marry a man from her mother's clan, excluding mother's brother, mother's father and mother's father's brother (figure 11) and, conversely, a man can marry a girl born from a mother of his clan (figure 12).

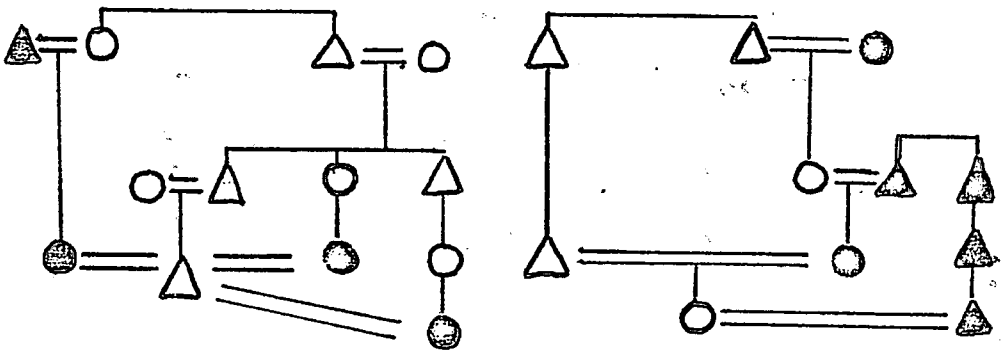
Figure 11 EXTENSION OF CROSS-COUSIN RELATIONSHIP (FOR GIRL)



[44]The classificatory cross-cousins are the children of clanswomen (substitutes for father's sisters) and the children of mother's clansmen (substitutes for mother's brothers).

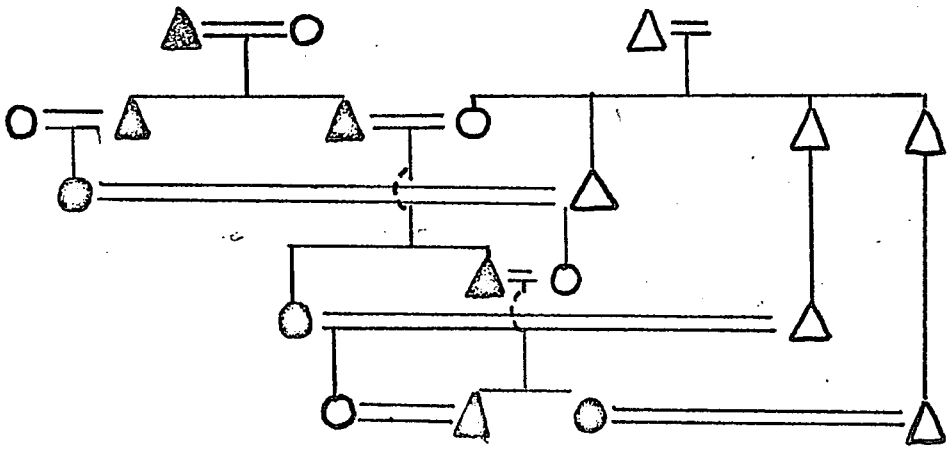
The patrilateral cross-cousins are called abusa (plural) and the matrilateral cross-cousins abi-beda. The nearest cross-cousin to ego is not only the preferred partner but ego has a strict right to her and, traditionally, will kill any one who would dare to take her away from him.

Figure 12 EXTENSION OF CROSS-COUSIN RELATIONSHIP (FOR MAN)



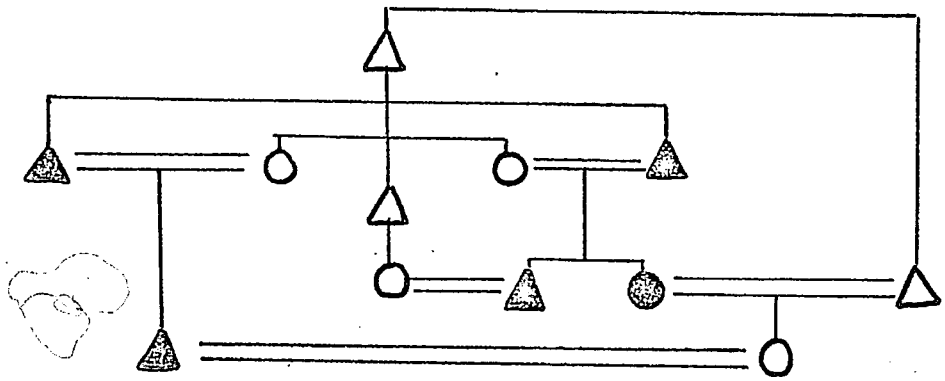
However, since marriageability is communicated to all clan members a very complex web of marriage bonds can grow between two intermarrying clans. Here are the actual marriages contracted between the Askak Meli (figured in black) and the Arkalto (figured in blank) clans. It can be seen that Fatuma married a man from her mother's clan; she had no cross-cousin.

Figure 13 INTERMARRYING CLANS: ASKAK MELI AND ARKALTO



Another example of twinned kin groups follows: The clans involved are the Haysanto, in black, and the Amasito, left in blank.

Figure 14 INTERMARRYING CLANS: HAYSANTO AND AMASITO



For ego, all children of father's brothers are clansmen and

cannot be married[45] while all children of father's sisters, abusa, and of mother's clansmen, abino, can be married; abusa and abino are often of the same clan and only exceptionally of the clan of ego. Full siblings have preference over half siblings and the order of birth should be followed. For instance, if there are four sisters and two brothers, the first two elder sisters will be married to the two brothers.

If a man wants to get married but finds himself without a near cross-cousin, he can offer cattle to the father of the girl of his choice. Only two heads of cattle may be enough, but many more may be needed. The children of this marriage cannot be abusa nor abino for anybody from their parents' families, and the daughters will be married off only on payment of the sum given for their mother.

As explained above, when two agnatic groups enter into marrying relationships they form a new political entity. They also form a corporate unit with complementary obligations for each half of the unit, each half retaining its own social rank. Some 'Afar say: we exchange wives with "them" but "they" are different people; the two intermarrying groups may form a symbiotic relationship in which one will dominate politically. For instance, the Aytilela, an Asaimera tribe,[46] have paired with the Maandita, a tribe which used to belong to the Adoimera, a tribal confederation which was defeated and subjugated by the rival group of Asaimera tribes. Now the Maandita are still, at least theoretically, ruled by an Aytilela chief.

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[45]They could be married, however, according to Islamic tradition.

[46]The Asaimera confederation of tribes fought against the Adoimera confederation especially during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The Askakmelik-Modaito form another intermarrying pair. The Askakmeli say they are descended from Amonaba Aisi, a Galla, whose people were in Awsa before the arrival there of the great Modaito confederation. Keddafo, who was leading the Modaito (Asaimera) into the interior broke all resistance to his rule and subjugated the Askakmeli. The two groups built an alliance which has endured to this day. Now the Askakmelik-Modaito consider themselves as the vassals of the Sultan of Awsa. They are ruled by a chief appointed by him. The Lubakkubok-Modaito form also a twin group in which the former Assaimera-Adoimera rivalry has been resorbed by a political agreement sealed by marriages. Many more examples could be cited, for instance, the Wolwolluk-Hadarmo, the Eletok-Seka, the Araptak-Assabekeri, etc. and, probably, with the same serf-master relationship.

Beyond Patrilineality: the Sultanate[47] and the Affiliations

We have now seen how the rule of cross-cousin marriage adds an important dimension to the principle of unilineal descent in 'Afar social organization. More removed from descent rules, but still very significant in terms of 'Afar social organization are the institution of the sultanate and the various kinds of affiliations, or associations, between few or many individuals. The sultanate will be described first, although it does not affect as many people as do the affiliations.

Above the multitude of tribes, clans and lineages we find in Awsa a miniature state complex which was always very influential and which has preserved some of its traditional functions while becoming more and

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[47]The word "sultanate" is used here for lack of a better one in English. The sultanate of Awsa remains a part of the Ethiopian state.

more integrated with the Ethiopian Central Government. There used to be other sultanates, but they have more or less disappeared from the map. The only sultanate that survives today, obviously with no complete autonomy, is that of Awsa. It owes its survival to the exceptional wealth in cattle and farm lands that has given its masters an undisputed superiority over the other tribes who all live in poorer environments.

Since the advent of Ali Mirah in 1944 the Awsa sultanate has been progressively shaped along the lines of a Moslem state. Ali Mirah (his title in 'Afar is amoita) is a fervent Moslem and tries earnestly to spread the Islamic faith and practice among his people. The Shariah has become the law wherever possible and it has abrogated 'Afar laws when there was conflict.[48]

The sultan has surrounded himself with a number of ministers and officers of various tribes who help him administer Awsa. Some of his officers work also for the Imperial Ethiopian Government, but they give him allegiance first and can sometimes spend enormous amounts of energy at his service. They are well remunerated by traditional standards. The sultan exercises legislative and judiciary functions and has ultimate power on the land of Awsa. He can distribute and retrieve it at will, as well as the herds. This power gives him all freedom necessary to reward his officers and punish all kinds of offenders. The greatest source of cash for all is cotton which they grow on irrigated lands often with the help of non-'Afar farmers.

The sultanate organization deserves much more attention than can

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[48]Nowadays, of course, the national codes have precedence.

be given to it here. For all practical purposes, at least in the new cash economy, it seems often more significant that the tribal, or clan, organizations. More research will be needed to explain how a handful of men, the sultanate leaders, most of whom are illiterate, can keep in touch with and exercise some control over a population so sparsely distributed on such immense flats of arid land. The recent growth of their economy, mostly because of the success of the introduction of cotton as a cash crop, is a story that needs being told by itself.

It remains to indicate another principle of 'Afar social organization on which also much more research needs to be done: the various kinds of affiliations and associations that play a crucial role in strengthening the cohesion of 'Afar society. They are definitely distinct from the kinship bonds although they could be considered as extensions of kinship.

One of these affiliations is the incorporation of a friend into the buDa. He may be a clansman, just a tribesman, or he may not be related at all to the members of the buDa. If he does not come as a servant, as it frequently happens, in the buDa of rulers, then he must bring with him his capital in cattle, etc. and put it with the buDa's cattle, etc. Economic cooperation along, of course, with congeniality is the necessary condition for belonging to specific buDa. This neighbor will be treated like a relative, and in return numerous services will be expected of him. From a neighbor one can ask practically anything. Only when the question of marriage is brought up will his clan affiliation become significant.

Another institution which contributes to binding people together as a supplement to kinship ties is the friend, kataissa. There seems

to be no ritual attached to the acquisition of a kataissa, and it may take judicious observation to distinguish the true kataissa from its imitations. The 'Afar are very liberal in the use of words like: important man, big chief, kataissa, etc. But the real kataissa is a precious possession because with him practically all the privileges and obligations of kinship (except the marriage prohibitions) find their application.

One more type of alliance is found in the associations which bind together adolescents of approximately the same age and, in separate groups, young adults and men. These associations, called fi'ema, are found in great numbers, all over 'Afarland, always with the clear aim of binding more closely groups of relatives, or neighbors, who might otherwise be tempted to compete with each other instead of helping each other. Some of these associations grow up spontaneously, but some are also obligatory accompaniments of life under certain conditions, for instance all servants of the sultan must belong to the fi'ema of Kalo (green lands of Awsa). Some fi'ema group members of various tribes together, others are restricted to the members of one tribe only.

To complete this network of social relationships which the desert dweller likes to build around himself one must add, finally, the homonym, mogga. When a child is born, he is given the name of a friend or a relative. They then become mogga, which means that they are bound to help each other for life. For many years, it is the child, of course who will derive more profit from the relationship.

Islam and the 'Afar[49]

A description of 'Afar society, no matter how schematic, cannot omit to mention the "civilizing" influence of Islam on the 'Afar people. There is some similarity here with the role played by Islam in the transformation of the Arab society under the leadership of Mohammed in the seventh century: Islam did not only adapt to the Arab socio-cultural background, it also helped to transform it, even to reform it.[50]

First, a brief review of Mohammed's impact on his time. When the founder of Islam looked at his society, he discovered that tribal solidarity was breaking down, traditional animistic beliefs were the only theology of the time and rich individuals were ruthlessly asserting themselves with less and less concern for law and justice. He decided to fight these wealthy and selfish monopolists who were oppressing the poor and who were putting their trust only in their money. He came as a prophet, with a message that was going to disturb the peace of the Arab world. In fact, he met with such resistance from his fellow citizens, even from his own relatives, that he had to leave Mecca and start anew in Medina.

His plan was clear: to rebuild a new tribal solidarity based on faith in God and to introduce principles that would check the power of the monopolists. The converts to the new faith soon emerged as a

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[49]This relatively short section on Islam and the 'Afar is justified by the fact that most of the cattle people in Ethiopia are Moslem, the notable exception being found in the north among the Tigre and the Saho; it will also be useful for the majority of readers who are much more familiar with Christianity than Islam.

[50]For more on Islam see W.M. Watt, Islam and the integration of society (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961) and J. Jomier, The Bible and the Coran (New York: Desclees, 1964).

multi-tribal community which in fact acted as a tribe, with Mohammed, and later his successor the caliph, acting as tribal chiefs, with policies stressing brotherhood and equality and forbidding crime. The Islamic society was to be the ideal society in which to live and prepare for heaven; it was opening a beaten path leading to Allah, the greatest.

This was a real, but congenial, change. The rules concerning worship, marriage, inheritance were modified, but the people continued largely to live according to tradition. The outward forms of pre-Islamic animism were reset into the new thinking, for instance, the Black Stone of Mecca which had been considered as a deity became the shrine of God. Mohammed's message was basically borrowed from the Judaeo-Christian tradition: one God, his revelation, his prophet, the last judgement and the condemnation of idolatry. Most important was the mechanism needed to fight the perverted individualism of the monopolists. To people who had lost the sense of tribal solidarity and who were trying to make a future for themselves he revealed their personal responsibilities, the fact that they were accountable before God, that they would be judged, then rewarded or punished. Their eternal salvation was in their own hands and they had to do good if they wanted to be saved. Of course, Mohammed was selective in borrowing from the Judaeo-Christian tradition; he discarded elements which were not compatible with the Arab tradition, for instance, the crucifixion of Christ, whom he otherwise recognized as a great prophet; by minimizing sin he also rendered Christ useless. But he borrowed what was needed to check the worldly amitions of those who were already bourgeois exploiters of the people. He taught kindness even charity for the poor. He succeeded fairly well and his teaching is still honored by millions of faithful, even in this twentieth century.

It is now possible to turn to the 'Afar, especially those of Awsa, to understand the influence extended upon them by Islam. Within the last sixty years the sultanate of Awsa has experienced a religious revolution which has profoundly influenced the life of its people.

The last three sultans illustrate well the progressive conversion of Awsa to Islam. Dejazmatch Yayo (sultan from 1910 to 1927) was not a practising Moslem and he did not like those around him to perform their religious duties too ostensibly. His successor, Dejazmatch Mohammed (1927-1944) adopted a tolerant attitude toward Islam. Today's ruler, Bitwoded Ali Mirah favors Islam with great sincerity. As a result, the present 'Afar population of Awsa appears to adhere very strongly to the five "pillars" of Islam: bearing witness to Allah and Mohammed, praying five times a day, fasting, traveling to Mecca and giving alms. The pilgrimage to Mecca is out of question for most 'Afar, indeed, but a minority is particularly faithful to it. The 'Afar fast inspite of considerable inconveniences; Ramadam may not enrich their spiritual life as much as it seems to do in Harar for instance, but it remains a major criterion of religious fidelity. Prayer is also very important. The sultan insists that everyone do the five ritual prayers, every day, and he punishes young men who do not pray, (with adults he can simply withdraw his support). All his close associates must pray and the higher an officer is in the hierarchy the greater must be his faithfulness to prayer. The sultan, Bitwoded Ali Mirah, has his own IMAM and he studies the Coran every day. Giving alms to a poorer brother is also accepted by the 'Afar who often do not have much for themselves; this is institutionalized in the Zeka which obliges those who have large herds to give two out of every forty animals, whether camels, cattle or goats

to poorer members of their community. The extra animals cannot be given to relatives but can pass to servants who should be the first ones to be taken care of. If a wealthy 'Afar cannot find a poor fellow around he must send his extra animals to the ámoita, or to a SHEIKH who will take the responsibility of giving them away to poor tribesmen.

Like Mohammed, the sultan is a spiritual as well as a political leader. He has tried to eliminate cruelty. He does not dispossess enemies as was done in the past. The law of the TALION has lost importance. Emasculation is forbidden and the CADI has tried to forbid also INFIBULATION. The traditional legislation has been liberalized in favor of women. They are forbidden to sing and dance (although some take exception to this puritanical rule), but they are given privileges accepted by the Coran: they are able to go to court and are given some rights of inheritance. Sometimes it is even possible for a woman to marry a man she loves. Attempts are made to abolish customs that evoked "pagan" cults and rituals. EUNUCHS are forbidden to marry, in Awsa, although in other parts of the desert they can marry and become the fathers of children procreated by other men.

Like Mohammed's religious community the sultanate of Awsa tends to ignore tribal affiliations (except for marriages); it reduces the cleavage between the aristocratic classes and the others (although the sultan must always belong to the Aydahysso clan) and it does not discriminate against any racial group. The religious fervor of the Awsans is really fascinating. In his camp, the writer always heard the first drum call to prayer at about 4:30 A.M. and he was always impressed by the prayerfulness of his neighbors. They could never be disturbed during prayer no matter who the intruders were: mosquitoes, radio broadcasts or unexpected

guests. These Awsans reminded the writer of medieval religious fraternities characterized by prayer, communal life and begging. But the 'Afar are also warriors and they would probably be better described as a military order of monks, like perhaps the order of the Templars, or as the 'Afar knights. . . At this point the words of a SURA (Coran 5:85) come to mind: "You will find . . . that the nearest in affection to them (the Moslems) are those who say "we are Christians," that is because there are priests and monks among them, and they are free from pride."

The Role of the 'Afar Youth in the Development of 'Afarland: A Sketch of the Happenings from 1960 to 1970.

To complete the cursory study of the cattle people it will be useful to point to one more of their characteristics: the role of their youth for development. As was mentioned before, a great deal of change is occurring in the lowlands and the role of youth is easier to define there than on the highlands where students are involved in an endless confrontation with the government and the key people of the power structure; the struggle of these students has merits which it would be outside the scope of this text to discuss. The following section therefore, will be limited again to the 'Afar. Their youth are excellent representatives of the cattle area youth, certainly in terms of handicaps to overcome for development, 'Afarland being in its natural condition the most impoverished and barren part of the country. First, the circumstances in which the 'Afar youth find themselves will be explained and, second, what they have done for development.

Many young 'Afar whether educated or not, but in as much as they have been able to taste the fruits of modernization, find themselves

faced with the "dilemma of immobility."[51] They are torn internally between their attachment to the traditional 'Afar ways and their desire for some innovations. Many males enjoy the traditional culture very naturally: the relative freedom, the numerous opportunities for warm social intercourse and also their own privileges in a male dominated society. Nevertheless they have come to see the limitations of animal husbandry as a unique source of security, they resent the rigidity of some religious rules and especially perhaps the close network of kinship controls that encompass their whole lives; finally they rebel against the conditions of extreme underdevelopment in which they find themselves practically at all levels: medical, economic, educational, etc. Some youth cling to the traditions to avoid the anxiety that giving them up would bring about. For the 'Afar youth partial acculturation could amount even to a regression in terms of personality as has happened to the Objibwa. For many 'Afar, however, relatively little experience in acculturation is sufficient to encourage them to accept change, want it and even work for it.

Significant numbers of young people were familiar for years with such innovations as the tractor, the airplane, the Land Rover, the telephone, radio and newspapers as well as the products of trade and medicine. But it is only in school, it seems, that the impact of change was deeply felt.

The Educated. One of the interesting traits of the 'Afar student population is not the number of those who manage to pursue their studies

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[51] See Anthony F.C. Wallace, Culture and personality (New York: Randon House, Inc., 1961), pp. 160-61.

in the end, but it is rather the number of what one could call the "successful drop outs." 'Afar students are rarely interested in education for education sake, rather they seem to look at it as a stepping stone to something better. With their inimitable self-assurance they go to school to learn something they consider useful like languages, mathematics, etc. But they also want to know about trade, business, taxes, transportation, the government, politics, etc. and other subjects which obviously are not taught in the classroom.

Depending on their financial strength and especially on their position in the local power structure some can use whatever education they have acquired to leave the "desert." Students of all ages try to move to schools offering higher academic programs: first in Batie, later in Dessie and finally in Addis Ababa. A few have gone as far as Cairo and the U.S.A. Many of these peripatetic students faithful to the nomadizing habits of their fathers lose much time and money, moreover most of them will not fit properly in any formal educational system with the result that very few complete their secondary studies; one in twenty would probably be a good approximation. However, the interesting fact is that many of these official drop outs have gathered enough ideas and even skills to be able to use them among their own people. There is room in the lower Awash for semi-skilled workers who can help maintain communication between government, or business people, and the local population.

Here is a summary picture of the participation of the so-called drop outs in 'Afar development. Only three, understandingly have returned to school in the capacity of teachers: one who was exceptionally intelligent and well trained has become the school director in Aysaita; the second, intelligent also but much more inclined to trading than teaching, taught a few years and finally left the school to become an important

trader. The third has been teaching for years and is now School Director in El Woha.

A few young men work as interpreters with development agencies, fieldworkers or simply with the traditional local chiefs, especially the sultan, a man of considerable wealth and a key figure in some of the central government political manoeuverings. A few others have worked for Radio Voice of Ethiopia preparing programs that were highly appreciated by the desert people. Some have become tractor or Land Rover drivers. There are also young apprentices who have become mechanics at the Tendaho Plantations, in Dubti, after following a rather elaborate course of instructions. A few more have started farming, some of them very successfully. One is a large shop owner, another one is a security officer and four or five hold important ranks in the local political hierarchy. The mayor of Aysaita (population: about 2,000) is a remarkable young man who did only the eighth grade. One of the sultan's sons has launched a successful settlement scheme and was appointed, at twenty-three, governor of Awsa in replacement of the most famous war chief of the desert, Fitawrari Yayo. The new governor is planning to do his college studies during the next four or five rainy seasons. Finally, all those who went to Jibuti to start a new life should be mentioned also; the range of their activities there is even greater than it would be in Ethiopia.

Most remarkable perhaps are the efforts of two young 'Afar, one with money, the other with genius. They got together, formed a society and, within a year, opened up three laundries in Addis Ababa. These "Awsa laundries" were small but well organized and very well located, two in the market area and one near the University. For a variety of

reasons they did not last. What is significant, however, is that two young 'Afar tried to start a new business in the capital of Ethiopia. But that is not all: after the loss of their laundries they tried to launch another firm, this time the Lynx Company. It began by offering well-to-do Addis Ababans all kinds of services so badly needed by landlords and tenants alike: repairs for the house, doors, windows, locks, roofs, septic tanks, etc. The Lynx Company was even going to hire guards and supply help for moving when necessary. They advertized on television, on radio and in newspapers. Payments were to be made monthly. But again, something went wrong which convinced the founders they had better study more before trying their luck in a third venture. There is no need to stress the fact that these young men, born in small huts along the lower Awash banks are, even with their obvious limitations, quite an asset for a developing country.

One must not forget, however, the young 'Afar men and women who have not received any formal education. The young men are kept in bondage by the custom, like everyone else in 'Afarland. They must honor obligations dictated by kinship affiliations, they must obey the Shariah, etc. Later in life they will perhaps travel to Addis Ababa, even to Mecca and Cairo. They are usually receptive as regards changes affecting living conditions, they will try to find good pieces of furniture, better arms, new clothes, radios and even cars; they will accept occasionally some western medicine and some selected foods or drinks. The main difference perhaps between these and the 'Afar who have been to schools is that the traditional youth accepts changes in a more piecemeal or inarticulate manner. They do not see, as well as some students do, the interrelationships between some changes and

others, for instance, driving a car and having it serviced. They tend to reject changes that would affect their inner lives, for example, the introduction of the kind of manual work they are used to seeing done by non-'Afar, or obligations that would impinge on their freedom of movement like punctuality or regularity at work.

But all that is changing faster than was anticipated. Ten years ago, young 'Afar would have accepted practically only the job of a guard for the Tendaho Plantations Share Company. Now many are becoming farmers and actually doing the work themselves. The girls are not as actively involved in the new processes because so much of their energies go into performing daily chores. Yet they can encourage their men very successfully to accept change. The young women have understood very fast that cash could mean new clothes, new ornaments and even also food and medicine.

The 'Afar youth are struggling in complex circumstances. They are a religious and political minority. But they have strong allies in Islam and the French Territory of the 'Afar and the Eisa. A more egalitarian distribution of power and wealth will have to come to these cattle people and if this change is to materialize it will have to be engineered first by young men and women interested in the political as well as the economic development of their people. To achieve this end they may have to rediscover the best of the tribal spirit which could make of all 'Afar their brothers.

A few 'Afar youth are setting a pattern that may have value for the whole country when the task of nation building, or reconstruction is tackled on a large scale. They are demonstrating the willingness of

the pastoral people to accept change, they are hinting at the fact that in egalitarian societies education does not always widen the generation gap and they are reminding educational planners of the need for relevancy in curriculum design. Literacy is only one of the development tools. Many human qualities, the first of which may be courage, are essential and occasionally more urgently needed.

The 'Afar illustrate the fact that even the least advanced population can qualify for development if its human resources are identified and given room to grow. The cattle people have long been marginal in their own country; their development needs not be a threat to the nation, given a fair chance, and time, they can join the national community as full partners.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Agnatic (relationship)	Relationship found between agnates, that is consanguine relatives, men and women, in the patrilineal or male line.
Bilateral	System of descent traced through both males and females.
Cadi	Moslem judge.
Cognatic (relationship)	Relationship found between people related by birth through either male or female ancestors.
Cross-cousin marriage	Marriage between children of siblings of different sex, that is, children of a brother and a sister.
Double descent	Descent traced through the male line, on the father's side, and through the female line and the mother's side.
Eunuch	Castrated male.
Extended family	A social group consisting of several related individual families, especially those of a man and his sons or of a woman and her daughters, residing in a single large dwelling or a cluster of smaller ones.
Feud	A state of feud is a set of relationships between two tribal groups which are characterized by hostility whenever two or more of their members meet. These hostilities may last indefinitely.
Infibulation	Operation on the female genitals to make sexual intercourse more difficult.
Imam	Moslem priest.
Kinship	Relationship based usually, but not exclusively, on consanguineal or family bonds.

Lineage	Genealogical structure whose members share corporate rights and responsibilities. They can trace their ancestry with accuracy back to the lineage founder.
Matrilateral	Kinship relationship of relatives, male or female, descended from a common maternal ancestor, in lines of descent parallel to that of ego (the central figure of a system).
Matrilineality	Reckoning of descent through the female line.
Nomadism	Refers to the displacements of a group of people and their companion animals who move as a whole. These movements are irregular due to changing geographic and climatic factors. Transhumance, a kind of vertical but regular nomadism refers to the seasonal movements between the winter and the summer pastures.
Patrilineality	Reckoning of descent through the male line.
Patrilocality	Residence in the father's territory.
Perferential marriage	Type of marriage considered best, although not compulsory, in a particular society.
Sheikh	Head of a hierarchical lineage, a holy man, a specialist of the Coran.
Sufism	Mystical form of Islam which reflects its fusion with traditional, pre-Islamic forms of religion.
Sura	Chapter of the Coran.
Talion	Punishment in kind (comparable to the kind of offence).
Tribe	One of the basic culture-bearing units, a social group with its own global system of relationships. Tribesmen may or may not share the same territory, speak the same dialect and obey the same chief, but they have a common name in which they take pride. Tribal organization ranges from loose groups of families to well structured kingdoms. For its members, the tribe is the only point of articulation with life, nature and other groups, hence its paramount importance. In Amharic: zer or neged; sub-tribe would be gosa, and lineage: tewled.

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Trimingham writes:

> What little sense of unity the 'Afar possess as a people has nothing to do with kinship, for as we have seen they are not an ethnic unit. It is based on the factors they do possess in common, which are language, religion and way of life. But even these have never enabled them to combine against a common enemy such as the Galla or Abyssinians, whilst they live in perpetual struggle with one another. (Trimingham, Islam in Ethiopia, p. 175).

2. Among the cushitic speakers the traditional political system was based on the kinship group, not on the tribe. Therefore an organization larger than the kinship group was unstable. (See Trimingham, Islam in Ethiopia, p. 148).

3. Nicholson writes about the 'Afar:

> Like the Somalis, (the Danakil) were nomadic herdsmen, but unlike their neighbors, killing was at the root of their society rather than a common necessity or sport. (T. R. Nicholson, A Toy for the Lion (London: Wikimber and Co., Ltd., 1965), p.20).

4. Nicholson writes about the Somali:

> Warfare was literally their way of life. Water meant everything, artificial frontiers nothing. To stay alive they had to develop an extraordinary physical hardihood. A Somali crawled into a hospital with a gangrened bullet hole in one leg and a spear wound through his body that had just missed the heart. The British Medical Officer began to probe the bullet wound. His patient stopped him. "Don't worry about that. Look at the spear wound first. It hurts me when I laugh." (Nicholson, A Toy for the Lion, p. 16).

5. Happenings in Awsa

a) A second ginnery for Awsa

The projected ginning factory is to be built with American capital in Aysaita. There is already one ginning factory in Dubti, Tendaho Plantations Share Company, eighty miles from Aysaita.

b) A visit to the U.S.A. for the Sultan of Awsa

On behalf of the U.S. Department of State, the International Visitors Service of the Washington Governmental Affairs Institute has

offered a twelve-state tour of the U.S.A. (Aug. 3 - Sept. 14, 1972) to His Excellency Bitwoded Ali Mirah Hanfere, Sultan of Awsa, two of his 'Afar advisors and one 'Afar interpreter.

c) A new settlement scheme for the 'Afar in Dubti

In time of drought the Tendaho Plantations Share Company has been unable to keep the former occupants of its land (and other 'Afar groups) away from the irrigated cotton fields it now cultivates. Their trespassing herds have occasionally inflicted considerable damage to the cotton plantations. Erecting a fence, however, to keep the intruders out has proved too expensive.

To prevent further intrusions into the Tendaho cotton fields Sultan Ali Mirah initiated, in 1970, a resettlement scheme around the Tendaho Plantations. In two years he has settled some four hundred 'Afar who, besides growing their own cotton, are preventing unwanted herds from entering the Tendaho Plantations.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The preceding chapters attempted to initiate the reader to the field, still largely unexplored, of Ethiopian ethnography. Ethiopia was divided into three cultural areas and each one was approached from a different angle: the study of the ensete area was based largely on the ensete tree itself; the plough area was observed through its diverse ethnic groups; the survey of the cattle area was centered mostly on the principles of 'Afar social organization. Each area has revealed its singular characteristics, but also a number of traits that cut across the culture areas and that are shared by all Ethiopians. Some resources for development were also brought to light, especially the human resources, like attitudes and skills, along with the institutions that support them.

The people of Ethiopia and the New Pluralism

It will be useful now to reflect briefly on pluralism, a problem that was raised in the first chapter of this text and that must have taken new dimensions for the reader as he made his way through The people of Ethiopia. Significantly, the concept of pluralism, including even cultural pluralism, has taken lately a positive value, it has come to mean an integrative force in today's world.

This was the result of a gestation that lasted many decades. In the early nineteenth century, pluralism was an ecclesiastical term and it meant the holding of more than one benefice at the same time by one person. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, pluralism was used

in philosophy to designate a system of thought which recognized more than one ultimate principle. "Pluralisme" appeared in the French vocabulary only after 1900 and kept for long its philosophical meaning only. The definition found in the Larousse of 1932 reads as follows: "Pluralism is a philosophical doctrine which proscribes the search for unity and universal laws because, in this world, there are only multiple and individual beings."[1]

In 1963, however, Larousse came with a different perspective, pluralism was not only a philosophical doctrine any more, it now conveyed implications for a diversity of fields, even politics, and it was defined: "A doctrine which favors the constructive coexistence of various tendencies."[2]

What happened between the two periods? What caused this change? How can a centrifugal force become, in such a short time, centripetal? This dissertation cannot investigate the why of this phenomenon which, nevertheless, had to be mentioned and must be related, no doubt, to the development of atomic power and the planetary evolution of mankind as explained by Teilhard de Chardin.

The old principle Divide et impera, "Divide to rule," is losing ground to E pluribus unum, "One out of many," another old principle, perhaps, but one revitalized with reinforced meaning. People who talk of "one world" can do it more realistically now than ever. Almost contemporary were the birth of the United Nations and the birth of

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[1]Larousse du xxè siècle en six volumes (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1932), Vol. V. Translation by author.

[2]Grand Larousse encylopédique en dix volumes (Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1963), Vol. VIII. Translation by author.

numerous independent nations. Unity has come to be seen not as homogeneous, but as differentiated unity.

An illustration of this change of approach, can be seen in the following studies. In 1959, Murdock's Africa: its people and their culture history was published. This survey of some eight hundred and fifty African societies conveyed a vivid impression of cultural multiplicity. In 1972, already, Maquet was able to entitle a book: Africanity: the cultural unity of black Africa. He saw in "Africanity" a level of generalization that is valid and does represent concrete traditions shared by all Africans. More systematically, perhaps, than any one before, Maquet has spelled out the sources and the content of Africanity. He concluded that "the cultural unity of Africa is a fact."[3] In 1961, this writer produced an article entitled The peoples of Ethiopia.[4] But ten years later, while thinking of a title for this dissertation, the idea of dropping the "s" was irresistible, and "peoples" became "people."

Pluralism has changed its meaning, ethnic and other group differences are gaining citizenship rights: unity does not have to mean uniformity These considerations are very relevant in Ethiopia and they no doubt count among the reasons for the increasing interest in Ethiopian studies expressed recently by students and Ethiopians involved in their country's development.

This text, merely a basic introduction to the people of Ethiopia, written for the freshmen of Haile Sellassie I University, can be closed

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[3]Jacques Maquet, Africanity: the cultural unity of black Africa (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 10.

[4]See Ethiopia Observer, V, 3(1961), pp. 216-220.

with a Kiswahili word, harambee, which implies ethnic and racial unity as well as grass-roots development. When used by students who have devoted time to refining their ideas on development and unity, harambee takes on a very profound meaning indeed.

Anthropology and Development Education

The people of Ethiopia, draft of a textbook for the Freshmen of Haile Sellassie I University, exemplifies the relationship between anthropology and education in a developing country. It illustrates one approach to the training of future development workers, one way to generate familiarity with the culture of groups who must be prepared for the tasks of development. In this context, anthropology is important because of two main reasons: a) development occurs in a cultural context and b) local populations must be involved in development.

Cultural Context of Change

Development inevitably occurs in a very concrete cultural context. And here the consequences for Africa are underlined very strongly by Kofi Abrefa Busia, the Ghanaian political leader who lectured on sociology in Holland and Mexico and, later, was a senior member of St. Anthony's College, Oxford, in the Department of Sociology. He writes: "The contemporary problems of Africa must be seen in the context of Africa's own cultural heritage. That heritage is intensively and

pervasively religious."[5]

It will be useful to dwell briefly on this point because African traditional religion falls within the realm of anthropology, which alone can interpret it to development agents as well as to educators. Hence the value of Busia's words to illustrate the interaction between anthropology, development and education. His concern for the African traditional religion comes as a shock to most non-African development specialists who would have normally kept away from the discussion of religious questions. On the contrary, Busia regards traditional African religion as a reality that must be included in the discussion of progress and modernization. With Senghor he speaks of the fundamentally religious basis of African Socialism which is in conformity with the African religious view of life and community.[6] The Government of Kenya, in a sessional paper has affirmed the same belief: "Religion . . . will be a permanent feature of African Socialism.[7]

Busia recognizes, of course, that African traditional beliefs are challenged by Christianity and Islam as well as by science, technology, and new political creeds. But he sees in Africa's religious interpretation of the universe the roots of her rejection of what can be called the gods of other countries, East or West, whether these take the form of

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[5]Kofi Abrefa Busia, The African consciousness, continuity and change in Africa (New York: American Affairs Association, 1968), p. 3. These are three chapters from his book Africa in search of democracy (New York: Praeger, 1967).

[6]L.S. Senghor, On African socialism (New York: Praeger, 1964), p. 26.

[7]Republic of Kenya, sessional paper, No. 10 of 1963/5, Para. 10.

ideology, technology or political systems. Busia is clearly calling to attention more problems than he solves, but they are significant and they cannot be realistically ignored. Nyerere was perhaps more practical, at least in the short run, when he decided to keep religion for the private forum, an area where all decisions must be personal. He insisted therefore on keeping his brand of socialism absolutely religion-free.[8] One conclusion can be drawn here: development agents as well as educators must remember carefully the whole cultural context of the situation in which they operate, hence their need of anthropology.

Curle has underlined the importance of the knowledge of one's cultural background:

> It unfortunately happens that developing countries are apt to acquire an ambivalent attitude toward their own culture both despising it for being "primitive" and according it a patriotic excess of veneration. I would like to see this redress by making studies of indigenous culture, literature, music, art, and the like, more widespread and objective. The present unbalanced attitude means that these subjects do not contribute as they should to national growth. The local culture, whether praised or scored, contains many traditional strengths upon which a new moral and social synthesis must be built.[9] (Emphasis by author.)

And Ashby continues:

> . . . exporters of universities have a dual duty when they promote higher education in an underdeveloped country. Over standards they must not compromise; but they must encourage flexibility in curriculum. Above all they must encourage the receiving society to incorporate its own cultural values into the fabric of its system of higher

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[8]Julius K. Nyerere, Uhuru na ujamaa: freedom and socialism (New York: Oxford U.P., 1968), pp. 12-19.

[9]Adam Curle, "The role of education in developing societies," International education past, present, problems and prospects, prepared by the Task Force on International Education, John Brademas, Chairman, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 463.

> learning. In that way the German and the English universities incorporated their national values into renaissance traditions from Italy and the American universities incorporated their national values into traditional curriculums from England and Germany.[10] (Emphasis by author.)

This is equally true today. A country willing to develop, that is to change in a specific manner, cannot avoid moving away from definite cultural conditions into new ones. Any realistic approach has to be cognizant of both ends of the continuum of change, no matter how compressed one wishes this continuum to be. Even in China, where the cultural revolution has been radical, one can see the students of Peking University striving for three integrations, the second of which only will be mentioned here: the integration of the study of Chinese history and culture with agro-industrial production and military affairs.[11] Chinese culture is obviously changing, but not totally: there is persistance of the old in the new China[12] and this is one juncture where anthropology comes in.

Local Involvement in Projects

Familiarity with the culture of developing populations is important, second, because the local populations must be willing to commit themselves to development. A study of twenty-five educational experiments on which the Ford foundation spent $30-million has found that "a project, no matter

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[10] Sir Eric Ashby, "Universities for export: agenda for some thinking," International education past, present, problems and prospects, p. 419.

[11] B. Michael Frolic, A visit to Peking University: what the cultural revolution was all about, New York Times Magazine, Oct. 24, 1971, p. 117.

[12] Ross Terrill, The 800 000 000: report from China, Atlantic Monthly, 228 (Nov. 1971), 118.

how well conceived, funded and led, was unsuccessful 'without the commitment of others besides the Ford Foundation;' that is, local involvement at all stages was essential."[13]

The writer's personal experience has brought him to the firm conclusion that this "local involvement" cannot be achieved without a quality of communication between development agents and developing population that requires the development workers to know and value the culture of the people they plan to help. Often, lack of this precise kind of communication will be the major cause for the absence of local commitment and thus will ruin the best development project. Consider the following remarks appended to reports signalling the failure of programs that had been carefully devised by reputable experts whose knowledge and experience were, in themselves, a sure guarantee of success:

> . . . the need for far greater involvement of the local people in the project . . .
> . . . confusion among farmers arising from conflicting and inaccurate information . . .
> . . . the difficulty of obtaining suitable candidates for training courses, drawn from a wide enough reservoir of talent throughout the country, especially from rural areas . . .
> . . . resistance from the public due to traditional attitudes and suspicion of authority . . .
> . . . encountering serious obstacles due to insufficient awareness in the several government services of the need for proper coordination . . .
> . . . the incident arose because of rumours among the villagers that the experts' work would deprive them of their traditional livelihood . . .
> . . . doubtful whether there can be significant progress until a more positive climate of opinion, and greater public understanding of the purposes of this project, have been created . . .

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[13] Ford fund assays its school grants, New York Times, Dec. 1st, 1972, p. 23.

For the past ten years, or more, references like the above mentioned have been appearing "with increasing frequency in project reports, or have been the coinage of countless discussions among development personnel."[14] Hence the value of the approach exemplified in this dissertation, or more exactly the value of anthropology for development education.

Ianni and Storey discuss anthropology and education as separate entities and suggest the following division of labor between the two: anthropology is more problem oriented and education is more solution oriented.[15] The two complement each other a) to inform "educational problem-solvers and policy-makers;" b) to urge "upon teachers and learners a sense of human alternatives, a respect for the dignity of human difference, and a willingness to engage alternatives;" c) to carry on the vital role of questioning, "acting as a sort of guerrilla humanism even while performing as the science of the ways Man becomes human . . . ." [16]

The second part of the book,[17] however, is devoted to anthropology in education (as opposed to anthropology and education, or anthropology of education). This is really the point of view adopted

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[14]United Nations Development Programme, Background paper on project support communication (New York: United Nations, n.d.), pp. 1-2. (Mimeographed.)

[15]Francis A.J. Ianni and Edward Storey, eds., Cultural relevance and educational issues: readings in anthropology and education (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1973), p. x.

[16]Ianni and Storey, Cultural Relevance, p. xii.

[17]Ianni and Storey, Cultural Relevance, pp. 117-210.

in this dissertation: anthropology as a part of education itself. Anthropology has remained outside of education too long and this may be one important reason why so little is known about the relationship between education and development.

Anthropology and Education in Developing Countries

Balogh writes: "It can never be stressed strongly enough that the education process and the development process must be taken as an organic whole and not divided into little compartments independent of one another. Educational methods should accelerate the development process and the development process should result in broadening educational methods."[18] But very little has been done. "Despite the voluminous outpouring of educationists--perhaps the most verbose of all professional groups--we know extraordinarily little about the symbiotic relationship between education and development."[19] The integration of education with development cannot be done without the help of anthropology. This has become more and more evident as the nature of education has been changing, in developing countries, as well as in affluent societies.

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[18]Thomas Balogh, Land tenure, education and development in Latin America, Problems and strategies of educational planning, (Paris UNESCO/ IIEP, 1965), quoted in Guy Hunter, The best of both worlds? (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 108.

[19]Adam Curle, "The role of education in developing societies," International education past, present, problems and prospects, prepared by the Task Force on International Education, John Brademes, Chairman, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 461.

In India, as Kothari says,

> The most important and urgent reform in education is . . . to endeavor to relate it to the life, needs and aspirations of the people and thereby make it a powerful instrument of socio-economic and cultural transformation necessary for the realization of national goals. For this purpose education should be developed as to increase productivity, achieve social and national integration, accelerate the process of modernization and cultivate social, moral and spiritual values.[20] (Emphasis by author.)

To achieve the goals proposed by the Kothari report a great deal had to be changed in the traditional Indian education system in terms of method and content both of a) the instruction given to the students and b) the textbooks used. Some specific objectives required support from anthropology, in particular: "the promotion of understanding and reevaluation of the cultural heritage, the education of the tribal people with programs attuned to tribal life and atmosphere."[21]

The need of anthropology for education also emerged clearly from the discussions of the Educators' Social Action Workshop held in Kyoto, Japan, in August, 1971. The theme of the workshop was: "The role of educators as agents of change in the nations of Asia and the Pacific."[22] The workshop dealt extensively with social attitudes toward such most vital institutions as family, local community, employment, property, cooperatives, productivity, etc.

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[20] D.S. Kothari, ed., Report of the education commission 1964-66, Ministry of Education, Government of India, 1966, p. 6.

[21] Kothari, Report, pp. 16-17 and 140-143.

[22] Educators' social action workshop (ESAW), Kyoto, Japan, August 1-28, 1971, p. 2.

Continuity and Change

The cultural identity of people should not be considered as something static. There is always some change occurring in a culture, as well as in an individual personality. The classic social anthropological distinction between social structure and social organization remains valid, but a more useful approach might look at social relations as relations always in the process of being and becoming.[23] This approach gives a more fluid view of reality, one in which reintegration occurs as widely as disintegration and, especially, one in which change and continuity are closely interrelated.

Experience shows clearly that very often social relations can be transformed, rechannelled, more easily than they can be created, or abolished. Hence the importance of knowing the basis of culture change. It may sound trivial to insist on the need to know where one starts from, when introducing change, even radical change, but it is extremely important. Cultures are not like machines,[24] but more like organisms. They grow and develop, and very often the more continuity there is in the growth process, the more chances of a lasting success.

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[23]Ian Hogbin, Social change, Josiah Mason lectures delivered at the University of Birmingham, (London: Watts, 1958), see Change and continuity in Africa, a review article by C. Frantz, Human Problems in British Central Africa, XXVII (June 1960), 50.

[24]This point is well taken by Vohra: "(Our existing institutions) are not concrete buildings which can be dismantled and put up again in better ways." F.C. Vohra, The social attitude in Asia and the Pacific toward the educator's role and strategy in bringing about social change (with special reference to Malaysia), Educators' social action workshop, p. 232. On the need for continuity in change see Raanan Weitz, From peasant to farmer: a revolutionary strategy for development (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), pp. 83 and 145-46.

In other words: relating an innovation to parts of the culture to which it is introduced increases its chances for survival. This may perhaps be impossible when drastic reforms are needed, or when one is faced with cultural traits that are counterproductive. But it is often possible, and to illustrate the point here are a few examples which throw some light on the contribution of anthropological knowledge to the solution of development problems.

Land reform is one of the important steps recommended by development agents in many parts of Africa. Unfortunately, very little effective land reform is possible, in many instances, because the reformers hardly know the precise system they want to reform. Here come to mind the highlanders of north Ethiopia. They would accept changes that would benefit them, for instance, a consolidation of their individual lots. But this can be worked out only with government officials who know the tenure system well enough to discuss it intelligently before trying to reform it. The problems revolving around land reform are immense and development agents compound them when they fail to study the land systems of the populations they hope to help. Bohannan writes that the relationship between negative attitudes to land reform and the concern for the preservation of traditional modes of social organization is little understood and mostly ignored by bureaucrats and planners in Africa.[25]

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[25]Paul Bohannan, "Land use, land tenure and land reform," in Economic transition in Africa, eds. M.J. Herskovits and M. Harwitz, (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1964), p. 135.

Erasto Muga has similar remarks to make when talking of one of the most common and difficult endeavors of developing countries: resettlement. He writes: ". . . initiation of resettlement schemes in Kenya and any other African developing country will not be successful unless the patterns of life of the people are taken into consideration and used in planning the transformation from traditional life to modernized life."[26] (Emphasis by author.)

Another illustration of the principle indicated above is the case of many Nigerian workers who began their work careers as apprentices in small enterprises. Gilpin describes how the traditional training structure (apprenticeship) was utilized and built upon to transmit the modern skills of trade and industry, but without undermining its own existence or replacing the small scale industry which it served.[27]

Hunter quotes F. Morton-Williams as saying:

> To become a modern trader . . . involves a certain twist in the social pattern of living . . . It is interesting to watch these adaptations actually happening. In Nigeria the need for middle class traders led, among other factors, to the formation of the reformed Ogboni society . . . thus partially transforming an old tribal "secret society" into a superior group of credit-worthy businessmen . . .[28]

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[26]Erasto Muga, Problems of rural development in Kenya: A sociological case study of social change in the Kano plains, Journal of Eastern African Research and Development, I, 1 (1971), 67.

[27]Clifford Gilpin, A case study of two training programmes for small scale industry in the northern states of Nigeria: the vocational improvement centers and industrial development center, Zaria. (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, December, 1971), p. 9. (Mimeographed.)

[28]Guy Hunter, The new societies of tropical Africa (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 154.

Frankel relates a successful attempt to utilize the initiation school of Mende, in Liberia, for instructions in nutrition and baby care. Two Mende women who had received the proper training were allowed to act as teachers, during the initiation period, because they patiently explained to the chiefs how helpful their lessons would be for the people and because, at the same time, the two women did not attempt to alter the beliefs, or ceremonies, of initiation and they also were willing to work under the observation and supervision of the Head woman of the society.[29] Frankel's primary thesis is that

> the Poro (a secret society with its own initiation ceremonies) is still one of the strongest, most respected educational institutions in West Africa and despite its basically traditional conservative nature, its input can be changed to enable it to serve as a successful non-formal educational institution in a very modern sense.[30]

Examples of reforms, or "transforms," that have been successful because (among other reasons) of their adjustment to cultural patterns could be multiplied. Also, much more easily, could examples of failures because of a lack of congruence.

Africanization of Education

To develop the concepts relevant to an understanding and practice of African education requires a great deal more field work than most educators in Africa--whether they be from Africa or not--have realized

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[29]Larry Frankel, A case study of the Poro (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, December, 1972), p. 17. (Mimeographed.)

[30]Frankel, A case study, p. 2.

until, perhaps, just a few years ago. The difficulty comes from the fact that to understand African education one has to understand Africa first, a prospect easier to formulate than to put into execution.

In 1928, a research project of the International African Institute aiming at coordinating research in Africa failed. In 1945, Gluckman started again and more realistically with a plan for coordinating social research in British Central Africa. It was "the first plan of the kind in the British Empire . . . the biggest event in social anthropological history since the Rivers' Torres Strait expedition."[31] However, in his lengthy introduction he devoted only one paragraph to educational research and it took seventeen years before the topic was mentioned again in the Journal: in 1963, one whole issue appeared which tried to come to grips with the problems of educational research.

This isolated case is significant. It shows how insufficient was the research done on African education as such. There was little blending of the social sciences with education although studies relating anthropology, sociology and psychology to education would have been of great help in the building of a solid basis for African curricula. This failure allowed Africans to harbor a very costly illusion, the idea that with education, i.e., "Western education," they would be able to "jump into the twentieth century."[32] Had the research been done in time, educators in Africa today would know better what their work is all about.

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[31]Max Gluckman, The seven year research plan of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, Human Problems in British Central Africa: The Rhodes-Livingstone Journal, 4 (Dec., 1945), 3, 24-25.

[32]Guy Hunter, The best of both worlds? p. 45.

A more organic approach to growth was attempted, on a limited scale, during the colonial period. But as can well be understood today it was open to abuses tending to increase, instead of to relieve, the dependency of Africans. Although these efforts at adapting education to the African socio-cultural context were sometimes used as tools for domination, they also revealed valid principles to which educated Africans are coming back today. In fact, the colonial "adaptionists," when proposing the africanization of education, were also offering many suggestions that anticipated the recommendations of the Conference of African States on the development of education in Africa held in 1961 in Addis Ababa.

Attempts were made by educators in Africa to africanize education,[33] that is to adapt it both in terms of content and method to the socio-cultural environment; to pay more attention to the children's milieu: physical, social, cultural, moral, etc., and also, whenever possible, to adopt the styles of learning more congenial to Africans.

However, research in the social, political and philosophical foundations of education in Africa is still lagging except in a few outstanding cases to be mentioned below. Fifty years after the first Phelps-Stokes Report one can record more agreement among educators on the need to africanize the curricula of African schools, but one must also recognize that little progress has been made in this direction.

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[33]See David Scanlon, "Education," The African world: a survey of social research, ed. Robert A. Lystad, (New York: Praeger, 1965), pp. 199-220.

The whole educational process must be rethought and reorganized if the development process is to accelerate. Both processes are organically linked and both depend on a better knowledge of relevant facts. Hunter points to the immediate collection of data as an essential condition for socio-economic development and implicitly for educational development in Africa. Needed again is anthropology, or

> . . . a far closer study of the exact stage and setting--economic, social, motivational--into which a new technique is to be introduced, and of the motives and institutions which correspond to it. In Africa this means not national but local studies, since not only economically but on all planes there are such wide differences between local societies, in addition to those of climate and general physical ecology. It is for this reason that the generalizations of central planning and macro-economics are so dangerous and misleading. Until the micro-economics and micro-sociology of each region is thoroughly understood, macro-economics are virtually meaningless . . . .[34]
> (Emphasis by author.)

Development for Education

Before going into a more detailed discussion of the reasons for cultural adaptation it is useful to reaffirm the close connection that exists between education and development. It would be naive and disastrous to try to usher the one without the other. Heyneman has recently brought to light data showing the futility of educational changes that are not supported by corresponding changes in the socio-economic structure. He points to a few hard facts that demonstrate the complexity of the africanization process but do not invalidate it. He writes: "Attitudes toward change are more influenced by the

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[34]Guy Hunter, The best of both worlds?, p. 129.

market than by the curriculum;" and "the more we learn about continuities within culture change, the less traditional values in the curriculum are viewed as being necessary for the stability of the personality."[35]

Also, of course, traditional methods and values may be at times counterproductive. The period, for instance, during which Ghana was exhibiting a greater degree of cultural and national pride than ever before was the period during which the vernacular was neglected in the schools. The Ghanaians wanted to join the modern sector of work and for that purpose knowledge of English was an absolute prerequisite.[36] Africanization can go on one way in some sectors and a different way in others; after all, it is the Africans themselves who have the last word on what africanization must mean concretely.

Implications for Africa's Educational Systems

Introducing anthropology to Higher Education needed justification at a time when the disillusionments of the development decade had not yet settled in. But things have changed and development agents everywhere realize the complexity of the challenges they are facing. Anthropology has gained respectability; there are now African anthropologists, and this is clearly a most significant development for the discipline. Education has called on the social sciences to help develop programs better suited

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[35]Stephen P. Heyneman, The conflict over what is to be learned in schools: a history of curriculum politics in Africa, Eastern African Studies II (Syracuse: Syracuse University, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, July, 1971), pp. 28-29.

[36]Paulette Simpson, Language and development: a new role for the vernacular in Ghana's modern sector (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, January 12, 1972), p. 12. (Mimeographed.)

to the African situation.

In Ghana, the Ministry of Education has asked for new textbooks, "Ghanaian in background so as to facilitate intelligent learning by the children."[37] This effort to Africanize textbooks has extended to most of Africa in gigantic proportions. The Congolese Academy of Mondouli (Congo Brazzaville) has innovated with the creation of a rural research center where in addition to standard teaching instructions are given to students in "their own historic tradition." Students and adults are encouraged to write about these as well as about contemporary social, political and religious institutions.[38]

A few African governments have gone further and have endorsed some forms of educational revolutions. It happened in Guinea,[39] for instance, and in the United Arab Republic. But, evidently, both enlightened educators and enlightened politicians are needed for effective and constructive change. Tanzania supplies, perhaps, the best example of that kind of cooperation. Considerable research was carried on there

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[37]Paulette Simpson, Language and development, p. 11.

[38]African Studies Bulletin, X, 1 (April, 1967), 108.

[39]Here are some of the new courses that were introduced at the secondary school level: 1. History, organization, structure and principles of the Democratic Party in Guinea; 2. Role of the Government, administrative structure of the national, regional and local government, the Constitution, fundamental rights and duties of citizens; 3. Economic structure of Guinea; 4. Three-Year Plan, its principles and objectives; 5. International policy of the Republic of Guinea. See Sekou Toure "Education and Social Progress," Education and nation building in Africa, eds. L.G. Cowan, J. O'Connel and D. Scanlon, (New York: Praeger, 1965), p. 135.

by local[40] and foreign[41] experts. But the most decisive agent of change in education was President Julius K. Nyerere himself.[42] After calling for the eradication of what he labelled the legacy of the colonial rule in the present education system, he proposed sweeping reforms in order to equip every young Tanzanian for life as a self-reliant farmer. An essential part of these reforms consists in bringing up citizens who will derive inspiration, strength and a sense of security and direction from their cultural roots. This is indeed a great venture in the field of education.[43] The new educators, nationals and expatriates, have high praise for traditional African education and, with Castle, many agree that "a little of this old wine might be tried in the new bottles often provided by foreign aid."[44] The need to know one's own people is clear especially perhaps in developing nations. And one way to do it is with anthropology.

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[40]For instance, the Nyegezi Social Training Centre, in Mwanza, one of the best African centers for training development agents. See Kenneth Prewitt, Education, citizenship and social revolution in Tanzania, Abstracts of the African Studies Association Tenth Annual Meeting, November 1-4, 1967, p. 15.

[41]For example, experts from the Centre for the Study of Education in Changing Societies (Amsterdam) who studied the influence of primary education on the personality of the younger generation in the Mwanza District.

[42]Julius K. Nyerere, Education for self-reliance (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: the Government Printer, 1967).

[43]Experience has brought to light some weaknesses in Nyerere's approach. For a critical appraisal see Heyneman," The conflict, pp. 31-49, and P. Foster, "Education for self-reliance: a critical evaluation," Education in Africa: research and action, ed. Richard Jolly, (Nairobi, Kenya: East African Publishing House, 1969), pp. 81-102.

[44]E.B. Castle, Growing up in East Africa (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 45.

Remarks

A few supplementary remarks a) on the text The people of Ethiopia, b) on the teaching aids to be used with it and c) on some significant trends in the field of African studies will conclude this dissertation.

The Text

The people of Ethiopia should be modified for classroom use. While the level of theory that can be incorporated in the factual teaching will vary with each Freshmen class, a few sections of the dissertation will have to be considerably reduced or simplified. In particular: Anthropology and Education, chapter I, and the Social Structure of 'Afar Society, in chapter V. Chapter II may also be difficult to assimilate for students with no background at all in physical anthropology and/or prehistory.

Some of the sources, although not suitable for a number of Freshmen, should however be made available to the most advanced students; they should also be supplemented by writings from local specialists. It will be useful to read and analyze in a constructive way the fast growing literature on Ethiopian problems of development, for instance the Third five year development plan, etc.[45]

It must be understood that The people of Ethiopia is just a beginning, perhaps the first systematic approach to a global study of the Ethiopians, but definitely only the introductory paragraph of a long discourse. It exploits resources available at present, it insists less

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[45] Imperial Ethiopian Government, Third five year development plan (Addis Ababa: Berhanena Selam H.S.I. Printing Press, 1968).

on better known and more accessible materials, for instance articles in the Journal of Ethiopian Studies, or the Journal of the Ethiopian Teachers Association, etc. and it aims especially at developing interests and attitudes that will encourage readers to pursue their work in the field of Ethiopian studies with relentless courage. A great deal of research, obviously, remains to be done, and it must be carried on in a spirit of cooperation by scholars versed in different disciplines.

Freshmen studying The people of Ethiopia should be exposed to the views of social scientists laboring in the fields of public administration, economics, political science even geography, history and philosophy. They should have direct contact with research workers returning from the field and should keep abreast of developments at the Institute of Ethiopian Studies. In all these relationships the Freshmen from Haile Sellassie I University should not be satisfied with being only the recipients of knowledge, but they should also bring in their own valuable contributions.

Past experience indicates that field work has always provided Haile Sellassie I students with incentives and rewards without parallel in their whole academic experience. Organizing significant and practical projects, carrying them out with the prudence and expertise required, studying the data, expressing its meaning and communicating it to interested scholars and laymen are difficult challenges, especially in the circumstances in which the Haile Sellassie I University staff and students find themselves at present. But these are also responsibilities no one can shrink from, far less one who is studying the people of Ethiopia.

One of the most stimulating academic requirements of Haile Sellassie I University is the Ethiopian University Service, the year of teaching (or other service), in a rural area, every University student must contribute

before graduation. Students can capitalize on this experiment for themselves and for the country. They can use it to help improve the formal education system which is and will remain necessary, but must be made "more efficient and more relevant for African conditions."[46]

Freshmen have to share their knowledge of Ethiopia, but they also have a lot of researching and discovering to do. They should be given the opportunity to listen to people who really know the country and who feel free to express themselves in the halls of the University. Most of these experts will be nationals working for the Planning Commission, the Institute of Public Administration, the Ministry of Interior (especially the Municipalities), the ministries of Agriculture, of Commerce and Industry, even the Ministry of Information and Tourism in relation to projects like model villages or handicraft exhibits planned for visitors and, necessarily, the Ministry of Land Reform and Administration.

To be encouraged also are contacts with strong parliamentarians who keep in touch with their constitutents, like the Sidama representatives, with honest and articulate judges, lawyers or teachers, with community development and social workers, with educated priests, experienced administrators and managers working for development projects like the Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit or the Agency for International Development. Some foreign experts, preferably Africans, can also be invited through the World Bank, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Organization for African Unity, the International Labor Office, the

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[46] J.R. Sheffield and V.P. Diejomaoh, Non-formal education in african development (New York: African-American Institute, 1972), p. 206.

various United Nations agencies. This list is long but not exhaustive. In as much as the intricacies of schedules, space and communications will allow, arrangements should be made to tap the knowledge and experience of development workers who can be reached in Addis Ababa.

Teaching Aids

This needs no great elaboration: all available instructional materials should be used either to reinforce or to supplement the text. The museum of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies could be exploited much more than is currently done and students could perhaps even be invited to help improve its educational impact. Relevant films, although rare, should be utilized as well as audio and videotapes. Very practical and often very instructive are slides; they should be shown without hesitation because few are the Ethiopians who have a visual knowledge of the greater part of their own country.

At this point a brief digression on ethnic and Black studies in America will not only give additional thrust to the author's argument, but suggest also a variety of methods with which understanding as well as attitudes of tolerance and cooperation can be developed.

The coincidence was remarkable indeed: while African educators were discovering the relevance of anthropology, American educators were forced to launch programs in Black and other ethnic studies, they were discovering, at last, that there is no educational formula that fits all groups in the U.S.A.[47] and that ethnic awareness is not necessarily

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[47]Some "Chicanos" for instance, are like foreigners in the U.S.A. The Black Americans are less "foreign," yet they have characteristics of their own: "How well, asks Ianni, do we understand the culture of the American Negro? We have been looking at the Negro in this country for

a divisive force, but can also be positive. The ethnic identity of the United States minorities which appeared in the nineteen thirties as "powerlessness" has contributed more to American life and literature than any dream melting-pot would have. Hence the value of the new ethnic studies that come in various forms.

"Enrichment Programs, for instance, attempt . . . to create renewed interest in the ethnic community of the students; Heritage Programs focus on the cultural roots of a particular group . . . so as to increase the small ethnic group identification."[48] In appendix C can be found some of the reflections made by fifth and sixth graders from Barton School in West Bend, Wisconsin, after the visit of a Menominee Indian, social worker, and her five-year-old son. These texts speak for themselves and they show how convincing the presence of anyone from a different ethnic group can be, especially when the potential relationship has not been exceedingly damaged by prejudice.

Worth mentioning also, as another non-formal type of study, is the "Ethnic Theatre" (that is theatre by and for a particular group). This type of theatre is intended to reflect the positive qualities of a group, reinforce its cultural norms, nurture awareness of its own capabilities and generally develop a sense of pride in self. This exercise can be of great value to help a minority culture see itself as having

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three hundred years and yet we continue to see only what we want to see. And now he shows us only what we want to see." Francis A.J. Ianni, "Cultivating the arts of poverty," in Ianni and Storey, Cultural Relevance, p. 459.

[48] Non-formal alternatives to schooling: a glossary of educational methods (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Center for International Education, n.d.), p. 27.

desirable traits no matter how unimportant and perhaps even undesirable these may be viewed by the dominant culture.[49]

In a similar vein are events like the week long Annual Great Lakes Indian Awareness Powwow in which the theme of Indianness permeates all lectures, concerts, art exhibits, dances, etc. At the 1972 powwow, sponsored by the organization of North American Indian Students of Northern Michigan University, Mrs. Harris said that, in the past, an Indian who wanted to get education had to give up his Indianness; but all that had changed, she added,

> We know who we are and we are proud of it . . . The United States is really not a melting pot when it comes to dark and brown skinned people, American whites don't understand other people. They want to convert them into people like themselves. "Join our church, join our fraternity, marry us to get rid of your dark skin," they say. American whites fail to recognize the beauty of being different.[50]

Even with its Christian ethics, its beautiful Constitution, America was slow to develop ethnic studies. The first community-controlled school for Indian children was opened in 1972 in Rough Rock, Arizona.[51] The bicultural design of the school will aim at preparing students for modern life while keeping the best of Navaho traditions. Parents, in particular, along with medicine men, elders, etc. are expected to contribute an enormous input as cultural liaisons; in the classrooms, not only the "three R's" will be taught, but also all the Navaho lore that

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[49] Non-formal alternatives, p. 43.

[50] Great Lakes powwow stresses Indian awareness in dances and meetings, New York Times, Oct. 8, 1972, p. L73.

[51] Sue Edelstein, Little Navajo with a big future, Christian Science Monitor, Oct, 1972, p. 11.

gives pride in being a Navaho. The Indian school board members believe this pride is important to happiness and success in any world the child may choose to live in, on or off the Reservation.

Black studies also are a fairly recent phenomenon in America; it took very much time for writers to move out of the beaten paths. Now, for the first time, the role of the Negro in American history is being fairly and adequately treated in school textbooks.[52]

Ethnic studies in one way or other tend to support the cultural identity of the students; they also certainly make education more meaningful and, at the same time, more "productive." An experiment carried on among Indians from Colorado and neighboring states can be mentioned now, not only because it illustrates very well the value of anthropological research for education, but equally because the experiment has some significance for Africa. Here is how a group of forty teachers from schools on Reservations in nine different states succeeded in helping American Indians to adjust to the White World.[53]

The teachers had observed that the Indian children who performed at, or above, national academic norms during their first years in school were beginning a steady scholastic decline in the eighth grade level. The reason for this decline seemed to be a progressive alienation which prevented these children from identifying either with the White World or their Indian heritage. Playing a large role in this process was the traditional American grade school curriculum and also the circumstances

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[52]Conclusion reached by a survey commissioned by the American Federation of Teachers. See Philip Shabecoff, Textbooks hailed on view of Negro, New York Times, Oct. 11, 1972, p. 14.

[53]John Bryde, School teachers told how to help Indians, Catholic Denver Register, July 14, 1966, p. 7.

of poverty and isolation in which the average Indian child found himself.

The teachers tried to find a way to break down the barrier that has prevented the American Indians from taking their place in national society. They looked for the psychological factors preventing personality, academic and social development during adolescence, and they planned an educational program using Indian values to teach cultural adjustment. This led to interesting discoveries. They found great contrasts between Indian and White American values: individual freedom versus conformity, generosity versus acquisitiveness, love of philosophical counsel versus admiration for efficiency and practicality. A course on "How to be a modern Indian" was created. It told the students that "since they are the same as the old-time Indians, except in their way of making a living now, they had to learn two things: how to be like the old-time Indians and yet make their living in a different way." This process was called adjustment and adjustment had to be learned.

The students, who had never been spoken to in such terms before, loved the course. They learned that the traditional Indian value of bravery could be translated in terms of making a living today. Comparing the two cultures they learned how to use one as the basis for functioning in the context of the other. As a result, they were able to identify with both. Wrote one student: "It is absurd for an Indian to try to cease to be an Indian, and impossible for him to become a White man; so he must learn to take the best from both cultures to his own advantage and that of society." In fact, they are more Indian now than before because they can use their own values in the new setting.

There is universal validity in the words Charton wrote originally for West Africa: "All native education, to be of any value, whether from

the moral or the intellectual standpoint, must be based upon psychology and ethnology."[54]

Trends

One major change that has given renewed life to African studies is the coming of age of African social scientists. Founded by whites the African studies are not any more an exclusive "reserve." The people who were the object of extensive studies by specialists who, sometimes, gained fame and degrees in the process, have produced their own scientists who can now voice the views of their people and articulate sometimes devastating criticism of their white analysts.[55] Mogubane blames Epstein and Mitchell for observations he thinks have encouraged the status quo; he also reacts vigorously against some Africanists: "Those whom Van Den Berghe calls the founders of African social science, despite their good intentions, did superficial analysis of African societies under stress of foreign domination. Their work is permeated with an ideology that is not complimentary to the African personality, both in its theoretical attitude and in its practical implications."[56]

Mhone deplores the fact that Darwin's theory of evolution has permeated Anglo-American thinking in the social sciences and has blinded them to the value of revolution; he adds: "Africa would like to develop

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[54]Albert Charton, The social function of education in French West Africa, quoted in W. Bryant Mumford, Africans learn to be French (London: Evans Brothers Ltd., 1935), p. 104.

[55]See, for example, Gedamu Abraha, The wax and gold in Donald Levine's Wax and gold, Ethiopia Observer, 11, 3(1967), 226-243.

[56]Bernard Mogubane, A critical look at indices used in the study of social change in colonial Africa, Current Anthropology, 12, 4-5 (1971), 443.

an indigenous intellectual tradition which through its choice of what to investigate scientifically--reflects the values and urgency of the economic, political and social problems that face Africa."[57]

Mhone also regrets that white africanists are too removed from the emotional and social aspirations of Africa:

> Africanists are concerned with the artifact, the contrived and reasoned motives for African behavior. These can be analyzed methodologically. These are the concepts, myths, solutions and processes African intellectuals are most likely to read about and be educated in. The meaning of such concepts and myths to the Africans--the people doing the experiencing--is dismissed under the guise of scientism as irrelevant. By virtue of their intellectual dependence on Anglo-Americans, Africans are denied the right to define their own problems and deal with their own destiny. This is not to make apologies for intellectual autarky or chauvinism. It is simply to assert that any alien intellectual tradition should be assimilated in proper balance and proportion by the indigenous group. No alien tradition should predominate, particularly without the consent of the domestic group.[58]

A second trend is the growing association of anthropology and education under the influence of development necessities. It will suffice to mention here the fact that this is a growing concern for the nationals themselves. Kabir, from India, and Ki-Zerbo, from Africa, have expressed very cogently their views on the educational ingredients of cultural and social development.[59]

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[57]Guy CZ Mhone, The case against africanists, Issue, II, 2 (1972), 11.

[58]Mhone, The case, p. 13.

[59]See Joseph Ki-Zerbo, Cultural cohesion through education, "Education and African culture," and Humayun Kabir, Education and national integration in India, "National integration in India," in Education and the development of nations, eds. John W. Hanson and Cole S. Brembeck, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), pp. 233-40 and 241-48 respectively.

Two other trends deserve mention. One is the open recognition of the value of their cultural heritage by Africans themselves. Mazrui dares speak of "retribalization"[60] and Adekunle thinks that minor Nigerian languages do not prevent communication, at all levels, and may even survive longer than was once predicted.[61] Mbone, in the article quoted above, thinks in more positive terms of his African culture than Allot, for instance, who sees "little immediate prospect of interesting achievement in the building of new laws based on the customary laws that existed before the arrival of the Europeans in Africa."[62]

The fourth and last trend to be mentioned is the growing tendency of developing people to try, at least, to become more responsible for their own development. The African nations are accepting the fact that economic development, not only economic growth, is going to be slow and painful and will call for the mobilization of the resources and energies of the African themselves.[63]

There is need for an intellectual "decolonization" and a direction of African aspirations toward Africa rather than to Europe or America, a need for relevancy and high quality of knowledge at the same time. African africanists would agree mostly with Tax commenting recently on

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[60]Ali A. Mazrui, "Current sociopolitical trends," in Africa in the seventies and eighties, ed. F.S. Arkhurst, (New York, Praeger, 1970), pp. 49-52.

[61]Mobolaji A. Adekunle, Multilingualism and language function in Nigeria, African Studies Review, XV (1972), 203.

[62]Antony Allott, "African law in the 1980s," Africa in the seventies and eighties, ed. F.S. Arkhurst, p. 174.

[63]David Carney, "Requirements for African economic development," Africa in the seventies and eighties, ed. F.S. Arkhurst, pp. 184-85.

the distinction between theoretical and applied work.

> These are the two extremes and they are caricatures. A third way is to do theoretical anthropology, but on subjects relevant to problems of wider social interest. Good anthropology requires the highest standards of fieldwork and the highest standardization of theoretical competence. What we must do is simply more good anthropology, but with part of our effort directed to problems which are not the concern of anthropologists alone but of a wide variety of behavioral scientists and others. This is the program which the international group has recently set for themselves.[64]

The road ahead does not appear very easy, but if there are tough political and economic problems looming on the future of Africa, if the leaders of many countries seem to have lost much of their imaginative dynamism, because of the practical problems and frustrations of government, nevertheless it remains possible to see that there could be, just the same, "quite a bit of sunshine for the 1980's."[65]

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[64]Extract from Remarks made by Dr. Sol Tax to the Plenary Session at the Conference on Anthropology, Cross-Cultural Data Retrieval, and Pressing Social Problems, sponsored by the Center for the Study of Man of the Smithsonian Institution and the American University in Cairo, Cairo, Egypt, May 9, 1972. (Mimeographed.)

[65]R.S. Schachter Morganthau, "African politics: background and prospects," Africa in the seventies and eighties, ed. F.S. Arkhurst, p. 45.

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APPENDIX A

'Afar War Song[1]

I am Ali Bonkattu, from the Ma'a Sarra.[2] I was the first to kill, during the battle. People asked: "Who killed?" and somebody answered: "It was 'Ali Bonkattu." I killed a second time and people asked again: "Who killed?" It was answered: '"Ali Bonkattu." I killed a third time and they asked again: "Who killed?" Still the answer was: '"Ali Bonkattu." Then I killed a fourth man and those who asked: "Who killed" were answered: "The one who killed all the others."

Now I am the mokabantu,[3] the real mokabantu. I am not one who pretends to have killed many, but I did kill many; I am not one who acts as if he were the chief, but I am the real chief. I killed the Manda, then I killed in Kallale Abaka, also in Marto, in Dalafillale and in Bunke. I killed a lion to avenge my camels and an elephant who had fed on my tree. I killed Galla people to avenge my tribe. When I killed them, I took their cattle away; but for want of any thing better to do I distributed their cattle among my mother's relatives and my father's relatives; I gave some to my wife and to my son.

If the raiders wanted to share the booty, I got more than anyone else. If they wanted to keep it together, I still had more. I obtained more than a rich man can own.

I killed in Aora, in Baadu and on every branch of the Awash river. Wherever war broke out, I was present, killing enemies. I have children but I did not get what I wanted. I am wealthy but I am not what I wanted to be. I killed ninety-nine men, but I did not kill the one who would have made it a hundred. That is what disappoints me most.

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[1]Recitation by Fitawrari Yayo. See G.C. Savard, War chants in praise of ancient 'Afar heroes, Journal of Ethiopian Studies, III, 1 (1965), pp. 105-108.

[2]An important tribe of the famous Modaito tribal confederation often mentioned by travelers.

[3]The father of the tribe.

APPENDIX B

A Sidama Boast Song[1]

To battle with men on foot and on horse.
Spies go creeping rapidly.
The men have been told to assemble at Orisse,
They will return successfully and go to Domale the next day.
They have broken the cattle coral and taken the cattle.
Kalife has seen me while I burst the cattle kral and captured the cattle;
And Gadigo has seen me while I fought the enemy.
Ask Wolsa about my fame, I carried yonder Wolsa on my back,
I took his spear and fought the enemy.
I sharpened my knife to cut off the testicles of the enemy.
I took my knife to Naata (a man who sharpens knives) so that it would not be dull again,
Whenever I have need to use it.
I met for battle with others at Warancha.
I here remembered Rojago whom the enemy killed.
Then we reached Tulla from Warancha,
At that time I caught up my spear,
Thinking to kill an enemy standing nearby.
Then we hurried to the Galla and I thought of killing many of those who had killed people at Tassera, my relatives.
When we reached Annoli, people came to honor me singing Walole (for the one who killed man or beast).
Then we reached Tukala and people gave me the title of Wanragi (for a man who has killed).
Here we slew white sheep and then reached Imalak,
Going on in one direction, toward the enemy.
My father Bereka, who begot me, was a brave man;
I won't lose this courage of my besello.
My mother Shur brought me forth as a gentleman and a friend of Loyo Sidole.
At this time we reached Ajawa (in Arusi) and fought the enemy and returned.
I picked up a spear of the enemy,
I took that spear on my shield, even though my shield was small,
I tied the testicles and penis to the handle of my shield.
My father Bereka who begot me named me Hoyawa.
The battle reached Faulite Massianamo in Welamo.
I, the son of Bereka, needed to do two things,
I have my spear at my side and with others to meet at Katcheli to cut off the penis and testicles of the enemy.

---

[1]Song recorded and translated by John H. Hamer; reproduced here with his permission.

APPENDIX C

Creative Writing from Mrs. Leithold's Reading Group (March 1972)[1]

In the moon I see someone who feels very special to me.
When I looked into the moon I wished I could be an Indian too.
I think being an Indian would be fun.
When you visited us every body enjoyed you. Thank you. Linda Werbelow

I never saw a Menominne Indian.
This is the first time I saw one.
She was very nice.
She brought her boy with her.
His name was James.
Her name was Mrs. Korn.
That must be fun when you ride horses.
It was very nice having you, and your little boy,
James, over to the school:
Thank you very much. It was nice having you over. Lori Drews

Mrs. Korn told the 5th and 6th graders very, very interesting things.
I thought that it was so interesting
That I told my mom about it. Bonnie Desens

Poso! The Indians learn to swim
before they learn how to walk.
They learn to shoot a gun
When they are six years old.
I liked the suit you wore.
Did you learn to ride horses
When you were six years old? Tom McCartney

You ride a horse!
I know that, of course.
I know you fish.
You fish for trout.
But I don't know if you use a dish.
Indian children like cats and dogs,
But they probably would like pigs and hogs.
But Mom would say, "Out with the beast or this will be the end or the least."

---

[1]Collected by Cecelia J. Penass Korn and reproduced with her permission.

I think that's all I can say
Goodbye, so long, have a good day.
Thank you for coming, I liked it so much.
I wouldn't like anything better,
Neither from Poland or Dutch. Mike Bieszk

Poso! I think that the state government should let the Menominee Indians have their reservation back because they were not bugging us. I think you could have your reservation back because you could live the way you used to. Thank you. Lori Maurer