



**DILLA UNIVERSITY**

**SCHOOL OF GRADUATES STUDIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND HERITAGE MANAGEMENTS**

**A SURVEY OF YEM, SOUTHWESTERN ETHIOPIA**

**BY SILESHI TEKLE**

**DILLA, ETHIOPIA**

**August, 2020**

A SURVEY YEM HISTORY: SOUTHWESTERN ETHIOPIA.

BY

SILESHI TEKLE

ADVISOR

ASEBE REGASSA (PhD)

A Thesis presented to the school of Graduate Studies  
of Dilla University in partial Fulfilment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in History.

August 2020

Dilla University

School of Graduate Studies

A Survey of Yem History: Southwestern Ethiopia

By

Sileshi Tekle

College of Social Science and Humanities

Approved by Board of Examiners:

-----

-----

Advisor

-----

-----

Examiner

-----

-----

Examiners

Dilla University

Graduate programs office

This is to certify that the Thesis prepared by Sileshi Tekle entitled "A Survey of Yem History, SouthWestern Ethioiasubmitted in parital fuillfument for Degree of Master of Arts in History complie with the regulations of the university and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Signed by the Examining Committee:

Examiner \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Examiner: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Departement or Graduate Program coordinator

## **Acknowledgments**

The completion of this work has been made possible by the direct and indirect assistance and cooperation of many individuals and offices. My thanks go to all these individuals and offices. In particular, however, I am very grateful to Dr. Asebe Regassa, my advisor, for the guidance he has given me and for re-reading the drafts of this work. I would like to thank Dilla University for the sponsorship that made my graduate training possible. I am sincerely grateful to Dr. Abudu Mohammed Ali who helped me in the selection and development of the research topic.

I wish to extend my profound thanks to those institutions and offices where I had the opportunity to utilize. I am also very grateful to Ato Tekalign Hailu, a Head of Culture and Tourism Office of Yem Special Woreda, Ato Falke Wube, Wubeshet Gojam, to assistant data collectors (Ato Niguse Zebe, Mekonnen W/Yese,) and to my informants.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my brother Dinberu Tekle, my sisters Marta Tekle, Tsega Desalegn, my friends Getachu Gidi, Sisay Telku, Demalash Nigusa, Mathios G/Madihin, Kelemu W/Mariam for their material and moral support.

## **Preface**

The main aim of this thesis is to discuss the Yem history of southwestern Ethiopia; their survey of the study. Regarding the contents of the thesis, it has five chapters. The first chapter deals the human and physical setting the area. In this chapter the origin the Yem people, the nomenclature, the clan system the language, the population is discussed further.

The second chapter discusses about the political administration structure of Yem people. Under this, the customary rules and regulations governed and guided the local officials is discussed. Besides to this, the dynasties, the succession system, war and traditional defense system, the modern political history, the Italian occupation, the evacuation of Italian from Yem, is stated.

The third chapter is focus on Socio-cultural history of Yem people. In this chapter a way of solving social errors such as marriage and conflicts ,a way traditional trial and conflict resolution ,marriage system, weeding ceremony, commemoration and Funeral ceremony ,Traditional holiydays slavery and slave trade ,the occupational group ,marriage among occupational group, the Yerifo (blacksmith)is discussed.

The fourth chapter is deals is with relationship between Yem and neighboring states, the interaction between Jimma kingdoms

The fifth chapter dealsare with the reaction of the Yem people to the Italian aggression and its aftermath, the land tenure system, land and taxation system in during the reign of Emperor Haile Sillase I, is elaborated

## **Abstract**

Yem was one of the earliest kingdoms that are found in southwestern part of Ethiopian until its incorporation into the Ethiopian Empire in 1894. They were existed in the area between the Gibe River and the Omo River. They were pay tribute in horse to king Yesaqa (1412-1427).The economy of the kingdom is agriculture. The called themselve Yem (Yamma); their land was called Yangar and language called Yamsa. With the exception of Gama, Gémélo, Mowa, Fuga, Kamosh, Saoala and Kanishero, the rest clans were said to be indigenous. From this, Gama, Gemelo, and Mowa are formed their dynasties in the history of the kingdom. In Yem kingdom, unlike the Fuga, (tanners, potters and hunters) the Yirfo (blacksmith), woodworkers had least respect in the community. Due to this, the other people do not interested made marriage alliance and other social interaction with the Fuga. In Yem, the commiration and funeral ceremony is different based on the age, social, political role, hunting ability and war ability. *Amno* was the highest authority on both social and political life of the people. Mostly he carried several symbols of offices such as crown, gold armllets necklace and double headed spreads. Before the introduction of universal religions i`e Christianity and Islam, the people of Yem followed additional religion. The kingdom had good relationship with neighboring states with the exception of Jimma. On other hand, the first Italian force entered Yem through kumbi. During the five Years Italian occupation period, there were the sons of king (Amno) Gäbrä-Mädihin Bogibo. In addition to this, before the introduction of the new land measurement, in Yem, land was under the control of the *Amno* (king).It was that in 1942E.C (1949/50) that the first land measurement was conducted. The second land measurement in the area was conducted in 1948E.C. (1955/5).The third/last one was land measurement undertaken in 1960 E.C. (1967/68).

### **List of Acronyms**

CSO	Central statistical Office
EOC	Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity
SNNPR	Southern Nation Nationalities and People's Region
YPDM	Yem People's Democratic Movement

### **List of Figures**

Figure .1.Map of Yem special Warada-----	2
Figure .2.Gebete and Amcha (animal sacrificcation material) -----	16
Figure .3. Medanalem church-----	19
Figure .4.Zanso Megefiteria-----	23
Figure .5.Erected Stones-----	29
Figure.6. Angeri Palace-----	30
Figure .7.The traditional burial rite of elder men in Yem-----	50
Figuer .8.The celeberation of Hebo-----	52
Figure .9.Slave trapping material-----	56
Figure .10.Fitawurari Gabra Madihin-----	81

## Transliteration system

The seven sounds of the Ethiopian alphabet are represented as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> ለ =Lä

2<sup>nd</sup> ሉ =Lu

3<sup>rd</sup> ሊ =Li

4<sup>th</sup> ላ =La

5<sup>th</sup> ለ፡ =Lé

6<sup>th</sup> ለ፡፡ =Le

7<sup>th</sup> ሎ =Lo

### Example

የም =Yêṃ

ገብረመድኅን =Gäbrä-Mädihin

ጊቤ =Gibé

ምስሌ =Mislnäe

Palatalized sounds are represented as follows:

ቸ =Ča

ጥ =Ňa

ጃ =Jä

ገ፡ =Zhä

Example

Gětächāw

Grañ

Table of Contents	Page No
Acknowledgments.....	4
Preface.....	5
Abstract.....	6
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
1. GENERAL BACKGROUND.....	1
1.1 Human and physical Setting.....	1
1.2 Nomenclature of the Yem people.....	4
1.4 Clan system of Yem .....	9
1.5 The language of Yem people .....	11
1.6 Population size .....	13
1.7.1 Indigenous Religion among Yem people .....	14
1.7.3 Christianity .....	17
1.7.4 Islam .....	19
1.7.5 Protestantism .....	20
2. The political Administration Structure of Yem people.....	22
2.1. The Gama Dynasty.....	27
2.2 Gémélo Dynasty.....	28
2.3 Mowa dynasty .....	30
4. War and Traditional Defense System of Yem .....	34
5.1 Menelik Conquest .....	36
5.2 Yem during the Italian occupation of Ethiopian from 1936__1941).....	38
5.3 Evacuation of the Italians from Yem .....	41
CHAPTER THREE .....	42
3. Socio-Cultural History of Yem.....	42
3.1 Traditional Trial and Conflict resolution in Yem.....	43
3.3 Weeding in Yem people.....	48
3.4 Commemoration and Funeral Ceremony .....	49
3.6 Conflict resolution Mechanism .....	54
Yem cultural and Tourism office).....	57

3.8.1 The Fuga (potters and tanners) .....	57
3.8.2 Marriage among the Yem Fuga .....	60
4. The Yem and their neighbors.....	63
4.1. The relationship between Yem and the neighboring states up to 1894.....	63
4.2. The relationship between kingdom of Yem peoples and Jimma kindom .....	67
5. Yem history from Italian Occupation to 1974 .....	77
5.1 The response of the Yem people to the Italian Aggression and Its Aftermath .....	77
5.2 Adminstration of Yem in the post liberation period (1941-1974) .....	82
5.3 Land Tenure system in Yem in post_ liberation period .....	84
Conclusions.....	90
Referances.....	92
Pubulished sources.....	92
Unpublished Materials .....	94



## CHAPTER ONE

### 1. GENERAL BACKGROUND

#### 1.1 Human and physical Setting

The Yem are one of the earliest people of southwestern Ethiopia. They used to have their own kingdom, with an elaborate system of political and administrative structure and they claim that their kingdom extended to the west near town called Jiren (the seat of the Oromo kingdom of Jimma Abba Jiffar) and to Manna Karsa (in former the Limmu Aweraja)<sup>1</sup>. At present the Yem people are found in the southwestern Ethiopia and it is one of the four special districts of Southern Nations and Nationalities and People Regional states (SNNPR) in the present administrative arrangement. Before this rearrangement, Yem was under Gurage Zone. During the time of Imperial regime Yem was under Jimmia Awerja of Kaffa Takalay Gizat. The former administrative center of the area was Fofa that is located at distance of 273 km from Addis Ababa and 27 km from Addis Ababa- Jimmia highway nearest point. It is also located at distance of 527 km from Hawassa (SNNPR)<sup>2</sup>.

Fofa means Koso tree in Yamesa language (The language of Yem people). The name Saja was given by king Abba Jiffar II. During his journey to Addis Ababa for tributes payments looking his watch said saajaatera that means six o'clock local time in Affan Oromo which is equivalent of 12:00 A.M. Saja is located at distance of 273 km Addis Ababa down the highway to Jimma. According to some informants, the main factors that pushed changing, the site of district from Fofa to Saja was to create information accessibility as well as to promote the resource of districts for investors and interested groups. Why because the former capital Fofa is at hilly area 27 km away from main road to Addis Ababa<sup>3</sup>.

Yem special district shares boundary with Oromia regional states in the North and West, Gurage zone in the Northeast Hadiya zone in South and in the the Kambata east. It is located at 7°30'N and 8°27'N altitude and 27°20' E to 41°55' E longitudes. The special district covers a total area

---

<sup>1</sup> Akililu Yilma, Pilot survey of Bilingualism in Yem, SIL. International, 2002, p.3.

<sup>2</sup> Demeke, eta' I, ASketch of Yemsa Grammar, Hawassa, June, 2013, p.12.

<sup>3</sup> Milkyas Lamiso, *Ethno-History of Yem people*, Hawassa, July, 2017, p.9.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

of 724.55 square km. The surface configurations of Yem special district comprises mountains, ranges goes and deeps valleys (Tiffin's, 1965).The highest mountain peak is Bor Amor (Ama) which culminates about 2939 meter above sea level and lowest point is 100 meters below.<sup>4</sup>

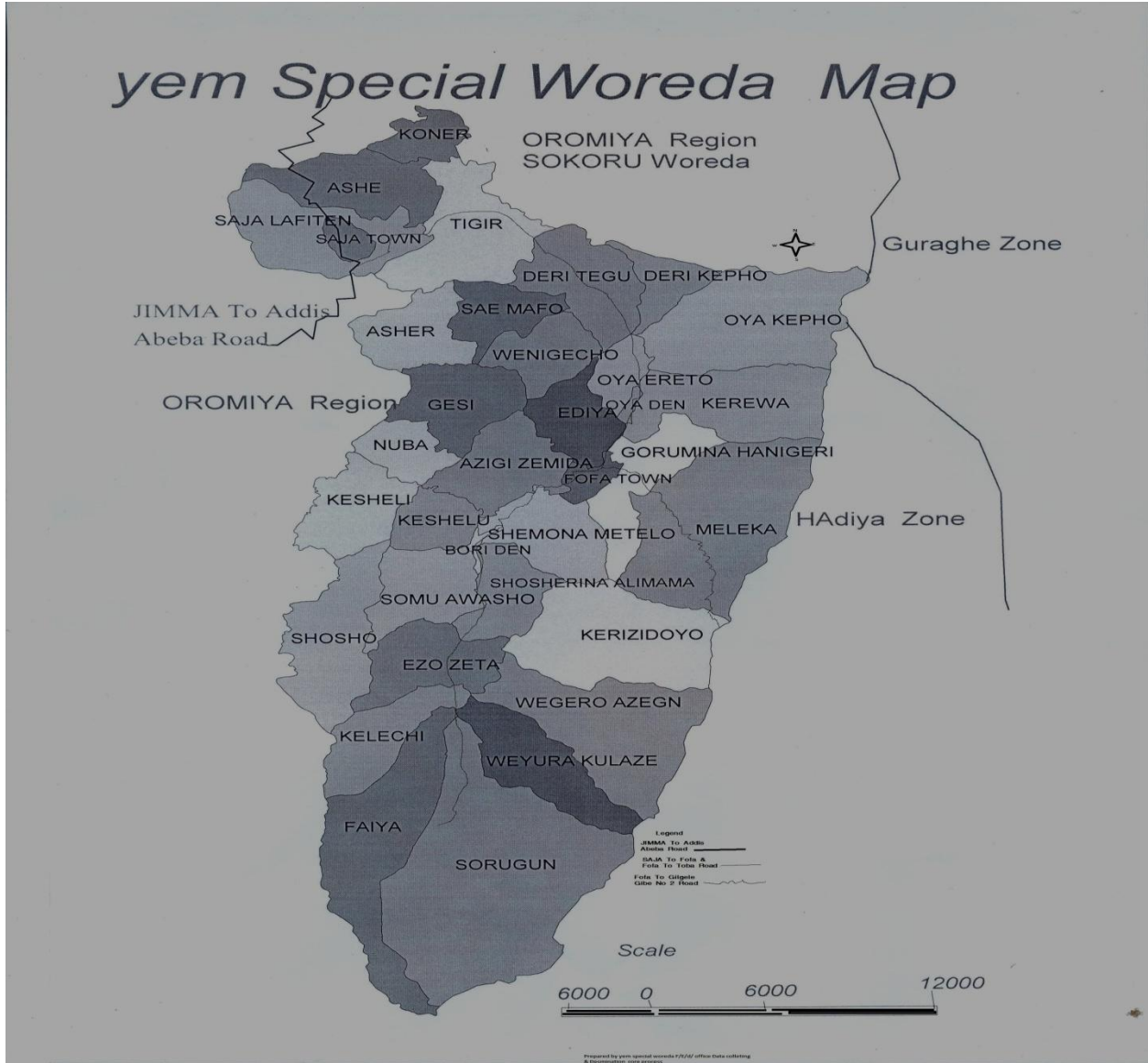


Figure.1. Map of Yem special worada (Source: From cultural and heritage management office)

The region is also rich in perennial rivers like Gibe, Gilgäl Gibe, Därbu, Ozewa, Kora and several other streams that feed these rivers<sup>5</sup>. In effects of varied surface configuration or

altitudinal variation , the special district experiences climatic Zones identified as“ agro-climatic zones ”that range from Bereha at the fingers of Gibe River to Dega zones on top of mountain a Bore Amor (Ama)<sup>6</sup>. The annual temperature of Yem is 20<sup>0</sup>cwhile the average annual rain fall ranges from 600-800mm. The land of Yem encompasses different climate zone’s. This enables different animals and plants to survive and human beings to settle and led stable way of life. Before 1950’s much of land of Yem was covered with natural vegetation and could be seen from the sum their remnants indigenous trees which in the compounds of the churches<sup>7</sup>. Accordingly in the Dega and Woyina Dega area trees like Juniper, Doqimma, and other plants are common. Likewise in Qalla areas trees like Acacia and Cactuses are prevalent<sup>8</sup>. However, vegetation covers the land is decreasing fast due the population growth, the effort of peoples who use mechanisms like reforestation, and afforestation on the land is found the way of rehabilitation<sup>9</sup>.

The economy of the kingdom was mainly dependent on agricultural economic activity. However; trade had also been contributing to developments of the area. The major types of crops produced by the society included enset (false banana), cereals, coffee, and perennial fruits like avocado, mango, coke, gishta, papaya, banana and orange, oil seeds, Niger seed sesame, peanut sunflower, linseed (telba) and rape seed, cotton, reed papaper, sugarcane, soya beans etc<sup>10</sup>. Among these Enset was a very important plant that largely consumed by the community mainly because of its drought resistance ability. Its sisal used to make carpet and sack<sup>11</sup>.

With regard to the territorial extent of Yem people in history, according to oral informants and some literature, before the arrival of the Oromo in the area particularly during the period of Mowa dynasty, the northern territorial limit of Yem extended up to present day Walkite town and its southern limit extended up to Bäda Buna<sup>12</sup>. Some other informants even claim that the western territorial limit of Yem before Oromo expansion extended up to the present Jimmia town. The other group of informants extended its southern territorial limit up to Gojab River<sup>13</sup>. In

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Demeke, et a'l ,*ASketch of Yemsa Grammar* ,Hawassa,June,2013,pp.13\_14.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> *Informant* Ato Niguse Zebe,May 12 2012.

<sup>13</sup> *Informant* Ato Gezaghen Rega May 4 2012.

addition to this, Wondemagen, Bizuayehu, Niuguse and eta'l in the distance past the Yem rulers administered a very large territory and the Yem people inhabited in a very wide area. But following the Oromo population movements those Yem who were not interested to lose their sovereignty retreated to their present location. Whereas, Oromo assimilated others<sup>14</sup>. Besides, according to Richard Pankhurst, the Yem people inhabited the area between the Gibe River in the west and the Omo River in the east<sup>15</sup>. Their staple food is *ensät*. The kingdom was largely isolated in early and later period. On the other hand because of political, economic and other historical changes a large number of Yem people inhabited outside the Yem land<sup>16</sup>.

## 1.2 Nomenclature of the Yem people

Regarding the nomenclature of Yem or Yamma, neighboring people gave their own derogatory (pejorative) names, which the ethnic group could not accept. In general, the derogatory name of Yem was "Janjero", which is considered as having Hamitic origin, was mostly used by non-members of the Yem (Yamma) ethnic groups<sup>17</sup>. In addition to this, most of the informants reported that for the non-members of the Yem the name of the people and language were called Janjero. However most Yem preferred to call themselves Yem or Yamma; their land was called Yangar and their language *Yämsa*<sup>18</sup>. On the other hand, regarding the origin the word Yem, there are groups that claim the word Yem comes from one of the strong and famous king of Gama dynasty called Tato Yamino<sup>19</sup>.

The original name of the people is called Yem or Yamma. It comes from the name Yemen; an Asian country where Yem people traced their origin. Various historians explain different ideas concerning to original land of the Yem people. Many historians agree that the original home land of Yem people Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Yemen. However, they did not state the exact period under their studies<sup>20</sup>. Some of the oral informants, it is stated that the population migration that

---

<sup>14</sup>Wondemagen eta'l, *Ya Yam Hizn Beherseb Tarik*, Yem special Woreda culture, Tourism and Government Communcation, March2004, pp.1-2.

<sup>15</sup>Richard Pankhurst, *State and Land in Ethiopia* Addis Ababa university, 1966, p.102.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>17</sup>Metiku Negash, *Legal System*, Vol.I. Far East Trading printing press, 2005, P.10.

<sup>18</sup>Informant Ato Gabra Silase, May 24 2012.

<sup>19</sup>Wondemagen eta'l, *Ye Yem Beherseb Tarik*, Yem special Woreda culture, Tourism and Government Communcation, March2004, pp.1-4.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid*

was caused by land pressure forced Yem to search unoccupied land leaving their land where previously. These people came to Ethiopia and settled along Gibe River. According to the local informants, the other groups of people were also arrived at the present time Yem territory from Gonder, northern part of Ethiopia<sup>21</sup>. According to some informants and literature, out of 200 and above clans in the kingdom of Yem clans like Soala, Kamoso, Kanshiro, Gama, Gemelo, Moa, and Fuga are said to have migrated to land from Gonder, Israel, Yemen, and Kambata. For example, according to Getachu Fulle, clans such as Kemoso, Soala, and Kanshiro comes from Kambata. Moreover Gama, Gè mè lo, Mowa and Fuga clans are reported to have originated from Israel, Yemen and Gondar<sup>22</sup>.

On the top this the members of these clans also claim that the founder of the three major dynasties (Gama, Gémélo, and Mowa) comes from Israel, Yemen, and Gondar through Gurage land the Gibé River. In order to strengthen the above claim oral informants told me the following story: among the migrants from Middle East to Yem there was a person called as Shék Dinbul Shéh Dinbul who came to the area through Yemen with his three brothers; Ahemed Negash, Shéh Baraka and Shéh Araj as well as his mother, soldiers, advisors and common people. When Sheh Dinbul and his men arrived at the present day Yem land with his soldiers, advisers, common peoples and his mother: Irri Sudan. Later Shek Dinbul declared war against the last ruler of Gama dynasty (tato Kilayno) and emerged victorious. During that period, some clans which fought against the forces of Shek Dinbul were Gama, Wasam, Yasam, Kanshero, Dichago and Wan. The war ended up with the victory of Shéh Dinbul and as a result, the territory of the last king of Gama dynasty became part of Shéh Dinbul's Empire. Finally, he secured his control of Yem land and formed the Muslim dynasty known as Gémélo<sup>23</sup>.

### **1.3 Origin of the Yem people**

According to some documents, Yem people came from Israel through Saudi Arabia (mainly Yemen) reached to Gonder and then arrived at Yem land crossing Gibe River via the direction of Gurage being under the leadership of Bäläwäld around 600 years ago. Their leader came to present day Yem land with his three brothers namely Wazam, Gulmasho, and Fuga –testo. Their

---

<sup>21</sup>Informant Ato Adamu Mamo, May 14, 2012.

<sup>22</sup> Getachu Fulle, *The kingdom of Janjerio. A Historical Survey to 1894*, B.A. Thesis, A.A.U., 1995, pp.46-59.

<sup>23</sup> Informant Niguse Zebe May, 24 2012.

were also his soldiers, advisors, and other common people. When Baläwäld and his servants arrived at Yem, the land was already occupied. These people were the part of Yemen and Saudi Arabia migrants who were early\_occupied Yem region under (Gémélo dynasty) was conquered and totally collapsed by Baläwäld and replaced by the Christian dynasty called the Mowa dynasty. Bälwäläd control the local peoples of Gemelo dynasty without any conflict. The residential house of the last king of the Gémélo Dynasty was situated at a place called *Tumtumi*, on the way to Angeri palace. A year later with the arrival of Balwäläd and his men, this king was passed. This event helped the successor, Mowa kings to legitimize their power with no resistance. Muslims were baptized by Balwäläd, who was the founding father of the Mowa dynasty and popular preacher of the Gospel. The Mowa dynasty continued its rule until it's conquer to total demise by the expanding army of emperor Menelik at end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The defeat of Abba Bogbo, the last king of the Mowa dynasty marked the termination of this dynasty and incorporation of Yem in to Menelik's Empire in 1894<sup>24</sup>.

Further more, history of Yem people is mentioned with ancient kingdom of Enariya in the book of YohanisWoldemariam entitled የዓለምታርክክጅኦግራፊያ on page 127-130. In this book it is explained that Yem people are from the Kam tribes. The Kam tribes came from Asia into Ethiopia. It was from 2787-2713 B.C. According to Yohanis, the people of Enaryia are from the Kam tribe. He expresses that the people of Enariya are living in the Southern margins of in Walayita, Sidama, Dawuro, Konta, and Amaro<sup>25</sup>. But later the predominance of Kam in Enaryia was replaced by the Youktan, a tribe that came to the area to area, from Arabia or Yemen. He added that before the arrival of the Oromo in the region territories such as Lokima, Jimma, Laka, Tribe, and Kaffa were administered by a king called Abel. The seat of this king in Enariya and his throne was made up of silver. Alaqa Taye also affirmed the above idea mentioned in book of YohanisWalda-mariam. He said that prior to the occupation of the region by the Oromo, it was under the control of vast kingdom called Enaryia ruled by king of king that of Yem<sup>26</sup>. Other sources also confirm that from antiquity until Yem land's incorporation in 1894 to the Ethiopian Empire, the Yem people had their own political, social, religious administrative organizations. In Yem Mansha was one of the rulers of Gama dynasty in about 220B.C and later in about 190 B.C

---

<sup>24</sup> Wondemagen eta'l, p.16.

<sup>25</sup> Yohanis Woldemaria, *Ya Alem Tarik ka geography gar*, pp.127-128.

<sup>26</sup> Alaqa Taye, *Ya Ethiopia Hizb Tarik*, 1914, p.132.

his son tatoYamino came to power. Most informants also associate the origin of the kingdom Yem with the name of this king tatoYamino. There are also material and non-material evidences that show the relationship of Yem and Israel. For instance, if we see the New Year called *Magor*, *Misa* and *Hebo* in both Hebrew Israel and Yemsa. *Magor* means super natural power of the earth and they call it *Gor*, *Magor* or *Samägor*. *Misa* means growth or developments. *Hebo* means a month of flower which is similar with the Amharic enkutatashe (mäskäräm 1, or September 11). The festival of this holiday in Yem began on mäskäräm16<sup>th</sup> (September 26) might and continued up to the end of the month<sup>27</sup>. Thus most sources origin of Yem people claim that except clans such as Gama, Gemelo, Mowa, Fuga, Kamoso, Sola, and Kanshero the other clans are said to be indigenous to the area. Along with this, clans such as Gama, Gémélo, and Mowa were the most dominant clans could administer the other clans in Yem to 1894<sup>28</sup>.

Linguistically, Yemsa language belongs to the Omotic family, which is grouped under Afro-Asiatic super family. However, the Yem people's early history is shrouded in obscurity and there are contradictory views about their origin. There are different suggestions about the Yem people. Some of them suggested that they are referred as one of the earliest Gona peoples in other as Sidama in the some of them stated that as pre- Semitic Hamites (Cushitic) and still in other as migrants from Semitic areas<sup>29</sup>.

Many historians agree that the original home lands of the Yem peoples as Yemen and Saudi Arabia. The other also stated that Yem people are indigenous people to their present day land who established their own political administration in the South western part of Ethiopia<sup>30</sup>.

Nevertheless, there is not exact time given to their occupation of the area they occupy today. Other sources relate them Yem with Qimant of the Gonder, who are said to have been pushed out during one of the wars of medieval period<sup>31</sup>.

---

<sup>27</sup>Wondemagegn eta'l, pp.17-29.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>30</sup> Mikeyas, p.15.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid*

The ethno-history of Yem people first mentioned in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century to the 13<sup>th</sup> century historical records of African scattered and opposing reference to Yem, they were often mentioned as ancient inhabitants of the horn of Africa or the most ancient people<sup>32</sup>.

The Yem had established a small kingdom at last by the 14th century was strongest and famous. Their tradition about state formation and the organization structure of their kingdom exhibit some similarities with that of Omotic kingdoms<sup>33</sup>.

According to different sources, the Yem were first mentioned in the victorious songs king of Yeshaqa (r, 1413-1430) of the Christian kingdom by the name “Zenjaro” in the c.1420. But the chronicler of the kingdom mentioned nothing about them except that starting that they were paying tribute in the form of horses<sup>34</sup>. In some sources, Yem were described as one of the principal representatives of people who reached their current inhabitants in the remotes ancient times and were often mentioned as one of the ancient pre-Oromo small Omotic kingdom. However, it is very difficult to establish as to how old this kingdom might have been Some scholars generalize the pattern of evolution of most of the pre-oromo people in southwest Ethiopia by stongly arguing in favor of the introduction of state consciousness in to these regions specifically the kingdom of the Yem through the agency of the the northern influence of the area around 1400. By doing so, they completely dismiss the possibility of internal evolution of political institutions. But many local sources and oral informants essentially emphasized the fact that event through it is very difficult to set the exact date, state formation began among the Yem as a result of internal dynamism. According to these sources, the northern conquerors, by any means, could no organization to the area be the nuclus of the Yem population or the to introduce the concept of political organization the area<sup>35</sup>.

In Yem kingdom succession to power was hereditary and in most cases orderly and peaceful. They had elaborate monarchical forms political and administrative system that was hierarchal

---

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>33</sup> Mitku Negash, p.9.

<sup>34</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ *Introduction to the Ethiopian History V.II*, Asemere University, 1983, p.82.

<sup>35</sup> Sahiu Zeben, *Yem and his culture*, Yem special woreda Culture Tourism, and Government Communication Affaires office, 2001, p.27.

organized. The independent existence of the kingdom of Yem ended with emperor Menilik's conquest in 1984 and then the kingdom was incorporated into the Ethiopian empire<sup>36</sup>.

#### 1.4 Clan system of Yem

When we see history of clan's origin, Yem nationality is the amalgamation of several clans gathered through time from various corners of the Middle East countries in Asia mainly from Yemen, Saudi Arabia, as well as Israel<sup>37</sup>.

Since immemorial times the Yem people have been living in family, clans, and nationality maintaining the ancient nomenclatures for different clans and groups in the area<sup>38</sup>. Around 150 B.C the Gemelo clan was dominant; several clans have arrived at Yem with Shéh Dinbul. Later on different clans were also coming to Yem lands under the leadership of Bäläwäld. He was born from the Mowa clan<sup>39</sup>. In Yem the most interesting clans naming are that the name given to anset species is based on clan's names. Due to this, the numbers of anset is almost equal to the members of clans in the area<sup>40</sup>. According to informants; the formation of various clans in Yem was caused by the computation acts started by the Gama clan. This began to exaggerate itself as its members mounted to thousands. This indicates how far the clan intended to be superior up the others. This event created a kind of numerical computation among the clans in Yem<sup>41</sup>. Consequently, the Mowa clan formed and incorporated with Yessu and Haáma clans and declared itself as thousands. The Gemelo clans on its turn allied with the Soala, Dichangu, Won and Tolo clans and declared clans from being absorbed by the dominant clans although it reduced the numbers of clans putting them under a single association known as Furi<sup>42</sup>. Furthermore, there is a tradition of naming villages and places after their clan's names and leader. According to local elders, there are above 380 clans. Each clan had its own appellation that was given on the economic activity of the clan; the physical appearance of the clan members; the origin of the founder of the clan and day\_ to \_day activity of the clan members<sup>43</sup>. However, currently only 224 clans are found in the special district of Yem. But, recently do to their number is diminished

---

<sup>36</sup> Mekonnen Woldeyese, p.36.

<sup>37</sup> Mikeyas, pp.18-19.

<sup>38</sup> Niguse Zeben, *Ya Abesha Masero*, DAF printings press PLC, p .33.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>41</sup> *Informant* Ato Haile Mariam Koyas, June 2, 2012.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>43</sup> *Informant*, Ato Neguse Zeben, may 14, 2012.

due to several reasons. The absorption of smaller clans by the big and strong ones through times; the assimilation of some clans into the Oromo during the Oromo population movement. Sometimes smaller clans agreed to unite in order to establish one strong clan mainly to get political and social acceptance<sup>44</sup>. *Furi* or merger of clan in to one party also contributed to both the reduction of the clans number as well as the absorption of clans. The successive wars with Abba Jiffar of Jimma and expanding army of Emperor Menelik were also other responsible factors for the complete disappearance of several clans either through death or dislocation<sup>45</sup>. In Yem, every clan had its own *Jiga* (clan leader). The *Jiga* were the highest administrative and decision making bodies in their respective clans. In addition to this, all clans had their own deities called *awas*. The mediator of clans and their *awas* was called *mag*<sup>46</sup>. On the other hand, there was social stratification among different clans of Yem. The nomenclature of the clans in Yem was based on following three major criteria;

1. Their economic activities and daily tasks
2. Their physical appearance such as being tall, short, fatty and thin.
3. The original place where the founding father of the clan has come from<sup>47</sup>.

According, clans like *Mowa*, *Gémél*, and *Gama* had more respect from the other clans of Yem. Because these, three clans had established three major dynasties in the area. On the other hand, there were clans such as the *Fuga* (tanners, potters, and hunters) which got the least regard in the Yem society<sup>48</sup>. Disappeared clans are *Charachaku*, *Gobetgoba*, *Misomisu*, *Kereayir*, *Sormasos*, *Kikus*, *Komukomu*, *Warwara*, *Mararo*, *Cheraw*, *Sharu*, *Gumadergumada*, *Amashuasha*, *Irin os*, *Dchino*, *Kilayno* etc<sup>49</sup>. Every higher economic, political and social benefit was being under the control of numerically superior clans and royal families. For example the *Gama* and the *Mowa* are larger clans and they rule the people in their reign because of they are majority in number. The people's acceptance is also another criterion for the clans to power<sup>50</sup>. The clans live

---

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>46</sup> Mikeyas, p.19-20.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>48</sup> *Informant Ato Adamu Mamo*, June, 4 2012.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>50</sup> *Informant Ato Tekle Mencho* June, 9 2012

in peace and there is mutual understanding among them leaving aside their internal problems, they would help each other in the time of conflict with the others<sup>51</sup>.

### **1.5 The language of Yem people**

At different times different scholars call Ethiopia a “mosaic of people” mainly because of the existence of various cultural, religious and ethnic groups in the country. Linguistically, the Ethiopian people are divided into four major language families: Semitic super families, that includes Ahmara, Tigra, Gurage, Harar; Cushitic super families are Affan Oromo, Somali, Afar, Agäw, Béja; Omotic super family include Yem, kaffa, Bench, Wälayita, and Nilo-Saharan super family are includes Añuak, Gumuz, Nuer, Majanger<sup>52</sup>.

The Omotic speaking peoples got their names simply because of their location on both sides of the Omo River. Situated exclusively in southwestern Ethiopia they have distinguished by two important features; the large scale cultivation of ensät/False banana/ and evolution of highly organized political<sup>53</sup>. These peoples are today found exclusively in southwestern part of Ethiopia. The native language of Yem people is Yemsa which is one of the Omotic languages. Many Yem people especially educated ones were not willingness of speak by their language using the Yamsa. Because they said that the term is almost with similar Amharic word female genital organ. However now this, attitude is changed. Although many Yem peoples speak Amharic and Affan Oromo, some also speak Gurage and Hadiya languages. There are also similarity between Yemsa and languages of surrounding states like Dawro, Kaffa, Wälayita, Oromo, Bench and Sheko languages<sup>54</sup>.

---

<sup>51</sup>Wondemagen eta'l, p.15.

<sup>52</sup>Milkyas, p.8.

<sup>53</sup> Bahiru Zewde, *A History of Ethiopia 1855-1974*, Addis Ababa University, 1992, p.18.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid*

**Table.1. Similarity between Yemsa and Affa Oromo**

No	Yamsa language	Affaoromo language	English language
1	Mamaka	Mamaka	Saying
2	Odu	Odu	News
3	Miera	Mirama	Violating right
4	Eto	Ittoo	Wet/souse
5	Ashamini	Ashamma	How are you
6	Akan	Akkam	Hi
7	Näga	Naggea	Peace
8	Kosa	Koosea	Comedy
9	Gamala	Gammala	The get of the door

Yemsa language is one of the endanger languages; however with the current introduction of self-administration had subsequent measures or efforts to promote and sustain the language it gaining the momentum of its growth<sup>55</sup>.

On the top of the above discussion, the Yemsa language; was basically divided into the major spoken forms. During usage there were words and sentences that were given by the society only for the royal family members, respected person in the community and ordinary people<sup>56</sup>. For instance specially words like *damta* (to say my lords), *otonigan* (to say go with respect and *bozonign* (to eat respect) were used for the group of royal family and no one was allowed to used it the ordinary person. In addition to this words such as *aginnua* (to say enter without respect) *hama* (to say go without respect) *diwa* (to say sit without respect) *mutigna* (to eat without respect) are ordinary peoples in the society<sup>57</sup>.

The Yem language, Yemsa, is spoken in Illubabor (formerly Kaffa), an administrative region in the south-west of Ethiopia. Historically the center of the Yem people was Fofa. At present the

<sup>55</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ *Shehu Meset*, Yem special woreda Culture Tourism, and Government Communication Affaires office, 2001, p.14.

<sup>56</sup> *Informant Ato Tekalien Hailu*, May, 17,2012.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>58</sup> Akiliu Yilma, p.3.

Yem live in different parts of Illubabor either mixed with the Oromo's in the same village or side by side in different villages within the same Wārāda. The only place where the Yem live isolated is Fofa, the original center of the Yem kingdom before Menelik's incorporation of the southern parts of Ethiopia<sup>58</sup>.

The Yem who live in Fofa and the adjacent areas are surrounded by Oromo speakers in the west, northwest and south; by Gurage speakers (Enner) in the east and north-east, and by Hadiya speakers in the south and south-east<sup>59</sup>.

### **1.6 Population size**

At different times different research literature tried to estimate the total number of population of Yem. Their number was not definitely known until recently as AkliluYilma states, Bender gives the estimates as 10000 (Bender 1976:4), where as the Ethnologies reports the figure of 1000-4000 speakers of Yemsa (Grimes, 1992:257).The reports of the central statistical offices gives the 1984 census figures of the Yem peoples 34,951 (central statistical offices, 1991:61) but this census seems to comprise only the Fofa area. According to 1994 national census reported 60,811 peoples lived in southern nation nationalities and people region of Yem special district. From this population number 59,581 lived around Fofa Town and 52,292 speakers of Yamsa language. The more recent 2007 national census reports that 160,447 were Yem from this 84,607 lived in Oromiya region<sup>60</sup>.

In the present survey the population was found that the earliest estimates were too small because they excluded that Yem person who lives in different areas of Illubabor (present Oromia area of Jimmia Zone). Beside to this the former Sokoru wārāda that included Sokoru town, Fofa, Saja, Dänāba a surrounding village. There are also considerable Yem peoples in the following wārādas<sup>61</sup>.

Deedoo wārāda. An area about 15 km from Jimmia town on the road to the Dawro area (Kullo) is populated, according to the Offices of the Yem People's Democratic Movements (YPDM) the population is 152,304 in 59 villages of Deedoo warada.

---

<sup>59</sup>*ibid*

<sup>60</sup>*ibid*

<sup>61</sup>*ibid*

<sup>62</sup>*ibid*

In addition to this in the Nada area adjacent to the DeedooWarada has an estimated number of 72,200 Yem who live in 26 Deedoo villages<sup>62</sup>.

Saka Wārāda. The Saka Warada is 18 km South of Jimmia town which is found on the main road of Mizan. There are about 34 villages with Yem lived. From this, Yem villages only inhabit 13 villages. The census of 1989 has registered 42 households in this district and 30,000 of them were found to be Yem. So it is estimated that there are about 150,000 Yem in Saka warada<sup>63</sup>.

Tiro Afata Wārāda was one of the districts of the former Gibe warada; there are about 42,600 Yem over 17 peasant associations<sup>64</sup>. In Manna wārāda there are 20 peasant associations, with a membership of about 17,000 Yem. Beside to this, there are also settlements with large numbers of Yem inhabitants. This includes, for instance, Dimtu (a village on the road to Jimmia, near Sokoru) includes Jimmia Town, and Kishe (45-50 km from Saka on the main road to Bonga)<sup>65</sup>.

The information given above probably is not as precise as it would be desirable - nor is it (!) - but on the basis of this new survey we conclude that the Yem population approximates 500,000. Many of the Yem are followers of Christian religion. About 80% of them are orthodox Christians whereas 5% of them are protestants. The people who follow Islam religion are about 15%<sup>66</sup>.

## 1.7 Social institution

### 1.7.1 Indigenous Religion among Yem people

Before the introduction and expansion of universal religion i.e. Christianity and Islam the Yem people followed traditional religion. In Yem each clan had their own deity (*awas*). But some time two or more clans might have similar deity (*awas*). In Yem events if each clan had its own deity the supreme one was *Hawo*<sup>67</sup>. In addition to this, the people of Yem believe in the existence of bad spirit called *kita*. Because of this, mostly they threw away to the ground some amount of

---

<sup>63</sup> *Informant* Julase Fita, Malkam Tadase May 4, 2012

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>66</sup> *Informant* Ato Malkam Tadase, June, 15 2012.

<sup>67</sup> Mekonnen Woldyese, p.61.

their food for kita (bad spirit) before they ate it<sup>68</sup>. In Yem there were two wildly worshiped gods in earliest time in Yem. They were *Dono Kam* (the sky god) and *Da Kam* (the earth god). In the former times many Yem gives ritual sacrifices for *Dano Kam* and *Da Kam* to protect themselves from Tender, Ice accidents, hurricane, lighting, landslides, drought, flood, disease, war, and other natural and manmade calamities<sup>69</sup>.The people present their sacrifices to *Dono Kam* at the selective worshiped sites such as to of mountains, the shores of rivers, hills, etc. because in the Yem culture, the mountains are believed to be close to sky god<sup>70</sup>. However later these practices were vanished because of intensification of universal religious teachings and other social, political and cultural changes in the area<sup>71</sup>.The word *Dono Kam* is derived from two Yemsa words Da, meaning earth and Kam which means god.Thus Da Kam means the earth god, Yem people believed in *Da Kam* as it would have them from any accidents of related to the earth<sup>72</sup>. For instance, *Da Kam* protects their animals from being hunted by aggressive wild animals, keep their crops from any danger, save their family form endemic diseases war and keep themselves and their animals from hunters aquatic animals like crocodile and Hippocampus that came from the Gibé River.The Yem people present sacrifices for both *DoKam* and *DaKamin* different places namely *Sheshokam* (along the Gibe river) *Zegdakam*, *DariKam*,*KulmemKam*,*KamMofa*, *Balkam*, *WegazKam*,*Akancha Kam*, *KnerKam Saja Kam* etc<sup>73</sup>.

### 1.7.2 Ritual practices of Traditional Religion

According to Hunting Ford, the traditional practices of Yem people were so strange and barbarous which were very difficult to think in other places. Some of these stranger customs were follows in Yem there was human sacrifices during the death and the coronation of a king. For example, when a king died those who have been serving him was beheaded<sup>74</sup>.The Yem people believed in the life after death.Those servants were through to serve the king in the hereafter world.When a king came to power, those suffered from leprosy and ring warm were beheaded on the Shore of Gibe River for crocodiles. But later his human sacrifices in Yem were

---

<sup>68</sup>*Milkayas Lamiso, p.62.*

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>70</sup>*Informant, Ato Hailemariam Koyas, May ,12,2012.*

<sup>71</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>74</sup> *Mikeyas, pp.60-62.*

replaced by animals sacrifice. There was tradition of worshipping crocodile as god in Yem in the early times<sup>75</sup>. Violating any societal laws led to punishment for instance, if a given girl dwells in her father's house during her menstruation period and if son enters into his father's house after committing sexual intercourse and without staying three days, it causes unexpected danger upon that family, such king s of sins should be forgiven animals sacrifices to crocodile<sup>76</sup>. The cultural performer (*mag*) or bishop presents sacrifices to god (crocodile) on behalf of the sinner. The Calf would be slaughter and its meat is divided in to half (equal) parts. Half of meat would be put on the *Gebte* (Gebete) to give to be crocodile<sup>77</sup>. The *Mag* makes prayer called “*nono*” calling the crocodile to meat came and takes its share. The remaining half of the meat will put on “*Amcha*” (tool made of iron) and tried in the fire until its smokes to sky god<sup>78</sup>.



Figure.2. Source :( from Yem specia woarda cultural and heritage managemental office (Gebete) or the material made of wood that is used by Yem to supply animal sacrifices to Crocodile and Amcha (iron tools)

There is also another bad practice in Yem. If a man was injured in a war, his relatives were expected to kill him if his relatives failed to do so, his closest friends was expected to kill him.

<sup>75</sup> Informant, Ato Gebre Mecheal, May 14, 2012.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*

This was done to prevent from being said killed in the hands of the enemy<sup>79</sup>. Moreover, the Yem people also believed that the *Zawataki Zawa* (a heavy and huge python) had already mounted a high mountain called Bor Amor. If one day that a huge python come out of the mountain; it would be the end of this world. Moreover, when earth quakes happened in the district, the people of that surrounding used to associate it with the movement of this huge python (snakes god) in side mount Bor Amar<sup>80</sup>.

Consequently, the people gave different kinds of sacrifice to prevent the python not to come out the mountain. On the top of this mountain, in Yem when a king died all the material he used as well as his palace would be burnt in to ashes and the new king was expected to build his own palace<sup>81</sup>. Regarding human sacrifice, if stranger or non-member of the Yem community found in Gibé valley, on he was beheaded and given to crocodiles. This was mainly because of the believe of the, scarification of non Yem would cause boom and other production in Gibe valley<sup>82</sup>. Besides to this, on the top of mountain Bor there is a tall metal post, which erected during time immemorial and used to serve as escalator for deities (awas). The people of the area beheaded that if the tall metal pillar would fall down; it would hit and broke the Bor Mountain that its turn would cause huge devastation in the area<sup>83</sup>.

### 1.7.3 Christianity

Before the introduction of monoltheistic religion such as Christianity and Islam, Yem peoples were the followers of the traditional religion. Regarding the introduction of Christianity the Yem people claim that it was in the 11<sup>th</sup> century that some religious preachers to came to Yem to preach Christianity. But the people of Yem violated opposed these religious figures and forced them evacuate from the area<sup>84</sup>. This was mainly because the people of Yem were much more interested in defending their traditional religion. Other sources also state that Christianity was introduced in to Yem kingdom in the 13<sup>th</sup> century after the restoration of the so-called

---

<sup>79</sup> *Informant*, Ato Ramso Kiyas, Silasie, June, 8, 2012.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>84</sup> Mikeyas, p.63.

Solomonic dynasty in 1270. AbbuneTekle Hymanot has played a vital role in preaching Christianity into Walayita, Dawro, and Yem<sup>85</sup>

A person called Bäläwäld (the founder of mowa dynasty) introduced Christianity in the area. As result, many people in Yem were converted to Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity (OEC) and it is believed that Christianity was introduced to Yem for the first Christian king by the person called Bäläwäld. In addition, Bäläwäld (Balakam) was the first Christian king in the history of the kingdom<sup>86</sup>.

Thus the Christianity become dominant and widely religion in Yem until the 16th century. On the other hand in the first half the 16<sup>th</sup> century the rulers of the Christian highland kingdom and sultanate of Adal were repeated confrontation to trade route and fertile land. This confrontation reached its height during the Imam Ahmed Ibn Ibrahim Algazi or more popularly called in Ethiopian history Gragn<sup>87</sup>. Following his coming to power as a leader of the sultanate of Adal, he emerged victorious against the Christian high land kingdom and expanded his administration to the north and southern parts of Ethiopia. One of the victorious of Gragn's southern parts Ethiopia away Yem<sup>88</sup>. He invaded the Yem kingdom and destroyed so many materials of churches included Tsilats and burned several churches in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This period, brought gap people largely returned to their former traditional religious beliefs and practice<sup>89</sup>. However, Christianity was reintroduced in to Yem by Fitawari Gäbrä- Medihin Bogbo/Gérano/ in 1888. He brought the two Tsilats to Yem: St. Georgis church and Medhanalem from Addis Ababa. St. Georgis church the earliest church in Yem was constructed at Angri inside residence of Fitawari Gäbrä Mädihin Bogbo for royal family and palace members. But following the death of Fitawari Gäbrä Mädihin in 1956 Giorgis church was brought to place called Mafo an area which is found between Sokoru and Saja by a person called Grazmach Abba Sura Abba Gäwisa<sup>90</sup>

Fofa Madhanalem church was established in 1888 with the efforts of Fitawari Gabra Madihin Bogibo. On the place where earliest indigenous religion (Don Kam) was worship. For instance,

---

<sup>85</sup> Wondemagen et'al ,pp.131-132.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>87</sup> Mekonnen, p.57-58.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>89</sup> Mikayas, pp.63-64

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*

Bishop Gebra Hiwot, Aleka Hawez, and Memhir Wolde Mariam were brought to Yem by Fitawrari Gebra Medhin to facilitate the church<sup>91</sup>.



Figure.3. (Former Church of Medanalem from Madanalem church)

#### 1.7.4 Islam

Although the Orthodox Christianity is dominant religion some, followers of Islam have existed in Yem<sup>92</sup>. According to informants Islam was introduced in to Yem during the arrival of Shék Dinbul and his followers in to Yem. This person came to the area from Yemen through Gondar land crossing the Gibe River together with his soldiers and political advisers. After arrival, he established the Gémélo dynasty by removing the Halmam Gama dynasty<sup>91</sup>

On the top of this, Wandemagen, et al claim Islam was introduced for the first time to Yem from the neighboring states of Hadyia sultanates in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. But most of sources indicate that Islam largely spread in Yem beginning from the mid of 19<sup>th</sup> century, particularly following the represented invasion of the area by Abba Jiffar I and Abba Jiffar II. In 1964 from the total population one-third were the follower's Islamic religion and according to the 1987 census

---

<sup>91</sup>Informant Obo Abba Kider Abba Oli, April 23 2012.

from the whole population of Yem that inhabited in the special district 25 percent registered as Muslims<sup>92</sup>.

### **1.7.5 Protestantism**

According to some informants Protestantism was introduced to Yem by German and America missionaries that come to the area under the banner of establishing primary school in the Saja town. The name of the school which these missionaries opened at the time was Sudan Interior mission<sup>93</sup>. So missionary society that opened a school at Saja tried to expand Protestantism in Yem. In addition, in these early days the missionary opened a health center Saja town. However the Protestants were discouraged and finally destroyed by military rule of Derge and eventually revived after the down fall of the Derge regime in 1991<sup>94</sup>.

Then they began indoctrination of students and some individuals who went to get health service in the clinic. The other strategy that missionary used to expand the religion was using students as preachers of community. The paid students preachers a monthly salary of 20 birr and other incentives. The missionaries taught the local community by using documentary films<sup>95</sup>. In the geographical domination of Yem special wäräda, the first protestant church was built in Saja in 1954. Then protestant religion expanded out of Saja to various areas. Text to, Saja protestant religion was expand into a place called Wargo, which is 13kms from Saja town, then to Ganata, Mafo had been expanded<sup>96</sup>. During the time, protestant religion could not enter Fofa town at the beginning. Because, the town was inhabited by fanatic Orthodox Christians, political and local leaders who violently threatened the preachers and followers of the religion. As result, there was no protestant church and burial site for protestant in the town. However, now these problems are cast out the protestant had got church and burial site in the town<sup>97</sup>.

---

<sup>92</sup> Mikyase, p.64.

<sup>93</sup> *Informant*, Ato Mezmure Kebede June, 4 2012

<sup>94</sup> Milkayas, p.66.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid*

## 1.8 Economic activities of Yem

Agriculture is one of the dominant economic activities in Yem people. They largely dependent on agriculture activity (crop production and animal husbandry)<sup>98</sup>. However trade and craft (mainly related with metal and waving) also had significant share in economy of the people. For along in the 19<sup>th</sup> century distance trade, the kingdom of Yem gave protection for the long distance caravan traders and in return collected tax posts. The groups who were responsible for collecting tax at custom posts in Yem were eashas (province governors) and gagna (administrators of community) in their respective administrates region<sup>99</sup>. The economic activity of Yem people is largely depending on the strength and weakness of kings (amno). That means when strong and powerful kings (amno) came in to power, the economic activities and trade of the kingdom will be developed. The opposite is true of weak king (amno). The other factor that affected the economic activities of Yem was peace and stability of the area as well natural dangerous such as drought<sup>100</sup>. Trade activities of Yem included both internal and external trade. The domestic trade is carried out by bartering system, mainly to get agriculture and craft products of the day today activities, where as external (long distance) trade, the Yem people actively participated in west-east direction which crossed area Jirén, Säqa, Sodo, Harar, and Deri (Boke) market in Yem, to the outlet of Zeila and Berbera ports. Top of this, the north-south direction passed through different market such as Bonga Jirén, Säqa, Deri (Boke) market in Yem, Assändabo, Basso, Gondär, Adäwa, Asemära, and ended in the port of Massawa. Deri (Boke) market was the largest and historical market in Yem<sup>101</sup>. According to Ato Mekonnen, there were Yem people who involved in trade of castor plant (a kind of tree the seeds of which has oil) up to Middle East<sup>102</sup>. In the long distance trade caravan trading goods which were exported from Yem consisted of ivory, skin, and hides, civet, tiger skin, castor plant, and so on. In return the local people got salt bar (amole chew) beads, cloth, different kinds of ornaments etc. During this time the medium of exchange is salt bar (amole) Mari Theresa thalers were the common one<sup>103</sup>. In the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, trade in slaves became one of the most lucrative trading activities in the county. The

---

<sup>98</sup> Sahiu Zeben, *Yem and his culture*, Yem special woreda Culture Tourism, and Government Communication Affaires office, 2001, pp.58-61.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>101</sup> *Informant*, Ato Mekonnen Woldyese, June, 12, 2012.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid*

source of long distance trade is southwestern part Ethiopia in general and Yem in particular. In Yem slave trade is cheaper price. However later with decline of the kingdom and the shrinking of its territory, the long distance caravan trade began to decline in Yem<sup>104</sup>. Due to this, the most local and long distance traders in the area returned to agricultural activities. This was the case particularly after the taking of Bädi folla first by Limmu Enariya and later Jimma. Due to this, long distance trade activity in Yem began to decline. Because according to informants; the long distance trade line to Yem came through Bädi folla. Consequently, the taking of Bädi folla limited the external trade activity of between Yem and Shewa<sup>105</sup>.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. The political Administration Structure of Yem people

The Yem people had elaborated political administrative structure, which was hieratically organized. A set of customary rules and regulations governed and guided the local officials. At the top of the pyramid administrative structure there was *Amno (Kemni)* or Tato which literally means a king. He was widely believed to be the main carrier of the spirits of founding fathers. His welfare was equated with the welfare of the entire people. Due to this; sacrifices were made for the gratification of his spirit. This entire people were subservient to his blessed position and could not see his face. According to this he was the most dignified figure in the kingdom. This means he was the owner of all peoples and land of the kingdom. He was the most powerful and highest political title in Yem politics: *Amno* was usually appointed from the Gama and Mowa clans because: these are two dominant clans in Yem<sup>106</sup>.

In Yem kings carried several symbols of office (crown, gold armlets, bracelets, necklaces and double headed spears) that differentiated him from the common people. They live in a big enclosed area surrounded by three circles of fences each with many gates defended by guards armed with spears and administered by *Tunta erasho* (court administrator). In the area, there was a belief that if the king had not gone out of this house before sun rise, he could not go out be

---

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>106</sup> Milkayas Lamiso, *Ethno-History of Yem people*, Southern Nations Nationalities and peoples Regional state Bureau of Culture and Tourism, 2017, p.22.

by two stars at the same time<sup>107</sup>. Formerly kings did not sit on a carpet in their palace. But later kings issued decrees from an elevated platform located in front of royal residence. At last once in one week he gives judgment with *Astèsärs* (standing below at the foot of the platform).The worst crime would be judged by being throwing meter to the cliff called *Zanso* / (it is widely known as the *Zanso Gansu/Zanso* punishment).It is 70 hight.

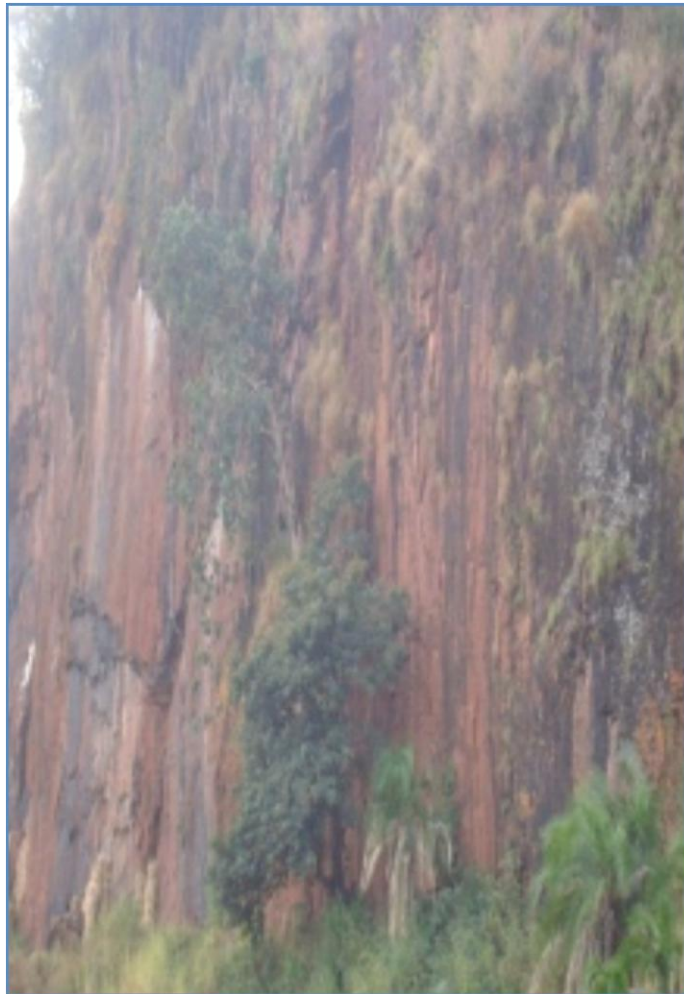


Figure.4. (source Yem special worada cultural and heritage management office)

Zanso Megefteria (The worst crime would be judged by being thrown to the cliff)

---

<sup>107</sup> Ibid

Traditionally it was strong and strict in its measures. Every decision and command made by the king must be accomplished within a short time it would be punishable. That of disloyalty and disobedience to the period of time unless king was very dangerous to ordinary people, because any disobedient person up king was unkindly through down into the deepest cliff known as *Zanso*. This gorge consumed enormous lives in the order carelessly and brutally for a period of time *Amno*<sup>108</sup>.

Next to the Amno (king) there were the Astèsärs (the council of 12) who chosen from the prestigious clans. This body of states was the second powerful political structure next to Amno (Tato) and it was to control political authority of the Tato. The Head of Astèsärs was waso elected mostly from the Gemelo clan. Astèsärs worked side by side with the king. Every political decision made by king was never practically applied without the knowledge of the Astèsärs because they were the representatives of the twelve (12) large clans in Yem<sup>109</sup>. This twelve (12) main clans that had the right to represented in the Astèsärs are the Gè mè lo, Gama, Soala, Mowa, Kalamigno, Akmam, Hama, Gazew, Kanshshro, Kankenu, Kalmum and Gazi. The first five consecutive Astèsärs had higher power compared to the remain seven ones. They had to make decisive political decisions independently. *Nantèsärs* are the third traditional political structure in Yem. It is the council of people's representatives. Every clan had their say in the political affairs through their Nantèsärs<sup>110</sup>. It was responsible on the matters that had relation with defense or it is almost similar with the current defense minister. *Fantèsär* a council was responsible on the matters such as economy and wealth. *Funtèsär* a council which was responsible to predict the future fears of a king and its people. In general the council of *Mentèsärs*, *tantèsär*, *tuntèsär* and *flanèsär* were led the council of Astèsär<sup>111</sup>. In Yem Amno's last son would be elected as the heir by the Astèsärs (council of Advisors). After he elected by the Astèsärs, the success would be taken to very dark Jungle area known as *Gabno* to be examined whether he is the right man to power or not. The examination is carried out by Tiger. If he was legitimate to power, a Tiger will visit him appearing in front of the man. If not a Tiger would never appear to the place where the prince sits. This process is usually worked by *Gabno Mag* and Angeri Tato. After the end of

---

<sup>108</sup> Ibid

<sup>109</sup> Wandemagen eta'l, *Ye Yem Bereseb Tarik*, Yem Special wareda culture, Tourism, and Government Communication Affairs Office, 2004, p.35-36.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid

<sup>111</sup> *Informant*, Ato, Demuise Degafa, May, 14, 2012.

this, process the success of would get Zakner, at a burial place of Yem kings. Then, he was got Tiphazawa, how land area along the Gibe River to was his body with holy hot spring, Known as Hora<sup>112</sup>. According to the tradition of Yem people this hot spring purified after washed with Hora hot spring. When he return back from Tiphazawa, women would wait for him gathering at the street to welcome the king extraordinary. The waiting women would receive him expressing their honor to their king saying Amno or king. This event brought that is the end of ever process that is carried out to fulfill the coronation criteria. After this everybody calls him highest in his title known as Amno. After all processes ended, the king is allowed to enter in to palace to locate at Angeri a place (about 3kms from Fofa town from the former capital of Yem special district. The king was vested with the lifetime power<sup>113</sup>.

In traditional administration of Yem kingdom there was also hierarchy called *erasho*. They were provincial governor with in the territory of Yem. *Erasho* had the right to assign *gagna* (district chiefs). The power of *gagna* is lower than *erasho* but higher than *Nasin gagna* (sub-district chiefs) *gurmu* (serve as adviser of *gagna* and mediator between *gagna* and *erasho*)<sup>114</sup>.

The *erasho* were elected from any clan with exception *Fuga* occupational groups. The number of *erasho* was not fixed. This is because the number of provinces itself was not constant sometimes it would be fourteen or less and at other times it would be sixteen or more. They were appointed by the king in consultation with the *Astèsärs*. They represented to the king in each province. They were well known people whose skill in warfare was recognized. This was the main factor by which they were recruited. Their ability and skill in administration, their honesty and loyalist to the king were studied before their appointments<sup>115</sup>.

Besides to above, *Erashos* were also responsible for peace and security and had to make sure their respective areas and frontiers were safe and secured. They looked important preparations such as collections of weapons, digging concentric ditches (*gudba*) and connecting with natural physical features like mountain cliffs, gorges, etc. On the fronted through which the Yem territory was often attacked by the neighbor. In their middle of the kingdom around Briten Bitä,

---

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid*

they erected a very long wooden or iron pillar with the height of Fifty meters<sup>116</sup>. The *Erashos* without waiting orders from above could take urgent action against enemy's advance if necessary by mobilizing all their able-bodied citizens. Since they grew practicing wars the Yem youth learned tactics of defense. Most Yem courageous alert and could easily throw down spears or even blocks of stones on the enemy from top of mountains<sup>117</sup>.

They rarely missed their targets and easily escaped spears thrown from enemy. It was shameful for the Yem to fall into enemy's hands. They did not hesitate to fight and die. They would prefer to kill their fell friends would in warfare in order to kill by enemy<sup>118</sup>.

The *erashos* also waged annually planned raids against their hostile neighbors like Maru, Botor, Bacho, Bujo, Agola, Nonno, Limmu, Gomma, Jimma, Gera, and Kaffa. Erashos failure in such expansion resulted in their automatic dismissal from their positions losing the privileges they used to enjoy. If they were successful and came back with huge needs of cattle's, they rewarded with spars. The looted cattle's were kept at a place like *Anfel, Arigada, Tigit, Wogw, Asonyaenat* and *Atumsi* mostly considered as state property<sup>119</sup>.

Beyond to *erasho* there were district chiefs known as *gagna*, who assigned by *erasho* and acted as their representatives in each village. Orders from Amno went down to the *gagna* and the vice versa were carried through special messengers called *wasi*. In addition to the above officials there were clan elders. For instance *jiga* or sometimes *Tato*. They were expected as the most senior individuals and assisted the Yem administration. They give great effaces on the safety of all members of the respective clans as close advisors and their advice was often taken from granted<sup>120</sup>. They were active in resolving quarrels and disputes among clan members. When clans came into mistake the concerned *tato* tried to resolve the problem before it reported to the *erashos*, the *astèsär* or the *Amno*. The *tatos* were very important in spiritual affairs and acted as important priests. In secular roles the *tatos* performed religious functions through their religious

---

<sup>116</sup> Sahile Zebe, *Yem and his culture*, Yem Special wareda culture, Tourism, and Government Communication Affairs Office, 2000, pp. 28-29.

<sup>117</sup> Wandemagen eta' I, p. 37.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>121</sup> Milkas, pp. 23-25.

messengers in each village called *Mag*<sup>121</sup>. The Soala clan tato or Jiga used to give decree to the kings during coronation and was considered as top tato in religious issue since he was in charge of *Shashakam*, the most important deity next to Balam<sup>122</sup>. In addition to this, the Yem people had their own political stratification. This social stratification political stratification grew between the dominant and marginalized groups. In Yem power transferred genealogically. As the result of this; Yem people had their own way of coronation system of their kings. Title like the peoples of kaffa, the Yem peoples also used the title of tato for their kings and clan leaders. The Yem people used the title *Amno* only for the kings *Eno* for the Queen. Here are the Yem political structure forms.

*Amno (Tato)*\_\_\_\_*Asteser*\_\_\_\_*Nantesar*\_\_\_\_ *Togo*\_\_\_\_*Jiga*\_\_\_\_*Shani*\_\_\_\_*Nassi gagayn*  
 \_\_\_\_\_Common people

## 2.1. The Gama Dynasty

For the long period of time the society of Yem was rule under the monarchical system in south west Ethiopia and served a seat for Enarya empire since 16<sup>th</sup> century. From the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century society of Yem was ruled by the dynasty of three clans. They were as follows: As informants stated that it was the earliest dynasty in the Yem. In addition to this some written sources stated that the earliest kings of the Yem belonged to the indigenous Halmam Gama dynasty. The king of this dynasty had a political little known as Tato. The king used to wear his Mantle or Kaabba made of gold to show his power<sup>123</sup>.

The royal residence site (*tunta*) of this dynasty was reported to be Dari kam near Oya, a few miles to North of Fofa at a place called *Zimarma*. It is not known how long had lasted this dynasty. However, later the Gama dynasty was removed by Gemelo dynasty and the capital was changed in to *Kanfocha*. It was 1.5 kms far from Fofa town. This dynasty had twelve administrative entities and the seat of the central administration regions and the site of central government was a place called *Zimarma* which is located near Fofa town<sup>124</sup>. The king of these dynasties was elected from the Tunta-Gama sub-clans. These kings were Tata Oyano, Tato Yemuno,

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>123</sup> Informant, Ato Gezaghan Gega, May 14, 2012.

<sup>124</sup> Mekonnen Waldyese, *Zoka Ye Yem Hezbi Tarik*, Addis Ababa, 2011, p.40.

Tato, Keshawn Tato Garfawno, Tato Gamno, Tato Yekkino, Tato Widakaino, Tato Lirano, Tato Duchino and Tato Kilayno. From this Tato Kilayno was the last king of Gama dynasty<sup>125</sup>.

As stated above the Gama dynasty had twelve administrative entities and each of them had their own governors. These were only elected from the twelve sub-clans of the Gama clan namely *Azig-Gama, Korum Gama, Fagagu Gama, Gere Gama, Kazo Gama, Feto Gama, Nara Gama* and *Tun Gama* are the same of the major clans under Gama dynasty. The kings of Gama were elected from Tun-Gama clan. Finally during Gama all political and administrative power was delegated only for the members of Gama sub-clans<sup>126</sup>.

## 2.2 Gémélo Dynasty

According to oral informants the last ruler of Gama dynasty, Tato Kilayno, lost his power by forces of the founder of Gémélo dynasty. There is a belief in Yem that the grandfather of the founder of the Gémélo dynasty (Shék Dinbul) came from Yemen and settled in Gondar. Then the descendants of this group came to Yem via Gurage land crossing Gibe River under the leadership of Shék Dinbul. The founder of this dynasty, Shék Dinbul came to Yem together with three brothers (Shék Mohammed, Shék Sairaj and Bäräka), his mother (Iri Sudan), his army and advisers. After removing the last ruler of Gama dynasty (Tato Kilayno) Shék Dinbul declared himself the first of Gémélo dynasty<sup>127</sup>.

The political center of the dynasty was a place called Kanfucha, an area which was found at the back of the present Fofa Madhan Alem church in Fofa town. During this time ritual sacrifices for different deities were outlawed and the people of the Yem accepted Islam<sup>128</sup>.

According to the oral narration of local elders, Shék Dinbul exercised his unlimited efforts to Islamize the local people of Yem and he ruled the people according to Islamic laws. The reign of Shék Dinbul was witnessed by the progress of architectural, metal and pottery works and the Kingdom of Yem reached its highest peak in economic development<sup>129</sup>.

---

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>127</sup> Informant Ato Tekalign Hailu May 14, 2012

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>129</sup> Mekonnen, p.41-44.

In order to commemorate their contribution the Yem people erect stone monuments during the death of prominent individuals mainly on their tomb. For instance until today a place called Mélisä which is believed to be the burial place of Shék Dinbul and other known persons of the period, there are a number of erected stones. The highest of erected stone the tallest one is about three meters and the shortest is about six centimeters long<sup>130</sup>.



Figure .1.Mélisä erected stones.



Figure.2. Zofkar erected stone

Figure.5. Erected stones of Mélisä the burial palace of shék Dunbul and other known personals of that period (from Yem cultural and heritage management office)

The Gémélo dynasty legitimized its power continued to rule the Yem people until it's finally decline by the strong expanding army of Baläwäld in the 13<sup>th</sup> century<sup>131</sup>.

---

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>130</sup> Wondemagen eta'l , pp.34-35.

### 2.3 Mowa dynasty

According to the oral informants, Baläwäld, who was the founder of Mowa dynasty, which came to Yem through the Gurage land crossing Gibe River together with his army political advisers, religious leaders and 44 tabots. After arrival of Baläwäld and his groups settled at a place called Balamo an area which is currently located to the North of Fofa town under the leadership of Baläwäld Mawa dynasty replaced the Gémélo dynasty and Baläwäld became the first king of the new dynasty. It was the last dynasty that was founded by Balewold in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. He and his followers came from Gondar. Baläwäld was born in Gondar: his earliest ancestors however came from Yemen. Balewold had a Christian back ground and he brought about forty-four arc of covenant (44) or Tabots (in Amharic term) in Yem. Muslims of Yem were Christianized by this leader. Mowa dynasty is very different from its predecessors as it tried to embrace other clans in its political system. Thus one can say it had democratic rule compared to its predecessor<sup>132</sup>.

The political and social administrative system of the Mowa dynasty is different from its predecessors because its delegates authority, which was not common during those previous periods to the different clans in their administrative territory. Besides, in administrative hierarchy of Mowa dynasty kings had the highest political and religious authority. On top of this king was considered as God's representatives on the earth. On top of this following their coming to the power rulers of Mowa transferred their center from *Kanfucha* (which is found around Fofa) to Angeri, to located three kilo meters away from Fofa town<sup>133</sup>.



Figure.6. Angri palace (source Yem special woarda cultural and heritage management office)

---

<sup>132</sup> Milkas, pp.27-28

<sup>133</sup> Mekonnen, p.44.

Below the king, who was considered as holy there are *Astésärs* (a group of 12 persons who had the higher power next to the king). The *Astésärs* were elected by the *Nantésärs* (council of people's representatives in which almost all clans of were represented). *Mentésärs* (the leader of the war and defense affairs), *Funtésärs* (the economic affairs) *Flantésärs* (the leader of justice and order of affairs) *Tumtésär* (the law maker body) *Furatésär* (the security body or the body of accident protection and readiness) were the major bodies of the *Astèsäs*. There markable Tato (kings of Mowadynasty areas follows: Baläwäld (Balam), Azagino, Tokkoino, Silbabino, Mawdanin oKokkeno, Nodino, Zermadino, Digamino, Adelono, Bogibono (Gosasino), Gerano (Amno), Fitawurari Gäbrä Mädi

### 3. Succession in Yem people

As it was common with kingship, royal power in the kingdom of Yem was also hereditary. Royal authority was firmly continued to the members of the royal clan. However, in Yem it was not the reigning king himself who could choose the successor from the king, sons but a council of royal an advisors called *astésärs* who had this authority. This council chose the successor up on death of the king on the basis of socially and traditionally accepted merits such as physical fitness, careless, courage and so on. Mostly unmarried prince's burns from one of the different wives of the kings were supposed to have been preferred. If the king died without a male heir, one his closest relatives would be chosen by the *astésärs*<sup>135</sup>.

In Yem the death of kings would be disclosed immediately. Rather this was done after successor was chosen by *astésärs* (council of twelve). During the vacuum period political system in the states was run by the *astèsärs* and Waso (that mediated *astèsärs* and the king)<sup>136</sup>. Most of the time, during succession to power to power the last son of the death king would get priority. The last son of the death king was chosen by *astèsärs* because he was considered as holy and cleans from any sin. Beside to this, the chosen heir was expected to be knowledgeable, courageous, problem solver and orator. If the last son of the dead king was not a position to fulfill the above mentioned criteria: the nominators would come to the next young son of the kings. If this failed

---

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>135</sup> Wandemagen eta'l, p.40-41.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid*

they came to next son or the nearest relatives of the king. This was the first criteria to nominate and assign a king after the death of a king in Yem<sup>137</sup>.

After nomination, they would be taken to the forest by the *astèsärs* for the second examination. The forest that served as an examination site was founded at the place called *Azigi Zemda* (the forest an elephant) which is currently destroyed. During the test the nominated heirs ordered to sit alone in the forest a slaughtered Ox. Then the *astèsärs* call different types of wild animals such as tiger, hyena lion, using cultural classical musical instrument called *Fino*<sup>138</sup>.

During this time, if the lion or tiger tried to threaten and attack. But following this occasion, the *astèsärs* considered that the heir had failed in the test and would go to find another successor. However, if the lion or tiger protected the king from the attack of other wild animals, the king would be considered as a good leader in the future and would be taken by the *astèsärs* for the third examination<sup>139</sup>.

The third examination to be a being of Yem was cared on the shore of the Gibe River in this phase the expected king success fully passed or failed the examination there was nothing that would danger him from being the king of Yem. The place where this examination would take place was at *Tipi Zawa (Hora)*, it is an area where hot spring water was existed. After the arrival assigned king on the shore of the river, he would was his body with hot spring water Oslango that lead the activity. This process is the for the purification purpose. After this, the *astèsärs* would order the king would be to sit on one side of the twelve stones prepared in the area for this purpose<sup>140</sup>.

The stone that found in shore of Gibe River or *Tipi Zawa (Hora)* had their own names that would represent different events. For instance events such as drought, war, migration, happiness, external invasion, productivity, development, peace, so on. If the assigned king set on the stone would represent peace, lucky, development productivity etc, he was regarded as a good king immediately declared as the new king the kingdom. However if he seats on the stone that would

---

<sup>137</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>138</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>139</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>140</sup>*Informant Ato, Adamu Mamo, June, 23, 2012.*

represent drought, war, and the like he was considered as unlucky. But they did not tell him they and silently declared his coming to power as king of Yem<sup>141</sup>.

Except the Osalagano (the leader of the coronation activity on the shore of the Gibé River) and the *asatésärs* (council of twelve individual from twelve clans) on one had knowledge about the representation of the twelve stone on the shortest, the Gibe River or *Tipi Zawa (Hora)* without disclosing this secret to public and the king, they would coronate the new king. However, with a short time the Osalagano and *astésärs* had customary right to remove the king from power secretly. Because of it was believed that the existence of such unlucky king would cause problem to power the people and the states. Moreover, coronation of the new king on the Shore of Gibe River was accompanied by persecution of individuals who suffered from leprosy and ringworm ritually for crocodile's. However, this was practices was later substituted by slaughtering of a calf<sup>142</sup>.

According to Richard Pankhurst "when king died in Yem his body dressed in rich cloth and wrapped in skin of a new cow slaughtered for purpose,,. In addition, the people look the dead body of the king to the burial place dragging on the ground. They did his mainly because of the belief that the corpse of kings would bless land to become productive. On the top of this according to the Richard Pankhurst, after his coming to power, the new king was accepted to accomplish the following:

*---immediately summon all his predecessors favorites and tell them that they were so much part of the late monarch that they could not be separated from him ,and must therefore go to the next world to remain in the his favor. He would then ordered their execution, and choose new courtiers in which the old king had lived, together with all their furniture and utensils would mean while be ritually burnt .Nothing was allowed to remain .Everything, however valuable, was reduced to ashes. When any privies person died it was the custom likewise for his house as well as all the nearby tree and plant to burn.After the destruction of his processors palaces the new monarch would at once have a new one built<sup>143</sup>*

---

<sup>141</sup> Ibid

<sup>142</sup> Ibid

<sup>143</sup> Richard Pankhurst, state and land in Ethiopia Addis Ababa University press,1966,p.120.

#### 4. War and Traditional Defense System of Yem

For long of period time Yem was a monarchical government system. In Yem peoples were settled in the highland areas because highland areas have strategic importance during time of war or invasions. Besides to this, the Yem people gave due respect to those people, who were brave in battle field and hunting, like that of kingdom of Kaffa, Walayita and Yem people have their own traditional mechanism of defense system. For this defense mechanism one of the well known was digging a deep, wide and long trenches (ditch) called *gudba* along the border areas between Yem and its neighboring states. This traditional trench had its own hidden gate, which the local people customary called it *Kéma*<sup>144</sup>.

According to some informant, these hidden, trenches were dug for the first time during the king of Adlono. The trench dug by mass participation. The main thing that instigated this king to prepare these huge trenches was frequent attack from kingdom of Jimma. The king was asked by the neighboring people. He answered for them to protect *ensät* (false banana) from porcupine. However, the main kingdom constriction of the trench (ditch) was protecting his kingdom from external attacks<sup>145</sup>.

On the other hand, there are oral informants who strongly argue that digging of traditional defense system ditch was practiced in Yem even before the time of king Adlono. But the local informants stated that Adlono made it much more known and productive. In addition to this currently it is widely believed that most of the long *gudba* and their gate door (*kéma*) in the today's Yem are constructed by Adlono and his son Abba Bogibo. Following the death of Adlono his son Abba Bogibo strengthened the digging of trench on those external invasions suspected territory<sup>146</sup>.

Most of the time the *gudbas* (ditches) of Yem are not continuous rather they linked together with natural lines of defenses such as scarp slopes and deep river valleys. Accordingly, the defense lines (ditches) of Yem are continuous and stretched North, Northeast to South, and Southeast parallel to Gibé River. And the other line of defense runs east to west across the Kingdom of Yem and Karsa valley<sup>147</sup>.

---

<sup>144</sup> Mekonnen, pp.102-103

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>146</sup> Wondemagn eta'l, p.64.

<sup>147</sup> Informant Ato, Neguse Zebe, May, 5 .2012.

The line of defense formed partly from valleys and escapements and run parallel to each other in semi-circular arc extending from the edges of the Omo gores and centered on the Fofa. They did this because the Omo gores are natural obstacles that do not need extra defense line<sup>148</sup>.

There are four defense lines of the kingdom of Yem shows the history of the defense strategy of the people of Yem against their enemy. Particularly it played a great role to defend force of the neighboring hostile states .The width and depth of the ditch, average it had about three meters with and depth<sup>149</sup>.

Today there are thirty five (35) military defense *kémas* (hidden doors of the trench) in different directions of Yem special district. The name and direction of these *kémas* are stated as follows: in the Northern direction there were eleven *kemas*<sup>150</sup>. From these the known were *Tégär kéma, Taga Kéma, Dudär Kéma, Sure Kéma, Oya Kéma, Gado Kéma, and Shemir Kéma*. The Eastern directions there were only one Kema that was Kenal. In the Southern direction there were nine *kemas*. These were listed as follows *Sosho kema, Métélo Kéma, Därit Kéma, Izo kema, Fegegu Kéma, Duma kéma, Nawa kéma, Atar and Kamsi Kema*. In the Western direction there were four *kémas, which were Chekord kéma, Dbisa kéma, Ora kéma, HassanKema, Däwalu kéma, Gär Kéma, Kumul Kéma ,Zazän kéma, Gälan kém, Däbäba kéma, Kotar kema, Kocho kéma, Wängelo kema, Ason kéma*<sup>151</sup>. In Yem during the monarchal government had its own military organization with hierarchy. In the military hierarchy Yem people had the following stages:

Mantésär-----the council of war minster

Zutash-----the commander in chief of the army

Mäni\_Gagña-----commander of the arm

Fazni\_Gagña-----commander of the cavalry

Oron-Gagña-----commander of the military intelligent groups

---

<sup>147</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>149</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>150</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>151</sup>Informant Ato, Geber Micheal Garo, May 14, 2012.

<sup>152</sup>Informant Ato, Geber Micheal Garo, May 14, 2012.

<sup>153</sup>*Ibid*

Yangoz-----sub military group

Afo-----information desk of the army

Kanis-----ordinary soldiers<sup>152</sup>

Besides to this the Yem people used the strategy of throwing a huge stone against enemies from the top of mountain in the area such as Bori Mountain, Azula, and Toba. This military strategy is commonly known as gome the Yem people<sup>153</sup>.

## **5. Modern political history of Yem**

### **5.1 Menelik Conquest**

The Yem were ruled for a long periods by various kings before the incoation into the hegemony of emperor Menelik II. During this time the Yem people were under the rule king Abba Bogibo. The army of Menelik II entered into Yem region through the direction of Jimma by the assistance of Abba Jiffar II. Border conflicts that had repeated occurred between the Yem kingdom and Abba Jiffar II were the fundamental cause that encouraged Abba Jiffar II to invite the Menelik's army into Yem kingdom<sup>154</sup>. According to local elders, the Jimma kingdom by its self could not advance into the heart land of stronger kingdom of Yem Abba Jiffar II appealed to the emperor Menelik to give him military assistance to revenge his age old grievance with Yem kingdom<sup>155</sup>. The war started between Abba Jiffar II and Yem kingdom at a place west Dänäba town before the arrival of Menelik army from Addis Ababa. Bori Mountain managed to defend their territory from the invaders. The strong army emperor Menelik was sent from Addis Ababa to invade the Yem kingdom<sup>156</sup>. The army that came from Addis Ababa and the army of Abba Jiffar II fought in the coalition and invaded Yem at the same time under the command of

---

<sup>154</sup> *Informant*, Ato Zerfu Kayas, June, 4, 2012.

<sup>155</sup> Milkyas, pp.31-36.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid*

Ras Wolde Giorgise, Ras Biru and Dejazmach Wolde Amanuel. Where as Wojojmag, Somudma, Ejarma, Omoshi and Gatise were the remarkable war leaders on side of Yem<sup>157</sup>.

Gatise was the known female war leader who come from the Shumara clan. The army of Yem was organized under the overall commandship of Wojojmag, the powerful Yem man who was the war leadership of Abba Bogibo. However, the Wojojmag escaped and collaborated with Abba Jiffar II of Jimma this is due the disagreement with Abba Bogibo<sup>158</sup>. Abba Jiffar of Jimma making collaboration with Wojojmag largely affected the patriots of Yem and eroded their fighting determination. The Wojojmag of Yem was advice by Abba Jiffar of Jimma further continued his attack against Yem. The wonderful guerilla fighters of Yem were gradually weakened and as result, the coalition force was able to advance into the heart land of Yem<sup>159</sup>. Abba Bogibo was defeated by and fleet to Gurage by the assistance of his son Jobir. This saves him in this father –in laws house<sup>160</sup>. The peace agreement was arranged by local elders with the government representatives at the place known as Shien –amma. This peace agreement brought that the end of the bloody war between Abba Bogibo and the feudal states. This brought that the final end of the Yem kingdom and its incorporation into the Menelik II Empire in 1894<sup>161</sup>. The war caused immerses loss in human life mainly on the side of Yem. According to some local elders the war was the blood war, the Yem patriotic flood into Simini and Darbu Rivers and changed their color into red. This was due to military alliance of the army of Abba Jiffar II and Menlik II coupled with Wojojmag on the side of Abba Jiffar II imbalance in size of the troops, the use of traditional weapons such as spear and shields, poor leadership of the war and poor organization on the side of the Yem kingdom were the main reason that contributed to their final defeat<sup>162</sup>.

At the end of the war, Menelik's Empire formed its own system of government in Yem. This is the end of the kingdom of Yem. Their territory was blended in to Kaffa Täklay Gizat and the feudal states troops reward for at the for their courage in the war period. The local community was forced to supply grains for Menelik's troops in the form of tribute measured in Dawala (it is

---

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>160</sup> *Informant, Ato Taka, June, 4, 2012.*

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid*

equal to *Feresulla* or seventeen kilograms)<sup>163</sup>. Anyone who opposed to not to give grains for troops would result in to harsh punishment. For instance, if a given person fails to give grains, the troops would go his home and burnt his hut to forms holes. Next to this, they would lay his leg outside the hut through a hole. The remaining portion of his body is kept inside. That means equal part of his body would be dwell outside of the hut, where as the other part of his body would be placed inside the hut. He would stay there until he apologizes for not give giving grain to the troops. Willingly and unwillingly, a person would be obliged to allowed troops to snatch his grain that he stored for his own family to use in the time of emergent<sup>164</sup>.

Fofa was the capital of Menelik, s Empire in Yem. It was founded before the arrival of Menelik's army in to Yem territory. Its former name was Yengar (Anner). After the collapse of the Yem kingdom, traditional administration became powerless. The feudal rule made demarcation that discourages the Yem not to come to the political power in their own territory. The feudal state assigned its ruler who was loyal to the emperor from Addis Ababa to administered Yem. For instance, Däjazmach Beyene, Däjazmach Ligaba, and Däjazmach Wube were the prominent personalities who were sent from central feudal states to Govern Yem<sup>165</sup>.

## **5.2 Yem during the Italian occupation of Ethiopian from 1936\_\_1941)**

At different times, different countries and groups tried to threaten the sovereignty of Ethiopia. From this the known one is external invasion the 1935/1936 Italian aggression laid the ground for the five years (1936\_1941) occupation of Ethiopia by Fascist Italy. This in order to erase shameful defeat at the battle of Adäwa<sup>166</sup>. The Italian government lost its hope to colonize Ethiopia after its humiliating defeat at the battle of Adwa in 1896. However, the fascist seized power in 1922. The leader of the fascist party, Benito Mussolini rekindled the idea of an Italian colonial Empire in Africa. Fascist leader wanted to win mass support by promising to avenge the defeat of Adwa and restoration of the glory of the Roman Empire to Italy<sup>167</sup>. As result of the Feudal political system in the country was replaced by fascist leadership of Benito Mussolini. Opposing the invasion and subsequent occupation there were multidimensional patriotic

---

<sup>163</sup> *ibid*

<sup>164</sup> *ibid*

<sup>165</sup> Mekonnen, p.45.

<sup>166</sup> Wandemagen eta'l, p.91-97

<sup>167</sup> *ibid*

resistance movement in different parts of the country<sup>168</sup>. During the five years Italian occupation period, the Ethiopian patriots at different corners of the country fought firmly and furiously together for the independence of their country<sup>169</sup>. After the forty years preparation, the Italians were returned to east Africa. Italy used her colonies of Eritrea and Somalia as her military base and employed subversive activities against Ethiopia. According to Bahru Zewde; Mussolini had clearly resolved not to repeat what he considered to be the mistake of forty years before. For the lack of a few thousand men we lost the day at Adwa. We shall never make that mistake I am willing to commit a sin of excess but never of deficiency (De Bono, 119)<sup>170</sup>.

Likewise during the five years occupation period, the Yem people also fought against the Italian under the leadership of Yem patriot such as Basha Kābādā Gābrā Mādihin and his brother Tāfārā Gābrā-Mādihni. In addition, Basha Kābāda was the leader of the Yem patriot at the battle of Maichew<sup>171</sup>. On October 3, 1935, Italian troops crossed the Mereb River into Ethiopian and started their war of aggression. Italian invasion came from two directions, in the north from Eretria under the leadership of petro Badoglio and in the south from Italian Somali land under the commander ship of Rudolfo Grazziani, Emperor Haile Sellaise I mobilized troops and marched to the northern Ethiopia<sup>172</sup>. He fought with the Italian at the battle of maichew on March 31, 1936 in Tigray. The fascist planes dropped bomb and sprayed internationally outlawed master gas up on the Ethiopians<sup>173</sup>. This brought that the moral of the fighters and forced them in to flee. The emperor retreated back and returned to his capital, Addis Ababa. Later on it was decided that the Emperor should flee to Europe with all his family leaving his people and country alone. The emperor left via Djibouti to England in 1936<sup>174</sup>. The organized efforts against the fascist Italians were culminated. Ethiopia became leader less and her people left helpless. Seeing the internal weakness of the feudal state and unorganized resistance of the Ethiopian troops, the fascist army encroached into the central part of the country and easily captured Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia on May 1936 through the north direction under the

---

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>171</sup> Mekonnen, p.109-112.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>174</sup> Milkayas, p. 37.

leadership of Badoglio<sup>175</sup>. Then the South was also captured under the leadership of General Rudolfo Grazzani in the same year. The feudal exploitive rule could not liberate Ethiopia from foreign aggression, although it was active and powerful in the times of repressing its own citizens. The Italians expanded throughout the country, although they were confined to urban centers. This was because the Ethiopian patriots strongly threatened them in rural areas<sup>176</sup>. When the fascist Italian invading army arrived at Yem, the local people did not want to make direct confrontation. This was because the Italians were highly organized and well equipped. It was unthinkable to the confront such a mechanized army for the Ethiopians they were armed with traditional weapons and had untrained farmers as soldiers<sup>177</sup>. Thus the Yem, Wolkite and Bacho (Woliso) Balabats /local chiefs) have made secret agreement to allow Italians to enter in to their heart land without any resistance. These Balabats planned to take a strategic and gradually counter-offensive action against the fascist army in the pretext of peaceful submission<sup>178</sup>. The Yem Balabat, Fitawrari Gäbrämädihin Bogibo sent messenger to the Däjazmach Derssu Duki with messenger explaining the “ I am mobilizing my army and preparing supplies to leave home to jungle to fight against Italians. You must avail you for war, but receive Italians peacefully. This will make easily fallible as you are submissive. The Italians advanced in to Yem territory after controlled Bacho and wolkite<sup>179</sup>.

Before their arrival to Yem territory, the Italians heard through rumors about the difficulty to control strong and powerful resistance of Yem. They expected fierce resistance during the subjugation of Yem territory, but Fitawrari GäbräMädihin Bogibo welcomed them peacefully as they advanced through Kumbi (town near Saja the current capital of Yem)<sup>180</sup>.

The Italians entered into Yem without resistance under the commandership of Marshalllo. The reception of Yem Balabat was not hearty but the planned to take gradual action against the Italians. It was planned to get enough time to prepare the local people for the future struggle. The relation of Fitawuari GäbräMadihin Bogibo and the Italians looked very good. Due to this the Italian considered as major ally in Yem but he advised his sons and other Yem men to fight

---

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>180</sup> *Informant, Ato, Bekle Sabi May 14, 2012.*

against the Italians depth of courage to bring freedom and justice for their people<sup>181</sup>. Accordingly, his sons and other patriots left to desert areas and began guerilla warfare against the fascist troops. This happened immediately a month later with the arrival of Italians at Yem land. Täfärä GäbräMedihin, Abbiye Haile Micheal GabraMedihin, Alemu Gabra Medihin, Kebede Gabra Medihin, Hailu Dima and Abba Jobir Rogge were the most known Yem patriots who played the vital role in leading the local people to fight against the Italians with greater determination. The patriots were over all command of Täfärä Gabra Madhin. Kebede Gäbrä Mädhin was sent to Dawro to make coordination among the Dawro patriots against the Fascists. Täfärä GabraMadhini played an irreplaceable role organizing and leading the Yem patriots against the fascist troops<sup>182</sup>.

### **5.3 Evacuation of the Italians from Yem**

In 1940, Italy entered world war second on the side of Germany. This led to British military intervention on the liberation campaign of Ethiopia. Britain believed that military involvement would defend her colonial interests in Africa. Emperor Haile Sellasie I, who was in exile in London, secured British military support and join Anglo-Ethiopian libration campaign was launched from the Sudan and Kenya. The patriots in the interior joined hands with the newly arriving liberation army's from Britain<sup>183</sup>.

Troops under General Willian Platt attacked the Italians in Eriteria. Major General Orde-Charles Wingate and Brigader General Daneil Sandford were two major officers led a joint army known as the Gedeon force with emperor that entered in to Gojjam in April 1941. The British commander, lietenant General Sir Allan Cunnigham entered Ethiopia through British East Africa (Kenya) and his army controlled Addis Ababa on 6 April 1941. Then emperor Haile sellasie returned back to capital on 5 May, 1941 and officially hoisted the Ethiopian flag<sup>184</sup>.

---

<sup>181</sup> *ibid*

<sup>182</sup> Wandemagen eta'l, p.96-98.

<sup>183</sup> *ibid*

<sup>184</sup> *ibid*

Yem people expressed their joy for the complete oust and evacuation of the fascist troops saying “Gerano,\_Gerano, congratulations for the withdrawal of the Italians from our country,you and your son Täfärä and his brothers have fought against the Italians<sup>185</sup> .

Right now that merciless creature is uprooted from our land, as Täfärä be happy.Täfärä you are our symbol of our freedom, let your merciless gun spear the Italian again and again. Let God of Yem make the Italian’s eye blind and dark not to see Ethiopia again<sup>186.</sup>”

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. Socio-Cultural History of Yem

In Yem there were several bodies that were responsible for the clans to administer arbitrate and solve social errors, such as marriage and conflicts.The administrative bodies consisted of administrative organs such as *jiga*, *toga*, *läga*, *räji*, *sheni* and *mila*. From this administrative hierarchy Jiga is the highest traditional social administrative body and mila is the lowest traditional administrative body. Mila was answerable to the sheni. In addition to this, sheni were responsible to the other traditional wing called räji. Above räji there was a body called laga that had power and responsibility manage more than two räji<sup>187</sup> .

Laga was a body in charge of solving matters which were not solved by räji. When läga failed, the cases they preferred it to the other stronger traditional administrative hierarchy called *toga*. This consisted of more than two administrative lägas. In traditional social management of the area the highest authority rested with the jiga (a clan leader).If the case was difficult to solve by *toga*. It was transferred over in to jiga<sup>188</sup> .

In Yem, each clan had the right to vote for its own jiga in the respective areas. Intra and inter clan conflicts were solved by jiga while settling conflicts the jiga did not have the right to solve it with their own consents.They could not develop their own laws. Rather they were expected to follow the customary laws of their fore fathers. If they were failed to settle complicated problems

---

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>187</sup> Wondemage eta'l , Ye Yem Berseb Tarik, *Yem Special Worada ,Culture,Tourism, and Government Communication Affairs Office,2004,PP.44-49.*

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid*

like murder they referred it to traditional religious leaders known as mag, which was solved the matter spiritually. They Yem people respect for their deities<sup>189</sup>. Here are the traditional administrative hierarchical structures of each clan.

Jiga → Togo → Läga → Räj → Shen → Mila. These Traditional administrative bodies were decline at the beginning of Yem under the incorporation of Ethiopian Empire in 1894. During the reign of Haile Silase I (1930-1974) mostly after the incorporation of Yem into Jimma awraja (province) and Kaffa Täkläy Gizat (governor general ) in 1942 the roles of these traditional administrative systems in the clan which were decline. This is due to the substitution of their role of the by the outside centralized administration and trial system. During the period of Darge (1974-1991) further centralization of administration social leaders and their system of administration was forgotten<sup>190</sup>.

### 3.1 Traditional Trial and Conflict resolution in Yem

Regarding traditional trial in the area under discussion, until the incorporation of the area into Ethiopia Empire in 1894, the highest judicial power vested with the king (*amno* or *tato*). But as stated above each clan had its own judicial administrative hierarchical system that lay between *Jiga* (the highest administrative and judicial organ and *Mila* (the lowest administrative hierarchal and judicial organ of the clan)<sup>191</sup>.

Most of time women were not assigned as heads of traditional administrative system of the Yem kingdom. They engaged in provision of different facilities for system. In other hand, in the Yem administrative system one clan leader was not allowed to interfere in the social and political and judicial affairs of other clan<sup>192</sup>.

Beside to this, the traditional judges did not amend and revise the customary laws of the society. This means those traditional judges were expected to keep the status quo. In general, based on the difficulty of the cases and the interest of the conflicting parties there were three main traditional trial system in Yem people. They were stated as follows: traditional trial led by traditional or universal (global) religious leaders, traditional trial led by the *Jiga* (clan leaders)

---

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>191</sup> Mekonnen Waldyese, Zoka, Ye Yem Hizb Tarik, Far East Printing press, Addis Ababa, 2011, p.46.

<sup>192</sup> *Informant*, Ato Adamu Mamo, Gebehyu G/Senbet

and traditional trial led by community elders. However this judicial power of the *Jiga* began to deteriorate in 1894<sup>193</sup>.

In Yem, in order to, be a *jiga* person should master the culture, beliefs, norms and values as well as customary laws of the society. In Yem traditional trial system first accuser is the expected to report his/her application to his/her respected *Jiga*. Then the *Jiga* would give appointment to accuser for some other times and on the next occasion the *Jiga* would gather the community to see the case on the date of trial, *jigas* were the only authorized body to pass judgment on the matter without the interference of any third party<sup>194</sup>. However after judgement both accuser and accused had the right to the express, his/her dissatisfaction the case was revised by other clans *Jiga*. However, this form of trial is not used by the community. It was decline in 1943 because of the opening of modern court in the Yem .This system was mostly chosen by accuser<sup>195</sup>.

The second main types of traditional trial were carried out by community elder's. In this system the leader of the trial was mostly chosen by accuser.The accuser was expected to the elaborate the case to the community elders.Then the community elders fixes date of trial to see the case. On the date of trial both accuser and accused were express their cases. Finally, after deep analyses of the ideas forwarded by disputant parties the elders would pass judgment. Most of the time parties accept judgment of traditional trial courts because of fear of their deities<sup>196</sup>.

The third was held by the religious leader. In this case was at ritual sites called *Kanch* (a common name which is given for traditional and universal religious activities).This trial are complex and difficult. Besides case that failed to get solution the above two traditional trial system would be transferred to this trial to get final and binding solution<sup>197</sup>.

Moreover, in traditional trial system of Yem, if somebody committed serious crime and sentenced to death penalty by anno he/she was taken to a place known as *Zaniso* .The criminal was pushed from the top of the cliff called *Zaniso* into deep gorge mostly by

---

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>195</sup> Milkyas Liamso, *Ethno-History of Yem People, Southern Nations, Nationalities and peoples Regional state Bureau of Culture and Tourism, 2017, P.25.*

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid*

marginalized occupational groups. This was became outlawed by Fitawurari Gäbrä Medhin (r 1898-1956). Regarding the introduction of modern judicial system it was introduced to Yem in 1943 after the return of the Emperor. According to informants during its introduction, the trials in these modern courts were held in Amharic. However, for a couple of years most people did not bring their cases to these modern courts and favoured the traditional one. But gradually the modern courts began influencing the traditional trial system<sup>198</sup>.

### 3.2 Marriage system in Yem

Marriage is a legally recognized relation, established by a civil or religious ceremony, between two individuals who intend to live together as sexual and domestic partners. In Yem culture people of the same clan are not allowed to marry one another because people in same clan are consisted relatives. Therefore, establishing marriage alliance among people from the same clan is considered as a taboo or sin and punishable ritually. Due to, this a person from same clan married the couple are anticipated to flee Yem<sup>199</sup>. In other hand, in the marriage tradition of Yem the male was not allowed to marry a woman that underwent genital mutilation (circumcisions). When a man married circumcised women, he was expected to slaughter ten oxen and penalized ritually by jumping into fire that was prepared for this purpose. This ritual punishment was to wash out the person hygiene or for purified from his sin. After fine and harsh measure the person was not to force to divorce his wife<sup>200</sup>.

There are five marriage ceremonies in Yem. These were: *Zata Giru* (customary/arranged marriage), *Boa giru* (Abdication), *Rara Giru* (unexpected/sudden types of marriage), *Shunogiru* (elopement/dual agreement) *Zoke giru* (broker oriented marriage)<sup>201</sup>.

During the, *zata giru* the family of the boy was in charge of searching a wife for their son without consulting him. It was the most widely used and earliest type of marriages in Yem. During the selection of, some of the most important points to be considered were: clan group

---

<sup>198</sup> Mekonnen, pp.76-78.

<sup>199</sup> Mitku Negash, *Yem Legal system*, Vol.I, Far East Trading Printing press, 2004, p.18.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>200</sup> Informant Ato Gezagen Rega, May 14 2012

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid*

and other details about the daughter and her family. It is accomplished by agreement of the parent of the two couples<sup>202</sup>. The local elders are the key actors in the process of convincing the girl's family. Identifying compatibility of the two couple's clan, his property and good conduct in his social life are the crucial criterion that is supposed to be fulfilled for the acceptance of the marriage questions. After having full information, the family of the body would send the senior community elder to the house of the family wedlock girl<sup>203</sup>. The elder prefer Tuesday, Thursday, to go to the parents of the girl to ask for marriage. Her families do not show their willingness quickly to allow their daughter. It takes times of appeasement for elders. If her parents accept the elder's question, the elders would give parents like green grass, money and an axe (Tegra) covering with enset leaves for parents. Then his parents will arrange wedding day after they complete the bride wealth. The amount of bride wealth is decided considering the wealth of his parents<sup>204</sup>.

*Bo'a giru* (Abdication). This type of marriage is carried out by forcefully by male without will of female. In Yem, the main reason for abduction is the competition between the two men on one female. This creates serious of tension and promote social disputes. Its bride wealth also would be high as the penalty against the abductees is another imposition<sup>205</sup>.

*Rar Giru* (unexpected/sudden) sometimes the male's parents would prepare themselves and arrange the wedding day without telling to the female's family Food and drinks would be prepared and the people are invited for the wedding ceremony, however still the female's families are not ready to permit their daughter at the day that was arranged by the male's family, though they have already agreed to marry their daughter to that person. The man would appear with his accompaniers at the compound of the parents to take her immediately. During this moment the girl would flee from her families to somewhere<sup>206</sup>. Next the family of the girl informs the flight of their daughter to those people waiting for her inside the compound. Hearing this information; he would immediately change his idea and plan to marry another unexpected girl. Then he and his accompaniers would choose the best women and they would immediately appear at the compound her family. They would ask her father to give them his daughter.

---

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>204</sup> Zinash Niguse, *Tradational Administration Systems of Yem*, Mizan-Tafari university, 2015, p.14.

<sup>205</sup> Wandemagen eta'l, pp.160- 167.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid*

According to the culture of Yem, it is believed that the future of her life would be miserable and she faces misfortune in her life if she refuses to accept the question of rara giru<sup>207</sup>.

*Shuno giru* (elopement marriage): It was usually taken by the dual agreement between the two couples. According to their own arrangement she leaves home to her husband's family without the knowledge of her families. Although some grievance would be happened among the two families, its intensity is not as serious as that of abduction, because, abduction involves an offense act and conveying away a woman against her will either by force fraud or intimidation. In these types of marriage, the local elders on behalf of the male would be sent to the women's parents and convince them to accept proper bride wealth according to the culture<sup>208</sup>.

The marriageable age of the male is twenty-five and female is twenty years. The body strengthen and enlargement are considered to determine the marriage age of the male through various indicators; if he able to farm on the harsh environment of low land area, if he performing hunting, if he develop enough capacity to alleviate or arbitrate disputes caused between individuals, if the he is able to make powerful sound while footing land in the time of dances ,if he can perfectly play the cultural play as the "Asma play" (It is a type of ring that helps him to become perfect in fighting ) are the major indicators of the male's maturity for marriage<sup>209</sup>.

Following elopement marriage the community would sing different kinds of songs against the eloped girl and her family. For example, one of the well known songs against an eloped girl was as follows.

Amésa Mowa	Why my sister?
Amsé Mowa	Why my sister?
Shépo Gruson	Why you beg and marry him?
Béytam Mowa	You have better drop him?

---

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>209</sup> Informant Ato, Demisse Degife, Taka, Gebehyu Gasha

*Zokigna (Zoka giru)* .It is mainly accomplished by and involvement of the brokers. These types of marriage were arranged by one or more than one women who know well the families with the boy and girl.Tradition of Yem such women were considered as Zokgna that means facilitators. The *Zokgna* as play and intermediary role between the boy and girl who used to explain about appearance, wealth, clan and economic status of the boy<sup>211</sup> .This marriage usually happens on the market days. In this type of marriage, women play a role in order to convincing both male and female couples to make marriage relations.The broker women mainly come from her husband's house to her natal family to convince her relative women to make marriage tie with the man of her husband's relative. This is to multiply her relatives at her nearby village and at the same time get some money from the man<sup>212</sup>.

### 3.3 Weeding in Yem people

The ceremony that signifies the beginning of a marriage is known as weeding. Weeding can be simple or wide but they occur in virtually all communities. In our country including the Yem people January and April are the most preferable months for weeding. January is the most preferable season for wedding because it is a time of harvesting. Cereals are collected through a cooperative labor and put into gotera (granary)<sup>213</sup>. It is joyful time among the people because there is no hunger and problems. April is the most likely month for wedding because it is the period when fasting period is culminated. In early period, the wedding ceremony was simple and not complicated in Yem. The accompaniers would bring the women to her husband's house carrying her shoulder and later on she would be transported by horse and mule substituting manpower. *Gama* was the most widely known types of cultural songs that seved during wedding ceremonies in Yem. It encompasses several jocks that were forwarded turn by turn both the man's and women relatives. For instance, if he was from low land, her relatives would jock up on him saying hehas no horse; he is poor because he has no horse like that of the highland

---

<sup>210</sup> Wandemagen eta'l,p.180.

<sup>211</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>212</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>213</sup>Milkayas,p.74.

dwellers. Its main concern is to make fun within the invited guests and participants of the wedding<sup>214</sup>.

### **3.4 Commemoration and Funeral Ceremony**

The Yem people have different ways of expressing during the death of a person. The commemoration and funeral ceremony vary based on the age, political, social role, hunting ability and wartime role of the deceased. Funeral ceremony is the conveying of the deceased to the place of the burial<sup>215</sup>. The death of children below one year does not cause a bitter mourning among Yem people. This is because it is believed in Yem that God would compensate the family by replacing another child. The child's death is not formally publicized and its burial ceremony is accomplished by only the family members<sup>216</sup>.

Accordingly, there were different types of traditional funeral and mourning ceremonies in Yem. Among these we can see the mourning and funeral ceremony for Jiga (clan leader), the king and the elderly people. Jigas were respected and trusted leaders of each clan in Yem and when they die, the mourning and funeral ceremonies were differently held from the ordinary people<sup>217</sup>. During the death of Jiga, the first thing done by the people was electing another Jiga to replace the deceased one. During election priority was given to the son of the deceased Jiga. If there was no son, the next candidate was given to his son-in-law. If this was not successful, the chance was taken to other strong and capable clan members. Consequently, the body of the dead Jiga would be taken to the gravesite telling different stories about the deceased Jiga<sup>218</sup>. In addition to this, the Yem people look at the dead body of Jiga and other respected people to the grave site, dragging on the ground the wrapped body with skin of the newly slaughtered cow for that purpose. They did this mainly to bless the ground that bears the body of the respected person or Jiga. However, following the intensification of universal (global) religion in the area, this practice of the people was rejected<sup>219</sup>.

In the funeral ceremony of the Jiga, except clan leaders, the family of the deceased Jiga and those who carried the corpse to the burial site, others were not allowed to go to the gravesite. In the

---

<sup>214</sup> Informant Ato Niguse Zebe, Negatu Gojam, Mekonnen Waldayese

<sup>214</sup> Informant Ato Balayne Girmu, Anteneh G/Mariam, Tamirat G/Mariam June 4, 2012

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid*

12<sup>th</sup> day of his death twelve breads would be prepared from different kinds of the cereal crops and broken into pieces by the members of the Fuga clan and one piece would go to the Fuga and the other shared among the family of the deceased *jiga*. In Yem people the Fuga, s was expected to dig the grave of the *jiga*'s and other royal family and other Yem without payment. However this practice is rejected currently<sup>220</sup>.

In Yem the death of elder's is very shocking and causes a bitter grief in the communities. This is due to the elders are important and decisive person for every life of the Yem people. For instance, marriage is unthinkable in Yem without the involvement of the elders. They are also the key arbitrators of any disputes that rose among the individuals, family members, and community at large. So the elders are respected and acceptable by the whole society of Yem<sup>221</sup>.

The house of the deceased would be renewed ,the fence would be built, food ,drinks like *borda*(local beer) will prepared ,the information would be disseminated to all relatives by messengers are the major works that should be done before the morning ceremony began. After that, the real mourning would be formally begun<sup>222</sup>. *Buluko* (a heavy traditional woven cloth which is made up of cotton) would be placed flat on the outer roof of the deceased and later on redistributed among this daughter cutting different parts. All his cloths would be put on the outer portion of the house's pillar. The Yem people express his bravery during his life period, carrying the horn of deer, spear, and shields and wearing a tiger's skin<sup>223</sup>. Here are figures representing the traditional burial rite of elder men in the Yem

---

<sup>220</sup> Wandemagn eta'l,p.174.

<sup>221</sup> *ibid*

<sup>222</sup> *ibid*

<sup>223</sup> *ibid*



Figure.7.The traditional burial rite of elder men Yem (source Yem special woarda cultural and heritage management office)

### 3.5 Traditional Holydays

Beginning from time immemorial until today the Yem people have been celebrating different types of secular and religious holiydays. From this *tiya* was the one of which got significant portion as public holyday. *Tiya* was celebrated immediately before *samagor* (newyear). Some people consider *tiya* as a stepping stone for *samagor*. The ceremony for *tiya* was not prepared by all Yem people, it was organized by respected community elders who were well trusted and highly valued by the people. At this celebration of *tiya* first the lip of the ox was cut off by most respected community elders, then the public say “the ox is laughing”. Next the ox was slaughtered. According to Yem this practice was done to clean a bright and joyful future for society<sup>224</sup>.

*Hebo(samagor)* is celebrated on the Ethiopian months of *mäskäräm*17 (september27).It was the most celebrated Yem traditional holiydag which represents the Yem New Year.Although its

---

<sup>224</sup>*ibid*

exact day of the beginning unknown, the *Hebo* culture was celebrated for long period of time as the New Year festivity among Yem people. In Yem samagor means supreme deity of the sky. Due to this the Yem people have great respecting for samagor and they made a huge and long preparation for the holiyday<sup>225</sup>. Few days before *samagor (Hebo)* women and youth would clean their environment for the holiyday, people who lived somewhere would return home, and individuals in the dispute would settle their differences. Preparing “*Goto*” or fire wood, wailing “*Duwa*” another kind of fire wood which is prepared from thick stem of tree to be served for long time up to the end of festival and other works are among the main duties of men. The conflict settlement was usually conducted two days before *samagor* and the person found guilty was expected to give honey to this deity under the mediation of mag (leader traditional religious belief). This day was known as *kam keso* (a day of purification).The celebration of samagor was continued from the Ethiopian months of *mäskäräm*17 upto *mäskäräm* 30 (from sebtember27-7october) every year<sup>226</sup>.

*Meskel/Samagor/holidays* appear in four different forms: These are samagor, Achaagor, Betagor and Awagor. According to the church fathers these are the four Gospels of the New Testament. Accordingly,Samagor,Betagor,Achagor and Awagorare Mthew, Mark, Luke and John respectively. Timket (epiphany) Christmas, Id Alfetir (Ramadan), Arafa and Easter are the most remarkable holidays celebrated in Yem<sup>227</sup>.

---

<sup>225</sup>*Informant* Ato Geber Sillase,Abba Ramso,Addisu Kita,Adamu Mamo

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid*



Figure: 8. The celebration of Hebo/Samagor/ (source Yem Cultural and Tourism office)

*Abzogor*: This was another holiday which celebrated by the Yem people. The holiday was largely celebrated on the Ethiopian month of Miazia (April) under the shade of a big tree mainly to ask their deity to protect them from flood, disease, drought and other disasters. This is due to the coming of summer season. The season would bring heavy rain<sup>228</sup>.

On other hand, in Yem, there were also holidays for kings. A Kings holiday was prepared once in seven years inside the royal compound (residence). During celebration, most participants were clan leaders, respected individuals of the people as well as political and religious leaders. In Yem the people celebrated holiday for wealth. In Yem the communities the wealth of the individual was measured by the numbers of livestock that he/she owned. In the area individuals were allowed to celebrate holiday for their wealth when the members of the cattle reached either one hundred or one thousand. On the day of celebration, the owner of the cattle was his body with milk to show his wealth and got either the title called *tirawa* (owner of hundred) or *kumagatir* (owner of thousand)<sup>229</sup>.

---

<sup>228</sup> *ibid*

<sup>229</sup> *ibid*

### 3.6 Conflict resolution Mechanism

The Yem people shares boundary with Oromo in west, Gurage in the north, and Hadiya in the northeast. Yem lived peacefully and in harmony with the neighbors with the except some border conflicts with Jimma Oromo in the very near past mainly in the reign of Abba Jiffar II of jimma<sup>230</sup>. Yem have unique form of conflict resolution mechanism. The resolve every conflict caused with in itself and the other neighboring peoples in the traditional method at the ritual place at *Chalo*<sup>231</sup>. The local elders played a great role in the indigenous conflict resolution mechanism in the Yem people. If some conflicts rise among any two groups the victims will go to at the ritual site called Chalo to report their case for the local elders. The accused person is ordered to go to the ritual site and local elders give him guide to tell truth in front of the God and themselves. The accused man expected to speak the truth and confess everything what he did without lied. Otherwise, it is not good for the accused person. The person would incur severe danger or unexpected calamity up on his life and his family member's<sup>232</sup>. The *Chalo* ritual site is found near to Bor Mountain and essential to give justice for the victims. The Koner ritual site near to Deri town was also another place where local judges give justice in Yem for long period. This brought that how much this indigenous conflict resolution mechanism of Yem contribution for peace and security of Yem and its surrounding peoples<sup>233</sup>.

### 3.7 Slavery and slave trade

In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was a wide expansion of slave trafficking in southern part the Ethiopia. During this period the total number of slave capture in this part of the country was more than 15,000 individuals per annum. From this number the share of the kingdom of the Yem was around 1000 per year. Other states in the region such as Kaffa, Kucha, Konta, and Dawro together contributed around 11,000 slaves in this part of Ethiopia<sup>234</sup>. There were three factors that brought the expansion of slavery in this part of Ethiopia. The first one is the poor legal system in the country that restricted slavery and slave trade. The second one was the

---

<sup>230</sup> Milkayas, pp.29-30.

<sup>231</sup> Mitku Negash, *Chalo Customary Judgement*, Vol.II. Far East Printing press, pp.33 -46.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>234</sup> Wandemagen ,eta'l, p.198-199.

supported by local chiefs ,kings as well as local and long distance traders called the Afkala and Jabarti respectively .The third one is the profitability of trade in human beings<sup>235</sup> .

According to Timothy Derek, in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the areas like Yem and Gurage women and children were sold into slavery even by their relatives. Like those other neighboring states in the region ,the king (amno) of Yem also sold wives ,sons ,daughters and families of executed person (criminal)and political opponents to slave dealers in the public slave market. As my Informants Mekonnen waldayese told me, Däri (Boki) market in Yem was a market in which such kind of the people were sold and bought. On the other hand, when there were conflicts between the Gibe states and Omotic states war captives, relatives of kings and other prisoners were sold slavery. For example as result of the war between Yem and the kingdom of limmu Enariya during the king of Abba Bogibo (Ibsa), in the 1830,s the kingdom of Yem was defeated and became the tributary province of Limmu Enariya. During this period many Yem were sold into slavery by the fighters and followers of Abba Bogibo<sup>236</sup> .

Besides to this, the war of 1844 between Abba Jiffar I (r.1830-1855) of Jimma and tato Adlono of Yem the latter was defeated and his relatives, war captives and many other Yem prisoners were became the victim of the slavery<sup>237</sup> .

In the history of slavery and slave trade of the Yem there were slaves for both domestic purpose and external trade. In domestic slavery, the fuga clan's members were expected to serve as slaves to all non-fuga irrespective of their age and sex.This means in Yem the fuga clans served any non-Fuga without any hesitation and payment. This is because the Fuga people believed that refusal of the order of the non-Fuga would cause death of the family members. For this reason the Fuga would never oppose the order of the non-Fuga irrespective of their age and sex<sup>238</sup> .

On top of this, other areas in the region, there were slave raiding (hunting) practices in Yem .The raid was conducted against the neighboring states such as Gurage, Hadyia, and Kambata. Later on, when the governors of the area well understood the importance of slave trade for their economic power, they began to participate actively in this lucrative trade. Slavery and Slave

---

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>236</sup> Timothy Derek, *Serfs, Slaves and Shifta: Mode of production in pre-revolutionary Ethiopia*, Addis Ababa shama Books, 2010, pp.344.

<sup>237</sup> Mekonnen, pp.122-123.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid*

became the major source income of the kings of the Yem. They engaged vigorously in this activity and those people who failed to pay debt and tribute also became victims of slavery and slave trade. As elaborated above one of the important slave markets was Deri (Boke) market<sup>239</sup>. This pervasive act of slavery and slave trade in the kingdom of Yem is expressed as follows by Richard Pankhurst:

*The king of Yam ....was deeply involved in the institution of slavery*

*Whenever he purchased foreign cloth from the merchants, price ....would*

*Be fixed in slaves. The monarch would instruct his servants to go into one*

*Or more of his subjects house...and hand them over to the traders. He would*

*Order that the handsomest sons and daughter of any of his subjects be taken<sup>240</sup>.*

During the reign of Fitawrari Gäbrä-Madihen Bogibo and Täfarä Gäbrä –Madihen Bogibo slavery and slave trade were outlawed. As result, during the rule of these kings slavery and slave trade were not conducted officially. However, illegal slave trade continued for some time.

---

<sup>239</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>240</sup>Richard Pankhurst, *Economic History of Ethiopia*, Addis Ababa University press, 1968, p.50.



Figure.9. A material which was used to control slaves (Slave trapping material) (source from Yem cultural and Tourism office)

### **3.8. Occupational Group in Yem**

#### **3.8.1 The Fuga (potters and tanners)**

The history of Fuga clan in Yem goes back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the time when the members of Mowa dynasty arrived at present land of Yem under the leadership of Bäläwäld. They come from Gondar through Gurage crossing the Gibe River. Bäläwäld, Golemasho, Fugatesto, and Wäzzäm were the four brothers who came to Yem land with their followers and first settled at the place called Fuga-testo<sup>241</sup>.

There are several occupational groups in Ethiopia like other Africa country. They engaged their life in smith, pottery, tanning, weaving, and wood works. The people of their surroundings undermined by these groups of people. They were not allowed to take part in the community. For instance; they were not participated social, economic, political activities in their respective localities only because of occupational group<sup>242</sup>. In Africa these despised occupational groups

---

<sup>241</sup> Ibid

<sup>242</sup> Ibid

were expected to produce various kinds of materials that contribute for socio-economic development and survival of both the marginalized group and non-marginalized group. In our country these groups were lived in scattered manner among the different ethnic groups without enjoying their human right. However they played significant role in the daily life of these societies by serving as traditional midwives, musicians, circumcision of boys, and gravediggers<sup>243</sup>.

Moreover, in Ethiopia marginalized occupational groups did not allowed to established marriage alliance with the rest of Ethiopian peoples. They do have separate burial place and do not enter the house of non marginalized peoples. They were forced to eat on the broken materials or leaves and bare hands outside the houses<sup>244</sup>.

In the social interaction, these groups were expected to bow during greeting and considered as “evil eye”. Other people never eat food and drinks prepared by those groups of peoples. In addition to this, the groups were not allowed to live stock, to live outskirts of villages and live on the rocky and barren land areas. This is due to a belief among the society that these groups damage the fertility of the soil and live stock. They were not allowed participate in the traditional and modern administrative system of the community<sup>245</sup>.

The occupation of Ethiopia by Italian in general had played a pivotal role in southern Ethiopia. The marginalized occupational groups in southern Ethiopia in general and to Yem land in particular by the opening the way to equal economic, social and political participation<sup>246</sup>.

From occupational groups of Yem land the fuga (hunters, tanners, and potters) were the most marginalized one. The occupational groups such as Yirfo, (blacksmith), weavers, and wood workers were not as marginalized as fuga. According to the belief of the Fuga communities were come from northern Ethiopia, particularly from Gondar as army of the Mowa clan, which were believed to be the founder of mowa dynasty.

*Regarding the origin of fuga there is myth*

---

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>244</sup> Saillhue Zeben, *Yem and Culture*, Southern Nations Nationalities Peoples Regional State Bureau of Culture and Tourism, 2000, p.11.

<sup>245</sup> Informant Ato, Niguse Zeben, Gezaghen G/Sadik, Melaku Rasa, Bekele sanbi

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid*

*Fuga come from Gondar with his younger brother. On the way mowa*

*Became terribly thirsty and Fuga made him a pot from the clay soil that he*

*Could drink from Because of this when mowa became ruler of yem*

*he ordered that fuga and his descendant ,s should always make pots<sup>247</sup>*

The occupational groups like woodworkers, weavers, and blacksmiths were not interested to form marriage relation and other social interaction with that of Fuga. In the Fuga groups the men are tanners where as the women are potters. In Yem, the Fuga group's lives segregated from the other people. According to the local elders, the main reason for their isolation was to search comfortable soil for pottery. They produce jar, pot, cup; etc. Their products are indispensable for every Yem household. They consider themselves as Bera (supporters) of the other clans in supplying various potteries. Now a day, their members mainly live in the Geta, Meleka, Shemo-metelo, Toba, Idiya, Karrua (near Deri), Keph, Boluji Buro, Ololi, Mago, Wonglo and Wongacho areas in the Yem special Woreda. The Fuga do not want form marriage ties with other non-marginalized groups because they are marginalized and they believe that their species would disappear if they make marriage with the others<sup>248</sup>.

Many Yem believe that Fugas occupation and feeding culture are the main reasons for their marginalization. They also served as gravediggers to the others for some enset and grains. The Bera (lineage of fuga clan mainly working as Bishop), serves as mediator between God and men. If somebody has beaten by a thunder, it is considered in Yem as the anger of the God. The Bera prayer called *Zarro* to God. The delivery of the twins is considered in the Yem as sin<sup>249</sup>.

As informants stated that, in Yem the Fuga communities were considered as "non human". This was mainly because of their eating habit, extravagant practice, unethical behavior and "bad odor". Besides to this the Fuga were considered as lairs, boorish, sluggish and lazy by other Yem. Because of this the non- Fuga did not have respect for the Fuga and mostly they used words which lack respect such as *hama* (go without respect) *aginoa* (enter without respect) *diwa* (sit without respect) *mutigna* (eat without respect). On other hand, the Fuga were expected to

---

<sup>247</sup> Milkyas, p.104.

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>249</sup> Informant Ato Negatu Gojam, Tekle Mencho, Zenbech Zegaye, May 9, 2012.

respect all non-Fuga based on their sex and age like *damta* (lord), *ofonigna* (to say go with respect), *boznign* (to say eat with respect).

Here are sayings about Fuga by non-fuga,s

“Fuga mara anegawifa”            “ Fuga never satisfy eating”

“Fuganawa anagna isa baso”      “ Fuga and donkey are the same”<sup>250</sup>.

In Yem people there were negative set of beliefs and were not interested to interact with non-Fuga. In schools the sons and daughters of the Fuga were not allowed to sit on same table with the non-Fuga students. In Yem peoples Fuga were not allowed to enter in the house of non-Fuga because they were believe they had bad sprit. If the entered the house of non-Fuga, s house later a hot ash would be sprinkled on the chair on which the Fuga sat<sup>251</sup>.

### **3.8.2 Marriage among the Yem Fuga**

InYem if the Fuga and non-Fuga made marriage tie the couple were not live inside of the community and expected to flee from their native soil. In addition if the Fuga and non-Fuga make sex, the former was expected to sacrifices a goat and the later a cow or oxen for their deities in order to purify them from sin. Keeping constant all above things the past there was a belief in the Yem people that the fuga women were medicine of cramp.Because of this belief king of the Yem as well as the ordinary people, made sex with the Fuga women. But, after the event they expected to give the expected sacrifices for their deities<sup>252</sup>.

Until Italian occupation of Ethiopia there were no local or national leaders that paid an attention to the despised occupational group such as Fuga. But during the Italian occupation of Ethiopia (1936-1941), the Italian gave attention to the Marginalized occupational groups in the country. For example, during the time of Italian occupation some progressive Fugas were posted as administrators of their localities which were no common before. However this could not continue after liberation<sup>253</sup>.

---

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>252</sup> Mekonnen, p.36.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid*

According to informant, Antenehe Geber mariam the Italian occupation of Ethiopia had two advantages for occupational groups in the country. The first one is the political equality between the occupational groups and other community. Secondly, marginalized occupational groups had began to come on administration .That means they govern their own villages. My informants stated that some Fuga communities in Yem. However, during the Darge villagization policy the Fuga community in Yem were also settled together with the no-Fuga. But later they returned their former settlement<sup>254</sup>.

Besides to, this religious institution played a great role in changing bad outlook of the non-Fuga communities about the Fuga. Not to segregated them, because they were equal to with no-Fuga. Before accepting Christianity and Islam the Fuga communities in Yem were actively involved in traditional religious practices .For instance, when they passed through sacred shrines they used to bow down for the places or shrines<sup>255</sup> . Furthermore, the Fuga used to make their pot in the evening mainly to hide their pot from “evil eye”. The Fuga “sacrifice a cape shaped pot”for their deities every year after the end of the rain season .This was done for effective making pottery. In Yam the Fuga communities were needed for their ritual blessing during twin’s birth, fix fingers child birth and death of individuals. Because it was believed that if the Fuga had not blessed twins lighting would strike either the mother or the father of the twins<sup>256</sup>.

Finally, the marginalization of despised groups shows change from time to time and at present there is no official marginalization of these groups. But today, the other Yem people are not attracted to intermarry with Fuga. Still now, there are individuals in Yem who are not attracted to see Fuga in their house and they also hate eating, going, going and sitting with the Fuga. In Idir, Mahiber, Debo these groups are not interested to eat food, which are prepared by Fuga. Nevertheless, paradoxically these groups cook their food with pot which is prepared by the hands of the Fuga<sup>257</sup>.

---

<sup>254</sup> *Informant Ato Antenehe G/Mariam*

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid*

### 3.8.2 Yirfo (blacksmiths) waving and wood work in the Yem

In Yem people blacksmiths were the peoples who produce various types of iron tools for the community. They were locally called Yirefo. Their works using iron as input and makes bero'a (axes) hoes, abille (knives) marchi (spears), etc<sup>258</sup>. Their working place is called *kir kigoda* which has important purpose for agricultures. Most of time, the Yierfo of Yem were not interested to be called by his derogatory term. They prefer to call their own names. In Yem, unlike the Fuga (Bara), the Yierfo (blacksmith) were not totally dependent on occupational works<sup>259</sup>. They engaged in agricultural economic activities and their living standard was not lower than the other community. As local informants states that the other Yam the Yierfo occupational group used to undermine the Fuga community and not interested to formed marriage alliance and social interactions<sup>260</sup>.

In Yem, unlike Fuga, the Yierfo had to plough and they had equal political, religious, economic and social rights like other Yem. They worishp religion with other Yem, live together with other Yem, the can form marriage and other religious, economic and social interaction with Yem<sup>261</sup>.

The Yierfo make marriage interlink with other clans without discrimination in Yem except Koppu and Amaru sub-clans with in Yierfo. These sub-clans were prohibited from marrying Yem farmers and they are only married among themselves. This is because of the belief among the society that it was difficult to save money and secure property if somebody enters in to marriage relation with them<sup>262</sup>.

In general, there was no remarkable difference between the Yem (Yamma) people and Yierfo in their socio-economic interaction, political role and involvement as well as living standards

---

<sup>258</sup> *Informat* Ato Ramso, lishanu sanbi

<sup>259</sup> *Informant* W/Z Warkensh Diga, Teshome G/Senbet

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>261</sup> Saihu Zebe *Yem and culture, Southern, Nation, Nationalities and Peoples Region* al state Bureau of Culture and Tourism, 2002, p.30.

<sup>262</sup> Ato Niguse Zebe, Gezahegn Rega, Telikalegn Hailu

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. The Yem and their neighbors

#### 4.1. The relationship between Yem and the neighboring states up to 1894

The Yem were one of the strong kingdoms in southwestern Ethiopia. During the reign of Menelik II (r.1889-1913), the kingdom of Yem, which survived the assault from different directions for a long period of time, was forced to submit and be incorporated into the Ethiopia Empire in 1894<sup>263</sup>.

Regarding the relationship of the kingdom with the surrounding states there is shortage of written sources, particularly, for the period before the arrival of the Oromo in the region. However, oral informants stated that, the Yem people and government had established different kinds of relations with the neighboring states such as Enariya, Hadiya and Kambata even before the arrival of the Oromo<sup>264</sup>.

The most important neighbors of the kingdom of Yem were the Sidama kingdom of Enariya in the northwestern directions, Bosha (Garo) and Kaffa in the south and eastern direction, the Gurage, Kambata and Hadya beyond the Gibe River in the east. In addition, after the arrival of the Oromo in the region, Limmu Enariya and Jimma shared boundary lines with Yem in the southwestern direction<sup>265</sup>.

In the relationship between Yem and its adjacent states, what is well known is that the leaders of the surrounding states took part on the coronation ceremony of the new king of Yem mainly looking for his blessing. This was the case as it was believed that the blessing of the new king had superior spiritual power to administer their respective states peacefully. Some of the neighboring states of Yem that went to get the blessing of the Yem king were Kaffa, Dawuro, Konta,

---

<sup>263</sup> Shailu Zebe, *Yem and culture, Southern, Nation, Nationalities and Peoples Regional state* Bureau of Culture and Tourism, 2002, p.30.

<sup>264</sup> Informant Ato Niguse Zebe, Gezahegn Rega, Telikalegn Hailu

<sup>265</sup> Wendemagen eta'l, *Ye Yem Behiresb Tarik*, Yem special worada Culture, Tourism and Government Communication office, 2004 E.C, pp.69-70.

Kambata, Walyita and others in the region<sup>266</sup>. This practice of going to the king of Yem to get blessing continued up to the reign of Menelik II<sup>267</sup>.

Before the arrival of the Oromo, of all states that surrounded the kingdom of Yem, the Gurage people had strong trade, marriage, social and political interactions with the kingdom of Yem. For instance, the Yem and Gurage established common front against the Oromo. Besides, the two people worshiped common deity called abba at Enar<sup>268</sup>.

Based on, the marriage interaction of the Yem people and its neighboring states such as Jimma, Gurage, Limmu, Bosha (Garo) and other, it was mostly conducted between the Yem women and the men of neighboring states. Because in Yem culture, men were not allowed to marry circumcised women<sup>269</sup>. In Yem, if women were circumcised, they were marginalized by the community and it would be very difficult for them to get husband and acceptance. However, they had the right to marry from outside<sup>270</sup>.

Across the Gibe River, there were interactions of marriage, trade, and political nature between the Kambata and the kingdom of Yem. Accordingly some clans in Yem such as Soal, Kamoso and Kanshro are believed to have originated from Kambata<sup>271</sup>. Moreover, there were some sort of cooperation and collaboration between the Kambata and the Yem people against the Oromo. On the other hand, even if they did not go to a full\_scale war, there were frequent cattle raids between Kambata and Yem kingdoms which triggered hostile between the two sate. Regarding the relationship of Yem and Hadya, it was largely hostile accompanied by repeated raids and conflicts. After the arrival of the Oromo in the Gibe region the kingdom of Yem also made frequent raids against the neighboring people and states of Limmu Enariya and Jimma<sup>272</sup>.

According to oral informant and available scant literature, before the arrival of the Oromo in the Gibe region, there were both friendly and hostile relationship between the kingdom of Yem and other states in the area. But most of the clashes which broke out between Yem and surrounding

---

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>268</sup> Mekonnen Waldyese, *Zoka Ya Yem Hizb Tarik*, Far East printing press, 2011 E.C, p.76.

<sup>269</sup> Informant Ato Mekonnen Waldayes, Niguse Zeben

<sup>270</sup> Informant Ato Bantarga Almayhu, Gebeyhu w/senbet

<sup>271</sup> Informant Ato Ramsa Diga

<sup>272</sup> Sailu Zeben, p.31.

states such as Hadiya, Kambat, Kaffa, Dawro, Enariya, Garo Biloo and Gibe river. It was from this strategic location that the Macha Oromo began to expand into the Gibe region in general and the kingdom of Yem in particular<sup>273</sup>.

During the coming of the Macha Oromo to the Gibe region, many of the pre-Oromo states in the area tried hard to resist the penetration of the Oromo. Nonetheless, the resistance of the non-Oromo entries was broken and at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Oromo were able to settle in the territories of the former Enariya kingdom. Following that the name of Enariya was changed into Limmu Enariya, which becomes one of the five Gibe sates in the region<sup>274</sup>. The other group of Macha Oromo also settled in the adjacent regions like the area in where Jimma kingdom was emerged later<sup>275</sup>.

According to, the former inhabitants of Jimma kingdom there is controversy and there is no apparent evidence that clearly elaborate about the former inhabitants of the area. However, Getachew Fulle claims that, formerly before the arrival of the Oromo, the Kaffa people inhabited in the area. Even if the claim is not historically justified, the Kaffa people left the area because of strategic importance of their current location during Oromo people expansion<sup>276</sup>. Other sources claim that before the Oromo expansion the area where Jimma kingdom emerged was under the control of Yem<sup>277</sup>.

On the other hand, the arrival of the Oromo to the region affected the interaction of the former Gibe states including the Yem with the highland kingdom. Moreover, it was one of the causes for the end of the strong kingdom of Enariya and the state called Garo (Bosha). Above all, the expansion of the Oromo to the Gibe region challenged the independent existence of the states like the kingdom of Yem and forced it to abandon some part of its former territories for the Oromo<sup>278</sup>.

---

<sup>273</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>274</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ *Introduction to History of Yem*, Asmera university press, 1988. PP. 78-88.

<sup>275</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>277</sup> Milkyas Limiso, *Ethno-History of Yem people, Southern Nations, Nationalities and peoples Regional state* Buearuof Culture and Tourism, July, 2017, p.31.

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid*

Regarding to oral informants and some literature, before the arrival of the Oromo, particularly, during the period of the Mowa dynasty the western territorial extension of Yem extended up to Bāda Buna, which is now found to the east of Jimma Town<sup>279</sup>. Some other informants even claim that the former territory of Yem includes the current Jimma town<sup>280</sup>. On the other hand, even though it is very difficult to accept Getachew Fule, asserts that the western territorial limit of Yem extended even up to Gojab River<sup>281</sup>. Here what ever the southern and northern territorial limits of the kingdom, from the above discussion we can understand that the kingdom of Yem was one of the kingdoms in the region until its incorporation into the Ethiopia Empire in 1894 and it owned large territory in the beginning of its history<sup>282</sup>.

Based on the interaction of Yem with the government of the Christian kingdom, unlike other neighboring states such as Kaffa, Enaryaia, Hadiya, and Gurage that kingdom of Yem, was largely encircled by the Gibe and Omo rivers, and thus it was protected from external pressure. This isolation of the kingdom from outside enabled it to be affected very little by outside influences for a long period of time. Thus, they managed to preserve their cultures for a long time<sup>283</sup>.

However, the Yem people began paying tribute in horse to the Christian kingdom during the time in power of Emperor Yāshaq (c. 1412-1427). In addition, during the reign of Susuneyos (r-1607-1632), the kingdom of Yem accepted the tributary status of Christian Empire. But the people of Yem were not in a position to be decisively subjected and administrated by the emperor himself. Getachew Fule states this as follows.

.....[Yam] was not affected by expansion of the medieval Christian states of Ethiopia for instance, James Bruce, based on the account of Antonio Fernandez, wrote that king of [Yam] during the latter's visit to the kingdom was "neither subject nor vassal" of Susuneyos (1607-1632). Surprisingly, while the neighboring kingdoms of Enaryaia, Garo and Kaffa are reported to have either been conquered or heavily influenced by the evangelization efforts of the medieval kings like Zara Yacob (1434-1468), Sarsa Dängäl (1563-1596), Galawdious (1540-1559) as well

---

<sup>279</sup> *ibid*

<sup>280</sup> *ibid*

<sup>281</sup> Niguse Zebe, *Ya Habesha Masero*, 2012 E.C, PP.141-146.

<sup>282</sup> *ibid*

<sup>283</sup> Mekonnen Waldyase, p.77.

as Gondarin kings Susuneyos, Fäsilädäs (1632-1667), Iyasu I (1682-1706) we have no information how much[Yam] was affected.<sup>284</sup>

However, when we compare the influences of the forces of Ahmad Ibn Ibrahim Alagazi (Ahmad Grañ), which caused a huge devastation to churches that were built by the founder of Mowa dynasty, Bäläwäld, with military and evangelical influences of the Christian highland kingdom of Yem, the influences of former was much higher than the later. Because following the establishment of Mowa dynasty by *Amno* Bäläwäld, Christianity spread in Yem kingdom. But later as result of the war of Ahmad Grañ, churches in Yem were burnt in to ash. Following this, the Yem people returned to their former traditional religious practices until the re-introduction of Christianity into Yem by Fitawrari Gäbrä-Madihin Bogibo, which was true after the incorporation of Yem in to the Ethiopian Empire in 1894<sup>285</sup>.

But during the later period, particularly after the arrival of Oromo, the independent existence and isolation of the Yem kingdom was frequently changed by the neighboring states of Limmu Enarya and Jimma. The recurrent challenges particularly that came from Jimma kingdom threatened the independence of the Yem kingdom. At the end the forces of Abba Jiffar II together with the imperial army, under the leadership of Ras Wäldägiorgis, integrated Yem into the Ethiopian empire states<sup>286</sup>.

#### **4.2. The relationship between kingdom of Yem peoples and Jimma kindom**

The relationship with neighbours Yem people's political condition, historical and socio-economic activities of the community played important role. Probably the same factor might have played important role for the interaction between the kingdom of Jimma and Yem<sup>287</sup>.

Based on the linguistic interaction between Jimma and Yem it is mostly the Yem people that speak Afaan Oromo in the border areas as well as in their interior parts of Yem. In the frontiers areas between the two states, Afaan Oromo is more commonly used in their conversation. To the

---

<sup>284</sup> Getachu Fulle, *The kingdom of Janjerio. A Historical Survey to 1894*, B.A. Thesis, A.A.U., 1995, pp.40.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>286</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>287</sup> Sailu Zeben, p.32.

opposite most Jimma Oromo who lives in the border area as well as inside Yem could not speak Yamsa<sup>288</sup>.

According to documents found from Yem culture and tourism office, from the total population of Yem it is estimated that around 20% of the population speak only Afaan Oromo and 60% speak both Afaan Oromo and Yamsa<sup>289</sup>. Where as most Jimma Oromo who live in the border areas between the two states and inside Jimma could not speak Yamsa. From this, we can understand that Afaan Oromo is more dominate than Yamsa<sup>290</sup>. This is mainly because of two factors first it was mostly the Yem people that came to Jimma for different reasons such as seeking job, fertile land and their relatives who were brought to Jimma by Abba Jiffar II during his reign and then after. The second factor is mainly related with the effect of the war of Abba Jiffar I and Abba Jiffar II against Yem<sup>291</sup>.

Concerning religious interaction, the book called Yä Yem Hizib Tarik, an Amharic edition, states that Islam had a long history in Yem. However, it was started to expand in the area since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Especially, after the repeated war that was fought between Abba Jiffar II of Jimma and Yem, Islam was expanded in the area alarmingly. In general, according to the 1987 censuses from the total population of Yam 25% were Muslims<sup>292</sup>.

Most of the, informants indicate that the Yem people who brought as “Slaves” by the two Abba Jiffars settled at a places called Santama, Dagoso, and Marawa (areas which are found around Jimma) were converted to Islam. The rest of Yem community who were left on their native soil also accepted Islam gradually. After the conflict of Abba Jiffar II of Jimma and his contemporary in Yem, Abba Bogibo, the former sent clerics to Yem in order to speak Islam, which might have significant role for the expansion of Islam in the area. However, after direct administration of Yem by the imperial government, Jimma was not in a position to send as many religious teachers as before to the area. As a result, Islamic education began to get weaker and weaker in Yem.

---

<sup>288</sup> Wandemagegn eta'l, p.69.

<sup>289</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ Shu maset vol.II.2001,p.14.

<sup>290</sup> *ibid*

<sup>291</sup> *ibid*

<sup>292</sup> *ibid*

This affected the spread of Islam in Yem<sup>293</sup>. In addition, informants stated that in the past most Yem who came to Jimma were converted to Islam<sup>294</sup>.

Concerning the marriage interaction between Jimma Oromo and Yem, most men from Jimma referred to marry the Yem Wome because the latter participated actively in the indoor and outdoor activities. On their economic interaction the people of Jimma Oromo and Yem were interdependent. Accordingly, the former were dependent on the latter to get products such as barley, wheat, bean, pean, lentil, chickpea, ethion (product of Ensät) and give office, maize, and sorghum to Yem<sup>295</sup>.

Particularly Boke (Deri) market, in Yem attracted different people from different areas since distant past<sup>296</sup>. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Boke market was one of the strategies for the northern and eastern lines of long distance trade where traders could get different products including slave. During the time of conflicts between Jimma and Yem kingdoms the trade activities between the two sates were conducted by “diplomatic” merchants who had permission from both sides<sup>297</sup>.

On the other hand, beside the above peaceful interaction, Jimma and Yem people were under confrontation and war for a long period of time. Accordingly, there were conflicts between tato (amno) Adlono of Yem and moti (king) Abba Jiffar I (r. 1830-1855) of Jimma in 1843. During this era, the confrontation between the two sates was not raids but major wars. This period is remembered as a period of Bato neiya by the Yem people which means a period of crisis and violence<sup>298</sup>. The cause for the 1843 conflict between Jimma and Yem was the interest of king Abba Jiffar I to expand his domain into Yem kingdom<sup>299</sup>.

On top of this, other groups claim that the assassination of the younger brother of Abba Jiffar I, and his six friends by Tato (Amno) Adlono was also stated as a cause for the 1843 war between the two states. The king of Yem did this in order to abort the political marriage which was

---

<sup>293</sup> Malkam Tadase, Anthen G/Mariam

<sup>294</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>295</sup> Milkyas ,p.8.

<sup>296</sup> Wandemagen eta'l,p.99.

<sup>297</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>298</sup> Mekonnen,pp.76-78.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid*

intended to establish between the two states. The king of Yem was not interested in the political marriage. Because he believed that the marriage alliance was arranged to control the whole territory of Yem. Besides, the king was not interested to establish the marriage ties with Muslim Jimma Oromo kingdom<sup>300</sup>.

In order to realize his ambition of controlling vast territory king Abba Jiffar I fought with Yem, Boshha (Garo), Kaffa, Dawro and other Omotic kingdoms of the region. Consequently, the traditional expansion of Jimma was achieved at the expenses of Garo (Boshha), Badi Folla and Yem<sup>301</sup>.

Mohamed Hassen states that in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the power of the king Abba Jiffar I grew rapidly and in 1843 the king sent his forces against the Yem kingdom. The main thing that instigated Abba Jiffar I to launch an attack against the kingdom of Yem in 1843 was his unexpected success on a strategic trading post called Bādi Folla<sup>302</sup>. This was a strategic place for long distance trade that was located to the north of Jimma and between Limmu Enariya and Yem. As a result of its strategy for the north-south and eastern line of long distance trade, particularly, for Yem, Badi Folla was one of the most important causes of conflicts among Jimma, Limmu Enariya and Yem<sup>303</sup>.

In about 1841 the two hostile Oromo neighboring states signed agreement against the kingdom of Yem. Then they united forces of Jimma and Limmu Enariya declared war against Yem and emerged victorious. After their victory, Yem was transferred to Limmu Enariya and become under the control of moti Abba Bagibo (Ibsa). But after two years in 1843 Abba Jiffar I of Jimma declared war on Yem and he was brutally defeated<sup>304</sup>.

Following his occupation Bādi Folla, Abba Jiffar I was able to open an independent long distance trade line on the north- south caravan route. Then competent and contemporary of Abba Jiffar I, Abba Bagibo (Ibsa), who had strong relation and interest in Bādi Folla remained silent about the expansion of Abba Jiffar I to Bādi Folla. This silence of Abba Bagibo encouraged

---

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>302</sup> Mohammed Hassen, *Oromo of Ethiopia. A History of Ethiopia 1570-1860*, Red sea press, 1994.

<sup>303</sup> Wandemagen et al, p.72.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid*

Abba Jiffar I to launch an attack over Yem in 1843<sup>305</sup>. But before he declared war on Yem, Abba Jiffar I negotiated with Abba Bagibo (Ibsa) to get his neutrality. Because in the 1830's and early 1840's Yem was under the loose control of Abba Bagibo (r. 1825-1861)<sup>306</sup>. Besides, Getachew also claim that Yem was under the control of Enariya in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. However, the book of wendimagen, Ayele, Niguse and other, an Amharic edition, do not agree with this idea. Rather, these authors argue that for a long period of time until 1894 Yem was not under the control of any neighboring states<sup>307</sup>. After securing the neutrality of Abba Bagibo, Abba Jiffar I “sent a strong force in to [Yam] through the gates by which they were never to return”. And the forces of Abba Jiffar I were badly beaten by the forces of Tato Adlono of Yem<sup>308</sup>. For more look the following statements.

On 27 September (1843) a massager from Jimma arrived at Saqqa to inform about the disaster had come upon the troops of his country, who were going to attack the [Yam] of Yamma. The country was defeated on the border by ditches and fortifications of palisades. There were [thirty five] gates of entrance. The [Yam] opened them and said to the men Jimma, which their own forces were in a state of panic and had run away to certain mascara (a fortified house). Full of confidence, the Jimma advanced. A good number of troops entered in to the mascara and then the [Yam] closed all the gates. Then they jumped on the men inside and then started the carnage which went on for a long time. 307 cavalry with red shirts were cut down. The number of solders of lesser rank who were killed was so great that .... They could not be counted. Jimma had lost all her brave warriors in this single encounter alone.... The men of Jimma abandoned ten leagues of the countryside having lost (many warriors). At this time, Jimma was seeking an agreement with Limmu, Gomma, Gumma, and Gera for revenge and to drive the [Yam] from the land. The [Oromo's] estimated the loss of Jimma at ten thousand<sup>309</sup>.

As a result of their victory over the powerful Jimma kingdom, the Yem people were very much inspired. They become self-confident then ever before. The 1843 war between Jimma and Yem led to the forty years confrontation between the two neighboring states<sup>310</sup>. The Yem people stated

---

<sup>305</sup> Mekonnen, p.83.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>308</sup> Wendemagegn eta'l, pp.74-77.

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid*

this period as a period of *boti neiya* by the people of Yem. In the coming year (1844) Abba Jiffar I launched an attack against Yem to revenge his former humiliating defeat. At this time, the forces of Yem under *amno (tato) Adlono* were already “intoxicated” by their former victory fought with Jimma out of their fortified trench<sup>311</sup>. This becomes a good chance for the forces of Abba Jiffar I, to fight the army of Adlono. Finally the forces of Yem were badly defeated, *amno (king) Adlono* was captured and imprisoned; his relative were sold into slavery by Abba Jiffar I<sup>312</sup>.

During the war of 1844 the forces of *amno Adlono* was defeated at a place called Gadal Kétté, an area which is found near today’s Bulbul. Consequently, *amno Adlono* was imprisoned at a place called Kara (Yadi), which is located in the current Omo-Nada district and later in 1847 king Adlono was released<sup>313</sup>. Following the release of *amno Adlono*, the confrontation between the two states continued until the incorporation of Yem into the Ethiopia Empire in 1894<sup>314</sup>. However, according to other sources the king of Yem (*amno Adlono*) was killed by Abba Jiffar I at a place called Dagoso, which is located in the current district of karsa of Jimma<sup>315</sup>.

In 1850’s during the reign of king Abba Boqa of Jimma (r 1857-1862) and his contemporary in Yem *amno Dallo (Dogamno)*, who was the successor of Adlono, there was conflict. The war was carried out in two directions “at the Injullu plain beyond the present town of Dänābā, and near Abba Boqa’s trench district”. In the war it was the Yem that had the upper hand but *amno Dallo (Dogamno)* was captured and imprisoned for three years, his relatives were sold into slavery by Abba Boqa of Jimma. However, when catastrophic drought hit Jimma for consecutive three years most people believed that the cause for the drought was the inhuman treatment of *amno Dallo* by Abba Boqa of Jimma<sup>316</sup>. And *amno Dallo* was released making an “oath” not to fight again with Jimma. However, like his predecessors after reached his country *amno Dallo*

---

<sup>311</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>312</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>313</sup> *Informant* Ato Mazmura Kebede, Niguse Zebe, Gezahegn Rega, Mathios G/Madihin

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>315</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>316</sup> Sailu Zebe

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid*

(Dogamno) also launched an attack against its hostile state. Consequently, the hostility between the two states continued during the next decades<sup>317</sup>.

In addition, in the 1860's and 1870's even if there were no major conflicts between the two states, the antagonistic atmosphere was there. During this period the ruler of Yem was amno Gasso (Abba Bogibo)<sup>318</sup>.

On the other hand, other literatures claim that in the 1870's Abba Gomol of Jimma confronted with Yem and enslaved some of them. One of the war captives of Abba Gomol during the then war was Abba Fita Abba Miler, who was the relatives of Abba Bogibo. Later during the reign of Abba Jiffar II (r. 1878-1932) Abba Fita Abba Milet become the governor (Abba Qoro) of Herito area<sup>319</sup>.

On the other hand, during the 1870's conflict between Yem and Jimma, Abba Gomol pushed the Yem to the rugged mountainside and deep gorges of the Gibe River. But he was not in a position to get the total submission of the Yem (Yamma) people. Nevertheless, the armed confrontation between Jimma and Yem kingdoms reached its peak during the reign of Abba Jiffar II<sup>320</sup>.

According to some informants, the first confrontation between Abba Jiffar II and Yem was stared at a place called Bulbul, an area which is today found Sarbo and Assandabo towns. In this confrontation, the Yem were beaten and retreated. The second confrontation between the two states during the time of Abba Jiffar II was at a place called Mokoyu<sup>321</sup>.

In order to get the submission of Yamma people, Abba Jiffar II did not only use military force but also he used strategies such as attracting the Yem people to live and work in Jimma in order to use them as a secret agents (spies) against the kingdom of Yem. He also provide different kinds of gifts such as horses, clothes, mules and arms for those Yem, who visited in order to attract the other Yam. Those Yem, who got these gifts told about the glory and generosity of Abba Jiffar II to others. This encouraged a large number of Yem people to visit the place of

---

<sup>318</sup> Informant Ato Niguse Zeben, Adamu Mamo, W/r kebebush Rago

<sup>319</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>321</sup> Informant Ato Gezaghen Rega, Adamu Mamo

Abba Jiffar II to get gift<sup>322</sup>. This strategy increased the popularity of Abba Jiffar II in Yem and enabled him to get some Yam to fight on his side as well as to use some others as spies against the Yem kingdom<sup>323</sup>. One of the well-known individuals, who was assigned by Abba Jiffar II to attract the Yam people to his place was a person called Ogady. Who was living at a place called waze, which is located to the north of the present day Dänäbä town<sup>324</sup>. The other individual was called Abba Rago Madasho, who was Yem, but living in Jirren and accomplished this activity<sup>325</sup>.

On top of this, he assigned the Yem as administrators' of different border districts between the two states in order to use them as watch dogs against the invasion of Yem and to expand his country into Yem. For instance, we can mention the case of Abba Fita Abba Miler, who was the slave of Abba Gomol, assigned as administrators of Herito province by Abba Jiffar II<sup>326</sup>. Besides Abba Jiffar II used the strategy of settling volunteer Jimma Oromo and Yem people on the open land on the border area between Jimma and Yem giving arms. This strategy attracted some Yem to Jimma kingdom<sup>327</sup>.

Beside the above strategy, when he got conducive environment Abba Jiffar II declared war against Yem. For instance there was war between the two hostile states in 1880's. At this time the army of Jimma attacked the kingdom of Yem on the direction of Dari Hereto. This war was a kind of Jihad that was declared against the government of Yem to convert the people of Yem in to Islam. But as usual the forces of Jimma could not get the total submission of Yem<sup>328</sup>.

Moreover, citing Cerulli, Herbert Lewis mentioned that after the war of 1880's between Yem and Jimma the latter emerged victorious and captured many areas, which were formerly belong to the Yem kingdom. Abba Jiffar II also brought many Yem people as slaves and settled them to the west of Jiren, at a place called Sântämä. Lewis also added "in 1960 we found that some of the people of Santama, west of Jiren were said to be or to be descended from [Yam] slaves of Abba Jiffar II who have become [Oromo]"<sup>329</sup>. Besides, Lewis mentioned that in 1888 there was

---

<sup>322</sup> Informant Ato Negatu Gojam, June 9, 2012.

<sup>323</sup> Informant Ato Tekle Mencho, June 9, 2012.

<sup>324</sup> Informant, Ato Bedelu Kasahune, Teshome G/Senbet may 20 2012

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>327</sup> Informant Tekalign Hailu, Geazaghen Rega

<sup>328</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>329</sup> Wademagen et al, p.78.

irregular war between Jimma and Yem. Nonetheless, according to some archival sources, during the later age, those Yem who were settled in Santama by Abba Jiffar II were exploited by the local resident and administrators of the area<sup>330</sup>.

However, according to Katabo, before the incorporation of Yem in to Ethiopia in 1894 almost two-thirds of the territory of the Yem kingdom was taken by Abba Jiffar II<sup>331</sup>. During the military campaign of Menelik against Yem in 1894, Abba Jiffar II participated actively sending Abba Diga Abba Rorro, his war minister. Following this the independence of Yem came to an end<sup>332</sup>.

During his reign Abba Jiffar II built a palace and mosque on the top of mounts Bor and ordered the Muslim Sheks to preach the people of Yam to accept Islam. However, after the return of Fitawurari Gäbrä-Mädihin Bogibo from Addis Ababa in 1899 with Madhanialam Tabot the people destroyed both the palace and mosque<sup>333</sup>.

Following the war of 1894, the then king of Yem, anno Bogibo, went to Addis Ababa through Gurage land and appealed to Menelik to clear the forces of Abba Jiffar II from his territory. But he suddenly died before concluding the discussion with the emperor. Subsequently, his successor and son Gereno, later Fitawrari Gäbrä-Mädihin continued the appeal. After five years the efforts of Gereno and his father became fruitful. Consequently, Menelik II ordered Abba Jiffar II to remove his force from the Yam territory. Finally, before his return to his country Gereno was baptized by Nigus Mikael of Wollo and named Gäbrä-Mädihin and give the title of Fitawrari<sup>334</sup>.

Next to the return of Fitawurari Gäbrä-Mädihin in 1899 there were dispute between Jimma and Yem on the territorial limit of Yem. Because Fitawurari Gäbrä-Mädihin opposed his territory up to Bulubul in the west. However the Abba Jiffar of Jimma did not accept the opposition. Due to this, the imperial goverement sent its own boundary demarcation committee under the leadership of Chala. Besides to Chala, the boundary demarcation committees included Däjazmach Amanuel, Nägadras Muse and Nägadras Sahile. In this time, the government of Jimma was represented by Sultan Abba Jiffar Abba Dula, Abba Biya Abba Jiffar and Abba Dula Abba Jiffar.

---

<sup>330</sup> *ibid*

On the side of Fitawurari Gäbrä-Mädihin Bogibo was represented by the Qagnazmach Takle-Mariam Abba Diga and Sheik Adam Abba Wari<sup>335</sup>. The negotiators those assigned from imperial government under the leadership Chala did not solve border demarcation<sup>336</sup>.

Finally the imperial government ordered, those Muslim dominating areas were given to Jimma and the Christian majority areas were given to Yem. However, this decision did not satisfy the Yem people<sup>337</sup>.

According to Pawlos Negno, following the occupation of Yem by the united force of Menelik II and Abba Jiffar II the former sent a letter to Moti Abba Jiffar II of Jimma kingdom stop the inhuman treatment, harassment and enslavement of the Yem people<sup>338</sup>.

As stated before, because of the war between the two states, a large number of people died and dislocated from both sides, the border area between the two states became vacant because people who were living on the area evacuated not to be victims of confrontations. To solve this problem Abba Jiffar II settled volunteers giving various kinds of incentives including weapons. Some provinces of Yem Yem such as Herito, Malaka and the like are found on the border area between the two states came under the control of Jimma<sup>339</sup>. War captives of Yem were either sold as slaves or forced to serve Abba Jiffar II and his successors. For instance, according to some informants, the palace (masera) of Abba Jiffar II, which is found at Jiren, was built by war captives and slaves from Yem<sup>340</sup>. In addition to, the palace of Abba Jiffar II was constructed from the wood that came from Yem by the Yem slaves. All above the war created cultural and economic influences on the people<sup>341</sup>.

---

<sup>335</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>337</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>338</sup> Mekonnen Waldyese, p.102.

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>341</sup> Informant Takalign Hailu, Adamu Mamo

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. Yem history from Italian Occupation to 1974

#### 5.1 The response of the Yem people to the Italian Aggression and Its Aftermath

At different times, different countries tried to threaten the sovereignty of our country Ethiopia. From this the known foreign invasion the 1935/36 Italian aggressions laid the ground for five years (1936-1941) occupation of Ethiopia by Fascist Italy<sup>342</sup>. In order to erase shameful defeat at the Adwa in 1896 fascist Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1935/36. Due to this, the feudal political system in the country was replaced by fascist leadership of Benito Mussolini. Opposing the invasion and subsequent occupation there were multitudinal the patriotic resistance movement rise in different part of our country.<sup>343</sup>

During the five years occupation period, the Yem people also fought against the Italian under the leadership of Yem patriotic such as Basha Kābādā-Mādihin and his brother Tāfārā Gābrā-Mādihin. In addition, Basha Kābādā was the leader of the Yem patriots at the battle of Maichew<sup>344</sup>. Some of the famous Yem patriots that fought at the battle of Maichew were as follows: Mamo Bushen, Gabra-Yesus Jawui, Haylu Jimma, Abba Jobir Abba Fogi, Gābrā Mādihin

Diga, Kidane Kasito, Wademagen Waito, Zawudu Mago, Dula Rago, Abba Mechi, Alemu Magal, Bali Di du, Abba Bora Abba Machi etc. from this Almu Mgal, Tāfārā Waju, and Abba Bora Machi died on the battle field<sup>345</sup>.

While Italian troops reached Yem land under the leadership of Captian Brunti, Yem was under the governor of Dājazmach Balaynah Dabalke, a person who was assigned by the government of Haile Silase I to administer Yem. But following of the fascist to Yem, he left the area. As a result the then, vice administer of Yem, Fitawrari Gābrā Mādihin Bogibo, was not in a position to

---

<sup>342</sup>Wandemagen etai, Ya Yem Beherseb Tarik Ya Yem special worada Culture, Tourism and Government Communcation office, 2004 E.C. PP. 91-92.

<sup>343</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>344</sup>*Informants* Ato Niguse Zeben, Mezmure Kebede, Gezaghen Rega,

<sup>345</sup> Milkaya Lamiso, p. 32.

organize the resistance movements of Yem against Italy mainly because of his old age<sup>346</sup>. This brought good opportunity for Italians to capture the area without strong resistance<sup>347</sup>.

The Italian force entered Yem through Sokour under the leadership of Captain Brunti, who was accompanied by different agents from Jimma. One of the known individuals from Jimma that supported the force of Italy against Yem<sup>348</sup>. During the period under discussion was Sultan Abba Jobir. In addition to, this person called Qägnazmah Tekle Mariyam Diga the son-in-law of Bogibo played a great role in showing the way to the Italian soldier from Sokour to Fofa<sup>349</sup>. As reward for this, later Tekle –Mariam Diga was assigned as administrator of Yem during five years occupation period. After the arrival of Fofa the fascist first arrested and imprisoned the aged vice administrator of Yem, Fitawari Gäbrä Mädehin Bogibo. He was replaced by Qägnazmach Tekle Mariyam Diga, who was the nephew of Fitawari Gäbrä-Mädehin<sup>350</sup>.

In addition, during the five year occupation marginalized occupational groups such as tanners, potters and hunters were also assigned leaders. This was not common until that time. Later, Qägnazmach Tekle –Mariam Diga, understood the intention of the Italians and began serving as Yewust Arbegna (inner) patriots and contributed a lot in providing ammunitions as well as information for the Yem patriots<sup>351</sup>. After liberation, for his contribution as Yewust Arbegna (inner patriots) the government of Haile Silase I gave the title of Qägnazmach for Takle –Märiam. The other individual that served as Yewust Arbegna (inner) patriots in Yem was Abba Sura Gawisa. He was also got the title Giraazmach for his contribution<sup>352</sup>.

After controlling Yem the Italian Banda Captain Brunti was replaced by captain Trente. Later, he was also replaced by captain Major. It was Major who led the Italian force in Yem during the 1941 liberation period<sup>353</sup>.

During the Italian occupation of period, the patriot's resistance movement in Yem was under the leadership of royal family, high ranking military officials, and clan leaders the Yem people. The

---

<sup>346</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>347</sup> Wandamagen eta'l, p.92.

<sup>348</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>349</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>350</sup> *Informant Abba Ramso, Haile Marim Koyas*

<sup>351</sup> *Mekonnen Walaye, p.111.*

<sup>352</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>353</sup> Niguse Zebe, p.124.

fascist group in Yem was particularly under the leadership of TäfäräGäbrä-Mädhen and his brother Basha Käbädä Gäbrä –Mädihin who were the son of the well known Yem ruler Fitawrari Gäbrä –Mädehin Bogibo<sup>354</sup>. In 1935/36 Basha Käbädä was fighting against Italy on the Ogaden front. Later after the Italian occupation of the country he was one of the leaders of patriotic resistance movement around Dawro and Konta<sup>355</sup>. For his great efforts at the end of Italian occupation (1941) he got awarded and the title of known as Basha from the emperor Haile Silase I. Täfärä Gäbrä-Mädehin Bogibo was one of the known ant- fascist leader in the Yem. He Organized and led anti-fascist movement in Yem in collaborations with patriots of the neighboring regions. For instance, Täfärä Gäbrä-Mädehin Bogibo formed strong bound with Darasu Duki, who was the patriotic resistance movement leader of Waliso and walkite and Abba Dima, who was the resistance leader of Limmu against fascist Italy's occupation<sup>356</sup>.

According to local elders, in the struggle against Italy around Yem the forest called Fitara was historical. Because it was in this forest that the Yem patriots prepared their strategies to launch guerilla attack against the Italian force. Besides, Täfärä Gäbrä-Mädihin conducted repeated meeting with Garasu Duki in the forest. They used mostly guerilla fighting methods. That means whenever possible, particularly at night based on the information they got from Yewust Arbagna(inner) patriots the Yem patriots attacked the fascist force and returned to their base at Fitara forest and other nearby forests in the area. In the patriotic restance of Yem one of the most difficult points was role of *bandas*<sup>357</sup>.

Over the eve of 1941 there was one devastating war fought between the forces of Italian and the Yem patriots .This war had taken place at a place called Metelo kema (metelo trench), a trench which was dug under the foot hills of Bor mountain by Amno Bogibo. On the war the fascist forces were defeated by the Yem patriots, who were under the leadership of Täfärä Gäbrä mädihin Bogibo<sup>358</sup>. After the war, the fascists tried to escape using vehicles. But the Yem patriots expanded their attacks in different directions closing all major routes lying down big trees along the escape routes. One of the roads which were closed by the Yem patriots during the period was a road leading to the Anna Barri forest, which was found on the way from Fofa to

---

<sup>354</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>355</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>356</sup> Wandemagegn eta'l, pp.96-97.

<sup>357</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid*

Sakoru<sup>359</sup>. Formerly, this road was built by the Italian in order to connect Fofa town with the main road along Sokoru. In the Ann Barri forest the forces of Italy faced a great challenge from the Yem patriots<sup>360</sup>. After the war at Metelo kema the following folktale was said about Täfärä Gäbrä- Mädihin

Täfära barro baassé	Täfära did a miracle
Borirra kärrä baasé	He built a road along Bor Mountain
Majorin mätaa raasé	Major (Italian general) coat headache
Majorin garra raasé	Major was frightened very much
Majior läffära harkisé	Major fell down on the ground <sup>361</sup> .

In 1941, as stated above when the whole of Ethiopia became free from the fascist rule, those Italian administrators and military group in Yem also tried to escape. However, the patriots closed all major roads using big woods and stones and trapped Italian soldiers and administrators in Yem<sup>362</sup>. Later the trapped Italian soldiers and administrators they were free when Italians released the Yem Amno Fitawurar Gäbrä Mädhin Bogibo, who was imprisoned during the Italian occupation of the area. During that time, the main negotiator of the Yem was Täfärä Gäbrä-Mädihin Bogibo<sup>363</sup>.

In general, the role of the Yem people during the five years Italian occupation period was very high. This is because the people fought firmly in an organized manner against the fascist Italy in collaboration with neighboring states under leadership of Täfärä and other high ranking military officials and clan leaders. Other patriots in other part of Ethiopia the Yem patriots too played their own role in the liberation activity of the country from the yoke of Italian colonization<sup>364</sup>.

In 1941 there was some sort of instability and crisis in the Yem mainly because of the power vacuum created. But later Emperor Haile Silase I assigned Däjazmach Geazahagn Kalkile and

---

<sup>359</sup>Informant Ato Mekonnen Waldayese

<sup>360</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>361</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>362</sup>Sailhu Zeben, Yem and Culture, pp.96-97.

<sup>363</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>364</sup>*Ibid*

Fitawrari Gäbrä-Mädhin Bogibo as the main and vice administrators of Yem, respectively<sup>365</sup>. His son Täfarä was also assigned vice –administrator system of the traditional local administration next to his father subsequently, the administrative system of the pre-occupation period was restored in the area. Because of this these occupational groups such as pottery, tanners and hunter lost the political and social rights that they enjoyed during the occupation of by the Italians<sup>366</sup>.

Moreover, after liberation unlike other patriots in Yem Täfarä was not given title. Because after the period of liberation when he was hand asked to hand over his weapon he refused. Beside to this he was not interested to approach and rule accompany rules who were assigned to the area from the center<sup>367</sup>.



Figure.10. (Source from Yem cultural and Heritage management Bureau) Tafara Gabra Madihin the son of Fitawrari Gabra Madihin

Fitawrari Gäbrä-Mädhin died in 1956 and next to his death, his son Täfarä replaced him and administered Yem until he died in 1966. At time of Täfarä a person called Fitawurari Makonnen Guangul was assigned from Addis Ababa to administer Yem. Following the assignment of Fitawurari Makonnen Guangul political marriage was established between the daughter of Makonnen Guangul whose name was Altayu and Täfarä GäbräMädhin<sup>368</sup>.

<sup>365</sup> Niguse Zeben, p.75.

<sup>366</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>367</sup> Mekonnen waldayese, p.150.

<sup>368</sup> Informant Ato Adamu Mamo, Lishanu Sanbi, MalkamuTadesse

## 5.2 Administration of Yem in the post liberation period (1941-1974)

After the liberation of Ethiopia from the fascist rule in 1941 the pre-1936 administrative system was restored. But later different administrative rearrangements were made mainly to collect more taxes and to create a uniform, centralized and manageable administrative system in the country<sup>369</sup>.

In the 1943 first administrative rearrangement the country was divided into twelve (12) awraja (province), 60 wärädas (districts), 339 wäräda mäsälänés and 1176 mikitil mäsälänés. However, in 1946, this administrative rearrangement was changed and the awrajas became Täcklay Gizat and those wärädas became awraja gizat. Those with the title of a wäräda mäsälänés became wäräda gizat and the mikitil mäsälänés became mikitil wäräda gizat<sup>370</sup>.

According to the 1946 administrative rearrangement Yem was included under the Kaffa Täcklay Gizat and Jimma Awraja<sup>371</sup>. However the Yem peoples were not happy to be put in Jimma awraja. They repeatedly raised questions to the imperial government and Täcklay Gizat administrators. In 1963, Däjazmach Kifle Dadi (the governor of Kaffa Täcklay gizat) and Däjazmach Abba Jäbäl Abba Jiffar went to Yem with the order of the central government to have a discussion on the issue of promoting Yem from wäräda to awraja. But the Yem people strongly opposed the coming of Däjazmach Kifle Dadi with Däjazmach Abba Jäbäl Abba Jiffar, whom the Yem people considered him as the son of the former enemy. The delegated officials slightly escaped from the attack of people such as Yamane Roba and Dogoye Bulo. Due to this, the central government decided to continue Yem under Jimma Awraja<sup>372</sup>. During the local administration like the pre-Italian times governor from Yem was assigned from the center. But the Yem peoples have the right to their own vice governor in their territory<sup>373</sup>.

As stated above the only group that was considered as a loser because of the evacuation of Italian from Yem was Fuga occupational group. Following the occupation of Ethiopia in general and particular in 1936 the fuga occupational groups got administrative authority of their surroundings, this was not allowed for them during the imperial period. But as a result of the

---

<sup>369</sup> Mekonnen, p.74.

<sup>370</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>371</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>372</sup> Mekonnen waldayese, pp.90-94.

<sup>373</sup> *Ibid*

Italian departure, occupational groups in Yem and other areas such as Gurage and Hadiya lost the authority they got during the time of Italian occupation<sup>374</sup>.

From liberation period to the revolution the following individuals were assigned from the center to administer Yem district:

Däjazchach Gäzahegn Kalkilé

Fitawrari Atema Giorgis,

Nägadras Agélo

Qägnazmach Tämäsgän Warkinhah

Däjazmach Wubé

Qägnazmach Tilaye Färda

Girazmach Lakäw Färada

Girazmach Gétu Ayale

Fitawrari Mäkönnän Guangul (r.1962-1964)

Yamato Alaka Admasu (1964-1971)

Ato Alämu Wäldä Hana (r.1971-1973)

Girazmach Hayilu (r.1973-1974)<sup>375</sup>.

The most important development in the country during the post liberation period was the introduction of parliamentary representation. After the revised constitution of 1955 in the principle all people of the country were allowed to be represented in the parliament. However, in reality the election and representation was full of bias and did not favour poor peasants and

---

<sup>374</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>375</sup> *Ibid*

tenants in Yem in particular in the country in general .The election was conducted in 1957 to assign representatives for a period of four Years<sup>376</sup>.

Accordingly, a person called Kābāda Sori represented the Yem people three times up to his death in 1970. During the period the symbol of this person was sheep. Regarding the level of his education he attended church education<sup>377</sup>.

### **5.3 Land Tenure system in Yem in post\_ liberation period**

In the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century, Menelik II began his territorial expansion in to the southern, southern western and south eastern direction of Ethiopia. The people and traditional leaders of the newly incorporated area reacted in different ways. For example, there were areas which strongly resisted the expansion and suffered consequently. On other hand, there were local leaders that peacefully submitted and kept in their position<sup>378</sup>.

After the annexation of the new areas, Menelik II formed new forms of land administration in to the incorporated areas. Due to this the land owner's peasants were distributed for the new land lords. This distribution of the land for the land lords made the people of the newly incorporated areas landless and subjected to form Farms the land lords of the new land owners<sup>379</sup>. At some areas these landless people were forced to share up of the 75 percent of their agricultural products to the landlords .The same is true for Yem peoples<sup>380</sup>.

New forms of the land tenure system were introduced into Yem mainly after its incorporation. Regarding the new land tenure system which was introduced to the newly incorporated areas of southern, southwestern and, southeastern parts of the country scholars do not have common outlooks. For instance, many writers argued that the following the incorporations of various areas, there were an immediate nationalization of lands from the newly incorporated local peasants and the land was distributed to conquerors the church and landlords. In addition, this

---

<sup>376</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>377</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>378</sup> Milkayas Lamiso, pp.35-38.

<sup>379</sup> Saihlu Zeben, p.88.

<sup>380</sup> *Informant Ato Tekalign Hailu, Adisu Kita, Bedilu Kashahune*

group argues that the local peasants lost their former land rights after the conquest and incorporation of by the Abssinian<sup>381</sup>.

The other group argues that in the areas where there was peaceful submission, the local peasants were not largely evicted from their land. Rather the local chiefs remain in their position and became *balabats* getting one third of the land for their collaboration. But they were accepted to pay tributes to the central government. However, in this those peacefully submitted areas, the peasant were subjected to pay tribute to the central governments and evicted peasants from their land was limited. The same was true in Yem because local *balabats* had the right to own land but they were accepted to pay tribute to the imperial government particularly, collecting from the tenants<sup>382</sup>.

In Yem before the introduction of the new forms of land tenure system land was under the control of the king (Amno or Tato) and the people of the Yem were excepted to pay tax in kind (grain and domestic animals) or in the labor (corvee labor) and during the late period in Maria Theresa dollar for king. However, following the intensification of the oppressive new land tenure system eviction of the local peasants from their fertile land was very common, the land right that the local people enjoyed before was neglected and many Yem migrated to deferent parts of the country in order to escape from verities of taxes. In addition tenants in Yem were expected to built the house and fence of their master, give labor service every Tuesday and Friday, collect firewood ,give military service whenever needed provide gifts during birth of the a son circumcison, promotion of their master<sup>383</sup>.

On the top of this, following the forceful incorporation of Yem into Ethiopian Empire by the combined forces of Ras Wäldägiorgis and Moti Abba Jiffar II of Jimma in 1894, the local administration of Yem was replaced by the feudal administrative system<sup>384</sup>.

The land was previously owned by the local people were appropriated and distributed to the feudal land lords in the form of Qälads, Gashas, and Rests. The local communities were evicted from their land and they became landless. The government officials forced local communities to

---

<sup>381</sup> *ibid*

<sup>382</sup> Milkayas Lamiso, pp.47-49.

<sup>383</sup> *ibid*

<sup>384</sup> *ibid*

pay tribute in the forms of Sisso, Erbo, and Asrat (tithe). Sisso is the three fourth of the total production. It was paid to land lords by the landless tenants. Erbo is the the amount of money given to the Bale Rist (Rist owner) from land less tenants (chisegnoch) as gift of because they used his land (Rist). Asrat is a kind of tribute that used to pay to the government by Bale Rest<sup>385</sup>.

Although the cultivation of the land began before the coming of Menelik army in Yem an Oxen farming was adopted from the neighboring Oromo peoples after the entry of Menelik' s army into the Yem territoty<sup>386</sup>.

At the beginning, in Yem the livelihoods of the imperial soldiers were largely dependent the local peasants. Because the imperial soldier were divided among the different households of the local peasants to get food and other necessary needs. But later the imperial governments actively Yem involved in evicting the local peasants from their land and distributed it in to the soldiers and other leaders who were assigned to administer the area. This action of the imperial governments changed the local peasants Yem into tenant. So the incorporation of Yem had its own negative consequences on peasants of Yem by introducing the new tenure system instead of the former one<sup>387</sup>.

Moreover, following the incorporation of Yem into the Ethiopian Empire in 1894 the Shewan army was settled in important strategic areas such as Fofa, Saja, Deri, and Mokoyu. Then they began evicting the local peasants from their fertile land and became feudal lords in the teritory<sup>388</sup>.

After the incorporation of Yem those peasants who had their own land were given to the Mälkägña (Neftagna) together with their lands and became tenants. As result ,between 1941and 1974 the socio-economic and political right of the local peasants of Yem in particular and the newly incorporated areas in general were too much worse than ever before.This mainly because of the introduction of Qälad system, varieties of tax<sup>389</sup>.

---

<sup>385</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>386</sup> *Informant Ato Nigatu Gojam, Niguse Zeben*

<sup>387</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>388</sup> Tamasgen Hailu, *A Historical survey of Taxation in Sokoru Warada (1901-1969)*, B.A Thesis Jimma university 2004, pp.34-40.

<sup>389</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>390</sup> *Ibid*

#### 5.4 Land and Taxation system in Yem during the reign of Haile Silase I

During the privatization and registration of the land was expanded. In Yem, according to the archival sources, the land of the local farmers was taken illegally under the banner of ‘Giber Tal’ (failure to pay tax). This activity was widely expanded particularly after liberation of 1941<sup>390</sup>.

A period between 1936 and 1941 because of the Italian occupation of the country the former practice of land sale, land grant and eviction of peasants had been mitigated. Beside to this, the moral of local balabats and feudal lords was badly affected<sup>391</sup>. After the liberation the practice of the land sale, land grant for soldiers, patriots, returning exiles was expanded. Among some factors that instigated the imperial government to expand land grants were: introduction of verities of taxation in order to strengthen government and its supporters and avoid opposition<sup>392</sup>.

After the coming of the liberation of Ethiopia, in 1941 successive measures were taken regarding land taxation system of the country. This is due for the imperial government did this to rise the government revenue. On other hand during this time there were measurement (the so called Qäläd) for the distribution and redistribution<sup>393</sup>.

In 1942 E.C (1949/50) that the first land measurement was conducted in Yem. After that measurement; land in the area was categorized in to lam maret (cultivated land), lam- taf maret (semi-cultivated land) and taf maret (uncultivated land). However this division was not properly applied in Yem<sup>394</sup>. During this time Yem wäräda gizat faced a problem of collecting the expected tax. This means while categorizing the land as, lam-tef and taf, large amount of the taf- maret (uncultivated land was categorized under cultivated land<sup>395</sup>

Later in the 1948E.C (1955/56) land measurement was conducted in Yem Wärädä gizat for the second time. As stated above, the problem was 1942E.C (1949/50) was not correctly applied. The third land measurement was done in Yem 1955E.C (1962/63). During the third land measurement the governor of Yem district was Fitawurari Mekonnen Guangul. But later, in

---

<sup>391</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>392</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>393</sup> Mekonne Waldayese, 122-123

<sup>394</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>395</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>396</sup> Tamsegen Lama, *A Historical survey of Sokour Warada, Jimma university M.A Thesis, 2015, pp.42-43*

1956E.C (1963/64) this person was removed from his governorship of Yem mainly because of the tax fraud he committed .Then he was replaced by the Yä Mäto Aläka (captain) Admasu Kasa in the same year, 1964<sup>396</sup>. After he came to power the first action taken by him was writing a letter to then governor of Jimma Awruaja, Däjazmach Abba Jäbäl Jiffar about mischief, done during the 1942 E.C. (1959/60) land measurement and its impact on the income of tax collection of the area<sup>397</sup>. Following the letters the awruaja tried to consider compliant and sent an experts group to Yem on June, 1958E.C. (1965/66) to study re-measure the land that was under the categorized läm märet (cultivated land) without fulfilling the important criteria. The land was not measured in 1966/67.This is due to experts that were assigned to re-measure the land were largely engaged in tax collection activities during the time and the summer season. Käbädä Dinku was one of the individuals who involved on the land measurement during the period under discussion<sup>398</sup>. Besides, the land in the area, particularly in Gibe River valley was founded in scattered and difficulty to access as it was hot and unsettled. Final the land was measured in 1960 E.C. (1967/68). At the time, an expert from Jimma awruaja and Kaffa Täklay Gizat, local mislänes and chika-shu<sup>399</sup>.

In 1967/ 68 land measurement about 1167 gasha land which was formerly categorized as lam mart (cultivated land)without filling the necessary criteria re-measured and categorized as taf maret (uncultivated land) . Around 124 gasha lam maret (cultivated land) was found during the study that was abandoned by individual who opposed to pay tax (gibir täl). In addition to there were 102 individuals who applied to use the land which was categorized as taf (uncultivated) after paying the necessary tax. Later only 66 individuals were found on the spot to use the land. Accordingly, 14 gasha taf (uncultivated) lands were distributed among these 66 volunteers, who were ready to pay fire gibir<sup>400</sup>.

---

<sup>397</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>398</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>399</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>400</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>401</sup> Milkayas Lamiso, pp.38-39.

<sup>402</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>403</sup> Tamsegen Lama, *A Historical survey of Sokour Warada, Jimma university M.A Thesis, 2015, pp.42-*

From the total 1167 gasha taf maret (uncultivated land) around 14 gasha was distributed among interested group who were ready to pay fire gibir. That means the remaining 1153 gasha was categorized under taf maret. Later it was found that out of the 14 gasha which was distributed among individuals who were ready to pay fire gibir, was paid for one gasha and the controversy on the the land of the area had continued<sup>401</sup>.

During this period, all over the country land was divided into different categorizes into Yämängist märet, siso or balabat maret, madaria masret (land which was given to government officials and patriots) and Simon maret (land which was given to churches<sup>402</sup>. This was done according to their contrubition from half gasha upto two gasha either in Yem. For instance one of the well known Yem patriots Basha Käbädä Gäbrä-Madihin got land reward from the imperial government in the former Kullo Konta awuraja of Kaffa Täklay gizat at the place called Shara kabala. In 1973, the then governor of Kullo Konta awruaja Fitawurari Danak Fanta (r1969-1974), asked Basha Käbädä to pay 30 birr to promote him from the title of Bashato Fitawurari. But Basha Käbädä opposed to pay the money and remained bearing his former title<sup>403</sup>.

Besides, taxation, the imperial government introduced education tax and health tax during the post-liberation period. These tax brought a huge burden on the Yem people began complaining. These were paid with land tax<sup>404</sup>.

---

<sup>403</sup> *ibid*

<sup>404</sup> *ibid*

## Conclusions

Yem peoples are one of the earlier inhabitants of Southwestern parts of Ethiopia. The original name of the people is called Yem/Yamma. It came from the name Yemen, an Asian country where Yem people traced their origin.

In Yem there were around 224 clans. Among them with the exception of Gama, Gemelo, Mowa, Fuga, Kamosho, Soala, the other clans are said to be indigenous to the area. From these clans the most dominant clans in the kingdoms were Gama, Gamelo, and Mowa. Beside to this, every clan had its own Jiga (clan leaders). The Jigas were the highest administrative and decision making body in their respective clans. In addition to this, clans such as Gama, Gémélo, and Mowa had respect in the kingdom and able to established their own dynasties in the kingdom.

On other hand, there was clan like Fuga (tanners' hunters, potters) that got the least respect in the kingdom. Before the introduction and expansion of global religion i'e. Christianity and Islam, the Yem peoples were the followers of traditional religion. Accordingly, in Yem each clan had its own deity called *awas*. However; the supreme deity in the kingdom was *Hao*. The mediator of the clans and their *awas* was called *Mag*.

The economy of Yem was largely dependent on agricultural activity (crop production and animal husbandry) but trade and craft (mainly weaving and metal working was supplementary economic activity of Yem. During the long distance trade of 19<sup>th</sup> century, *erasho* (administrative of the region) *gagna* (administrator of community) were responsible in collecting tribute from merchants. *Deri* (*Boke*) market was important slave market in the kingdom. Regarding medium of exchange in the kingdom was like *Amole*, *Maria Theresa thalers*, *Maro*, and bartering were the known one.

The Yem kingdom were traditional social administrative bodies such as *Jiga*, *Toga*, *Laga*, *Regi*, *Shini* and *Mila*. The most important organ in each clan to administer, arbitrates, and manages social issues such as Marriage and communal conflicts. In the kingdom the political administration was below the *amno* (king), organs like *Astérsär*, *Mentésär*, *Waso*, *Erasho*, *gangna* and *gurmu* were vital one.

The kingdom had good relationship with the neighboring states with the exception of Jimma. The kingdom had fought long lasting war with the kingdom of Jimma from 1843-1894. This brought that the relation of the two kingdoms in to hostile.

During the fascist Italian occupation period, the patriotic resistance in the movement in Yem was under the leadership of royal family, high ranking military officials, and clan leaders. At this period anti-fascist groups in Yem were under the leadership of Tafara Gäbrä-Medihin and his brother Basha kábädä Gäbrä-Medihin who were the sons of the well known in Yem ruler Fiturari Gäbrä-Medihin Bogibo. In other hand, in the administrative re-organization of post liberation period Yem was under Kaffa Täkläy Gizat and Jimma awuraja.

The new form of land tenure system was formed in Yem after 1894. Due to this, peasants were evicted from their land by the Makagna and became tenants. In Yem before the introduction of the new land administration system land was under the hands of Amno (king) and people pay tribute to Amno (king).

In 1942 E.C. (1949/50) the first land measurement was conducted in Yem. After measurement, land was categorized in to lam maret (cultivated land), lam tef maret (semi-cultivated land), taf maret (uncultivated land). The second land measurement was conducted in 1948 E.C (1955/56). The third measurement was done in 1960 E.C. (1967/68).

## Referances

### Pubulished sources

Abir, M. *Ethiopia: Era of the princes*. London. William Clowea and Sons Limited, 1968 .

AkliluYilma“ .*The linguistic Etiquette of Yamsa,*” *Journal of EthiEthioian studies, Vo.1.nov.1993*

*Ethiopian studies, Vol.xx, No.1.nov1994.*

Bahru Zewede. “A century Ethiopian Historiography” .*Journal of Ethiopian studies, Vol.33,no,2000.*

- Bahru Zewede, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855-1974*, Addis Ababa university printing press, 1992.
- Beckingham, C.F, and HuntingFord, G.W.B, “*Some records of Ethiopia 1593-1646*” London; Hakluyt society, 1954.
- Crummy, D. “society, state and Nationality in the Recent Historiography of Ethiopia”. *Journal of Ethiopian studies*, Vol.31, No.I.1990.
- Daniel E.Hebding and Leonard Glick, *Introduction to Sociology: Community Collage of Philapephia*, 1996.
- Donham,Donald ,and Wendy James. *The southern Marches of Imperial Ethiopia; Essays in History and social anthropology*. London /New York; Cambridge University press,1986.
- Demeke,Fekeda, *Askech of Yamsa Grammar*,S.N.N,P.R.S.June 2013.
- .“*Agriculture.and social organization among the Yem of south west Ethiopia*” The case of GorumTege.M.A Thesis, in social anthropology, Addis Ababa University, 199 5.
- .*Yem. “In D.Freeman and A.Pankhust.Living on the Edge; Marginalized Minorities of crafts workers and hunters in southern Ethiopia “Addis Ababa University; Departments of sociology and social Administration, collage of Social sciences, Addis Ababa University, 2001.*
- HuntingFord, G.W.B. “*The Oromo of Ethiopia, the kingdom of Kaffa And Janjero*” .London; International African Institute, 1955.
- John Markakis. “*Conflict in Federal Ethiopia first National conference on federalism, Conflict and peace Building*” united printers’ pals, 2003.
- John Ston, c. “*Travels in Southern Abyssinia*” Vol.2.London; Gregg International Publishers, 1884.
- Mekonn Waldyese, *Zoka Ya Hizb Tarik*,Far East Trading Press,2011E.C.
- MitikuNegash. “*Yem Legal system*”Vol.I, Far East Printing Press, 2004.
- Mitiku Negash “*Yem Legal system*”Vol.II, Far East Printing Press, 2012.
- Milkyas Lamiso. “*Ehino History of Yem people*”.Hawassa.S.N.N.R.Bureau of culture and Tourism July2017E.C.
- Niguse Zeben, “*Ya Abesha Masero*”Far East Printing Press, 2012.
- Taye G/Mariam. “*Ye Ethiopia HizbTarik*”, Addis Ababa’centeralpriting press, 1972.
- Wondemagegn“, et, al.*YeYemBheresebTarik.N.P.P.Yem special Worada culture Tourism and Government communication Bureau, 2004 E.C*

## Unpublished Materials

Amanuel W/Maria. "A *short History of Yem 1894-1974*".B.A Thesis, department of history, Addis Ababa University, 2014.

Asrat Ermolo. "*Political history of Hadya, 1941*".M.A Thesis, department of history", Addis Ababa University, 2014.

Fiseha Hailu "*.Noun Morphology of Yamsa*" .B.A Thesis, Department of Linguistics,

Addis Ababa University, 1984.

Getachew Fule. "The *kingdom of Janjero; A Historical survey of to 1894.*"

*B.A.Thesis*, Department of History, Addis Ababa university press, 1985.

Getamesay Demsie. "*Funeral ceremony and Analysis in Yem*" .B.A. Thesis, Departments of Linguistics, Dilla university, 1984.

Giram Mamo. "*Yamsa verb Morphology*" .B.A.Thesis, Department of Linguistics, Addis AbabaUniversity1986.

Guluma Gemada.*Gomme and Limmu: The process of state Formation Among the Oromin the Gibe Region, C.1850-1889, M.A.Thesis, A.A.U.,1984.*

Hirut W/mariam. "*Word formation in Yem.*"M.Sc.Thesis, in Linguistics, Addis Ababa University, 1993.

Kabamu Addise, *A political History of Hadiya, 1890-1941*.M.AThesis, Departement of History, Addis Ababa University, 2007.

Mohammed Hassen,*The Oromo of Ethiopia:A History 1570-1860*.Cambridge:Cambridge university press,1990.

Seid Ahmed Mohammed ,*A Historical survey of Dawuro, South west Ethiopiaup to 1974* Addis Ababa University, 2007.

Tekalign W/Mariam. "Slavery and Slave Trade,in the kingdom of Jimma, 1800-1835"  
M.A.Thesis, A.A.U.1985.

\_\_\_\_\_ She'u Maset No.1.2000.

\_\_\_\_\_ She'u Maset No.2 .2002.

\_\_\_\_\_ She'u Maset No.3.2003.

\_\_\_\_\_ She'u Maset No.4.2004.

\_\_\_\_\_ She'u Maset No.5.2005.

\_\_\_\_\_ She'u Maset No.6.2006.

\_\_\_\_\_ She’u Maset      No.7.2007.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ She’u Maset      No.8.2008.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ She’u Maset      No.9.2009.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ She’u Maset      No.10.2010.

**List of informants**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Place of interview</b>	<b>Date of interview</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Remark</b>
<b>Mezmure Kebede</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>Saja town</b>	<b>June 4/11/2012</b>	<b>B.A in history and heritage management</b>	<b>Officer of saja urban planning</b>
<b>Niguse Zeben</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>Sajatown</b>	<b>May 14/9/2012</b>	<b>Employer</b>	<b>Officer of Yem development program</b>
<b>Tekalign Hailu</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>Saja town</b>	<b>May 14/9/2012</b>	<b>B.A in foreign language and literature</b>	<b>Head of Yem special warada culture and tourism officer</b>
<b>Gezahegn Rega</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>Fofa town</b>	<b>May14/9/2012</b>	<b>M.A Geography</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Adamu Mamo</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>Fofa town</b>	<b>June 23/10/2012</b>	<b>M.A in geography</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Antenhe G/Mariam</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>Saja town</b>	<b>June 4/10/2012</b>	<b>B.A in history and heritage management</b>	<b>Officer in civil service Bureau</b>
<b>Haile Mariam Koyas</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>MafoKebele</b>	<b>May 12/9/12</b>	<b>Farmer</b>	<b>House holder</b>
<b>Negatu Gojam</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>Mafo kebele</b>	<b>June 9/10/12</b>	<b>Farmer</b>	<b>House holder</b>
<b>Gebyehu W/senbet</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>Fofa</b>	<b>June 4/10/12</b>	<b>B.A physics</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Tekle Mencho</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>Mafo kebele</b>	<b>June 9/10/12</b>	<b>Farmer</b>	<b>House holder</b>

<b>AbbaRamso Diga</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>Fofa</b>	<b>June 8/10/12</b>	<b>Wavaver</b>	<b>House holder</b>
<b>Feleke Wube</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>Saja</b>	<b>June 20/10/12</b>	<b>B.A in Fokler</b>	<b>Officer in culture and heritage management</b>
<b>Wunshet Gojam</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>Saja</b>	<b>June 20/10/12</b>	<b>B.A in Arichology</b>	<b>Office in culture and tourism office</b>
<b>Demise Degife</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>Fofa</b>	<b>May 14/10/12</b>	<b>Diploma in education</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Bekele Sanbi</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>Fofa</b>	<b>May 14/10/12</b>	<b>B.A forein language and litureture</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Balyne Girmu</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>Saja</b>	<b>June 3/10/12</b>	<b>M.A in leadership</b>	<b>Office in rural political service</b>
<b>Mathios G/Madihin</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Fofa</b>	<b>May 12/9/12</b>	<b>B.A in history and heritage management</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
<b>G/Micheal Garo</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>Fofa</b>	<b>May 14/9/12</b>	<b>Diploma education</b>	<b>Officer of record Bureau</b>
<b>Gezahegn G/Sadik</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>Fofa</b>	<b>June 10/10/12</b>	<b>B.A in history and heritage management</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Bedelu Kashune</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>Fofa</b>	<b>May 20/9/12</b>	<b>M.A Civic and ethical education</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
<b>Teshome W/Senbet</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>Fofa</b>	<b>May 20/9/12</b>	<b>Civic and ethical education</b>	<b>Teacher</b>

## Glossary

Abanni Hao-----	Father of God
Awas-----	Dietys of individuals
Bori Ama-----	Highest Mountain in Yem Special Warada
Dakam-----	God of earth
Donokam-----	God of sky
Hao-----	creator
Kita-----	Bad (evil) spirit
Mag-----	clan leader
Zawataki Zawa-----	water snak

**Appendix.I, A**

**Interview Guide**

**Sex** \_\_\_\_\_

**Age** \_\_\_\_\_

**Educational Status** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. What was the Yem the original home land of Yem people?**

---

---

**2. What kind of Political-cultural administrative system do the Yem people have?**

---

---

---

---

---

**3. What are the basic economic activities of the Yem people?**

---

---

**4. What were social-structures of Yem peoples?**

---

---

**5. What were three ancient dynasties of Yem people peoples?**

---

---

---

---

---

**6. What was the traditional religion of Yem people?**

---

---

---

---

**6.1. What do you remember the indigenous religion of Yem and ritual practices?**

---

---

---

---

**6.2 How Christianity introduced in Yem peoples?**

**6.3 Which dynasty formed Islamic religion in Yem peoples?**

---

---

---

---

**6.4. How did Protestantism introduced in Yem peoples?**

---

---

---

---

---

**7. What were the clans of the Yem peoples?**

**a** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **b** \_\_\_\_\_ **c** \_\_\_\_\_

d

---

---

**8. What do you know the war between Yem kingdom and King Abba Jiffar of Jimma I,II?**

---

---

---

---

**9. How was the defense system of Yem kingdom in the earlier time?**

**10. How Menelik II expanded his territories in Yem Kingdom?**

---

---

---

---

---

---

**11. Who were occupational groups in Yem Kingdom?**

---

---

---

---

**12. What do you remembered about commemoration and funeral ceremony in Yem People?**

---

---

---

---

---

**13. With whom Yem peoples have interactions with neighboring peoples until 1894?**

---

A \_\_\_\_\_ b \_\_\_\_\_ c \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ d \_\_\_\_\_ e \_\_\_\_\_

**14. How did Yem peoples interacted with Jimma kingdom?**

---

---

---

**15. How was land Tenure system in Yem kingdom in the past?**

---

---

---

---

---

---

**AppedixII.B**

