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A Historical Survey of the Dalocha woreda of southern Ethiopia.

A Thesis presented to College of Social Science and Humanities

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History and Heritage Management.

By: Begashaw Arba

Advisor: Abdu Muhamed Ali (Ph.D)

Dilla Ethiopia

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned declare that this thesis is my original work, and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been dully acknowledged.

Name: Begashaw Arba

Signature: _____

Date of submission: 5 July 2023

Place of Submission: Dilla University,

College of Social Sciences and Humanities,

Department of History and Heritage Management

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I would also like to forward my heartfelt thanks to all my informants for their cooperation and willingness to provide me what they knew about the Dalocha woreda during the time of my field work. Thanks to Dalocha woreda Culture and Turist office and Finance and Development office. Finally and foremost I would like to thank my God who has helped me in all my achievement and success.

ABSTRACT

The thesis investigates a historical survey of the Dalocha woreda of southern Ethiopia of Siltie zone. The objectives of the study will to reconstruct the history of Dalocha woreda. It mainly depends on the critical analysis of archival sources, secondary and oral sources. The thesis focused on reconstructing the history of Dalocha woreda from the beginning of its establishment. Even though the thesis is about a socio-economic history of the Dalocha people, political aspect of different Ethiopian regimes were also discussed to some extent to show the history, continuity and change in the socio-cultural, political and economical history of the people under the regime. The Siltie people had their own traditional administration and indigenous conflict resolution. The socio-cultural and political system of Dalocha was replaced by a new system after the area became part of imperial Ethiopia in 1889. After 1903 the land distribution and the subsequent institutionalization of the Neftegna Gabbar system in the area completely changed the local peoples traditional administration and their culture. The socio-economic and administrative changes made by the improvement in the life of most of the local people of the area. The scope of the study delimited to investigate some futures of historical survey of Dalocha woreda of southern Ethiopia. This historical study has important source for other researcher to study Dalocha woreda.

The economic exploitation and socio-cultural suppression continued until 1974. The 1974 revolution and its subsequent formation of provisional administration was accepted most of the local people in the early period as it provided the right over the ownership of the land and freed from economic exploitation as well as religious and socio-cultural suppression. However later they developed hatred against the Derg due to implementation of some up popular policies by force. The situation which resulted the opposition group overthrow the Derg regime in 1991 and EPRDF took power. The EPRDF led government has retained and continued rural and urban land tenure of the Derg. During the EPRDF Dalocha district regaining of ethnic and administrative independence which they lost following the incorporation of the Siltie land into Ethiopia under Menelik II force in 1889.

PREFACE

This study is a historical survey of the Dalocha woreda of southern Ethiopia of Siltie zone. The major purpose of the thesis is to reconstruct the political, economic and social history of the Dalocha district. In general, the history of district in the Ethiopian historiography is still at its infancy. This thesis seeks to fill the gap in the historiography of the local history of Siltie. The thesis has six chapters. The first chapter provides highlights on the geography and the people of the district. The second chapter focuses on the regional administration in modern Ethiopia. Third chapter focuses on the history of the Dalocha district under Haile Silassie regime, where as chapter fourth and fifth deals with the history of district during and after the period of Derg regime respectively. Chapter six deals the social services in Dalocha woreda. Historical data used in the thesis consists of three kinds of source. The first category is written secondary literature. However most of these literature deals with works that deal with the general history of Siltie and do not explore developments in the district specifically. The second categories of sources used in the work are primary written sources. These include manuscripts and archival sources. The third category oral information from knowledgeable personalities who had direct or indirect relation with the history of the district of Dalocha as leaders, participants, observers and administrators. I gathered oral information by interview individually and group.

I faced a several problems while conducting the research for thesis. First, the archival document of Dalocha had been not well organized. Most of these documents were damaged and burnt down as waste disposal. Even the archival document which I used the thesis were they do not have folder number and some archives I collect from individual who served as local governor and administrator of kebele of the former government and so on.

Finally I would like to state that, I make no claim to have carried out a comprehensive research. I hope that my modest contribution will be of great interest and importance to others who want to conduct further research on the history of the district.

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Glossary

Abotgare - Male lineage

Agge – Free choice of female to marriage

Ansenbet Amara – Saturday's invasion

Ansewa – Highlanders

Asrehosht Siltie Mount- Twelve administrative regions of Siltie

Awneya – Craft worker

Atinzot – Do not see

Awamumma – A Cushitic folk religious that existed among the Oromo

Bade – Supra tribal or chiefdom

Balabats – Local chief

Bega – Dry season

Belg – Little rainy season

Berbere – peper

Burda – Band

Buda – One who tants leather

Dega – Highland

Delala – Broker

Enset – False banana (drought resist plant)

Fandano – A traditional way of life and in particular to syncretistic religion

Fuga – A clan of low status, but they were specialized in basketry and pottery work

Gogot – Unity

Gerad – Tittle name

Kiremt – Rainy season

Mist Angedo Dinet – How many heads of cattle

Mega and Freze Agegne – Arbitration process

Qurqur – Blaksmithing

Qalla – Low Lander

Raga – Traditional judgment

Siso – One third

Sebsabi – Collector

Shegne – Final resting place
Sojat – Down
Siltie –Ge – Country of Siltie
Somano – Fasting
Summu Siltie – Eight Siltie
Tequalo-Gibot – Sudden marriage arranged by male
Tukisho – Arranged marriage
The Mulla Siltie Harbe – The whole Siltie army
Waliye – Saint
Ware – Traditional religious practice
Woleba – Farmer and Trades
Yeslamafe- Islamic language
Yesiltie Serra- Siltie local governance
Yewurshit biter – Inheritance marriage
Yemula Siltie Melcho – Tribal meeting
Yesiltie Nubre – Tribal meeting

Abbreviation

SNNPRS – Southern Nation Nationalities and People’s Regional State

A.A – Addis Ababa

CSA – Central Statistical Agency

PHRC – Population and Housing Census Report

MASL – Meter Above Sea Level

EIGS – Ethiopian Institute of Geological Survey

EPRDF – Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front

SPDUP – Siltie People Democratic and Unity Party

CCI – Council of Constitutional Inquiry

FDRE – Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

NGO – Non Government Organization

SPDO – Siltie People’s Democratic Organization

GPRDM – Gurage People’s Revolutionary Democratic Movement

KG – Kinder Garden

Key to Transliteration system

I. The seven sounds of the Ethiopian alphabets are represented as follows:

1 st	በ	Ba
2 nd	ቡ	Bu
3 rd	ቢ	Bi
4 th	ባ	Ba
5 th	ቤ	Be
6 th	ብ	Be/B
7 th	ቦ	Bo

II. Palatalized sounds are represented as follows:

ሸ = Sh

ኸ = Gn

ኸፑ = Zh

ቸ = Ch

ጀ = J

ጰ = Ph

III. Glotalized sounds are represented as follows

ጠ = T

ጠጠ = Ch

ጸ/ፀ = Ts

ቀ = Q

IV. Germination indicated by doubling

Example: - ደጃዝማች = Dejjazmach

- ገበሬ = Gabbar

Chapter one

1. Geographical setting and historical back ground of the study area

1.1. Geographical setting

Siltie zone is located in Southern Nations, Nationalities and peoples regional state (SNNPRS) of Ethiopia. The majority of Siltie people live in Siltie zone. Some Siltie people also live in the surrounding Gurage zone, Halaba special woreda or current Alaba zone as well as in Hadiya Zone. The people are also found in significant number in various urban center of Ethiopia.

Siltie zone was formed in April 2001 following a referendum that separated Siltie from the neighbouring Guarage, Hadiya and Halaba communities. It is found 172 Km south of Adis Abeba (A.A) on Alemgena to Jinka asphalt road. The Siltie have settled in the area stretching for up to 60 Km to the east and west from the main road. Their territory covers more than 3000 Km². The zone is bordered to the north and northwest by Gurage Zone, to the east by the Oromia regional state, to the south west by Halaba special woreda now Halaba zone.¹



Figure 1: Administrative map of Siltie zone (source south nation nationalities and peoples regional state administration).

¹Keiredin Tereza, *Dynamics of legal pluralism and emerging legal hybridism*. (Eclipse printing press Dec 2018 A.A Ethiopia), p.56

Administratively Siltie zone is structured ten woreda (districts) and a town administration. These are Alichu wuriro, Dalocha, Lanfuro, Siltie, West Azernet, East Azernet, Hulbarag, East Siltie, Mito, Sankura, Werabe and Worabe town administration and the zone is further divided into 225 Kebeles (189 rural and 36 urban). Worabe is the administrative capital of the Siltie zone.²

1.1.1. Location, area and population

In general, Siltie zone has area of 278609 hectare, only 196229.6 hectare (151371.48 hectare and 44858.12 hectare are covered permanent seasonal crop), nevertheless there is also 9512.6 hectare which is expected to be developed accordingly and there is also 2393.03 hectare of arid, grazing land 19348.48 hectare, 39628.77 hectare for forest and bush and marshland or swamp 3695.8 hectare covered with various type of bush. As well as 42464.12 hectare covered with various types of plantations or bush.³

The siltie lands have two agro-ecological zones, namely highland (Dega) and temperate (Weynadega) each of which covers 20.5% and 79.5% of total area of the land respectively. Thus the people have mainly settled in highland area. Siltie zone predominantly plateau and flat plain. It also has a small rugged mountains territory. The elevation of Siltie dwindles from west to east. The highest mountain in Siltie is mount Mugo that has an elevation of 3060 m. The average temperature of Siltie zone ranges from 12⁰C—26⁰C and its average annual rain fall is from 780mm-1819mm.⁴ According to Central Statistical Agency (CSA) Population and Housing Census Report (PHCR) of 2007 the total population of Siltie is estimated to be more than a million in 2017 (CSA, 2009; Bustorf 2011: 456-458). The same source indicates that 51% of the population is female.

² *Mujib Suraj, "A historical Accounting of Islam in Worabe town, Siltie zone of SNNPRs" (MA Thesis, Dilla University 2020), p.20*

³ *Siltie zone cultural and tourism department, "Tourist attraction of Siltie" (March 2022), P.39*

⁴ *Keiredin Tezera. (2018), PP. 40-41*

As the source further indicates, 91.5% of the people live in rural area, while 8.5% live in the urban area. The number of male is small compared with female in highland Siltie due to migration either to urban area of Ethiopia or outside. Nevertheless it is observed now days that the low lands and Semi high lands area are also losing their young generation, mainly women, to the Gulf States in significant number. The siltie account for 1.3% of the total population of Ethiopia. The largest ethnic group reported in Siltie zone is the Siltie people (97.35%): other ethnic groups made up of 2.65% of the population. Siltie is spoken as a first language by 96.95% of the population and 1.48% spoke Amharic: the remaining 1.57% spoke all other primary languages. Muslim account for 97.6% of the population while 2.03% practiced various domain of Christianity (Ethiopia Orthodox Christianity takes the significant share of this) (Zerihun Abebe 2013:141: Siltie zone finance abstract, 2016/17).⁵

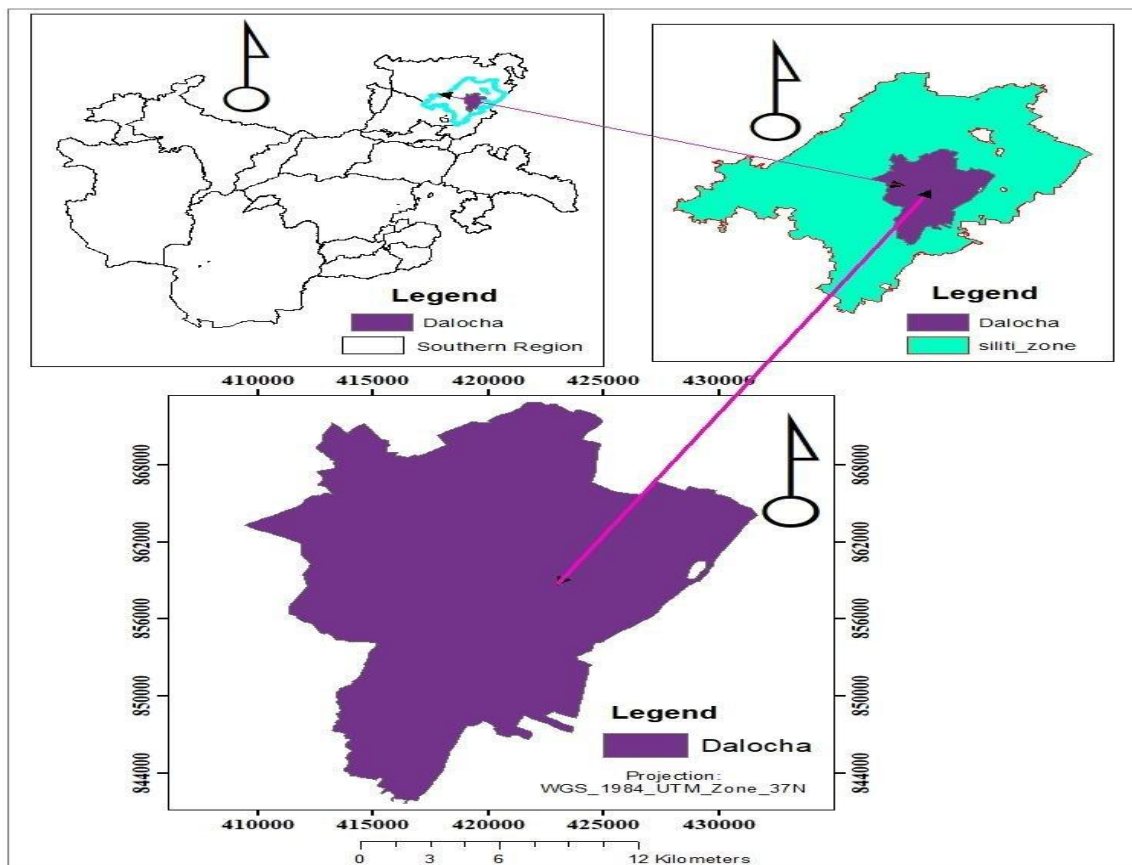


Figure 2: Map of Dalocha Woreda (source: extracted from Arc GIS software)

⁵Ibid. P.41

In 1943 was the turning point for Dalocha district because before 1943 Dalocha was administered from Wolkite area of Gurage people by governor general of Merdesa Gada assigned by central government. Informants also mention how the name Dalocha was adopted for the district. It is an Oromigna word Dalocha which means a pink like colour of soil expressed by Merdasa Gada a local administrator assigned from central government since 1940's. But some informants argue differently and mention that the name Dalocha was adopted by the name of known and prominent person Dalochu who lived in the area.⁶

Dalocha woreda is one of the ten woredas of siltie zone in Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State covering an area of 32072 hectares. Dalocha was established 1935/1943. It has eighteen Kebele (Dalocha talikessa, Metiya-Danega, Ebote, Abote- Terora, Wanjashola, Enqate-ageme, Naduge-lola, Gola Kura, Qorocho, Germama, Burqa Dilapa, Dube Godabamo, Golecheba, Agam, Enqat Agam, Jegena Lasho and one reform town of Dalocha 01 &02). Dalocha town is located 14 Km apart from Worabe. The boundary of woreda is in north Siltie woreda, in east Lanfuro woreda and in south Hulbarag woreda.

According to the census of 1999/2007 the population of the woreda in 2011/2019 are 122459 from this female is 61367 and male is 61092 concerning the settlement 90% live in rural area and the 10% live in urban area the 99% of the population is Muslim.⁷

1.1.2. Climate, rainfall and temperature

Climate is a long period of average weather condition of defined geographical area. It is determined by altitude, latitude, prevailing wind, cloud cover, pressure and wind belts. Altitude is by far determined factor for spatial variation of weather and climate, temperature and rainfall are important elements in determining the pattern population settlement, the range of crops vegetation that can be grown, soil formation processes and biodiversity and agro-ecology of a given area.

⁶ Informants: Keiredin Shifa, Mitiku Ababa, Negash Sirmolo and Huchago Workicho

⁷ Dalocha woreda Finance and economic Development socio-economic Geo-spatial data analysis and dissemination core process. (2020-2021), PP.1-3

Rainfall is simply defined as a droplet or liquid form of precipitation with varying sizes in diameter of the droplet is <2mm it is often named as light rain and if the diameter is about 7mm it is termed heavy rain. There are different types of rainfall, but in case of Dalocha woreda the type of rainfall is one which is created by the obstruction of highland or relief that is called Orographic rainfall. Relying on the reliability of rainfall for crop production and duration of growing periods the three seasonal patterns of rainfall. In this woreda experienced bega (December, January, February) provide rainfall limited part of the region belg (little rain season) that is March and April, the amount of rainfall received is relatively lower than the Kiremt rainfall that occurred in June, July and August however in each of the season the rain may begin earlier or later and ended before the usual time. This has its own impact of growing period and reliability of rainfall.

Temperature is the quantity that tells as how hot or cold something is relative to some set standard values. The degree and intensity of temperature determines the rates of vapor transpiration soil moisture content and humidity of atmosphere. The mean annual temperature of Dalocha woreda is 13.1⁰C. The meteorological data of 2010 indicate that the mean annual rainfall of the Dalocha woreda is 700 mm-900 mm.⁸

1.1.3. Topography and Drainage

The relief of Dalocha woreda is generally characterized by highly dissected rugged highlands and undulating low lands in southern part. Dalocha woreda altitude ranging from 1500 to 2400 MASL (meter above sea level) and the highland of Dalocha is 2400 MASL. Some major mountain peaks of Dalocha woreda are Balchi 2400 m located between Dalocha and Lanfuro woreda and Gafat 2350 m located at Dalocha woreda. The nature an orientation of the relief features resulted in the formation of numerous drainage system. Dalocha woreda is endowed with abundant water resources namely: Dijo, Wabera and Gale. Those drainage systems used for development for cultivation and other purposes. The drainages are providing benefits for the development of fishery and other related purposes, on the top of that the lakes and the lower parts of the rivers are using as the habitats for the great variety of fish, crocodile and birds. The major lake in Dalocha is Archuma.

⁸*Ibid: (P.4)*

1.1.4. Agro ecology and mineral occurrence

Dalocha woreda has a very diverse agro ecological conditions ranging from hot and semi-arid climate (Dega and Woynedega) in southern most parts such as Dega and Kefil Wurch type in highland of the north and northwest. Intermediate between these extremes the climate is defined to be tropical sub humid type (Woina dega) 34% of the woreda that is moderately suitable for settlement and crop production. Most part of the woreda about 98% lies under Dega type of agro ecology while Woina dega and Wurch conditions constitute 2% of the region. The varied agro climate conditions of Dalocha woreda endowed it with the production of different commercial and food crops.

Mineral occurrence although it has not been fully surveyed and studied, significant area of mineral potentials found in Dalocha woreda. Studies may be the Ethiopian institute of Geological survey (EIGS) reveals Geo-thermal energy in border line of Gola-Kura kebele, Wenja Shola and Golacheba was found⁹.

1.1.5. Economic Life

The Siltie practice mixed agriculture and cattle breeding. Like many parts of the country the Siltie economy largely depend on agriculture based on plow animal. In case of Dalocha woreda main income source is agriculture. Peasants coming from different areas of the region sell their agrarian products in various Siltie local markets. The people widely produce also livestock like goats, sheep, cattle, and chicken.

The distribution of vegetation depends on the climate condition the Siltie area. In the highland siltie the principal crop are enset, barley and beans. In the semi-highland and lowland area like Dalocha woreda where a significant amount of cultivable land is found, cereal such as maize, wheat, vegetable, fruits and legumes are produced. In these areas, located investors that are generating jobs for local people have practiced large farms with mechanized agriculture. Women are highly involved in khat market and subsistence production activities.

⁹*Ibid: PP.3-4*

Most of household in the highland Siltie are also headed by women as men go to urban centers for work. In low land areas and semi lowland area, women are engaged in household work and the local markets, in the construction sector, in daily labors as well as in the selling of traditional coffee. Each house among the Siltie has a garden to support the house hold. In the high land Siltie the garden is mainly crammed with enset and various vegetables, while in lowland Siltie different cereal including maize and wheat dominate the local production. Following the establishment of Siltie zone the construction sector has become an important source of employment for the youth.¹⁰

The Siltie people at large and Dalocha woreda particularly herd goat, sheep, cattle and chicken for their subsistence economy. Animal are source of meat, milk, butter, and egg. Animals particularly cattle are regarded as a symbol of wealth and pride for the people. The Siltie usually say, “Mist Angebo Dinet Allay” which means how many heads of cattle does a person have? to know how much the person is rich in the community. So an individual who has a significant number of livestock, irrespective of the amount of milk/meat or income he/she gains, is regarded as the wealthiest person in the society. The Siltie do not separate their animals’ abodes from their home. Rather they tie their cattle in front of them under the same roofs. It is thus an indication of the Silties strong attachment with their cattle.¹¹

The Siltie economy largely depends on agriculture based on plow animal.¹² In Siltie zone many woredas are very fertile including Dalocha woreda, the areas where a significant amount of cultivable land is found. A cereal such as Teff, Wheat, Maize and vegetable fruits and legumes are produced, however the tradition practice of agriculture discourage more production to fulfill basic need for people.¹³

¹⁰*Keiredin Tezeta 2018, P.47*

¹¹*Yedebub Biheroch Biheresebochina Kililawi Mengist Bahilina Tourism Beauru, “Yesiltie*

¹²*Reshad Kemal, “A History of Islam among Sitlie of Sankura woreda MA Thesis (Dilla University 2021), P.8*

¹³*Informant: Sultan Issa*

The people rear cattle, sheep, goat and chicken for their subsistent economy. Apart from food crop and herding animal cash crop such as chat and red pepper are also produced in the Dalocha area. The chat market has now became huge cash crop market and it is one of the source of income for district of the people.¹⁴

1.1.6. Religious Life Amonge the People of Dalocha Woreda

1.1.6.1. Traditional Belief

Somewhere in pre-civilized time human kind realized that there were forces beyond our control. This would have occurred at many times, such as during the aftermath of flooded pasture, a burned settlement, an earthquake or tordacho. The response to the unforeseen and uncontrollable was much the same whenever and wherever it happened; human kind learned we couldn't control our destiny, necessitating the need to placate forces beyond our control. Organized religious was born out of this fear of the uncontrollable. The first diets presided over and controlled nature's forces. Early man worshipped fertility goddesses and prayed to the gods of thunder and fire.¹⁵

Now a day people's worship and follow a number of different religious beliefs, such as Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Shintuism, Confuciasm and other religious, however the area that not spread these religion people follow a traditional beliefs: example large tree, river, mountain and so on.¹⁶ The whole of the communal life of the early society was strongly impregnated with their traditional religion.¹⁷

¹⁴*Informant: Sheh Hussen Abdela*

¹⁵*Todd Camey, cliff SAP woreda History (printed USA 2006), P.20*

¹⁶*Dinberu Alemu, Gogot: Yegurage Bihereseb Tarik Bahilina Qunqua, (Artistic Matemiyā Dirgit, 1995), P.193*

¹⁷*Mujib Siraj, "A Historical Account of Islam in worabe Town, Siltie zone of SNNPRs" (MA Thesis Dilla university, 2020), P.19*

Siltie was one of the indigenous people in Ethiopia which was mentioned since the time of King Amde Seyon (1314-1344). However, sources are very vague about the traditional religious practices in Siltie.¹⁸ But as it is discussed above, before the advent of Islam and Islamic groups from eastern Ethiopia, there were an indigenous people called the Zhera or Abzana who inhabited the area. But the pre-Islamic history of this indigenous people is not clearly identified. According to Trimmingham, Ulbarag which is a part of Siltie, remained predominantly pagan while (Wuriro) were Muslims.¹⁹

Some scholars noted by the end of 17thc the traditional belief of Fandano was widely practiced among the Hadiya. It spread among groups of neighboring east Gurage (Adare) presumably the Siltie. Isolation from Muslim centers of the east due to the Oromo population movement and expansion and the influence of traditional influence led to the decline of Islam in the southern Ethiopia region. In the case of Siltie the internecine conflict among themselves and against their neighbor contributed to the decline of Islam. It was during this period that element of Cushitic identities found their way to the Silti land Fandano religion of the Hadiya and the Awammuma of the Oromo. Fandano refers the traditional way of life and in particular to syncretistic religion. He also notes that this religion has spread among the Adare (Siltie) through intermarriage with the people of Hadiya along the border area. The practice of Fandano had some similarities with element of Islam. The observance of fasting known as Somano for 30 days was considered as one of the indispensable religious duties. In Fandano religion, adult had to obtain from eating food from cockcrow to sunset. Similarly the method of slaughtering and the food avoidance of Islam were strictly preserved and no Fandano would it meat slaughtered by pagan or a Christian.²⁰

According to informants, there had be the observance of the traditional religion of Fandano particularly in southern part of rural Siltie bordering Hadiya until the second half of 19thc. It is hard to find the followers of Fandano now a day as a result of strong Islamic influence among the Siltie.

¹⁸*(Ibid), P.20*

¹⁹*Spencer Trimmingham, Islam in Ethiopia, (Oxford university press, 1952), P.37*

²⁰*Braukamper, Islamic History and culture in southern Ethiopia, collected Essay, (London, 2002), P.175*

Nevertheless using the term “somano” is common among the Siltie Muslim for fasting season of the Ramadan. Awammuma (Awamu) was a Cushitic folk religious that existed among the Oromo. It was condition in which people live without organized structure form of ritual practice. Before the 19thc, Islam in Siltie had close similarities with the Fandano of Hadiya, Awammuma of the the Oromo and the traditional religious of Siltie called Aftoba. Afetoba refers to a condition in which people are nominal Muslim and their Islam is influenced by non Islamic practice.²¹

1.1.6.2. Islam and Siltie

Islam is the dominant religion among the Siltie. Muslim account for 99.5% o the population, while 0.5% practiced varies domains of Christianity (Ethiopia orthodox Christianity) takes the significant share of these.²² Islam and Siltie early contact goes, as some written sources such as (e.g Abdulfeta,2002; Braukamper,2001) indicate back to the 9th century. This was mainly connected to the establishment of ancient Islamic state such as the Makzumite Shewa dynasty and the medieval Hadiya Sultanate in Ethiopia. The Siltie call themselves as “Islam” and their language “Islamic”. It in this context that Markakis (1998: 230-231) noted that religious (Islam) is the corner stone of Siltie identity.²³

Some sources indicate that Islam made deep incursion through religious missionaries and caravan trades since the 9thc in the southern kingdom and Sultanate via central and southeastern Ethiopia frontiers (Lapiso 199: 21-15). The Siltie are among the various Cushitic and Semitic speaking people who established the ancient Muslim Hadiya Sultanate in the 13thc in south eastern Ethiopia.²⁴

²¹*Abebe Hiskel, “A socio-cultural history of the Siltie people”. (MA Thesis Dilla university 2017), P.37*

²²*Yedebub Biher Biheresebochina Hizboch Kililawi Mengist Bahilina Tourism Bearue, “Yesiltie Bihereseb Bahilina Tarik” (2007 Hawassa), P. 66*

²³*Keiredin Tezera, Dynamics of legal pluralism and emerging legal hybridism, (Eclipse printing press December 2018 A.A Ethiopia), P.56*

²⁴*(Ibid) Keiredin Tezera, P.57*

Even if Islamic presence among the Siltie has been confirmed since 9thc (Abdulfeta, 2002), it was further intensified during the 16thc following the expansion of Imam Ahmed Ibrahim Ben al-Gazi or Ahmed Gagn. The Siltie's popular 16thc saints are also regarded as important historical figure who played a significant role in the intensification as well as the spread of Islam and Islamic knowledge not only among the Siltie but also among the neighboring societies such as Mareqo, the Mesqan, the Oromo and the Halaba, Hajji Aliye Omar, Sheik Nasrallah, Gistit (Queen) Tahrat, Gistit Makiya, Gistit Muluka and Gistit/Etat Zavera are mentioned as ionic individual of 16thc Islamic scholar among the Siltie. In 19thc Islamic revivalism under the leadership of Hassen Enjamo also played important role for the expansion and intensification of Islam and Islamic knowledge among Siltie (Aklilu 2002: 46-7). The Siltie joined Hassen Enjamo of Qabena in 1881 against Menelik's expanding force through in vain.²⁵ Islam has made its way to the land of Siltie ancestors at the least since 9thc or 10thc. The religion of Islam has now become one of the identity markers of the Siltie. The nexus between Islam and the Siltie very strong that the people for long have addressed themselves as "Islam and their language" Yeslam Afe", means Islamic language. One can find arts and picture in government private building, residential houses and Islamic artistic design that depict the strong presence and place of Islam among the Silti.²⁶

²⁵*Ibid, P.57*

²⁶*Ibid, P.147*

Islam is the quasi-identical with ethno name Siltie. According to my Siltie Imams and Islamic scholar informants, sheik Dana of Wollo, Ifat sheik, Jimma Abajifar sheiks, from western Ethiopia and the Qebena Islamic learning centers are the source of Islamic education to the Siltie. Imam Shafi scholar of thought is also the dominant Islamic legal school among the Siltie. Hajji Aliye is one of the great Siltie ancestors who were in the forefront of in reconstructing the genesis of Siltie ethnic group. He and his colleagues who led the 16th c exodus to the present area from the east are also the prominent figure in the expansion of Islam 16th c. Hajji Aliye is considered as waliy (saint) who played a major role in Islamizing process in the area and its environments.²⁷

In 16th c the Imam of Adal Imam Ahmad Adal or Ahmad Gagn from time of 1524-1543 defeated Christian high land leaders. In this period to expand Islam, under the period of Imam Ahmad number of Christian churches was burnt down in Siltie land, example Christian church of Wuriro. In 1532 in the area of Mesqan, Siltie, Hulbarag and Dalocha were converted to Islam by the force of Ahmed Gagn after the defeat of Christian high land leader Libne Dingel. According to the oral tradition the follower of Ahmed Gagn and Islamic preacher who came to Mesqan, Siltie, Hulbarage and Dalocha were Sheh Usman, Sheh Berkele, Shes Merdin and Badi.²⁸ Now a days in Dalocha woreda Muslim account for 99% of the population, while only 1% practiced various domains of Christianity.²⁹

Key informant said that; The Silte Islamic scholars have been instrumental in teaching not only religious knowledge, but also brining social change for society to peacefully live with other religious neighboring people, funeral and other social integration.³⁰

²⁷*Ibid, P.147*

²⁸*Dinberu Alemu, Gogot: Yegurage Bihereseb Tarik Bahilina Qunqua, (Artistic Matemiya Dirgit, 1995), P.37-38*

²⁹*Dalocha woreda Finance and economic Geo-spatial data analysis and dissemination core process. (2020-2021), PP.1*

³⁰*Informant: Sheh Shifa Ibrahim*



Figure 3: Ye Dange Mosque

1.1.6.3. The introduction of Orthodox Christianity

Christianity was introduced into Ethiopia during the reign of Ezana and became the state religion of Aksum in 4th c A.D.³¹ Sources are limited regarding the exact time when Christianity was introduced into Siltie. Some oral and written sources indicate that the introduction of Christianity into the Siltie area goes back to the time of King Amadeseyon (1314-1344) when Amadeseyon conquered the area beyond the Awash river in the east, probably the Gurage land, he sent Christian soldiers to keep the security of the area, and the soldiers stationed in the area for long. This paved the way for the introduction of Christianity to the area. However, the conversion of local people was at a very small scale. The continuous campaign of King Zara Yacob (1434-1468) caused and laid the base for the appearance of some clans Zhera and Abzana in highland Siltie. Nevertheless, the influence of the Christian highland kingdom did not follow the establishment of a Christian church in Siltie land in its early days as it did in other parts of the region.

³¹*Taddese Tamrat, (1872), P.22*

Following the Shewa conquest, some developments occurred and Christian churches were built in Siltie around the second half of 19thc. When Menelik of Shewa subjected the Siltie land in 1888, Christian settlers arrived in the area with the introduction of neftegna-gabbar system. The northern settlers who had Christian background played their roles in the establishment of Christian churches in Siltie land. Of this churches Qoto Georgis church, Ageta Mariam church, Michael and Mariam churches of Dalocha, Balewold church of Tora and George church of Mito were the earlier one.

Though sources hardly show the exact date of the oldest church of Ageta Mariam, it is believed to built towards the end of 19thc in the locality of Abzana Ageta kebele of the Siltie zone. Though the passage of time the consolidation of Islam in the area hampered the expansion of Christianity in Siltie land. Most of the early Christian were dominated by the Muslim community and were assimilated in culture, language and religion with local Siltie people.³²



Figure 4: Balchi Saint Marry church

³²Abebe Hiskel, “A socio-cultural history of the Siltie people”. MA Thesis (Dilla university 2017), PP.46-47

In case of Dalocha according to local informants the early established church in Dalocha area was Balchi Saint Marry church and other such as Dange Saint Michael established in 1916 during the local administrator of Grazmach Geno.³³

1.2. An Overview of the History of the people of Dalocha

The History of Dalocha woreda is part of Siltie people who had established the medieval Ethiopia Hadiya Sultanate which was incorporated into the Christian highland kingdom under Amdesion (r. 1314-1344) in 14th c. This view is derived from the chronicle of medieval Ethiopia ruler, Amdesion and 16thc writer such as Almada. The chronicles of Aste Amdesion mentions an entity allied to the emperor by the name Saltagi “Saltahi” which can be interpreted as the country of Siltie.

Siltie is the only people related to the Hadiya Sultanate who did not adopt a Cushitic language. Other scholars also mentioned the 16th and 17th century’s population movement in south eastern Ethiopia contributed for the inter-mixing of various peoples and the genesis of Siltie in its current form. According to the sources due to the wars of Ahmad and the population movement of Oromo, the ancient Islamic principalities including Hadiya Sultanate were weakened and dislocated. Such incident led the ancient people including Siltie to move from the east to the south and western part of Ethiopia to the present land.³⁴

The Siltie did not have a common ethno-name for an extended period they had been named different at various time by scholars neighboring societies and even by themselves. They have been referred to as the east Gurage, Siltie Bete Gurage or Gurage sub group, Islam, Siltie, Selte, Hadiya, Adare, Ulbareg and Salte. According to respondents various neighboring people also call the Siltie in different name. The Arsi Oromo who borders the Siltie in east and north east, for instance call the Siltie as Adare in memory of people from Hararge in the east. The Mareqo on the other hand call the people as Gande or Genze while the Gurage name the Siltie as Hadiya associating the Siltie origin from the historic medieval Hadiya Sultanate.

³³*Informant: Priest Awgichew Mamo*

³⁴*Keiredin Tzera. PP.40-41*

The Siltie however, address themselves as “Islam” and their language as Yeslam afe or “Islamic language” to indicate their strong relation with Islam that shaped most of the identity manifestation of the society. They also call themselves Urbareg, the land of old lion. Additionally it is not uncommon to hear a Siltie person when he or she describes himself or herself based on subgroup name such as Azernet, Siltie, Alichu Wuriro and Melga.³⁵

In the same way, the oral tradition of the Siltie establishes their origin in two different ways. Some Siltie elders report that the Siltie ethno-linguistic group is indigenous to the area. The evidence for their position are oral history, culture, naming system, worshipping, and calendar. These elders argue that if the Siltie people were not indigenous but Muslim immigrants, the traditional worship of the Siltie people would not exist. Their naming culture was different from other Muslim immigrants since the forefather’ names were not Arabic. Until recently, it was common to give two names to a child in Siltie. The first name was indigenous and reflects the Siltie language and culture. According to my informant the indigenous name of Siltie (eg: Chumeto, Shewmole, Delbeza, Fesesse and etc) were reflects their language and culture. The second one was as Arabic name which shows religious affiliation (eg: Mohammed, Kemal, Hassen, Hussen and etc). Based on the calendar of the Siltie people is different from the Ethiopian and the Hejra calendars, but common to other groups in south central Ethiopia. Others however suggest that the Siltie originated from Hadiya Muslim Sultanate. This would indicate the Siltie already existed in the 8th century. The Hadiya Muslims joined other Muslim troops in their campaign against the Christians. The Siltie, Ulbareg and related groups which originated in the Charchar Mountain settled in Gurage land after series of fierce battles. The seven tribes of the east Gurage namely, Adare, Siltie, Ulbareg, Azernat Barbare, Wuriro, Wolane, and Gadabano, speak a Semitic language closely related to that of the Harari. According to informants, it is believed that the origin of the Siltie dates back to the 16th century, when Imam Ahmed Ibn Ibrahim (or “Ahmed Gragh “in the context of Abyssinian history) conducted a massive military expedition against Christians Abyssinia.

³⁵*Ibib. PP.43-44*

According to the Siltie oral tradition, a religious leader called Hajji Aliye who was born in Harar followed the expedition until he was asked to settle in a place called Umnan. He married with local women, and his last son called Gan-Siltie is believed to be the ancestor of the Siltie. In the mainstream history of Ethiopia the Siltie ethnic group has not been represented or misrepresented since they have been considered for a long time as a sub clan of the Gurage. In the narratives in Siltie oral history there are two dominant stories which consider the 16th century as their base. In fact the 16th century was a significant historical time in Ethiopian history in general and Siltie people as well as Dalocha in particular. The great Oromo movement or expansion and the Imam Ahmed war (1527- 1543) were the main event which had the major impact on the political, economic and social life of Ethiopia, the Siltie people and Dalocha had their own oral history regarding that time.

According to this history the founding father of the present people travelled from eastern Ethiopia. Some stories say from the middle east (some say from Saudi Arabia and other say from Iraq) came to Ethiopia crossing the Eden Gulf and lived for centuries around eastern Ethiopia around Harar. The origin of the name Siltie is connected to Gen Sultan who was the son of Hajji Aliye. However the term Siltie-Ge country of Siltie has already been documented during the reign of Amedsion in the eighth century relating the Siltie land with the name of Gen Sultan is unacceptable and has no evidence at all. It is possible to conclude that the Siltie people lived a long time in the present area.

The home land of the Siltie was put under the authority of the Ethiopia Empire in 1888. Since then, the Siltie and most of other Gurage groups constituted a single administrative unit. This was the first stroke in the process of creating a single Gurage ethnic identity based on a mixture of various components like a common genealogy, religious, language and history.

Therefore the Siltie referendum in 2001 and issues of Siltie identity capture much attention. The difference between Siltie and Gurage are mainly pronounced in terms of language and religion and the Islamic religion is the foundation of the identity of the Siltie. The fact that Siltie language and the Islamic faith can constitute only partly the present day Siltie nationality because there are

neighboring Muslim people who the same language, especially the Wolane. However, significant socioeconomic differences also occur between the Siltie and other Gurage. Especially not only during the regime of Haile Selassie but also under the Derg, the Siltie area was relatively poor, underdeveloped, and inaccessible. Amharic was not well known to most Siltie at the time so that they could not successfully participate in the educational system.

Because of its distance from the capital, the area was never as actively desired as an area for northern settlement. Furthermore, the Siltie living in the slopes on the western side of the Rift valley, were able to produce a lucrative cash crop, berbere. They were therefore able to pay the taxes imposed by Emperor Haile Sellassie's government from revenue generated in the local environment. As a result the Siltie were not forced to leave their ancestral homeland in the way that the other Gurage had been. The Gurage were actively involved in the process of urbanization in Ethiopia while the Siltie remained more firmly attached to their land and traditional ways of life. Since they are Muslims, it was difficult to them to assimilate with Ethiopia Christian Kings particularly in religious affairs.

After EPRDF took over the power in 1991, the Siltie started to campaign for their recognition as distinct ethno-linguistic group by pointing out that their language was different from that of the remaining Gurage, and that they have a unique history not shared by other Gurage. They constructed their identity based on oral tradition and legends of the expansion of Islam in the area. Initially, this process was not very successful; a conference was arranged in September 1997 at Butajira to discuss the issue of Siltie identity, and 961 speakers were elected as representatives to the conference. After three days of argument they voted to determine if the Siltie is a part of the Gurage or not. Of 927 votes 781 were for the unity of Gurage and 146 abstained assuring that the voting process was distorted by the government officials.

None of the votes supported the Siltie identity. However the Siltie people Democratic and Unity Part (SPDUP) proclaimed that it would not accept the outcome of the conference since the election of the representatives was undemocratic. As a result the Siltie political party split into two and their movement seemed largely disrupted. Later EPRDF evaluated its policy toward the Siltie political movement. It recognized that there was a strong and growing nationalism among

the Siltie. Therefore, based on a council by the House of Federation a referendum over the Siltie identity was carried out in 2001.

The National Electoral Board announced that 416,481 votes out of 421,188 were for self government of the Siltie in an autonomous administrative unit. Consequently the official split of from Gurage took place in July 2001. According to my informants the Siltie people consider this split as an opportunity for political independence and economic autonomy to share the resource effectively and to develop a self identity.³⁶ Therefore these facts indicated that the Siltie are one of the early people who have their own identity such as culture, language, religious and others in the present land of the Siltie people lived a long time the present area.

There are various views regarding the origin of the Siltie people. One of the version on the origin of the Siltie state that the Siltie came from an eastern part of the country following Imam Ahmed Gragn's war of expansion during the first half of the 16thc.³⁷

Other sources further identified the existence of indigenous Siltie speaking communities as Zhara and Abzana long before the war of Imam Ahmed. The native people lived in the area since the ancient time. In addition scholars further strengthen the Siltie existence long before the sixteenth century (16thc). According to these sources the Siltie are one of the ancient people who are established the medieval Ethiopia Hadiya Sultanate which was incorporated into the Christian highland kingdom under Amdesion (r.1314-1344) in the 14th century. This view is derived from the chronicle of medieval Ethiopian ruler, Amdesion and 16th century writer such as Almada.

³⁶*Mujib Siraj. PP.5-8*

³⁷*Keiredin Tezera. PP,44-45*

The chronicle of Amdesion mentions an identity allied to the Emperor by the name “Saltagie” “Saltahi” which can be interpreted as the country of Siltie. Added to this the German anthropology is (Braukamper 2001:51) also identifies the Siltie as the only people related to the Hadiya sultanate who did not adopt a Cushitic language. He further noted that the Siltie lived in areas around churcher highland in eastern before 16th century other scholars also mentioned the 16th century and 17th century’s population movement in south eastern Ethiopia continued for the intermixing of various people and the genesis of the Siltie in its current form. According to these sources, due to the war of Imam Ahmed and the population movement of the Oromo, the ancient Islamic principalities including the Hadiya Sultanate were weakened and dislocated. Such incidents led the ancient people including the Siltie to move from east to south and western part of Ethiopia to the present land. Therefore the various sources mentioned above clearly indicate the existence of the Siltie long before the 16th century exodus.³⁸ According to the founding fathers of the present Siltie people travelled from eastern Ethiopia. Some stories say from the Middle East (some say from Saudi Arabia and other say from Iraq) came to Ethiopia crossing the Gulf and live for centuries around in eastern Ethiopia around Harar. In this expedition there were about fourteen important public figures whose names are still remembered. Hajji Aliye Omer was core one and also the oral history believe that the ethnonym Siltie was named after his son “Gan-Siltie”. In another story people considered Siltie has the remnants of the Imam Ahmed or famously known in Ethiopia history as “Imam Ahmed or Ahmed Gragh”. This version of the oral history associate Siltie people with Imam Ahmed war (1527-1543); which he had with the Christian highland Kingdom. In this war the Imam was successful in defeating the Christian king and he was able to control large part of Ethiopia; the east, central, southwest to some extent north. In this history Hajji Aliye and other are considered as part of the military expansion and religious leader of Imam Ahmed who were assigned to control the Siltie area. However when the Imam lost this power and retreated to his base in Eastern Ethiopia those who had control of Siltie area cut off from the Imams leadership and preferred to stay in the Siltie area. By having a marriage relationship with indigenous people of the area in the long run, they have resulted today Siltie identity.

³⁸*Ibid, P.45*

According to Keiredien, with in the present Siltie ethnic group there are number of clans and sub clans who trace their lineage from 16thc Hajji Aliye and his group; and there are also another clan groups that trace their lineage from groups of people called “Zera” or Abzana who are said to have been there while the Hajji Aliye expedition team reached the Siltie area. They welcomed and hosted the Hajji Aliye team. In the local language the “Zera” or the “Abzana” community are referred as “Yeafer Seb” which literally means “people of the soil” or “people of the land”. Hence these indigenous people are placed in Siltie oral history and they are part of the living memory of the community. Today’s Siltie identity is linked to the strong works of Hajji Aliye and his leadership that gave a ground for the establishment of indigenous or local political has institution with the garad system. This system of administration has sustained till the late 1880’s and is considered a corner stone of Siltie identity. Hence forth, the Siltie people strongly associate their nationality with Hajji Aliye’s memory.³⁹

1.2.1. Expansion and settlement of the people

To make correct feature of the history of Dalocha district the background of territorial expansion and early settlement was the most important thing. The written sources are scant on what had happen specifically in the district of Dalocha during territorial expansion and settlement of the Siltie people. It mentions place names like Kibet, Lanfuro, Worabe, Hulbarag, Sankura, Dalocha and others. To suggest that Dalocha was part of the Siltie land at the time. But it is possible to reconstruct the history of Dalocha under its historical survey. One of the versions of the origin of the Siltie state came from an eastern part of the country following Imam Ahmed Gragh’s war of expansion during the first half of 16th century. Based on the sources, Muslim communities of the Siltie namely Azernet, Berbera, Hulbarag, Wuriro, Wolena, Gedebano and Zeway (Zay) are identified as descendents of people from Harar.

Despite pinpointing the direction of expansion of Siltie from the east, the above historical records could not identify the existence and the earliest area of Siltie in the eastern parts of Ethiopia. Other sources on other hand indicate the presence of the Siltie long before 16th century.

³⁹*Reshad Kemal, “A History of Islam among Siltie of Sankura woreda (MA Thesis Dilla University 2021), PP.6-7*

According to this view, the Siltie people expanded from the southern part of the Arabian peninsula, settled around Lake Zeway before the war of Ahmed Gragn and eventually dispersed to other areas including the present Siltie zone areas in three different exoduses. Hetzon's and Sherif's analysis of a historical account of linguistic patterns even put the time for ethno genesis of the people further back to the 8th century.

Oral traditions in the area relate mainly the people origins with the 16th century well known "Grand Father" Geradecha and Queen (Gistich) movement. These individual came from the east to the present Siltie land. However if we carefully inspect the contents of their narration, local informants do not limit the genesis of the people to the 16th century. Based on the primary informants Siltie grand fathers such as Hajji Aliye, Sheik Nesorallah, Sheik Alinur, Sheik Berkele and "grandmother "or queen such as Gistit, Tahrat, Gistit Shemsiyate migrated from the east with a large number of people and passed via Sharka Gadab and Wag countries and finally settled in the present Siltie land. These migrants intermingled with the local population known among the Siltie as Zhara and Abzana which the people considered as Yafersab (indigenous people).

Hajji Aliye especially has been considered among the Siltie as founding father, for he played a significant role in integrating the new comers with the native and establishing and system of traditional administration the people employed until the late 19th century.

Hajji Aliye and others married with the indigenous people and gave birth to many children who later become for most of contemporary Siltie clans and sub groups. Hajji Aliye's son namely Aleqiro semeredin, Dilapa, and Gan-Siltie (Sultan II) and his daughter, Ouyeta played a great role in the origin of Siltie people in its current form. The genesis of the name Siltie with alleges ancestors Gen-Siltie who are settled in present day Dalocha and Lanfuro woreda. In addition to this they settled in Gumer, Enemor, Meskan, Maraqa and Sodo woreda in Gurage zone.⁴⁰

⁴⁰*Keiredin Tezera, PP.6-7*

Among Hajji Aliye's children his daughter Ouyeta was given to the Kambata king as political marriage that later became the base for the emergence of Ouyate ruling dynasty among the Kambata around the 19th century. Also others who came with Hajji Aliye such as Ahmed Berbera, Oucha, and Sheik Naserallah were mentioned as one of Siltie ancestors who played significant role in the ethno genesis of the Siltie. Hence it is the combination of these factors that have laid a foundation for the genesis of Siltie ethnic group in its present state. In fact, most of the clans and sub clans that are found currently among the Siltie people trace their genealogical origin to the supposed 16th century ancestors. Such geneological connection in the people patrilineage mythological oral traditions also goes for beyond this period up to sharafic lines among the Hashemite in Arab land. In short the above various written as verbal tradition confirm the existence of the Siltie long before the advent of Hajji Aliye's group to the area. Some sources, however contest the genesis and continuation of the Siltie an autonomous ethnic group before the 1990's period some sources also categorize the Siltie as part of the wider Gurage groupings under the generic name eastern Gurage. But a growing number of literature indicate, however that the Siltie are an autonomous ethnic group themselves with a nation of independent and shared origin language, religion and territory as common psychological makeup. My empirical data also indicate further that the Siltie are one of the ancient people of the country whose ethno genesis goes at least back to the 9th century.⁴¹

1.2.2. Culture of the People

Culture is the basis of identity of development. Most function of culture as well as the various components of the culture itself, tries to project an identity. Development, as it is variously defined, tries to incorporate, manipulate draw from culture identity. Culture identity in its formation, involves the multiple issue of history, environment and value, social stratification, knowledge, power and wealth which are also the domain of development. Ali Mazuri acknowledges that the "interplay of Africa's indigenous culture with Islam on one side and western civilization on the other had not only political and economic effects, but also cultural and

⁴¹*Ibid.* P.47

civilization” influences. Culture he defines a system of inter-related value, active enough to influence and condition perception, judgment, communication and behavior in a given society, where as civilization embraces a “culture which has endured, expanded and been elevated to new moral sensibilities”.

The people of Ethiopia are relatively homogenous in a number of respects. Some of the culture traits they share may derive from a common aboriginal proto-Ethiopia culture, some may represent similar adoptive responses to similar situation and other probably reflects a coalescence of traits deriving from prolonged interaction from a distant past. There were several material and non-material culture practices among the Siltie people which have been developed in their long history.⁴²

The Siltie had been governed through Yesiltie Serra local governance since at least 9thc. The Siltie have given two versions to Yesiltie Serra. First they describe the various norms and values that regular the interactions of members as Yesiltie Serra, second Yesiltie Serra is also associated with a traditional system of governance the Siltie employed to govern them in the form of territorial and kinship organization. The Siltie have been employing elder’s assemblies that operate from Burda (band) to the Bade (supra-tribal or chiefdom) level since a long time. Yesiltie Serra defined as an amalgamation of social norms and values that regulate the day to day activities of members. Further the Siltie Serra has been playing a pivotal role in maintaining the unity of the people. Also the institution has helped the people foster and sustain the common identity. It has also played important roles in mobilizing the society for local development endeavors. Thus Yesiltie Serra can be expressed as an important institution and has deeply integrated into the political, social and cultural lives of the Siltie society.⁴³

⁴²*Abebe Hiskel, “A socio-cultural history of the Siltie people”. MA Thesis (Dilla university 2017), P.17*

⁴³*Keiredin Tezera, Dynamics of legal pluralism and emerging legal hybridism, (Eclipse printing press December 2018 A.A Ethiopia), PP.115-17*

The Siltie are also endowed with various cultural practices. Furthermore a number of traditional hair styles, five types traditional music and the different traditional practice such as women dominated religious association (Dado), traditional religious practice like ware can be mentioned as customary practice of the people depicting the Silties enriched religious and culture assets.⁴⁴

In the Siltie people there are six types of marriage, these are arranged marriage (Tukesho), abduction (Zimedot), Arrangement of by the free choice of the female (Agga), sudden marriage arrangement by the male (Tequalo gibot), inheritance marriage (Yewurshit biter), and secondary marriage (Wagiyet), however the accepted marriage type by the people Tukesho or arrange marriage.⁴⁵



Figure 5: Hair style of Siltie women

⁴⁴Mujib Siraj, “A Historical Account of Islam in Worabe Town, Siltie zone of SNNPRs” (MA Thesis Dilla university, 2020), P.20

⁴⁵Fereja, “No.9 Megabit 2003 (Design and print Eclipse), P.30

An arranged marriage follows various procedures that widely give time for the parents spouses to know each other. The wedding ceremony is called Bolocho or Digelaye. After Bolocho the families of male spouse are expected to provide necessary material for the bridegroom. These include a piece of land, residential area and food stuffs. This process is known as among the Siltie as Biter Atinzot.⁴⁶

1.2.3. Historical Development to the Late 19thC

The Silte people had been ruled by councils of local elders for several years. This state of affairs began to experience changes after the late 19th Century. The change began to occur when the forces of the Ethiopian state under Menelik II crossed the Awash River and overran the area. There were different motives that prompted the southward expansion of Menelik II such as economic, political and creating a buffer zone against the surrounding colonial powers that gained foothold in the Horn of Africa.⁴⁷

At the time of Menelik's conquest, there was no centrally organized political authority in Silte. The people were not united as a unified political entity. But soon they came under Hassan Enjamo of Qabena and started stiff resistance against the Menelik's forces. However, they could not withstand the strong force of Menelik and finally fall under his rule. The subjugation of the area was followed by the introduction of an alien social and economic relationship expressed in neftegna-gabbar system, which turned the local people into tenants. The neftegna-gabbar system is an expression that describes the relationship between the nobility and the soldiers that actively participated in the incorporation of the people. The system was explained not only in terms of confiscation of land belonging to the indigenous society.⁴⁸

⁴⁶Reshad Kemal, *"A History of Islam among Siltie of Sankura woreda (MA Thesis Dilla University 2021), P.13*

⁴⁷Tsehay Berhanselassie *" Menelik II's conquest and Consolidation of the southern province's, BA Senior Essay, Department of History, Haileelissie I university, 1969*

⁴⁸Abebe Hiskel, *"A socio-cultural history of the Siltie people". MA Thesis (Dilla university 2017), P.48*

The time of Emperor Menilik II subjugated the Siltie land in 1889. Since then the Siltie area had become part of the Ethiopian state. The new governors introduced a complex system that combined „transplantation of Abyssinians and the cooptation of a subordinate indigenous elite. As a result of the incorporation, the Siltie's local governance system has been reduced to ritual than political power. Furthermore, the new rulers brought Gabbar/tenant, and Balabat /Malkagna system in the area. Under this system, the most fertile and productive lands of the Siltie were appropriated and distributed for soldiers or Malkagnas. The majority of the Siltie who were forced to live in their land as servants became tenants. The same situations prevailed in the following Imperial regime (1931-1974). During the Imperial period, homogenization of culture led by the Amharic language was strengthened, and other languages were outlawed officially.

On the other hand, the ethno genesis of the Siltie indicates that parts of the soldiers of a medieval Muslim expansionist known as Imam Ahmed ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi (1506-43) settled among the Siltie during his war with Ethiopia's Christian Highland Kingdom in the 1530s. The Imam's 'expansion to the north. The Siltie have become suspect number one whenever Islamic momentum arises, and the religion has been perceived as politically subversive in the country. Due to this factor, Muslims were marginalized in every aspect of life including the state apparatuses since late nineteenth century. Through the Siltie were near to the center (only less than 172 kilometers away from Addis Ababa), they were marginalized socially, culturally, economically and politically for more than a century. They had been divided into neighboring communities so as not to allow the unified Muslim communities to live in peace. Menilek's expansion has had a great impact on the socio-economic life of the conquered and the northern socio-economic order was introduced into the southern highlanders during conquests of the region in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and super imposed on the pre-agrarian system about which very little is known. In this regard the land tenure system which totally favored the ruling classes, royal families and warlords of the kings, had great impact on the socio-economic and political life of the subdued groups during the expansion. The fate of the Siltie people was not different from the rest of the groups who were incorporated by the Menilek's expansion. In the late 1880s the Silties' indigenous governance institution fell and the people subjugated to the Meniliks rule. It was after this historical incident that the identity of the Siltie groups started to blur and began to be twist to the neighbor ethnonym-Gurage. Markakis pointed out two reasons why the Siltie people are considered Gurage by others; “one was conquest and subjugation by alien power, and

the need of the conquerors for clear and expedient principles to guide the administration of the subjects. Another was the necessity of subject people to adjust to the loss of independence and to the socio-economic exigencies this entailed. Smith (2007,) states that ‘the subjugation and exploitation under the emperor Menilek united the Siltie with Gurage neighbors. They saw themselves as the same because of this mistreatment’. Informants further noted that the whole Siltie community came together under the leadership of *Gerad* to defend their land from invading armies. This was achieved under the guidance of local leaders like *Gerad* during 18th and the late 20th centuries when the Shoan invading armies and the neighboring people tried to conquer their lands. The Siltie defended their lands from invading forces of Libido, Gurage, and Shashogo people’s right from 17th to 19th centuries under the leadership of *Azma Qalebo, Azma Atero, Umar Bele, Mula Gerad Teme Lezbo, Azma Ormora Gona, Haruna Goshute, and Azma Sugato* indicating some form of centralized leadership. During Menilik's expansion, the Siltie also set up a military alliance with each other and with the neighboring groups, an alliance referred to as *Gogot*. Some informants called this level of administration as *Gogot* or *YeSiltieSerra* while Bustorf (2011) describes it as a system of clan federations.⁴⁹ The expansion to the south and west aims to incorporate and assimilate Muslim and Pagan area in the south, east and west.⁵⁰

1.2.4. Dalocha Late 19th century to 1936

During the Italian occupation (1936-1941), the Siltie elders’ council also played a significant role in providing local means of administration. It filled the administrative vacuum that occurred due to the weakening of central government following Italian’s interlude. During this time, YeMula Siltie Melcho some call it YeSiltie Nubre incorporated the various ethnic groups, mainly the Amhara settlers that came to the land at least since the 19th century, as part of the Siltie local administration under their own district called Gogot. Gogot which means unity.⁵¹

⁴⁹Reshad Kemal, “A History of Islam among Siltie of Sankura woreda (MA Thesis Dilla University 2021), P.18

⁵⁰Imperial. Ethiopian government ministry of education and fine art: Ethiopian short illustrated history (1969, 1972) P.130

⁵¹Markakis, John (2011), Ethiopia: The last two Frontiers Oxford: James, curry. P. 126

Informant stated further that the Amharas' were followers of Ethiopian Tewahdo church, who by then, were persecuted by Italian occupiers as part of the Italians' "divide and rule" colonial policy. Rejecting the colonial power's policy, the Siltie local leaders declared that the non-Silties should be incorporated into the local administrations and ordered members to defend the other ethnic groups mostly non-Muslims. Following this incident, the Amharas settled areas have become the thirteenth administrative unit of the indigenous land. So, the Siltie land has been since then divided into thirteen administrative units, Aserashete Mauta (thirteen districts). These are Weleya, Gora, Abezana, Tite, Mukere, Aratebere, Anshebeso, Danecho, Azerenet, Berbera, MelgaAlich, Wuriro, and Gogot Mautas. Each Mauta comprises another administrative level called Azegag (Village assembly). The Siltie had been governed through *YeSiltie Serra* local governance since at least 9th century. The Siltie have given two versions to *YeSiltie Serra*. First, they describe the various norms and values that regulate the interactions of members as *YeSiltie Serra*. Second, *YeSiltie Serra* is also associated with a traditional system of governance the Silties employed to govern themselves in the form of territorial and kinship organizations for the discussion of *YeSiltie Serra*). The Silties have been employing elders' assemblies that operate from *Burda* (band) to the *Bade* (supra-tribal or chiefdom) levels since a long time.

According to some written sources (.Abdulfeta, 2002) and some informants, the Origin of Yesiltie Serra as a system of local administration goes back to the 9th century Muslim Hadiya Sultanate in central and eastern Ethiopia. According to his reconstruction, the Siltie have passed through three systems of governance: clan based segmentary system of administration, centralized system of Islamic Sultanate' administration and supra-tribal organization. Collapse of Hadiya Sultanate in 16th century the Siltie, however developed Yesiltie Serra has a local governance system that persisted until Menelik II conquered the area in the late 19th century.

Lej Iyasu had an uneasy task, to replace Menelik II (1889–1913) who not only defeated the Italian forces at the battle of Adowa, but was very much devoted to the expansionist policy of his predecessors. Moreover, Menelik was truly respected leader whose later career was disrupted by a severe disease. Last five years of his reign were characterized by latent internal clashes between various kin groups and political circles. European powers were constantly strengthening their influence on Ethiopia, mainly in the economic sector, and the Orthodox Church was very much

supportive of Menelik's daughter, princess Zäwditu. Two frontiers had to be taken care of, the international, and the internal.

With the death of Menelik in 1913, the throne was open to Lej Iyasu, whose time in power brought various challenges to the Orthodox Church and the foreign powers. Iyasu's enthronement was not a surprise, because already in 1909, Menelik officially designated Iyasu heir to the throne. When Iyasu got twelve years old, Ras Tesemma Nadäw became his regent. Iyasu's succession was largely disputed by Itege Taytu, wife of Menelik II, who had her own plans with the throne, and counted with her daughter Zewditu and her husband Dajazmach Gugsä Wale as the future rulers of Ethiopia. Things got worse when it became clear that Iyasu's sympathies belonged to Ethiopian Muslims, so far rather neglected community Ethiopia. Itege Taytu and her daughter Zewditu represented the traditionalist wing within the Ethiopian politics, and Iyasu's visions of religious equality were seen by them as heresy.

Iyasu's also extended his friendly and strategic relations with various local leaders in Ethiopia, the way how to fulfill this demanding task led through marriages with daughters of important noblemen in Muslim and Oromo areas. This was a strategy that several of his predecessors used as well. On the other hand, what he lacked was a strong tie to the most important region of Shäwa, Menelik's domain, from which most of the Amhara nobility and ministers came. Especially after the death of Ras Tesema, Iyasu lost any direct contact with Shewan politics and local aristocracy was not willing to support him because of losing their own status and privileges.⁵²

1.2.5. Dalocha During the Period of Fascist Occupation 1936- 1941

Mussolini declared in a speech "Fascist Italy intends to guarantee the Muslim people of Libya and Ethiopia peace, justice, prosperity, respect for the law of the prophet, and wishes more over to manifest its sympathy with Islam and Muslim of the entire world."⁵³

⁵²Reshad Kemal, "A History of Islam among Sitlie of Sankura woreda (MA Thesis Dilla University 2021), PP.23-24

⁵³Mujib Siraj, "A Historical Account of Islam in worabe Town.(2020), P.58

During the Ethiopia-Italian war of 1936-40 Muslim were tolerated the highest shariat court was officially established in Addis Ababa. Mosques were also built and the Arabic language was used. This period was a relief time for Ethiopian Muslims. In 1935 a mobilization call was addressed to all landowners in the south that ordered them to show up for the Italo-Ethiopian war (1935-36), while the gebbar were seemingly ignored.

The Italian army reached the region in February 1937, they entered Siltie sphere from north Butajira and the south via the district of Sankura and marched to the direction of Hossana. The story of Sugato's role in the Italian takeover of Kambata awraja is widely known among Silties elders and some version of it should be documented here in order to represent the way in which the story is narrated by my informants.

During the Italian occupation Gurage Muslim identity was strengthened due to the Italian policy. Mussolini's claim to be the "protector of Islam" which must be constructed as a part of colonial divide-and-rule strategy enhanced the role of Gurage shaykhs when some of them, together with the other shaykhs from different Muslim communities were selected from the region to represent the Gurage Muslims sent to Mecca. The Italian told the Siltie that they came to "liberate" them from domination. The Siltie like the Italians because they ended the subjugation of the Amhara for them. Above all, the gabbar neftegna system was abolished with all its repression and cruelties. There was no labor nor the other excessive exaction and impositions. The peasants became free to cultivate their own land and harvest for their own benefits. The Italian made many promises, though most of these promises were not turned into action. They also encouraged Islamic expansion into areas untouched by Islam before, or where Islamic presence had been superficial.⁵⁴ Yesiltie Gogot /unity were composed of two or more groups including the neighboring Mesqan and Alaba groups. In this case, Yebadenet Serra also works as an important local institution as a military unit under the leadership of local war leader called Abegaz or Azmach. It has also jurisdiction over non Siltie group who lived in the area.

⁵⁴*Ibid.P.59*

Whenever war broke out, Yebadenet Sera contribution its contingents under these local war leader to the Mulla Siltie Harbe (the whole Siltie army organized by Yesiltie Serra local governces. As informant said Azma Ormoro Gona and Azma/Imam Sugato Zeyne’s unified army in the 1930’ under the banner of Goget alliance to defend the Siltie land from Italian occupation.⁵⁵



Figure 6: Photograph of Imam Sugato Zeyne war-lord of the Siltie Gogot

During the early period of fascist Italia occupation, there was cooperation between the Italian forces and the Siltie. In the early days of the Italian occupation, the Siltie were less reluctant to be new government. More ever there seemed to be form of appreciation among the Siltie concerning the Italian occupation. This was because of the oppressive and severe administration and was looking for an outlet in order to express their opposition against the inhuman acts of the neftegna. Initially, therefore, it seems that the siltie considered the Italians as liberators from the neftegna rule. In fact, the Italians manipulated the Siltie and other southern people citing their unpleasant experience resulting from the taking effect of the neftegna - gebbar system.⁵⁶ However the collaborations with the Italia forces did not last long. After a laps of two years when the Italian began to implement their policy of colonial exploitation and oppression, the people began to oppose the Italian colonial forces and began to rebel against them in the court of time, the people became disenchanted with the rigid measures. On the other hand, the balabats who benefited from the Ethiopian imperial system firmly opposed and resisted the Italian rule.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Serra, “No 2 Megabit (2022 Meate Matemabebet), P.49

⁵⁶Abebe Hizkel, (2017 Dilla university), P.52

⁵⁷Ibid.P.53

Table 1: The known patriot who resisted Italian aggressor in Siltie land:

No	The name of the patriot	District of the area
1	Azma Ormor	Silti
2	Azma Atiro	Silti
3	Bekele Zena	Silti
4	Hussen Salih	Silti
5	Imam Sugato Zeine	Azernet
6	Jabir Gona	Azernet
7	Abegaz Sunkemo	Azernet
8	Ato Hulala Afrano	Azernet
9	Imam Toloro Guraro	Azernet
10	Ato Gobir	Dalocha
11	Hamdika Dado	Dalocha
12	Imam Amedi Lumago	Dalocha
13	Ato Seid Hamza	Dalocha
14	Aman Hamid	Dalocha
15	Mustafa Dega	Dalocha
16	Wulbalo Amjano	Dalocha
17	Rete Keleto	Dalocha
18	Geta Karicha	Dalocha
19	Uleni Keda	Azernet
20	Gechamo Tene	Azernet
21	Sherefa Awol	Dalocha
22	Mossa Dikano	Dalocha
23	Ato Laligo	Dalocha
24	Ato Gomen Dira	Azernet
25	Ato Gosa Gomem	Azernet
26	Asen Tobato	Azernet
27	Abegaz Bomed Megenese	Azernet

28	Kirebo Lalego	Azernet
29	Umer Lemro	Azernet
30	Ato Fisa Sebre	Azernet
31	Ato Ursala Sebre	Azernet
32	Hajji Mossa Yassin Abshiro	Azernet

Among the patriot Azmach Ormora Gonfamo after heroic resistance against Italian occupation, he captured and exiled by Italian into Moqadishu the capital city of Somalia. Finally Ormora Gonfamo was died in exile. At the time the Siltie people in general and Dalocha particular expresses the following poem by song about the prominent patriot of Ormora Gonfamo in Siltigna and Ahmaric language.

<< የጉና አርሞራ፣
 የሰቢሮ ፊላ፣
 አውጃው አምጣው መላ፣
 በዌራራ መሶ፣
 ዩንዚን ውይ መከዘ>>::

ትርጉም

<<የጉና አርሞሮ፣
 የሰቢሮ ፊላ፣
 ዛሬ አምጡ መላ፣
 አገር ሲወር ጠላት፣
 ምሰሶ ማቀፍ አያድንም ከጥፋት::⁵⁸

In fact the Dalocha of Siltie area was occupied by Italian as the same time when the Siltie land invaded by Italian troops. The Dalocha people resisted with other Siltie people by unity the aggression of Italian. The most known and prominent patriot at the time in Dalocha area were Sherafa Awol, Ato Gobir and Hamdica Dado.⁵⁹

⁵⁸Dinberu Alemu. *Gogot Yegurage Bihereseb Tarik* (2006), P.241

⁵⁹Informant: Hajji Argaw

1.3. Regional Administration in Modern Ethiopia

1.3.1. Pre Italian Period, 1889 - 1935

The Siltie had been governed through Yesiltie Serra or local governance since at least 9th century. The Siltie have given two versions to Yesiltie Serra. First, they describe various norms and values that regulate the interaction of members as Yesiltie Serra. Second Yesiltie Serra is also associated with a traditional system of governance the Siltie employed to govern themselves in the form of territorial and Kinship organization.

According to some written sources (Abdulfeta, 2002) and some informants the origin of Yesiltie Serra as a system of local administration goes back to the 9th century. Muslim Hadiya Sultanate in central and eastern Ethiopia. Even though they are unable to tell how it came into being. Some informants mentioned that the Siltie employed this institution to administer them for a long period of time. Nevertheless, other key informants said that the Siltie system of local governance emerged in the 16thc. According to these informants, the Siltie ancestors (Hajji Aliye) who came from the ancient lands in the east settled in the present Siltie land in the first half of 16th century. After the Siltie arrived at the present land, the legendary father of the Siltie, Hajji Aliye distributed the lands for elders of the people and they began to administer their respective land based on Yesiltie Serra. Hajji Aliye is believed to be the first administrator of the Siltie land.⁶⁰ The Siltie Serra have passed three system of governance; clan based segment system of administration, centralized system of Islamic Sultanate's administration and supra-tribal organization or chiefdoms.⁶¹ The local administration system known as Yesiltie Serra was practiced before Menelik force subdued the Siltie area. The force of Menelik defeated the last Gerad, Mulla Gerad Tem Lezebo in the battle called Ansenbet Amhara (Saturday's invasion).⁶²

⁶⁰*Keiredin Tezera, Dynamics of legal pluralism and emerging legal hybridsm, (Eclipse printing press December 2018 A.A Ethiopia), P.114*

⁶¹*Ibid, P.115*

⁶²*Informant: Sheh Abdurman Sheh Wajo*

Structurally Yesiltie Serra was well organized to maintain peace and stability among the people as well as to sustain culture, history, language and religion of the Siltie people. It was arranged hierarchically.⁶³ the members of the assembly (Yemula Siltie Melcho) came from the heads of local chiefs representing each clan. The assembly had great role in drafting traditional law. It had also the responsibility of assigning the head of indigenous government based on qualifications. Of them were leadership quality, amount of wealth, lineage background and horn among the people. The Serra had its own assembly headed by Garad Abbo, composed of war leaders, local chiefs, member of traditional court and religious leaders. War leaders had the title of Wozir, Azmach, Abegaz and Kontem. During the expansion of the Ethiopia state at the turn of the 19thc, the government marginalized those traditional leaders who resisted alien rule and administration where as others who submitted were used as intermediaries between the state and society. Siltie was one of the regions that strongly resisted Menelik's expansion. Incorporation into the Ethiopian empire state, compounded with policy of alienation and assimilation, undermined and eroded the potency of organized indigenous governance and political system and cultural heritage.

Emperor Hailesilassie I preserved the policy of his predecessor by co-opting local leaders and rewarding them for their cooperation services. However, the local Administration Decree 2/1942 which became the main instrument for centralization of power under the emperor narrowed the space for the regional lords. Hence the rule of traditional leaders and institution in regulating socio-cultural affair of the society shrunk and lost significant due to strong control of state.⁶⁴

The ethno genesis of the Siltie indicate that the part of the soldiers of a medieval Muslim expansionist known as Imam Ahmad Ibn Ibrahim al Ghazi (1506-43) during his war with Ethiopian's Christian highland kingdom in the 1530's. The Imam expansion to the north marked the Abyssinian psyche with an ever sensitive scar, and an abiding distrust of Islam and Muslims. This scenario has developed an Ahmad Gragn syndrome by the Christian dominated Ethiopian state which has also implemented a seed that has worsened Siltie state- relation until now.

⁶³ *Abdulfeta Huldaro, "Siltie Nationality Expression and its contribution to Ethiopia's existence and development (in Amharic), A.A: Pan African center 2010), P.97*

⁶⁴ *Abebe Hiskel, "A socio-cultural history of the Siltie people". MA Thesis (Dilla university 2017), PP.21-22*

Due to this factor Muslims were marginalized in every aspect of a life including the state apparatuses since late 19th century. Though the Siltie were near to the center (only less than 200 Km away from Addis Ababa), they were marginalized, socially, culturally, economically and political for more than a century. According to a key informant, the Malkagnas and Balabats were the most powerful person in the area during the imperial regime. The administrative system before 1930 consisted of these structures as a district province, and empire. Hence those governors who were appointed by the emperor monopolized all powers to their provinces. As scholars such as Bahru (1931) said the coming to power of Hailesilassie I (r.1930-1974) aggravated the weakening of local system in the country in general and among the Siltie particular.⁶⁵

With the approval of the first constitution in 1931 the seemingly dual exercise of the provisional governors and Balabats who were previously allowed to levy and collect tax on land and other powers were abolished. The new rulers were fully appointed by the emperor (Abera 1998:7). Therefore such newly devised system allows the emperor to have greater control over the local authority. Hailesilassie I placed this power under the control administration (Aadland 2002:29). As studies show, the process of centralization also continued in the Italian interlude period (1935-41). A new regional administration was devised in 1941 that brought twelve and later fourteen provinces (Teklay- Gizat) that were ruled by a governor general. There were around 100 countries (Awraja), over 500 districts (woreda), and several sub-districts (mikitul woreda) (walelign 2005:91).

More over before the Italian occupation, Emperor Hailesilassie I divided the country into 32 provinces (Gizat) that were directly organized under the control government. Each province was numbered and the name o the governor of each region was designated by corresponding names of the Gizat. The provincial governor of governed the fiefs in the name of the emperor were alien appointees to the localities (Aklilu 2002:28). Thus, during that time administrative arrangements were formed at the expense of identity and local realities.

⁶⁵*Keiredin Tezera, PP.280-81*

The Siltie following the enactment of Decree No.1 of 1942 that divided the country into 12 administrative provinces (Awrajas) were placed under the province of Showa. Showa Teklay Gizat also became answerable to the ministry of interior at the top level of a hierarchy.

Based on this the Siltie were further divide into Chebo and Gurage Awraja and the Kambata and Hadiya Awraja (Aklilu 2008:28-29). Having been disintegrated into various administrative structures, the Siltie could not exercise their local system of governance in the area. The strong centralization policy of the imperial regime could not allow the local system to function fully in the area. The Siltie were thus denied the right to self-rule and were only communicating with the center via Christian Gurage and only neighboring Kambata and Hadiya people. This situation further worsened the state Siltie relation.⁶⁶

Therefore Siltie in general and Dalocha area particular denied the local modes of governance system. Aklilu (2002) rightly said the local people had no direct influence in the administrative, political and economic realms in their realities. Thus the central government, its functionaries and representatives enjoyed a considerable degree of political and socio economic privileges in the area. The local people however were subjected to exploitative and oppressive structures. Despite that fact the emperor introduced a revised constitution in 1955; nothing was changed for the local systems to revive in the area. Nevertheless there was an attempt by provincial governors to install the local chiefs as Balabats in the political system. However their functions were limited only to serve the central government than the local people. Furthermore the criminal code of the 1930 and the proclamation of administration of justice of 1942 of the imperial regime replaced the customary dispute settlement modes by the state court system in the country. It denied the legal recognition for those local institutions of the law and authority. The Balabat was responsible for maintaining law and order hearing dispute as well as administering traditional justice among others during the imperial period 1931. As respondents said the customary court were used by the majority of the rural people for resolving such conflict as matrimonial cases, land disputes, theft and debit cases during the period..⁶⁷

⁶⁶*Ibid*, PP.281-82

⁶⁷*Reshad Kemal, "A History of Islam among Siltie of Sankura woreda MA Thesis (Dilla University 2021), PP.29-30*

The neftegna gabbar system was considerable and highly pronounced on the economic, socio-cultural and political life of the Siltie society. The conquest and entrenchment of alien rule resulted transformation of political condition and others. It had problem of the society that created stratification and domination of the Siltie in terms of political, cultural and social life of the people.⁶⁸

1.3.2. Italian Period, 1936 - 1941

In pre Menelik II era, the Siltie land as the native call Yesiltie Bade was categorized into twelve administrative regions, Asrehosht Siltie Mautas. During the Italian occupation (1936-41), the Siltie elders' council also played a significant role in providing local means of administration. During this time, Yemula Siltie Melcho some call it Yesiltie Nubre incorporated the various ethnic groups, mainly the Amhara settler that came to the land at least since 19thc, as part of the Siltie local administration under their own district called Gogot. Gogot means unity. Informants stated that the Amhara were followed of Ethiopian Tewahido church, who by then, were persecuted by Italian occupiers as part of the Italians' "divide and rule" colonial policy. Rejecting the colonial powers policy, the Siltie local leaders declared that the non Silties should be incorporated into the local administration and ordered members to defined the other ethnic groups mostly non Muslims. Following this incident the Amhara settled areas have becomes the thirteen administrative unit of the indigenous land. So, the Siltie land has been since then divided into thirteen administrative units or 13 districts. These are Weleya, Gora, Abezana, Tite, Mukere, Aratbere, Anshebeso, Danecho, Azernet, Berbere, Melga, Alichu, Wuriro and Gogot Mautas. Each Mauta comprises another administrative level called Azagag (village assembly). According to Bustrof (2011:461), the pre modern socio-economic system of the Siltie, however was based on small independent groups had four levels. These were extended family, local sub clans, clan and clan federation.⁶⁹

⁶⁸*Informants: Nesro Abdela, Hussen Shukure, Mitiku Woldemeskel, Mohamed Ibrahim and Bamud Surur*

⁶⁹*Keiredin Tezera, Dynamics of legal pluralism and emerging legal hybridism, (Eclipse printing press December 2018 A.A Ethiopia), P.53-54*

The war-lord imam Ahmad Sugato Zeyne who is one of the most important protagonists of the oral history of the Silte people of South-Central Ethiopia about the period between the mid-1930s and the early 1940s. However, Sugato is interesting in a wider context: he was the most powerful warlord of the so-called Gogot (Silte., “alliance, coalition”) a military coalition which included in its heydays warriors from all sub-groups of today’s Silt most of the Guragé groups as well as Allaaba and Hadiyya. Its influence reached into Kambaata proper and the bordering Arsi-Oromo territories. The core group of this trans-ethnic alliance were the yesiltie gogot (Slt., “Alliance of the Seltie”) or Seltie Gogot, a union of the Azernet-Berbere, Alichcho-Wuriro, Seltie and Melga (Welbarag) who most regularly were allied with Allaaba and Mäsqan and later the Sebat bet Gurage. Additional historical significance *Sugato* owes to the fact that he became the most important ally of the Italian authorities in the region during the time of occupation. History is a good example for the ambivalent relation between the local population and the European intruders.

After his years in Jinchi, ras Teferi’s government gave Sugato some authority in Enneqor in the service of ras Adefras Nadew who administered other parts of Gurage province. It is a wide-spread tradition that the leading families of the Azernet-Berbere, although they had to acknowledge his military talents, tried to impede Sugato by any means, arguing that he was a “nobody” and that his authority was illegitimate. According to a somewhat odd story, existing in various versions, Sugato was accused by his competitors at the court of fitawrari Habte Giyorgis to have usurped power and to have robbed the Azernet-Berbere people. In order to impress the court, they prepared testimonies bearing false handicaps; abegaz Alamu acted as a “blind” man, while Awgere, fit with a leg cast made of ensete fibre, pretended to be “lame” or to suffer from “leprosy”. One version of the story relates that Sugato himself could prove that handicaps and testimonies were false. Mediated through ras Adeferis, Sugato applied to the Regent Ras Teferi to further legitimize his authority. He was given land and the title of imam, which was not a government title and, thus, did question the authority of the other chiefs. However, returning back from Addis Ababa the people of Enneqor greeted him as a legitimate leader by giving him an expensive welcome and exclaiming “*Hebo, hebo!*”

In October 1935 the Amhara military of Kāmbata Province and the indigenous chiefs allied with them were called to arms by the Ethiopian government to defend their country against the Italian

aggression. They left behind in the region a vacuum of power which resulted in the beginning of the “period of chaos”, as it is called in the emic periodization of history. When the news of the Ethiopian defeat at the Battle of Maychew (March 1936) and the breakdown of the northern front reached Kāmbata Province, the autochthonous peasants took the opportunity to revenge. Since the conquest of Menilek they were marginalized in their own country, and oppressed and exploited by the merciless taxation system imposed on them. When the peasants of Hadiyya and Kembata started attacking the city of Hossana, the capital of Kambata awrajja, they could easily overrun the small forces of fitawrari Balchaw, who were in charge of the security of the Amhara inhabitants. They attacked the families of the absent soldiers, killed and emasculated the male, killed or captured the women and children, burned down the houses and took whatever booty they could achieve. The cattle, which the Amhara soldiers had given into the care of the peasants during their absence, were expropriated. For short time the ruling class completely lost control over the region. Similar events took place in the Arsi country as well.

The revolt was mainly carried out by Hadiya, Kambata and Arsi. It is told, that “only few” Sebat bet Gurage and Seltie peasants joined these raids. The reason for this seems to have been that their ties to the Amhara ruling class were stronger than those of other ethnic groups in the region. In other words, the Sebat bet and Seltie peasants were under tight control by their own chiefs who had been completely integrated into the Ethiopian system of rule.

While the balabbat, and, at that time, most powerful leader of the Azernet-Berberé, abegaz Debisso Salea Golbe and his brothers together with other Seltie chiefs were obliged to go to the Maychew front, Sugato stayed behind to guard the country. He exploited the situation for his own sake and quickly improved his military and political position. Coming back from the North, the neftegna found their families killed and their properties pillaged.

Fitawrari Tamrat Wäldä Sämayat asked the chiefs and balabbat of the Selt’é to support him in putting down the rebellion. While others, even some indigenous war-leaders returning from the front, opted for joining the peasants in their revolt, Sugato and other Selt’é leaders, such as qannyazmach Sharaffa Balaka of Seltie and qannyazmach Hamdinno Manamno of Alichcho, built up a strong force and joined a pro-Amhara military alliance called Gogot. According to oral sources the Gogot consisted of troops from all over the region, including Sebat Bet Gurage, Azernet-Berbera, Alichcho-Wuriro, Selit, Welbarag- Melga as well as Allaaba, Mesqan and

Wellane-Gedabano. The Gogot had started as an alliance whose major aim was to prevent internal conflict. The cohesion of its member groups was very weak. Many of my informants were not sure of the composition of this gogot, because it never seems to have acted more than roughly coordinated. It adds to the confusion, that earlier and later alliances which were also called gogot had a different membership composition. For oral historians, the importance of this transethnic gogot is surmounted by the so-called Seltie *Gogot*, consisting only of today's Seltie groups and acting independently. The Seltie Gogot is interpreted by today's Seltie oral historians as a kind of prove for the unity and independence of their people.⁷⁰

1.3.3. From Libration to Revolution, 1941 - 1974

Siltie during the Imperial period, granting land and gabber in lieu of salary to the administrators and the soldiers was the typical feature of the feudal Ethiopia. Rights over the portion of land that belonged to the state were distributed to various groups which claimed such rights on the basis of services rendered during the campaigns or in compensation for continued services, and to the clergy and settlers who migrated to the incorporated regions. Markakis and Nega described the situation that accompanied the incorporation. Immediately after the conquest, the northern rulers divided the southern lands into three, theoretically equal, parts according to a traditional principle known as *sis so*, meaning one third. They confiscated two thirds outright, leaving the last third to the indigenous population. To win their collaboration, the local chiefs or *balabbats* were given their choice of the remaining one third and were either exempted from taxation on it or paid a reduced amount. This largely affected the Silte peasants and forced them undertake large scale rural-urban migration in the locality. The adverse impact of the *neftegna-gabbar* system was considerable highly pronounced on the economic, socio-cultural and political life of the Silte society. The conquest and entrenchment of alien rule resulted in a radical transformation of the socio-cultural and political life of the people. This had been the main problem of the society that created stratifications and domination of the Silte masses in terms of social, cultural and political life.

⁷⁰*Reshad Kemal, "A History of Islam among Sitlie of Sankura woreda MA Thesis (Dilla University 2021), PP.24-26*

Moreover, before the Italian occupation, Emperor Hailesillasié I divided the country into 32 provinces (*Gizat*) that were directly organized under the central government. Each province was numbered, and the name of the governor of each region was designated by corresponding names of the *Gezat*. The provincial governors who governed the fiefs in the name of the emperor were alien appointees to the localities. Thus, during that time administrative arrangements were formed at the expense of identity and local realities.

The Siltie, following the enactment of Decree No. 1 of 1942 that divided the country into 12 administrative provinces (*Awrajas*) were placed under the province of Shoa. Shoa *Teklay Ghizat* also became answerable to the Ministry of Interior at the top level of a hierarchy. Based on this, the Siltie were further divided into *Chebo* and *Gurage Awraja* and the *Kambata and Hadiyya Awraja*. Having been disintegrated into various administrative structures, the Siltie could not exercise their local system of governance in the area. The strong centralization policy of the Imperial regime could not allow the local system to function fully in the area. The Siltie were thus denied the right to self-rule and were only communicating with the center via Christian Gurages, and neighboring *Kembata* and *Hadiyya* peoples. This situation further worsened the state-Siltie relations. Aklilu (2002) rightly said, "the local people had no direct influence in the administrative, political, and economic realms in their realities." Thus, the central government, its functionaries, and representatives enjoyed a considerable degree of political and socio-economic privileges in the area. The local people, however, were subjected to exploitative and oppressive structures. Despite that fact that the emperor introduced a revised constitution in 1955, nothing was changed for the local systems to revive in the area. Nevertheless, there was an attempt by provincial governors to install the local chiefs as *Balabats* in the political system.

However, their functions were limited only to serve the central government than the local people. Furthermore, the criminal code of the 1930 and the proclamation of Administration of Justice of 1942 of the Imperial Regime replaced the customary dispute settlement modes by the state court system in the country. It denied the legal recognition for those local institutions of law and authority. The *Balabat* was responsible for maintaining law and order, hearing disputes as well as administering traditional justice among others during the imperial period 1931.⁷¹

⁷¹*Ibid*, PP. 28-30

1.3.4. Era of the Marxist Junta, 1974 – 1991

During the imperial era, the struggle was expressed through continuous disputes between the central king or Emperor and the regional lords and princes. When the Marxist military junta came to power in 1974, the ethnically based movements replaced the lords and princes as regional forces. This is how an Ethiopian historian ends his book about the building of the Ethiopian modern state up to 1974. Although the events in 1974 are most commonly described as a revolution, implying fundamental changes to the society, the continuities from the imperial regime to the new military regime became more apparent as the years went by after the coup. The downfall of Haile Selassie was characterized as a “creeping coup” which started with demonstrations and strikes among civilians and mutinies in the armed forces and ended with the deposition of the Emperor and his regime and the establishment of a military government. The main actors in the civilian rebellions were students and employees in the modern sectors in alliance with other parts of the urban work force. Many of the students who played a major role had returned from North-America and Europe, where they had been in exile during the reign of Haile Selassie, and were organized in the All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement (MEISON) and Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Party (EPRP). Both organizations viewed the problems in Ethiopia as a result of class conflicts and not as an outcome of struggles between ethnic groups.

Although parts of the military tried to topple. Even if the first constitution that was enacted during the Imperial regime (1931, and revised in 1955) as well as the Dreg’s 1987 constitutions gave little concessions to the customary and religious laws in the country, empirical data among the Siltie indicate that both the religious and customary courts have continued to operate. The customary court, for instance, has delivered justice to the community on one hand and has also become a hub for maintaining the identity of the people on the other. Siltie land was disintegrated into neighboring areas. As a result, the quest for self-determination and central administration had started since then. The Menilik administration adopted a politico-administrative system called Balabat or *Malkagna* and appointed *Balabats* to administer the area indirectly. Denying self-rule of the Siltie had continued under the Imperial regime as well. The Siltie students had joined the Ethiopian Student Movemnts that became one of the factors that unseated Emperor Hailesillase I in 1974. The Siltie area had been included under Gurage, and the people in the urban area were called Gurage. Some sources indicate further that the Siltie identity politics was initiated since

1990s, and „does not have any historical precedence. Rather, it constitutes an emerging social and political processes of constructing a new ethnicity for the majority of Eastern Gurage-speaking population.⁷²

1.3.5. Post Marxist Ethiopian, 1991 to present

The fall of Derg regime in Ethiopia coincided with the end of the cold war era, and the inception of a new world order that ushered in most of African countries demanded to institutional and structural reform that aim at “the right to have a right” (Smith 2013:3).⁷³ After the demise of Derge regime in 1991, Ethiopia has introduced a new policy called ”Ethnic Federalism”. Such policy has mainly based itself on a formal decentralization of local and regional administration along the ethnic, linguistic and historical criteria. This policy led to an ethnicization of public discourses filled with cultural revivalism and resulted in the strengthening of ethnic group identities. The Siltie who were categorized among the administrative zones of Hadiya, Gurage and the then Halaba-Kambata zones felt neglected both economically and politically under the post Mengistu regime. Thus the urban Siltie, youths, peasants as well as rural self-help organization initiated an ethnic identity movement called the Siltie movement that lasted from 1991-2001. Its aim was to define their ethnicity and to develop the socio economic lives of the society. According to Dirk their first important political goal was “to assert their ethnic unity and to realize equality with neighboring ethnic group by acquiring their administrative zone” (Dirk, 2011:457).⁷⁴ The Siltie intensified their struggle and the state took various measures including arrest and intimidation to silence the quest. The federal and southern regional states provide different mechanisms including conference to resolve the dispute. One of the major actions the government took was organizing the conference know historically as Butajira conference in Butajira town. It was held from 30 July - 1st August 1997 in which the representatives of the Siltie and the Gurage, contending parties, federal as well as regional government authorities took part in different capacities.

⁷²*Ibid*, PP. 30-31

⁷³Keiredin Tezera, *Dynamics of legal pluralism and emerging legal hybridism*, (Eclipse printing press Dec 2018 A.A Ethiopia), P.288

⁷⁴*Ibid*

The Siltie contested the mechanisms provided by the government that were against the constitution that stipulates that “the exercise of self determination, including secession would be determined by the referendum of the concerned group and subsequent approved by federal and regional government bodies” (Article 39 (4)). The Siltie party, Siltie people’s Democratic unity party (Henceforth (SPDUP)) had contested both the outcomes and the entire process of the resolution and made a formal request to the House of Federation to resolve the question of Siltie as per Article 62 of the constitution. Representatives of Siltie elders and SPDUP had submitted a petition to the House of Federation to review entire process and provide another mechanism to resolve the dispute on March 25, 1998 and November 7, 1991. The House referred the case to the council of constitutional inquiry (CCI) committee to interpret the constitution as per Article 84(1) and come up with the resolution. Finally the CCI indicated that the procedures takes by the southern regional government had violated the constitutional right of the Siltie. It was because of this problem that the result of the Butajjira conference faced fierce resistance from the people. The CCI underline further that the procedures and mechanisms used to resolve the inter-ethnic dispute were not carried out in the spirit of Article 39(5) of the constitution that empowers the Nation, Nationalities and peoples of the country to self-administration including secession.⁷⁵ The constitution inquiry committee recommended that the identity question be resolved by the active involvement of the people who raised the quest. The House of Federation instructed the southern regional state to facilitate a referendum to settle the identity dispute between the Siltie and Gurage.⁷⁶ With the failure of various strategies to end an inter-ethnic dispute between the Siltie and Gurage a popular referendum as the only mechanism to resolve a decade long identity struggle. Thus southern regional state arranged a referendum on April 1, 2001 when majority of the Siltie took part and decided that the Siltie be an independent ethnic group. Finally in June 2001 Siltie zone was formed. In the inter-ethnic dispute both state and non state actors had active involvement, and with this, the Siltie has got the status of ethnic identity and their administrative center in the federalist Ethiopia.⁷⁷

⁷⁵*Ibid*

⁷⁶*Ibid*

⁷⁷*Ibid*

Chapter II

2. A History of Dalocha 1941-1974

2.1. Land Tenure system

The first and central point to make about the pre-1975 land tenure system in southern Ethiopia is that the state acquired land ownership in the incorporated territories was the emperor reserved for himself ultimate power for land allocation (Markakis, 1974). This was bases for the prevalence of lop sided tenure policies and practices that favored the insignificant minorities at the expense of a vast majority of the southern peasant. This discriminatory approach resulted in a number of adverse consequences for the local population. Such a situation where the majority of the southern peoples were discriminated against by the political system in land allocation and were placed at the mercy of the growing power of the northern elites could be thought of as the politics of land tenure. Indeed, experience from the Ethiopia south is a good example of what plateau (1996:45) terms as “high level of politicization of wealth allocation of sub-Sahara Africa”. This practice reduced the status of peasant into land less farmers or gabbar, as noted earlier, who were exposed to political and cultural subjugation coupled with economic exploitation by the alien land from the north. A good illumination of this reality comes from John Markakis (1974: 112) who contends as follows:

The expropriation and distribution of a very large portion of land in the south among the victors had a dramatic effect on the native population. The relationship of person to land was radically transformed practically overnight force majeure. The southern peasantry, which found itself on land claimed by the state, lost whatever right it had held a traditionally over the land. The people were transformed into gabbars of the state and of the privileged group to whom the state granted right over such land. As was the case with the term balabat the term gabbar change in meaning when applied in the south, since the position of the peasant cultivator in this area was substantially different from that of the northern gabbar. In the north, the term refers to the tributary status of the peasant, regardless of his right over land. Thus the northern restegna who has secure right over his, is also a tribute paying gabbar. In the southern province, however the peasantry cultivating

the land expropriated by the state lost whatever right it had enjoyed over such land and what reduced to the status of tenant quartered on the land of another.

It is therefore, noteworthy to underline that the alternation in property right to a land generated fundamental changes in the status and dignity of the majority of the southern peasants who were reduced to the status of the gabbar. In the south, contrary to the north where gabbar stood for a tribute paying ristegna who had an unchallenging rist right, the term was designated to describe a generation of landless peasants who had been devoid of any say on their own land and exposed to severe exploitation and domination by the northern landed classes and political authorities.

Elite peasant relationship should also be understood beyond economic interaction. It is recorded that the circumstance in the southern areas was entirely different from that of the Northern provinces, where gultegna (gult holder) and gabbar shared ethnic identity, religion (orthodox Christianity), language and cultural value which enabled the latter to exert social pressure on the former to protect rist right. In the south, by contrast, land alienation and exploitation of the gabbar were coupled with ethnic discrimination and domination. In short, the situation in the south is characterized as a “political and social structure that had created an enormous inequality in wealth and power along class and ethnic lines”. This obviously means that there existed a system of double oppression of the peasants of southern provinces. They were subjected to economic exploitation as a class and political and cultural domination, as the political minority ethnic groups. In short transformation of land holding system from the principally communal (Bezawork, 1992) to a substantially state and private tenure led to negative change in the status and dignity of the majority of the southern people. It is maintained (Bahru, 1991; Markakis, 1974) that such a drastic change of property rights to land and the reduced status of the southern masses was the outcome, of excessive political intervention which was directed against the best interest of the majority of the local peoples.

Some methods land alienation in the south was facilitated through multifaceted mechanisms, which, inter alia included the following. First, conquest and blatant seizure of the southern territories. This is the situation where by the minority by virtue of their ethnic background and access to political power, gained at the expense of a great majority of the native population. Second, conversion of land holding rights from temporary to permanent forms, thereby providing

the gultegna (gult owner) with private holding rights. The gultegna were initially provided with the land as “maderia” (a means of livelihood, literally) and such a land was eventually transformed into a rist gult- a private holding of the gultgna. This process is analogous to the land holding system under feudal Europe which the fief, which were originally granted as a compensation for military service, were gradually transformed into heritable and transferable private property of the fief holders. Third, combination of inaccurate land measurement followed by the imposition of arbitrary land tax. Fourth, alienation of land that was originally owned by individual or the local communities failing to pay taxes. This kind of land was known as gebre-tel meret (or “tax born land”) the identification of the existence of “excess” of land was a golden opportunity for Hailelessilassie’s government to deny local communities landownership and management rights.

Evidently the southern peasants were helpless in face of well designed and systematically imposed land grabbing strategies and practices. This is the issue of power relation between powerful elite and the weak and scattered peasant masses. It is typical to an authoritarian type of political system elsewhere in which case, “power and privilege are (used) as means to acquiring wealth and the desire to acquire wealth motivates the action to ruling stratum”. In southern Ethiopia such a practice was a reflection of an absence of rule of law land accountability of political authorities, which manifested itself in an extreme politicization of land allocation.

That courts were mainly influenced by the land lords and interfered by political authorities had also played an important role in facilitating land alienation. The local communities were discriminated against and denied of justice even in the courts, which were in principle, supposed to give fair and prompt verdict. Certainly there had been endless land litigation mostly between government authorities and the local peoples. Peasants had to travel back and forth between the deep rural area and the urban centers, including Addis Ababa, the capital in search of justice. It is not difficult to imagine the extent to which this state of affairs, coupled with other adverse effects of the imposed tenure system, was back breaking for the peasants in terms of resources and time that could otherwise be used for productive activities.⁷⁸

⁷⁸*Hussen Jemal, The Politics of Land Tenure in Ethiopian history: Experience from the south, (Agricultural university of Norway 2004), P.5*

Following his restoration to power, Emperor Hailesilassie passed various proclamations which were aimed to consolidate the political power and to increase government revenue. The proclamation formed the foundation for the post-war government of the emperor.⁷⁹

The Siltie interaction with the state had started in the 14th century when king Amdesion invaded ancestor of the Siltie land somewhere in the east. However, a noticeable relationship that has brought significant socioeconomic as well as culture changes has began since the late 19th century. This time forces of Emperor Menelik II subjected the Siltie land in 1889. Since then the Siltie area had became part of the Ethiopian state. The new governors introduced a complex system that combined “transplantation of Abyssinians and the cooption of subordinate indigenous elite” (Markakis 2011:4). As a result of the incorporation, the Siltie local government system has been reduced to ritual than political power. Furthermore the new rulers brought Gabbar/tenant, and Balabat/ Malkagna system in the area. Under this system the most fertile and productive land of the Siltie were appropriated and distributed for soldiers or Melkagnas. The majority of the Siltie who were forced to live in their land as servants became tenants. The same situation prevailed in the following imperial regime (1931-1974).⁸⁰ Moreover in Dalocha as other part of Siltie the people were forced to live in their land as servants became tenant.

At the time of Menelik’s conquest, there was no centrally organized political authority in Siltie. The people were not united as a unified political entity. But soon they came under Hassen Enjamo of Qabena started and started stiff resistance against Menelik force. However they could not withstand the strong force of Menelik and finally fall under his rule. The subjugation of the area was followed by the introduction of an alien social and economic relationship expressed in neftegna-gabbar system, which turn the local people into tenants.

⁷⁹*Crummy, land and society in Christian kingdom of Ethiopia from 13th century to the 20th century, (A.A university press, 2005), PP.237-239*

⁸⁰*Keiredin Tezera, Dynamics of legal pluralism and emerging legal hybridism, (Eclipse printing press December 2018 A.A Ethiopia), P.280*

The neftegna-gabbar system is an expression that describes the relationship between the nobility and the soldiers that actively participated in the incorporation of the people. The system was explained not only in terms of confiscation of land belonging to the indigenous society, but also the settlers partitioned the local people and made them render corvee services by working on the farms and in house hold of settlers. Moreover the system aimed at imposing the supremacy of the settlers over the Siltie people by virtually destroying their culture and indigenous institution.⁸¹ During this period some Balabats retained their position after the consolidation of the conquest where as others collaborated from the very beginning with the objective of pursuing their self interest. Their collaboration with imperial rule undermined the capacity of the peasantry to resist the ensuring oppression and exploitation.⁸² According to Ernesto Ceruli the main function of the Balabats were to act as intermediary between local people and newly installed rulers by transmitting and executing orders, collecting tax and controlling those who attempted to defy the power that be. In this regard, a number of Balabats used their position to get land right and win favor from conquerors. The Balabats facilitated the ensuring oppression and exploitation of the masses by retaining considerable privileges and wealth for themselves. According to Markakis:

The Balabats proved themselves indispensable as intermediaries between the north governors and the southern masses. In return they were accorded status and privileges and gradually emerged as distinct groups associated with the northern as groups and emulating its dominant characteristics.⁸³

When the time of Imperial period granting land and gabbar in lieu of salary to administrators a neftegna was the feature of the feudalism Ethiopia. The land distributed to various groups such as royal family, clergy, Nechlebash or the soldiers of emperor and nobility. Then the Siltie people were alienated from their land and became tenant and servant for the above mentioned groups.⁸⁴

⁸¹J. Markakis. *Ethiopian anatomy of traditional policy* Oxford university press, 1975

⁸²J. Markakis and Nega Ayele., *class and revolution in Ethiopia*, Trenton NJ: The Red Sea Press, 1986

⁸³Abebe Hiskel, “A socio-cultural history of the Siltie people”. MA Thesis (Dilla university 2017), P.48

⁸⁴Yesilti Bihereseb Bahilina Tarik, “ Yedebub Biher Biheresebochina Hizboch Kililawi Mengist Bahilina Tourism Bearue 2007), PP. 33-34

Markakis and Nega described the situation that accompanied the incorporation of immediately after the conquest the northern rulers divided the southern land into three, theoretically equal parts according to traditional principle known as Siso, meaning one third. They confiscated two third ought-right, leaving the last third to the indigenous population. To win their collaboration, the local chiefs or Balabats were given their choice of the remaining one third and either exempted from taxation on it or paid a reduced amount.⁸⁵ This largely affected the Siltie peasants in general and Dalocha particular undertake rural-urban migration due to the confiscation of their land resulted landless tenant.

2.2. Agriculture

A large proportion of developing countries notably in sub-Sahara Africa, continue to struggle with hunger and poverty. Agriculture is also significant part in the majority of the developing countries economies.⁸⁶

The Siltie economy depends on agriculture. The distribution of vegetation depends on the climatic condition of the Siltie area. In the high land Siltie the principal crops are enset, barley and beans. In the semi high land and low land area where a significant amount of cultivable land is found cereal such as maize, wheat, vegetable, fruits and legumes are produced. The Siltie peasant's widely produce also livestock like goat, sheep, cattle and chicken.⁸⁷ The gebbar system in which northern settlers used to give tributary right over peasants of the Siltie land enabled neftegna to take over much of the land for themselves forcefully. This condition challenged the peasants from increasing its production and the land lords have the right of removing peasants from their own land.⁸⁸

⁸⁵Reshad Kemal, "A History of Islam among Siltie of Sankura woreda (MA Thesis Dilla University 2021), P.28

⁸⁶Eva Berger. "Access to land in Ethiopia: The impact of land law, industrial development, villagization and land grab in rural area (BA Thesis in development studies. Lund university 2014), P.4

⁸⁷Informants: Hajji Keiredin Sherif, Sultan Mohammed, Awol Mossa

⁸⁸Informants: Mulugela Ketsela, Bejada Astatike

Agricultural sector the predominant economic activity there by the largest contribution of the Dalocha woreda gross domestic product, and around 90% of population the main livelihood which are engage in farming and pastoral system, however based on rain fed agricultural production is still at subsistence. Dalocha woreda agricultural land holding is very small and highly fragmented. This fragmented and small holding per household is mainly attributed to population pressure in the region. Dalocha had different agro-ecological namely woina Dega 80%, kafil Qola 20% which are found. Land has been cultivated wheat, barley, maize, sorgum and vegetable are the major crops in this woreda. The livestock production such as cattle, sheep, goat, poultry and others.⁸⁹ The Siltie usually “Mist Angedo Dinet Allay” which means how many heads of cattle does a person have? to know how much the person is rich in the community. Animals also have ritual significant among the Siltie. End of feuds between disputants is heralded through slaughtering of animals. It is believed that animal can end murder case. They thus serve as a symbol of ritual reconciliation during Gudda ceremony. Slaughtering of animal is a customary practice among the Siltie in general and Dalocha area particular during Arafa, Edulfiter and Mawlid ceremonies. It is believed that slaughtering of animal and touching the foreheads of the bridegroom with the blood of the slaughtered animal can prevent any evil spirit on their way to the new home during the wedding time this activity called Meticha Egedote.

Animals also serve as special gift of during wedding time, the garads, inaugural ceremony and during the return of pilgrim from Islamic pilgrimage from Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Animals such as horse, mule and donkey are important pack animals for transportation mainly employed in mid high land and low land Siltie area. Local markets serve on various days on a week to allow a society to attend market in different days. In this local market various local produced material such as enset/false banana, cereals, Khat, red peper and animal are traded among the people and the neighboring society.⁹⁰ The peasants continued with subsistence agriculture by backward farming system. The peasants also used their little produce to pay taxes to the state and other tributes such as education tax and health taxes were increased burden on the peasants.

⁸⁹*Dalocha woreda Finance and economic development, department of socio-economic Geo-spatial data analysis and dissemination core process 2021, P.12*

⁹⁰*Keiredin Tezera, Dynamics of legal pluralism and emerging hybridism, (2018), PP.49-50*

The agricultural sector land privatization had through different ways; the neftegna who acquired tributary right over peasants turned the land into private, the Madeira holders who gain land lieu of salary and government land to patriotic soldiers. Land privatization then resulted in the spread of tenancy, economic inequality between landlord and peasants and hampered agricultural sector in Siltie area and as well as Dalocha district. The problem of tenancy under this period or pre 1975 was absence of legal form of contract between landlord and tenants by sharecropping agreements. Besides tenants had no guarantee for duration of tenancy and amount to be paid which varied according to the yield crop. In general during the Hailesilassie I regime the Dalocha woreda affected by poverty, famine, food shortage and living low standard of life.⁹¹

2.3. Trade

The Siltie people have long history as trans regional traders. In medieval Ethiopia, the Siltie were actively involved in slave trade and caravan trade activities (Cecchi 1818 in Bustorf 2009:607). In the urban centers of the country, the Siltie have been known mainly as business persons. They have now become the well known entrepreneurs in Addis Ababa and major cities of Ethiopia. They represent one of the dominant economic groups in Merkato.⁹² Historical setting for the Siltie and the neighboring people changed drastically after the southern conquest by Menelik II. The homeland of the Siltie was also put under the authority of the Ethiopia Empire in 1888 soon after the alliance of Qabena, Sebatbet and the Siltie (Islam) was defeated by Ras Gobena, one of Menelik's generals. Neftegna or armed northern (mostly Amhara) settlers built town throughout the newly conquered south to exercise administrative and economic control over the people. Ironically, this change enabled the Siltie to expand the geographical and economic sphere of travel across the southern part of Ethiopia, the Siltie started to built their own commercial network connecting Addis Ababa and towns in the south. Many Siltie men and women departed from their homeland in search of fertile land and trade opportunities. Among their destination was a town called Dande, which was located on ridge of hills in Sidama province (Awraja).⁹³

⁹¹*Informants: Detamo Darsebo and Abdi Shifa*

⁹²*Keiredin Tezera. (2018), P.50*

⁹³*Nishi, Makoto. Making and unmaking nation state and ethnicity in modern Ethiopia: A study on the history of the Siltie people (Kyoto university 2005), PP.161-62*

By the 1930's the Siltie were playing important role in Sidama coffee markets and established the trade route up to Addis Ababa. Dande town in those days had two quarters (Sefer) and two market places (Gebeya) that were connected by a stone paved passage. One of the quarters between the local administration office (tsifet bet) and the church (Kidus Giyorgis Bete kristiyan) was Neftegna sefer which was occupied mainly by Christian Amhara settlers. On the other hand, the merchant Quarter (Negade sefer) around the mosque was occupied by Siltie and other Muslim immigrants from Wollo and Jimma. Between those quarters was Dande's main market place, Ye Nadew Gebeya, which was named after a long administrator.

One market days, Siltie women used to sit in the market place with scales front of them to purchase coffee from "Native" farmers. There were also Siltie men who brought coffee to the market from rural village where they purchased coffee from farmers. Such traders were called Sebasabi.



Figure 8: Coffee trade route during 1930's

Coffee collected locally by women and Sebsabi traders resold to asmachi traders who brought the coffee to Addis Ababa. In addition, delala or brokers used to prowl around the market in the hope of making a deal by breaking into transaction.⁹⁴

Sidama coffee was transported to Addis Ababa on the backs of mules. Unity highways were constructed during the period of the Italian occupation (1936-41). According to Siltie elders, Caravans departed from Dande town, marched through some Sidama rural centers where they were joined by fellow merchants and their mules, then went down to the lowland which is home to pastoralists. The caravan was armed with guns since its relationship with pastoralists was generally hostile. The caravan proceeded through the home village of the Siltie (present day of Siltie zone), and finally reached Addis Ababa after more than a month's journey. At the destination of asmachi traders their coffee was usually brought into the store house of a foreign trading company, A. Besse and Co. (Ethiopia) Ltd. which was known as "Biskampani" to Ethiopians. It was one of the major laki or exporters that many of the foremen and casual laborers who worked storehouse of Bis Kampani were also Siltie men who migrated to Addis Ababa.

During the 1930's the Siltie traders played leading role in the local market of Sidama and on the trade route to Addis Ababa (and they also shared a marginal role in the export business). The process resulted in a clear division of labor between the Sidama "native" who engaged in coffee production and the Siltie who engaged predominantly in the coffee trade. One of the Siltie elders who live in Sidama recalls that time as "Yetigab zemen" or the day of satisfaction, when the children were brought up with "honey and butter" and even a head of goat was "un worthy" for their common dinner. The prosperity was, of course, achieved largely at the cost of the "native" Sidama peasants.⁹⁵

⁹⁴*Ibid, P.162*

⁹⁵*Ibid, P.162*

The item of trade in Dalocha district was Teff, Maize, red pepper, sorghum, cattle. These items exported to other places outside the district and importing trade item to Dalocha district which were not produced in Dalocha. The imported items were coffee from Sidam and Jimma, cloths like Abujadid, kaki, soap and sugar from Addis Ababa and Wonji sugar factory.

The commodities were transported by the merchants using pack animals like Donkey and Mule. It took merchants many days to make round trip from Dalocha to Addis Ababa. While the majority of Dalocha merchants sold the items collected from local they sold in Worabe market at the time worabe was a small market area that crossed highway road from Addis Ababa to Hossana, Wolayta, Arba Minch and other small towns.

The cattle trade was an important business in Dalocha woreda during imperial regime because the oxen were highly demanded for agricultural from March to July, the second reason was the celebration of Arefa for Muslim thousands of cattle were slaughtered. This made the price of cattle to increase significantly in Dalocha district.⁹⁶

Cash crop such as red pepper and khat are also highly produce in Dalocha district. The khat market has become another cash crop market in pre-1974. People are highly involved in khat market. In low land area women are engaged in the house hold work and the local market in selling of traditional coffee. Local markets serve on various days in a week to allow the society to attend markets in different days. In these local markets various locally produced material such as cereals, craft products, khat, red pepper and animals such as cattle goat, sheep, chicken and donkey traded among the people and neighboring societies. These markets also serve as source of communication and exchange of information between the country side and the urban. Various neighboring grouping also attended these market based on their proximity. The Dalocha elders, Raga (cultural legal experts) use market day to handle dispute cases. The challenge of merchants was problem of transportation, in rainy season the trip was challenged by flood, security and lack of infrastructure especially road.⁹⁷

⁹⁶*Informants: Jemal chalamo, Kedir Salia, Terefe Asefe*

⁹⁷*Ibid.*

2.4. Dalocha's relation with its neighbor

The Siltie intra and inter action with various people have been characterized by peaceful co-existence among its neighbors on the one hand, and some forms of conflict among each other and its neighbor group, on the other. The Siltie clans as informants said had conflict with each other over the control of resources expansion of territory and political hegemony to take an upper hand over the other clan. Nevertheless, when a common enemy came, they assembled their forces under a single administration in the form of clan confederation. The people then abided by the Siltie administration under the rule of Gera Abo the highest leader of the Siltie traditional administration. The intra-ethnic dispute persisted until Menelik's force controlled the area in 1889.

In fact the Siltie land was subdued by Menelik's troop for the first time in 1879. The marriage of the daughter of the Summu Siltie (eight Siltie) chief; Azma Qalbo with Nigus sahelisillassie (r.1831—1834) of Shewa kingdom facilitated a comparatively friendly relation between the leading families of the new of the rulers and the Siltie. In the 19th century scarcity of land and frequent conflict with the neighboring Gurage forced the Siltie to leave most of the highland areas except Mugo, Eneqqore and Alichu Wuriro to the Gurage. The Siltie in turn expanded their territory to the pastoralist areas in the east and south east. This incident again brought the Siltie into conflict with the Arsi, Libido, Lemmo and Sasoogo Hadiya (Bustorf 2011:461—62). Thus the basic cause for most of conflict in the area were competition over resource particularly land among the ethnic group as well as rivalries for territorial and political hegemony.⁹⁸

Since settling current location the Siltie have interacted with different neighboring people that include; the Gurage, the Hadiya, the Halaba, the Arsi Oromo, Gedebano and Gutazer with whom they have forged various types of relation by sharing socio cultural characteristics. Commodity exchange and trade had been one of the feature of that characterized the nature of relation between the Siltie and neighboring communities. Trade as a field of economic engagement was very significant in Siltie society.

⁹⁸*Keiredin Tezera. 2018, P.47*

In order to get locally available commodities, the Siltie used to engage in trade relation with the neighboring people. In this regard peaceful between the Siltie and Gurage was manifested in market visit and intensive marriage relation. The Siltie had also political, economic and socio-cultural relations with the neighboring Hadiya. The Siltie inherited also political title called Garad from Hadiya.⁹⁹ Since the Siltie and Gurage shared long boundary, they experienced border clash and conflicts for several years. In this regard, Nishi asserts that warfare over land and water was common practice between the Siltie and surrounding groups such as Sebatbet and Kistane before the end of 19thc.¹⁰⁰ In most cases the conflict between the Siltie and Gurage resulted in cattle raids and burning villages. Such conflicting relation between the two persuaded the Siltie to dig the historical ditch of Keyrate in Kibbet town to defend themselves from attacks and raids of the Mareqo.¹⁰¹

The Siltie had also conflicting relation with the Hadiya, while the Siltie were pushed by Cheha Gurage in the north, they also conducted raids over the Hadiya in the south to relax the congestion. Such kinds of conflicts were followed by raids of cattle, burning of villages and destruction of properties as well as human lives. In order to defend themselves from the attacks of Hadiya, the Siltie dug Kululo Cave in Woyra wusho qabale of Ulbareg.¹⁰²

The people of Alaba and Siltie people of Wulbarag on side and Mareqo on another side conflict each other by unknown case, however the Arsi peoples interference to stabilize and make peace around 1940's by Miselene Qegnasmach Goshme had assigned to rule the area.¹⁰³ (See appendix II and III). The Siltie people of Dalocha woreda had closer interaction with Lanfuro, Mito, Sankura, Ulbarag and Silti Woredas along their border. The border area of the people had both marriage and trade relation as well as they shared common Islamic value and socio cultural inter-relation.

⁹⁹*Tesfaye Tadese, P.85*

¹⁰⁰*M. Nishi, P.160*

¹⁰¹*Ferejat, No.15, March 2014, PP.53-54*

¹⁰²*Abebe Hizkel, P.70*

¹⁰³*A type of letter from Arsi Aworaja Yehager wusti Minister*

Interaction between the Siltie people of Dalocha and other woredas of neighboring community were characterized by both cooperation, peaceful and conflict/disagreement took place at varying time. The factors for disagreement were competition over grazing land and water utilization. Small number of Orthodox Christian in the area the majority of Muslim lived peacefully with the people of other religious. During the Italian occupation (1935-41), the Italian attacked Christians for Muslims as a strategy to divide and rule the country. More over the Amhara settlers are integrated with the local community, speak Siltie language, and the priests also use Siltie language not only in the everyday interaction, but also in teaching the gospel to their followers.¹⁰⁴

2.5. Migration

Eviction of landless peasant of the southern was adverse effect of landlordism under Hailesilassie's government. Besides exacerbation of the suffering of the tenants through exploitation, the landlords could discontinue their relation with their tenants at discretion. Thus the poor peasants had been subjected to displacement that created further in security of tenure. One of the important causes of eviction of the tenants concerns the introduction mechanized farming that emerged in the second half of 1960's. The introduction of new technology in the field of agriculture indeed highly tempted the landlords and stimulated their appetite for more income and wealth, which were anticipated to be substantially higher than the rents to be received from tenants. Hence the landlords started to displace the tenants in large scale. They did this for: 1) To rent their land out to those who were considered to be capable enough to employ new technology in the farms, or 2) to farm land themselves using modern agriculture method. Eviction was under taken arbitrarily rather than in a planned way that might otherwise give the tenant's time to look around for alternative plots. Furthermore, tenant displacement was effected where there existed no adequate alternative means of employment for the landless peasants found that as a result of mechanized farming, in southern provinces, a portion of a poor peasants were either turned into agricultural work place or being displaced from their village to came to the urban centers in search of job or migrated into marginal areas to seek plots of land to cultivate.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴*Informants: Prist Awgicho Mamo, Mohammed Hajji and Yekesi Nesro*

¹⁰⁵*Hussen Jemal, "The politics of land tenure in Ethiopian history: Experience from the south" (agricultural university of Norway 2004), P.8*

During the imperial period granting land and gabbar in lieu of salary to administrators and soldiers was the typical feature of the feudal Ethiopia. Right over the portion of land that belongs to the state were distributed to various groups which claimed such rights on the basis of service rendered during the campaigns or in compensation for continued services, and to the clergy and settlers who migrated to the incorporated regions.

Markakis and Nega described the situation that accompanied the incorporation:

“Immediately after the conquest, the northern rulers divided the southern lands into three theoretically equal, parts, according to a traditional principle known as Siso, meaning one third. They confiscated two thirds outright, leaving the last third to the indigenous population. To win their collaboration, the local chiefs or Balabats were given their choice of the remaining one third and were either exempted from taxation on it or paid reduced amount.”

This largely affected the Siltie peasants and forced them under take large scale rural-urban migration in the locality.¹⁰⁶ Migration forms an integral part of family life among the Siltie and has done mainly since Addis Ababa’s establishment in the late 19thc. Driven by marginalization in the countryside following the introduction of a new system of administration and the subsequent takeover their land by Balabats, the Siltie began to migrate to Addis Ababa and major urban center of southern Ethiopia since late 19th century.

According to Bustorf, it was since early 20th century, that urban migrations have become part of the Siltie culture (Bustorf 2011:460-461). However, whatever the time of the start might be migration to the urban center and the Gulf state has now become a norm rather than exception among the Siltie. Today the Siltie are one of the largest migrant groups in southern Ethiopia towns and Addis Ababa where they are known as shop keepers and merchants. Werabe and some other cities have provided new focal point for migration. Such centers have proved especially attractive to women.

¹⁰⁶*Abebe Hizkel, (2017), P.50*

Mainly during annual Islamic Holidays, most of the urban immigrants come home back to celebrate and strengthen social ties between family members. During these times, the urban Siltie enhance their Kinsfolk's ties among their parents and their extended family members. It is customary during the holydays that the urban Siltie bring special gifts such as clothes, animals for slaughter, kerosene as a source of energy for their families. This situation and the flow of information from urban to a rural area of Siltie also serve as a further instigating or pushing factors for younger generations to take similar ventures to the urban areas. Despite its economic significances in the form of local and international remittances to the place of origin, migration has been resulting in demographic changes since it accelerates depopulation, dependency high elders age ratio, and finally negative impact on the economic development of the area as a whole.¹⁰⁷ The shortage of agricultural land and un employment caused for the migration of Siltie people into urban area and Arab states. According to informants to minimize migration make favorable condition for young people; the stockholder and the government should play a great role to solve problems.¹⁰⁸ The majority of Siltie people generally and Dalocha area particularly left their original place before the revolution of 1974. One of the reasons behind the migration was the gabbar system which introduced during the imperial period that the native of Siltie people's and Dalocha woreda alienated from their land. As result of this migration become the most option who did carry burden of Balabats exploitation and oppression; they moved to Addis Ababa, Jimma and other towns of the country. In addition to this the migrant moved outside world especially Arab states by the name of Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca Saudi Arabia.¹⁰⁹ (see appendix VII)

¹⁰⁷*Keiredin Tezera.2018, PP.57-58*

¹⁰⁸*Sirgaga Dari. Gen Siltie Yesiltie Bahilina Tarik (Jobek Design print and Trade), P.95*

¹⁰⁹*Informant: Sheh Hussen Sheh Wajo*

Chapter III

3. Dalocha 1974-1991

3.1. Land Reform

The introduction of land reform of 1975, which was a response to one of the basic question of the 1974 revolution, is a land mark in contemporary history of the country. On March 4, 1975, the Derg introduced a fundamental land tenure system, the proclamation to provide for public ownership of rural lands No. 31, 1975. This means changed the pattern of relationship between the owner and the cultivator of the land by “making land to the titter for the first time a reality in Ethiopia” (Ellis, 1992: 254). The proclamation nationalized all rural land throughout the country. It eradicated private land tenure system and replaced it with public ownership (article 3, sub-article 1 and 2). Indeed, “the abolition of private land ownership” (Clehpam,1988) is one of the basic factors that demonstrate the radicalism of the Ethiopia revolution. The reform act has prohibited transfer of land by sale, lease, or mortgage article 5. The legislation abolished tenancy (article 4, sub article 5) and emancipated the poor peasants from all types of obligation to the landlords (article 6, sub article 3). Evently, this way a radical departure from the pre-land reform dominated sub-ordinate relation between the landlord and peasants, which prevailed in the south. Nevertheless the reform act provided the peasants only with use right, and not private ownership right. Moreover only individual who were willing to farm personally were entitled to possess land.¹¹⁰

At the time of the Derg’s ascension to power, the land tenure question was at the forefront of the political debate. The exploitation on the south land reached an unbearable degrees under Haileselassie’s privatization programm, as onerous rent payments and, in some cases, outright landlessness, had impoverished peasants to the point that the “hunger season” had become a time of insurmountable suffering for many (Teshale 1995, p.152-153). Both the state and its nefteгна agents were held responsible for this, and a great deal of resentment was fostered among southerner’s towards their northern over lord.

¹¹⁰*Hussen Jemal, The politics of land tenure in Ethiopian history: Experience from the south (Agricultural university of Norway), PP.9-10*

However even among the new urban, predominately Amhara classes this injustice was recognized, and gave rise to the ‘land to the tiller’ movement amongst Marxist student protestors in the 1960’s, which would eventually become one of the slogan of the revolution (Bahru 2001,p.225).¹¹¹

In the aftermath of the revolution the Siltie supported the military regime for in its enacting of the land reform and religious equality. Article 8 and 10 of the 1975 land reform proclamation proclaimed that peasant’s shall be organized under farmers’ association. The military regime pursued oppressive policy under the banner of “Ethiopia First” and “Ethiopia or Death” both of which were based on aggressive patriotism and ruthless use of coercion that was detrimental to the legitimate crime and aspiration of society.¹¹²The military regime freed the peasants from the bondage of the landlords, but put them under the bondage of state through its forced collectivization policy and state led agricultural marketing scheme. Peasant association and producers cooperative and union were the main instruments of the regime.¹¹³ (See appendix VI). Since 1976 farmers were forced to form cooperative. Both producers and service cooperative were formed in most peasant associations and became the core unit of production distribution of goods and services. Service cooperative provided basic and essential inputs by under taking sale of farm input and consumer items, provision of loans education of peasant members in socialist philosophy.¹¹⁴ During the Derg regime the abolition of landlord gave freedom for the Siltie people of Dalocha area and distribution of confiscated land from landlord that landless peasant who oppressed and exploited since imperial regime. The Dalocha people welcomed the Derg regime, however the practice of peasant association and cooperative put people under the control of state.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹Steven Davis, “The political economy of land tenure in Ethiopia” Phd Thesis (university of St. Andrews 2008), P.189

¹¹²Abebe Hiskel, “A socio-cultural history of the Siltie people”. (MA Thesis Dilla university 2017), P.54

¹¹³A type of letter from Dalocha Lanfuro Awaraja to Werabet Kebele Farmers association office

¹¹⁴Abebe Hizkel, P.55

¹¹⁵Informant: Munaja Gutago

3.2. Villagization

The state led villagization program is not a new concept in Ethiopia; in fact such program was introduced by the military regime “Provisional Military Administrative council” also known as Derg, in the 1970’s. At that time it had a disastrous impact on rural population (Deiniger et al. 2007). Concerns about skepticism toward the current program have been expressed, which might be due to the devastating impact it had about 25 years ago.¹¹⁶

As the Derg seized political power in Ethiopia in 1974, major changes were made in the policy of land ownership. All rural landless and tenants were given free access to use land. The Derg began a comprehensive agricultural collectivization which included a villagization program. It had the objective of grouping scattered farming communities into small village of several hundred thousand each. The official aim of the villagization was to promote an efficient land use, save resource as well as improve healthcare and infrastructure. The Derg regime attempted to resettle more than 30 million rural peasants two-third of total population into village over nine years period. The villagization process was disorganized with threats of violence against those who did not move. Those who resettled describe the new village as camps for forced labour on government project, such as road construction, agricultural and other infrastructure development. The village was in poor condition and thousands of people died of starvation and tropical disease. In 1986, at least 84,000 people are believed to have fled the settlements while 50,000 became refugees in Somalia. By 1989, the Derg had villagized 13 million people.

Resistance groups against the government arose and violence erupted. Because of shortage of resources and the increasing international condemnation, the state reforms began to drastically slow down. In 1987 the Derg government was dissolved although, by that time the reforms had already dramatic impact on the rural population.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶*Eva Berger. "Access to land in Ethiopia: BA Thesis in development studies Lund university 2014), P.15*

¹¹⁷*Ibid*

In 1985, the military government declared villagization program which grouped scattered farming communities throughout the country into small village clusters with the aims of promoting rational land use, conserve resources, provide access to clean water, health and education services and strengthen security. Although the government had villagized about 13 million people by 1989, international criticism, deteriorating security condition and lack of resources doomed the plan. Markos, et al, on the other hand, claim that the government wanted to establish village for the purpose of controlling people's way of life and preventing political dissidents from in filtering the villages. Although the government tried to convince the peasants of Siltie to join the program, the peasants remained reluctant to leave their home base to which they were strongly attached. There were mixed feelings regarding the government-led villagization and collectivization schemes. In terms of providing access to utilities and services, many argue that the schemes had some positive impacts. However, the way through which they were implemented was against the will of the people since the schemes uprooted the people from their ancestral land and confined them in small hamlets where the people felt alien in the new places of settlement.¹¹⁸

The military regime of Derg started villagization in Dalocha area in 1986/87. Kutiyo Sabola and Wacho Obisa Kebele in Dalocha district was the main place to apply villagization. Immediately following the implementation of villagization malaria and cholera disease broke out. In malaria case the area people villagized was low land that exposed to the disease. Due to absence of health center, medicine, school and other infrastructure the people disliked villagization and the program was failed and not effectively run. According to my informants villagization was opposed by the peasants because of the following reasons, such as the peasants moved into new area, they were not able to take permanent plants like chat and other plants, the peasants live in distance place from their original farmland and from their home. Villagization also contributed to the decline of agricultural product, degradation, it also aggravated the already existing problem of peasants income, low production in Dalocha district. During the eve of the collapse of the Derg regime peasants began returned to their original homeland.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸Abebe Hiskel, "A socio-cultural history of the Siltie people". MA Thesis (Dilla University 2017), P.56

¹¹⁹Informant: Busser Mohammed, Wonda Mulugeta and Alemayehu Atnafe

3.3. Opposition against the Derg

In the program of villagization the government tried to convince the peasant of Dalocha to join the program, the peasants remained reluctant to leave their home base to which they were strongly attached.

In regard to religion, the military regime had shifted its approach and expressed firm opposition against all kinds of religion including Islam. In Siltie the official of the military government banned the religious practice, hence, religious become one of the aspect of the interference between state and society that had adversely affected the relation between power holder and society in the pre-1991 period. The regime also persisted with the policy of marginalizing the indigenous assets of different communities in its drive for control of the nation. National unity and centralization aimed at building a strong and unified state was the main justification behind suppression of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

Under military rule, local leaders and indigenous institution were abolished altogether branded as collaborates of the imperial regime and dubbed as reactionaries. During this period the elder's councils were replaced by peasant association and the regime embarked on intensive campaign against indigenous institutions and societal cultural practices. Generally, the aforementioned policies and practice of military regime created dissatisfaction and opposition against the Derg regime. They put the people under total control and dominance of the state and the nature of the relation between the state and society were skewed against the latter that remained disadvantaged. The policies and practice of the government further dismantled the already endangered indigenous institution of the people. Due to such negative developments, the people of Siltie stood against the military regime.¹²⁰ The main causes of the Derg disliked by the people are the recruitment of soldiers forcefully and sent them to military training school; the recruits were the son of poor peasants. Those who had strong relation with officials of the Derg or who had money could be free either through money. At that time the students had no right to learn.

¹²⁰ *Abebe Hizkel, PP.57-58*

Civil servants, teachers and other persons were ordered to be registered for the national army. But the soldiers were not voluntary at the beginning; they defected from the government service from the beginning up to the down fall of the government. This conditions accelerated the people's opposition in Siltie area generally and Dalocha district particularly.

In general the Derg regime in Dalocha woreda went through different changes. The introduction of land reform proclamation, the introduction of basic education to adult people. However peasants of Dalocha district did not accept the implementation of villagization program, violence of human right, the extreme dictatorship. In addition of the above idea there was also other impacts of villagization on the livelihood of the people in the district. For instance they were moved to great distance to their agricultural land the peasants waste as required collecting grass for their cattle, fire wood, and it increases government control over agricultural production system and marketing decision. Indirectly villagization was likely to affect land use, agricultural productivity and peasants income in Dalocha woreda. In these case peoples of the Dalocha area strictly opposed the Derg regime. Finally Woyane traditionally by the people and later EPRDF of Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic front controlled the area. At the time the people welcomed the EPRDF because they considered EPRDF would liberate and free from villagization, recruitment of young people to war and others.¹²¹

¹²¹ *Informant: Priest Awgichew Mamo*

Chapter IV

4. Dalocha 1991 to the present

4.1. Land

The Derg's agricultural policy was, in effect, a threat to the gains of the land reform for the great majority of the peasants. This interventionist policies have contributed to the surfacing of contradiction between the peasants and the Derg, the situation which the opposition groups exploited effectively to overthrow the government in May 1991.

In spite of remarkable changing economic and political in other areas, the EPRDF led government has retained rural (and urban) land tenure policy of the Derg. At present, public ownership of land is constitutionally acknowledged. As it was under the previous government, private tenure and land sales that it entails are prohibited.¹²² The constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), which entered into force in 1995, stipulates that being a common property of Nations, Nationalities and People of Ethiopia, and not a private property of individuals or group of individuals or land would not be sold or exchanged. The federal government on land tenure, the system of state landholding in Ethiopia vests farmers with only usufruct rights over land under their possession. The relevant passage in the 1994 constitution reads as follows:

The right to ownership of rural and urban land, as well as of all natural resource is exclusively vested in the state and in the public. Land is a common property of the nation, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia and shall not be subject to sale or to other means of exchange.

Holding rights are considered permanent, although, the government has reserved the right to redistribute more or less any land whenever it sees fit, as occurred in Amhara region in 1996-97.

¹²²Hussen Jemal, *"The politics of land tenure in Ethiopian history: Experience from the south"* (Agricultural university of Norway 2004), P.11

As the above clause states, land can be transferred permanently by inheritance, but never by sale, and temporarily by rental. Free land is also available to all citizens who desire an agricultural livelihood according to the constitution. However for those who wish to move into other spheres of employment, the state can expropriate their land for cultivation by others, and will at best only pay compensation for “improvements” on the land, but not the land itself (FDRE proclamation 456/2005, Article 9 (1)). The FDRE has enclosed its land policy within an ideology of rapid state-led growth and social justice. However much of the economic justification offered by the government in support of its stance is so incoherent and contradictory that it defies any real possibility of reasoned debate and analysis. Therefore competing perspectives as have tended to focus up on the few key arguments advanced by the regime that are most plausible, and it is only those that will be outlined here.

The main justification offered to support state retention of land is that if peasants could sell their land then, given Ethiopia’s high poverty levels, many would undertake distress sales during hard times. In the long run this could have the polarizing effect of creating a minority of wealthy landlords and a huge under class of landless, destitute peasants, which would be both socially and economically undesirable. This of course mirrors the prognosis offered by the World Bank, which asserted that the free sale of land might have a deleterious effect on welfare in some parts of Africa, for reasons such as distress sales, speculation by exploitative investors etc. Therefore, until economic growth and hence substantive off-farm employment have been generated, the Ethiopian government is intent on restricting land transfer by way of the nationalized tenure system. This objective is further illustrated by the restrictions placed up on labor mobility under their land policy. Federal law states that confiscated and redistributed to the landless and in fact the government has been fairly open about its reason for this. Over all then, state ownership has been conceived as a means to avert the harmful effects of a free land market.

The government also adopted several other lines of argument in favor of state land holding. They have claimed that privately owned land could not feasibly be used as collateral in rural Ethiopia, as a bank does not possess the capacity to administer confiscated land in the case of default. They instead assert, which can best be administered within a system of state free hold. The government has also made the case that, were land to be privatized and then consolidated into large commercial farms by wealthy individuals, then this could actually reduce productivity

growth. This is because if the new owner were to institute agricultural capitalization, then this would reduce employment requirements, which would be some optimal in country that is labor but not capital abundant. Alternatively, were commercial farmers to employ peasants as tenants and opt for a labor intensive strategy, then productivity would also be reduced, because, according to neo classical /neoliberal economic theory, owner operators tend to be more efficient and hard working than tenants because they can reap the fruits of their own efforts, rather than receive a fixed wage. It is therefore argued that state land holding can provide the best of both worlds, as it prevent land from being accumulated by the rich, while still allowing individuals to enjoy the rewards of their own labor, hence maintaining pare to - efficient incentives.

The EPRDF has characterized tenure as passive conditions that must be upheld in order that their Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) strategy can work its magic and transform the economy. In their view industrialization would precipitate off farm employment, hence relieving the burden on agriculture and the tenure system, without the rules of the latter needing to change. But the fatal flow in this logic is in the fact that the best available evidence seems to suggest that agricultural development led industrialization is utterly in capable of delivering any significant growth at all.¹²³ Land is a vital resource for the Siltie. The issue of the land is strongly lied also with the identity of the people as well. Locally the Siltie call land Deche. Nevertheless, whenever, the people want to associate land with identity, they call it Shenge. Shenge means one's land that can become not only a means for living and an asset, but also a final resting place. Land has thus become an integral part of the identity of families, clans and villages. Land is owned communally among the Siltie. Thus the Siltie have a strong attachment to the land. A well known Siltie proverb which reads “ስልጤ ደችዋ ኢንዳች ዮዳን”, which literally means “ The Siltie strongly like their land and women”, also depict how land had strongly become associated with identity among the Siltie. Even until this day, key informants said that land is a cause of disagreement among the Siltie, and it is the primary source of dispute in the area. Scales of disputes are intensified in those areas which the communities or member of a family considered land as Shenge.

¹²³ *FDRE constitution, Article 40*

It seemed that there is a conflict of norms in this regard. This may arise owing to the introduction of transplantation of “capitalist economic practice that encourage individualism and considered land as property to be bought and sold, which is a valuable economic asset, especially for the purpose of serving as a collateral for loans” on one hand, and the local conception of land as a communal property on the other hand. The government declares in 1995 Act that has been enshrined in the 1995 constitution that land belongs to the public, and it is not allowed to sell or buy it. However it is widely observed that land is freely sold and about in the Siltie area and possibly beyond. In the transaction of land, we see also a clear involvement of plural legal system. The parties involve both the state, and elders in the process. The state is however absent in the transaction yet given a place in the contractual agreement between the parties. The parties indicate in the contractual paper that the state can fine one or two of a party who break the agreement. They use elders as witness and guarantee for the transaction. Informants indicate that the parties are afraid of elder’s curse rather than the state’s prisons whenever they are involved in the transaction. The state has become “an embedded state” where by the state institution and state agents have got little significant in the local setting and hence the state is represented only symbolically. In this regard, the parties rely more in elders and informal transaction rather than a municipality of the other state agent.¹²⁴

Despite the commercialization nature of land, one can also observe an aspect of legal pluralism in the application of land right. Both local kinship and an official form of land right claims are used in the local settings. In the countryside, the most used legal way to apply to the land right is through kin lines. A father can inherit the land to his children; especially male children are entitled to inherit the land. This may be due to the patriarchal relation that dominates the Siltie social life.

¹²⁴Keiredin Tezera, *Dynamics of legal pluralism and emerging legal hybridism*, (Eclipse printing press Dec 2018 A.A Ethiopia), P.51

With growing population, children vie for land, and hence land has become one of the major sources of dispute among the people. This scenario strengthened the important of lineage councils, and customary laws in the daily life of the people. Elders also resolve land disputes which are mostly tethered with individual or elder than state agencies. This indicates the existence of normative clashes between liberal and non liberal values.¹²⁵

On the other hand, the government has introduced land ownership certificate since 2008. It also used as means to own land privately. Due to some factors including increasing population and scarcity of land, new land distribution by the government is rarely observed. The government however has set up land administration committee at kebele administration, the level which is in charge of registering land and giving ownership certificate for members of the kebele who have already had land holding rights. As the issue of gender becomes an important agenda, both husband and wives are usually registered in the land ownership certificate.¹²⁶

However the certificate could not resolve property right claims whenever the size of the family increase and the children want to access land. It is children who are considered the instigators of property disputes that involve land dispute cases reported in the state court. According to Siltie zone high court report (2016/17), 2/3rd of family disputes which are brought to the tribunal are related to land. Kebele land administration committee is also involved in a related dispute as dispute settler. Hence, family Shengo and Abotgare are most powerful local institution which take part in the distribution and redistribution of collectively owned lands by family. Abotgare is a male lineage based council that is composed of localized partilineage circle of male lineage that affect members in various ways, including distribution of land. It is also involved in the distribution of land oversees dispute cases among member. It acts like the semi-autonomous social field that dominates the Siltie rural life.

¹²⁵*Ibid*

¹²⁶*Ibid*

The male lineage group functions properly even if various states controlling strategies, such as one to five organization, development groups, kebele administration, land administration committee have been introduced by the government to control the rural life.¹²⁷ The local forums are important local dispute settlement institution, for members of the family are strong controlled by kinship organizations.

Thus whenever land dispute cases are initiated, these two forums are actively engaged in claiming down tensions and if actors in the institutions are not able to solve it, clan leaders or elders will be involved. However, if the disagreement continues, the state will also be involved.¹²⁸

Women mainly resort to a government installed women's development group and kebeles land administration for interventions. This happens when ever Abotgare, men dominated institution, could not consider women as having inheritance right owing to the patriarchal relation prevalent in the area. However due to some gender-based intervention launched both by the government and NGO's in the past two decades, women's awareness has increased and they have begun to challenge the status quo. It is due to this fact that elders have now seriously considered gender issue including property rights in various customary court hearings. Thus the various governments and NGO's intervention and teaching in equality of all sorts including gender following the introduction of global norm are affecting rural life. It is now observed that elders are employing international laws to adjudicate disputes that involve gender cases or inheritance cases. Thus elders are also participating in the distribution of land and women inheritance right have got due attention by elders this time. This arises primarily because of the influence of global gender issue. One can also say that local institution are becoming part of the transformation and even at times appropriating state's social program and hence accelerated "democracy from below".¹²⁹

Dalocha area is one of the Siltie whose life is strongly attached and tied with their land; the key informant said that during the Derg regime a proclamation of land reform. The proclamation implements the confiscation of land from land lords and distributed to the landless peasants. Indeed the abolition of private land ownership replaced by public ownership.

¹²⁷*Ibid*

¹²⁸*Ibid*

¹²⁹*Ibid*

The Derg government prohibited land sale and buy as individual resource. Villagization program and agricultural marketing program was demoralized and challenged the right of land owner. After the fall of Derg rule by EPRDF the right of landownership is the same as that of the Derg. According to Ethiopian people's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) land is belong to public and it is not permitted to sale and buy its own property, however to the coverage of the landownership the government symbolically give certificate, but it could not solve the property right of the land of the Dalocha district. At any time the EPRDF officials by the name of investment, development and urbanization case the peasants removed without sufficient compensation.¹³⁰

4.2. Siltie identity crisis and the Siltie Gurage inter ethnic dispute

The Siltie are an oral society and commence most of their conversation with proverbs. This is even true during the formal meeting like zone councils and state court sessions. They are open to talking, yet often express their ideas idiomatically. They criticize the state whenever it seems necessary to them, but they do it cautiously as they still “fear” the state. Nevertheless, they have their forms of resistance as Scott aptly puts it referring to how the weak resist the powerful in everyday life (Scott 1985). The Silties interaction with the Ethiopia state, on the other hand, harks back to the late 19th century. Both friendship and enmity characterized the Siltie's interactions with the state. Their first encounter with Menelik II's Ethiopia at the end of 19th century did not start in healthy ways because of the imperial states disintegration of the Siltie land into neighboring people that had been precipitated by the fierce military resistance the Siltie showed towards the expanding force of Menelik II. The state was since then perceived as an enemy and it continue to have negative connotation among the Siltie until today. It is remarkable that the local community calls the state “Mengist” that is an “absolute power” that can give and take everything that it wants from the people. It is likewise remarkable may be also due to the problematic relationship between the Siltie and the state which the Siltie managed to set up their administration zone only in 2001 that was a decade later than most of the ethnic group in the ethnic federal Ethiopia.¹³¹

¹³⁰*Informant: Shemse Ali, Hamdala Hawkash, Munaja Gutago and Kedir Hegano*

¹³¹*Keiredin Tezera, 2018, PP.286-7*

Even though the inter-ethnic dispute between the Siltie and Gurage started in the early 1990's its emergence could be traced back to the late 19th century. The Siltie area had been incorporated into the Ethiopian state. Menelik's expansion into the south and southwest of the country had culminated with the birth of unified Ethiopia in the quarter of 19th century. In his expansion to the south, Emperor Menelik II used two strategies to conquer and incorporate new territories effectively. These were the peaceful submission and armed struggle (Bahru 2001: 60-61). The expansion of Shewa to the Siltie as had started in the 1870's had been concluded with the conquest of Siltie in 1889. The Siltie formed an alliance called Gogot with neighboring people like Qabena, Sodo Gurage to fight Menelik's force, yet became unsuccessful.

Following the incorporation, a new form of a legal system has been transplanted, and the Siltie land was disintegrated into neighboring area. As a result, the quest for self determination and central administration had started since then. The Menelik administration adopted a politico-administration system called Balabat or Malkagna and appointed Balabat to administer the area indirectly. Denying the self rule of the Siltie had continued under the imperial regime as well. The Siltie students had joined the Ethiopian student movement that became one of the factors that unseated Emperor Haile Silassie I in 1974. The Siltie area had been included under Gurage and the people in the urban area were called Gurage. Some sources indicate further that the Siltie identity politics was initiated since 1990's and does not have any historical precedence. Rather it constitutes an emerging social and political processes of constructing of a new ethnicity for the majority of the eastern Gurage speaking population (Zerihun 2015: 7-8).¹³² Some written sources however indicate that the Siltie has got a different origin.¹³³ The identity of the Siltie was originated from their father of Hajji Aliye, the war commander of Ahmad Gagn.¹³⁴

¹³²*Ibid*

¹³³*Dinberu Alemu, Gogot Yegurage Bihereseb Tarik Bahilina Qunqua, (Artistic Matemiya Dirgit, 1995), P.48*

¹³⁴*Yeharari Hizb Biherawi Kililawi Mengist Yebahilina Tourism Biro, "Yeharari-Siltie Hizboch Andinetina Tarikawi Tisisir" (December 2008), P.100*

The transformation that has taken place in the political structure of Ethiopia since 1991 has been both radical and pioneering. It has been radical because it has introduced the principle of self-determination for federal regional unit in a former highly centralized and unitary state; it has been pioneering because Ethiopia has gone further than any other African state.¹³⁵

The pre-1990 development and the ethnic consciousness that has been aroused in Ethiopia resulted in the change of government in 1991 by ethnic based resistance.¹³⁶ Markakis notes that the Siltie assertion of separate identity was following a trend of shaping and reshaping of “Gurage identity” as response to the existing socio-political and economic reality of the post – 1991 Ethiopia.¹³⁷ it also granted every nation, nationality and people in Ethiopia the right to a full measure of self government which include the right to establish institution of government in the territory that it inhabits and to equitable representation in state and federal government.¹³⁸

When the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), toppled the Derg regime, category and boundary formation, political solidarity and social cohesion remained relatively stabled at the level of social relationship and organization built on the principle of clanship and locality.¹³⁹ Some sources indicate further that the Siltie identity politics was initiated since 1990’s and does not have any historical precedence. Rather it constitutes an emerging social and political processes of constructing a new ethnic for majority of Eastern Gurage speaking population.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁵C.Clapham, “Controlling space in Ethiopia”. I.W.James, Donham, Kurimotaa, Triulizi, (eds) 2002

¹³⁶Markakis, John. *The politics of identity: The case of Gurage in Ethiopia*, (Addis Ababa, 1998)

¹³⁷Elena, *Beyond Right: Legal process and Ethnic conflicts*, university of Petersburg, 2004), P.543

¹³⁸FDRE constitution, article No 39

¹³⁹Keiredin Tezera, *Serra: Yasiltie Hizb Tarik Bahilina Qwanqwa 894-2001 in Amharic*

¹⁴⁰Yalew Tezera: *The History of Siltie people, a particular emphasis on their struggle for identity the subsequent socio-economic development of Siltie zone*, BA Thesis (Debu university)

Post 1991 the recognition of areas and ethnic group in Ethiopia with in ethnic federal system. The Siltie Gurage a Muslim group split from Gurage speaking people, now with their own political unit or zone.¹⁴¹ Additionally, studies that are based on empirical data indicate further that the Siltie-Gurage identity dispute had been continuation of the past and the post 1990's identity struggle was a revivalism of an already existing ethnic group identity that "was suppressed under the wider Gurage category". The empirical data also indicate that the Siltie did not categorize themselves with the Gurage and describe their history significantly different from the Gurage groupings.¹⁴² The Siltie disputed over categorization with Gurage and continued the struggle for identity during the Derg regime. The current federal system supposes that each group of people shall constitute an administrative unit which is politically represented by an ethnic party. Gurage zone is one of the such administrative units which falls under the southern Nation Nationalities and peoples regional state. The split of Siltie zone from Gurage officially took place in July 2001.

¹⁴¹*Yesiltie zone Bahil Tourismina Yemengist communication Gudayoch Memirya, "Yesiltie Bihereseb Tarikina Qwanqwa symposium Tinatawi Tsufoch Medible, (Megabit 2002), P.5*

¹⁴²*Dinberu Alemu, P. 49*

The issue of Siltie identity captured attention because the Gurage were believed to be a people of solidarity and diligence. Shaack (1966: 37) noted that Gurage culture is essentially uniform, apart from the varied forms of language and religion. Fecadu (1969), attributes the success of Gurage activities to their strong social orientation and to their respect for the material aspects of modernization. In short the Gurage seemed the last people to be involved in the politics of ethnicity.

It was widely accepted (at least until the split of Siltie) that the Gurage consisted of three major groups of peoples Sebat bet, Sodo Kistane and Siltie. These groups share a common set of artifacts, technology and mode of production as a people of “enset culture complex” of south eastern Ethiopia (Shack, 1966: 1-3, 37). Their geographical proximity also led to extensive inter-marriage between the groups.

Even so, the diversity between these groups is impressive, while the Siltie are Muslim people, the Sodo Kistane have been followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity for centuries. The Sebatbet used to follow the indigenous religion represented by “Waq”, and converted to Islam and Christianity during 20th century although even them is great to the extent that they have to use to use Amharic as the lingua franca among themselves.

The Sittlie are a Muslim people sharing perceived genealogical ties. After the political and economic incorporation of their homeland into the modern Ethiopia state in the late 19th century they have emerged as a part of the Gurage who are recognized as the most industrious ethnic group among the Ethiopia nations. Finally, under the federal state system they were recognized by the ruling party as the “Siltie Nationality” which is totally distinct from the Gurage.

It is believed that the origin of the Siltie date back to the 16th century when Imam Ahmad (“Ahmad Gran” in the context of Abyssinian history) conduct a massive military expedition against Christian Abyssinia. According to the oral tradition, a religious leader called Hajji Aliye who was born in Harar followed the expedition until he was asked to settle in a place called unman. He married with local women, and his last son called Gen-Siltie is believed to be the ancestor of the Siltie. The Siltie in its traditional sense (as descendents of Gen-Siltie) constitute only part of the present day Siltie Nationality. There are neighboring units of Muslim people who share the same language and the similar historical narrative about the Islamic expedition. They are

Azernet Berbere, Malga, Alichu Wuriro and Walane Gadabano, and the traditional word to address the people of these five units (including Siltie) in “Islam”. This word may simply mean “Muslim” in the local language, but more specifically, it means the people who speak “Islamgna” (Siltigna) the language shared by the Siltie and their neighbors.

One of the distinguished inheritors of Siltie collective knowledge, all the five units of “Islam” should be considered equal within the context of their political tradition, and there was no clear answer why “Siltie” turned out to represent all those groups. However, some mythological prestige was attached to the Siltie, the descendants of Gen-Siltie. Hajji Aliye as a significant local saint is believed to have performed a miracle before his death. The legend goes that his Baraka (benediction) was transmitted when his vomit was given to Gen Siltie. It is also said that Gen-Siltie was given his father’s spear with the words of blessing so that he could be the leader of warfare to obtain land. Warfare over land and water was a common practice between the Siltie and the surrounding groups before the end of the 19th century.

In the political movement of Siltie, the historical setting that supported modern Gurage identity was lost, and the identity is now exposed to the internal diversity of their own society and to the politics of the nationalities. It was soon after the EPRDF assumed power in Addis Ababa, that the Siltie Azernet Malga Walane Gadabano Peoples Democratic Party was established in 1992. Its name was a simple opposition of some traditional group that used to share traditional “Islam” identity. It was their belief that the Gurage zone administration neglected the development needs of the Siltie people, and their aim was to seek for recognition of their own identity through negotiation with the EPRDF.

The party changed its name to the Siltie People’s Democratic Unity Party (SPDUP) as the movement went into direct confrontation with the Gurage People’s Revolutionary Democratic Movement (GPRDM), the ruling party of the Gurage zone. Siltie politicians published a monthly paper titled “Sojat” (meaning “Dawn” in their own language) to illuminate the cultural and historical identity of the Siltie. On the other hand, the Gurage ruling party published a book titled “Gogot” to advocate the idea of unitary Gurage Nationality. “Gogot” claimed that the Siltie could be considered as a part of Gurage based on cultural similarity as explained by Shack (1996) and on the fact of extensive intermarriage between Siltie and other groups of Gurage. The Siltie

advocates retorted by pointing out that their language (Siltigna) was very different from that of Sabatbet and of Sodo Kistane, and that they had a unique history that was not shared by the Gurage.

The EPRDF saw the Siltie political movement as local strife to be kept down, at least during initial stage. The party explains in its periodical brochure “Tehadso” explain that the Siltie nationalism was “mishandled” by the EPRDF because the party feared that “it might lead to the broke up of the Gurage people”.

A conference was arranged in September 1997 at Butajira to discuss the issue of Siltie identity and 961 speakers of a Siltegnna were elected as representatives to the conference. After three days of argument, they voted to determine if the Siltie is part of the Gurage or not. Of 927 votes, 781 were for the unity of Gurage, and 146 obtained. None of the votes supported the Siltie identity.¹⁴³ The SPDUP announced that it would not accepted the outcome of the conference, because the election of the representatives was “undemocratic”.

When the political resolution did not favor their claims, SPDUP and its supporters vehemently opposed both the outcome and the entire process of the resolution. Through concerted agitation and public meeting in the capital and elsewhere, they placed separatism in their political agenda. Thus the identity claims becomes ever more polarized and the debate and tug-of-war have become ever more pronounced ever since. In particular, the Siltie protagonists have questioned the entire appropriation of deciding the dispute through an indirect representation. Also the SPDUP renewed its quest by submitting its protest to the house of federation and demanding the reconsideration of the case as per constitutional provisions.

The chairman of the Gurage ruling party declared that the idea of Siltie as an independent nationality had no historical back group. Consequently the Siltie political party split into two and their movement seemed largely disrupted.¹⁴⁴ (See appendix IV and V).

¹⁴³*Nishi, Makoto. Making and unmaking nation state and ethnicity in modern Ethiopia (Kyoto university 2005), PP.160-165*

¹⁴⁴*A type of letter from houses of federation to SPDUP and to SNNPRS*

But EPRDF later reviewed its policy toward the Siltie political movement. It recognized that there was a strong and growing nationalism among the Siltie, and admitted that the party's commitment to the unity of Gurage was "undemocratic". Based on a recommendation by the house of federation the referendum over Siltie identity was carried out in March 2001. The National Election Board announced that 416,841 votes, out of 421,188 were for independence of the Siltie. Prior to referendum another conference was arranged by the EPRDF to pave the way for the establishment of Siltie zone through consolidation of the Siltie political movement. The reunion of Siltie political parties and the establishment of the Siltie people's Democratic Organization (SPDO) was decided at the conference. When the Siltie zone was set up, the SPDO became its ruling party.¹⁴⁵

The area that were merged with Gurage zone before the establishment of Siltie zone were Dalocha, Siltie, Lanfuro, Ulbarag and Alichu Wuriro. On the question Siltie identity, those Siltie speaking people were marginalized participation in everyday life, local institution, and others. In Dalocha district Hajji Sirgota Gultamo, Keiredin Hussen, Hamduka Wochiso, Keiredin Ibrahim and other individuals were arrested by the case the question of Siltie identity.¹⁴⁶ However after prolonged challenge the Siltie people got the status of ethnic identity.

4.3. Crafts and Social Stratification

Social stratification focuses primarily on those aspects of human experience which center on kinship, gender, ethnicity and territorial locality. Social stratification pattern in Ethiopia consists of four strata: high ranking lineage, low ranking lineages, caste groups and slave. According to Levine distinctions of status among lineage take the form of assigning greater prestige to certain patrilineal descent groups among the Gurage people including Siltie.¹⁴⁷ Marginalized groups were labeled at the bottom of social hierarchy. The occupation specialties of the caste groups include smithing, tanning, pottery, basketry and weaving.

¹⁴⁵*Nishi, Makoto, P.165*

¹⁴⁶*Informant. Kedir Issa*

¹⁴⁷*Donald Levine, Greater Ethiopia: The evolution of a multiethnic society, (university of Chicago Press, 1974), P.56*

Members of caste groups were largely despised and often feared as sources of pollution because of their eating habit. Some of the common characteristics features towards caste group were restriction on social life, status hierarch, concept of pollution, association with traditional occupation and caste membership ascribed by birth. They were not treated equally. But what is to be understood is that they ensured that regular supply of the resources such as cured leather, forged iron tools, pots and woven cloths at their disposal.

Over time human groups have created social and cultural forms which previously did not exist. One of these was occupational specialization. According to Donald Levine the nearly omnipresent caste groups in Ethiopia need no longer be regarded as for tuition remnants of aboriginal population who were simply subjugated dominant Ethiopia stock.

Although the question of their precise origins is complex and yet to be elucidated, it is clear that in many instance the members of caste groups are highly skilled crafts specialists who have migrated and settled among one or another host tribe for the sake of finding the regular source of demand for their products. Hence the caste groups do not represent specialization on the bases of internal social differentiation; rather the exchange of specialized services between different groups. Members of caste group migrate from one area to another or there is a general pattern of caste group circulation among different societies. Occupational specialties were taken to categorize the caste society into different groups.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸*Abebe Hizkel, PP. 32-34*

Siltie society is internally differentiated and consists of several stratified descent based subgroup. These includes the dominate majority of farmers and traders (Woleba) and the marginalized craft work (awneya) e.g. black smiths, tanners, and potters. People also differentiate between believers in Islam and non-believer, in those of higher (sharafic) descent and those of low, e.g. non-sharafic descent also called yeafeseb (native) and finally between high Landers (Ansewa) and low Landers (qalla).

Recently, one could also observe another form of social stratification emerging. Due to the expansion of development and education in the area, the Siltie are categorized into urban and rural, as well as elite and ordinary people. Related to the recent economic progress in the area, one can also see an emerging middle class, next to lower class and upper class. Silties as reflected in the living standards of the community. Furthermore, gender segregation in the life of the Siltie. Women are predominantly housewife and control house economy, while men section of the society work on the field as farmers or traders. But in the urban centers of the Siltie, women are also joining various occupations including business. In the case of study area, the same is true for the Siltie society in general and Dalocha district particular. Occupational specialties were taken to categorize the caste society into different groups.¹⁴⁹

4.4. Natural and manmade heritage

Siltie zone is renowned in its natural historical aspects. To name some such historical aspects, there are number of caves bore hand prints of the Siltie ancestors, various types of birds, erected stone statues, attractive and magnificent natural lakes, rivers, brooks, historical mosque etc. The effort was made to promote the aforementioned natural and manmade sites to access for tourist. In accordance with the survey conducted on the tourist sectors, it is vital importance to create a chain of tourism transaction system to promote attractions of the zone.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹Keiredin Tezera, 2018, P.58

¹⁵⁰Siltie zone culture and tourist department, “Tourist attraction of Siltie” (March 2022), P.41

Table 2: Some of natural and manmade heritage in Siltie zone:

Heritage	Name	Its location
Natural	Hare Shetan lake	Silti
	Abay lake	East-Silti and Lanfuro
	Mugo mount	Azerne Berbere
	Dalocha Raga Oda crown tree	Dalocha
	Balchi mount	Dalocha
	Chancho fall / Furfuro spring	Hulbarag woreda
	Handoshe natural forest	Sankura
	Gafat Mecherefa mount	Dalocha &Hulbarag
	Someno Koto mount	Azernet Berbere
	Abrano Fan/ Weyra fall	Azernet Berbere
	Manmade	Siltie cultural museum
Gisti Tehirat mosque		Alicho Wuriro
Hajji Aliye& Gen Siltie mosque		Azernet Berbere
Alkeso mosque		worabe city administration
Dange mosque		Dalocha
Genbo cave		Azernet Berbere
Ziko sheik mosque		Sankura
Sheberkele mosque		Alicho Woriro
Sorgan mosque		Alicho Woriro
Guta and Gugato cave		Hulbarag
Jewar cave		Azernet Berbere
Woyra wager bridge		Alicho Woriro
Gonie erected stone		Alicho Woriro
Hadir sheik mosque		Alicho Woriro

In Siltie zone Dalocha woreda there are number of natural and manmade heritages. The natural heritage of the Dalocha woreda are mount Balche, Dalocha Raga Oda crown tree arbitration locations, Gafat-Mecherafe mount and other natural heritage located in Dalocha district. Man made heritage of Dalocha are Dange mosque, different caves that are scavated by human being located at the area.

Mount Balche located between Dalocha and Lanfuro woredas and it crosses more than five kebele beside to the bordering mountain. This mount is located 197 Km away from Addis Ababa, 215 Km away from Hawasa and 47 Km away from Worabe the capital of Siltie zone, it covers 1675 hector of the forest. The mountain is suitable place for wildlife protection and care. The mount is fully covered with indigenous tree and bushes. It is also known for its concentration of geo-thermal energy, as observation of professionals of the sector.



Figure 8: Mount Balchi

Another natural heritage of Dalocha woreda is Dalocha Raga Oda crown tree arbitration locations. These places are used to resolve conflicts in community members of Siltie and they are located at Dalocha city and Hubarag area. This historical site is located 182 Km away from Addis Ababa, 176 Km away from Awassa and 12 Km away from Worabe. The traditional judgment /arbitration process has three phases namely Mega, Raga and Ferez Agenge, and issues beyond Raga shall be observed through Raga system. The system of arbitration shall be held under the shade of crown tree and Oda and the process could take as well from 30 minutes to an hour, and from 10-15 case could be heard in a single day. Systems of Dalocha's Raga arbitration shall be held every week on Monday and there could be emergency hearing if necessary.



Figure 9: Dalocha Raga Oda crown tree arbitration location

In Dalocha district there are many manmade heritages. Among these Dange mosque is the most one. It is located Siltie zone under Dalocha woreda, Dange Metewa kebele away from 7 Km of Dalocha. The mosque was built 100 years ago, and it has number of religious scriptures as well as other materials written on traditional aspects of Siltie. Dange sheik was a prominent scholar at his

time and including Golechaba sheik, Demala sheik there were a total of 250 religious scholars (Derasas), sheiks and religious leaders, it is said that these persons are founding fathers of Siltie. Dange sheik mosque is an establishment where conflicts resolved. Different persons who seek to get academic knowledge about the Muslim religion are also offered with scholarship. Currently the mosque is administered by grandson of the former sheik.¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹*Ibid, PP.50-52*

Chapter V

5. Social Services

The Imam's expansion to the north marked "the Abyssinian psyche with an ever sensitive scar, and an abiding distrust of Islam and Muslims". This scenario has developed an "Ahmad Gragh syndrome" by the then Christian dominated Ethiopian state which has also implemented a seed that has worsened Siltie-state relation until now. The Siltie have become suspect number one when ever Islamic momentum arises, and the religion has been perceived as politically subversive in the country. Due to this factor, Muslims were marginalized in every aspect of life including the state apparatuses since late 19th century. Though the Siltie were near to the center (only less than 200 Km away from Addis Ababa), they were marginalized socially, culturally, economically and politically for more than a century. They had been divided into neighboring communities so as not to allow the unified Muslim communities to live in peace. They even felt ignored during the first decades of post socialist Ethiopia. Following the establishment Siltie zone in 2001, the Siltie zone launched various projects aimed at developing the region and the identity marker of the people. The existence of communication among the Siltie can be evaluated from infrastructure building such as road and telecommunication service. In the past the Siltie were neglected by central government as far as road construction is concerned. Most of the Siltie woreda, however are now connected to the center of the zone and the main asphalt roads. Still woredas such as Dalocha, Alich Wuriro, Lanfuro and Misrak Azernet Berbere cannot get access to the main roads. As far as telecommunication services are concerned, almost all 196 Siltie kebeles have mobile services and wireless telephone services.¹⁵² In case of Dalocha woreda the same is true for Siltie society in general and Dalocha particular about the construction infrastructure.

5.1. Telecommunication

Now a day's telephone services are expanding in Dalocha woreda. There are two types of telephone service. Namely digital and automatic digital. Dalocha town having postal service through postal service agent.

¹⁵²*Keiredin Tezera, 2018, Pp.280 and 57*

5.2. Electricity

It is one of the modern sources of energy used as a source of power supply in industry, resident's fuel replacing wood and cow dung. The Dalocha woreda distribution of electric service can be seen both in interconnected system. This electrified distribution status of service is functional.

5.3. Road transport sector

Land transport particularly, road basically plays vital role in making easy communications, transporting freights and passengers. But though efforts have been made in the course of time to improve transportation accessibility of the zone, road transports within the Dalocha woreda are still poorly developed and under maintaining resulting in considerable isolation of the large areas especially towards the east and west of the basin, but improving these problems at this time because of a number of roads are under construction in the east and west part of the woreda.

At the end of 2009 E.C Dalocha woreda has a total road length 471 Km out of which 44 Km is federal gravel and the remaining 65.5 Km is regional gravel. Dalocha woreda has more or less considerable access to public transport.

5.4. Education

The number of schools for kinder garden, primary and secondary schools companied with in Dalocha town and kebeles. This woreda has 2 kinder garden schools both of them are found in Ferejat kebele. Primary school (1-8) in this woreda is 20 and (1-4) is 14, secondary school (9-10) in this woreda is 3 and 1 preparatory school (9-12) which are found in this woreda.

5.5. Health

Building of healthy society enhances the full involvement and participation of the community in all socio-economic activities with maximum capacity and also plays an important role to create sustainable economic development of the country. The health policy of Dalocha woreda mainly focused on the prevention strategy. Based on this strategy the health service coverage of this is encouragingly increased during the last decade. In 2010 E.C a lot of activities have been done in the area of disease prevention and improving the health and administration service of the

community, implementing family health care and controlling the transmitted disease in each house hold level. Improving the total number of graduates health professionals implementing the capacity building program and constructing more health institutions in this woreda. The potential health coverage in this woreda reached 87%. There are 4 health center, 20 health post, rural drug, 5 junior clinic, 4 middle clinic centers, 3 diagnosis labs, and 7 drug stores. Total 185 health facilities are available in this woreda.

5.6. Water

The source of domestic water in the woreda, whether trapped by pipe lines or hand pumps from surface are the rivers, the lakes and ground water from spring, boreholes, shallow and dug wells. Although not yet fulfilled compared to the demand, a number of springs, hand dug wells, shallow well, deep wells, and spot spring are in use for domestic water supply. In 2009 E.C the average woreda water supply access in urban areas reached 39% and for rural areas 47% while for both rural and urban areas it is recorded 43% of Dalocha woreda.

5.7. Hotel and Tourism

There are extremely attractive features in Dalocha woreda such as mountains, valleys, rivers, lakes and forests. The mountains are the sources of many river springs as well as the home of many different floras and fauna. Several mineral waters, hot and cold springs exist. Besides their recreational purpose, people use them as curative medicines. This woreda which are resulted from the rugged nature of the landscape. So there are many historical attractive sites such as mosques, monasteries, caves, rock arts, wooden arts and pale anthropological sites. In Dalocha woreda each ethnic group has its own culture, reflected by their hair style, body decoration, dressing, jewelry, religious and cultural ceremonies: it also has enormous tourism investment opportunity potent.¹⁵³

¹⁵³*Dalocha woreda Finance and economic development of socio-economic Geo-spatial data analysis and dissemination core process, (2012 E.C statistical abstract data), P P.15-20*

Conclusion

The history of Dalocha woreda is part of the Siltie people. To make correct feature of the history of Dalocha district the background of territorial expansion and early settlement was the most important thing. The written sources are scant on what had happen specifically in the district of Dalocha during territorial expansion and settlement of the Siltie peopled. It mention place name like Kibet, Lanfuro, Worabe, Hubarag, Sankura, Dalocha and others. To suggest that Dalocha was part of the recent Siltie land at the time. But it is possible to reconstruct the history of Dalocha under its historical survey. One of the versions of the origin of Siltie state came from an eastern part of the country following Imam Ahmad Gagn's war expansion during the first half of 16th century. Despite pinpointing the direction of expansion of Siltie from the east, the above historical records could not identify the existence of and the earliest area of Siltie in the eastern part of the Ethiopia. According to this view, the Siltie people expanded from the southern part of the Arabian peninsula settled around the lake Zeway before the war of Imam Ahmad and eventually dispersed to other areas including the present Siltie land.

Other sources further identified the existence of the indigenous Siltie speaking communities such as Zhara and Abzana long before the war of Imam Ahmad. Some Siltie elders report that the Siltie ethno-linguistic group is indigenous to the area. The evidence for their position is oral history, culture, naming system, worshipping and calendar. My imperical data also indicate that the Siltie are one of the ancient people of the country.

The Siltie land had been governed through Yesiltie Serra of local or traditional governance since at 9th century. Muslim Hadiya Sultanate in central and eastern Ethiopia. The Siltie employed this institution to administer them for long period of time. Other sources indicate that the Siltie system of local governance emerged in 16th century, the Siltie ancestor of Hajji Aliye who came from the ancient land in the east settled in the present Siltie land in the first half of 16th century, after the Siltie arrived Hajji Aliye distribute the land for the elder of the people and began to administer their respective land based on Yesiltie Serra. Hajji Aliye is believed to be the first administrator of the Siltie land.

Local administrative system was practiced before Menelik forces subdued the Siltie area. The force of the Menelik defeated the last Garad, Mulla Garad Temlezebo in the battle called

Ansenbet Amhara (Saturday's invasion). Structurally Yesiltie Serra was well organized to maintain peace and stability among the people as well as to sustain culture, history, language and religious of the Siltie people. During the expansion of the Ethiopian state at the turn of 19th century the government marginalized those traditional leaders who resisted alien rule and domination where as other who submitted were used as intermediaries between the state and the society. Siltie was one of the regions that strongly resisted Menelik's expansion. Incorporation into Ethiopian empire states compounded with policy of alienation and assimilation, undermined and eroded the potency organized indigenous governance and political system and cultural heritage was changed. Emperor Hailesilassie I preserved the policy of his predecessors by co-opting local leaders.

The Siltie following the enactment Decree No 1 of 1942 that divided the country into 12 administrative provinces (Awraja) were placed under province of Shoa Teklay Gizat. The Siltie were further divided into chebo and Gurage Awraja and Kambata and Hadiya Awraja. Having been disintegrated into various administrative structures, the Siltie could not exercise their local system of governance in the area. The strong centralization policy of the imperial regime could not allow the local system to function fully in the area. The Siltie were thus denied the right to self rule and were only communicating with the center via Christian Gurage and neighboring Kambata and Hadiya people. Therefore the Siltie in general and Dalocha area particular denied the local modes of governance system and the same situation continued as a system of imperial regime.

In the pre -1991 period of the Derg regime persisted with the policy of marginalizing the indigenous assets of different communities in its drive for control of the nation national unity and centralization aimed at building a strong and unified state was the main justification behind suppression of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity. Under military rule local leaders and indigenous institution were abolished. Due to such negative continuation Derg regime the Siltie stood against the military regime.

An ethnic identity called the Siltie movement that lasted from 1991-2001, its aim was to define their ethnicity and to develop the socio-economic lives of the society, to assert their ethnic unity and to realize equality with neighboring ethnic group by acquiring their administrative zone. Thus the house of federation and southern regional state facilitate the referendum to settle the identity

dispute between the Siltie and Gurage. After the referendum 2001 when majority of Siltie took part and decided that the Siltie be an independent ethnic group. Such episode led to the regaining of ethnic and administrative independence of the Siltie which they lost following the incorporation of Siltie land into Ethiopia under Menelik II forces in 1889. Finally in June 2001 Siltie zone was formed and Siltie people began their self independent and self rule during Federation Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, this resulted the Siltie people practices as other neighboring ethnic group equally.

The force of emperor Menelik II subjugated the Siltie land in 1889. Since then the Siltie area had become part of the Ethiopian state. The new governors introduced a complex system that combined. "Transplantation of Abyssinians and the cooption of subordinate indigenous elite". As a result of incorporation the new ruler brought gabbar or tenant and balabt or melkegna system in the area. Under this system most fertile and productive land of the Siltie including Dalocha area appropriated and distributed for soldier or melkengas. Majority of the people forced to live in their land as servants became tenant. The same situation continued prevailed in the following imperial regime. Emperor Hailesilassie preserved Menelik's tenure policy of the land. The fact that government policies favored and encouraged land lordism exposed the peasants of the people to landlessness, exploitation and oppression.

In 1975 the Derg introduction of fundamental lands tenure system, the proclamation to provide for public ownership of rural lands. This measure changed the pattern of relationship between the owners and the cultivators of the land by "making land to the tiller for the first time a reality in Ethiopia". The proclamation nationalized all rural lands throughout the country. It eradicated the private land tenure system and replaced it with public ownership. Nevertheless the reform act provided the peasants only with use right, and not private ownership right. Moreover, only individuals who were willing to form personally were entitled to possess. Government peasant harmonious relationship did not last as result of austerity policy measures that the Derg introduced subsequently. Political domination of the peasant association, the emergence of agricultural producer's cooperation and the introduction of grin marketing and pricing policy are case in point.

In general political intervention that was dictated by the desire to control rural resources and rural decision making processes strangulated the countries small holders from every direction. The

Derg's agricultural policies were, in effect, a threat to the gains of the land reform for the great majority of the peasants. These interventionist policies have contributed to the surfacing of contradiction between the peasant and the Derg, the situation which the opposition groups exploited effectively to overthrow the government in May 1991.

In spite of remarkably changing economic and political policies, in other areas the Ethiopian people's Revolutionary Democratic Front or EPRDF led government has retained and continued rural and urban land tenure of the Derg. At present, public ownership of land is constitutionally acknowledged. As it was under the previous government, private tenure and land sales that it entails are prohibited. The constitution of the FDRE or Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia which entered into force in 1995, stipulated that being a common property of Nation, Nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia, and not a private property of individual or group of individuals, land would not be sold or exchanged.

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Appendix I

List of Informants


No	Name of informant	Sex	Age	Date of interview	Place interview	Remark
1	Keiredin Shifa (Ato)	M	70	1/8/2014 E.C	Dalocha town	He is one of known elder and he has knowledge about Dalocha
2	Mitiku Abebe (Ato)	M	73	1/8/2014 E.C	Ferejat 02 kebele	He is well informant about Siltie area of Dalocha and he has good memory
3	Negash Sirmolo (Ato)	M	75	1/8/2014 E.C	Ferejat 02 kebele	He was member of workers party of Ethiopia (ኢህፓ) and good knowledge about establishment of Dalocha worada
4	Huchago Workichio (Ato)	M	68	2/8/2014 E.C	Sojast 01 kebele	He is merchant and good understanding about Dalocha district
5	Priest Awgichew Mamo	M	69	2/8/2014 E.C	Dalocha 01	He is orthodox church priest and he has knowledge about how Christianity introduced into the district
6	Sultan Issa (Ato)	M	63	2/8/2014 E.C	Dalocha 01	He is merchant in Dalocha town & he has good knowledge about economy of the area
7	Hussen Abdela (Ato)	M	70	2/8/2014 E.C	Ferejat 02 kebele	He is a merchant& he has knowledge about the source of income about Dalocha
8	Abdurahiman Sheih Wajo (Sheik)	M	80	8/2/2014 E.C	Ebot	He is respected local elder and he has good memory about local administration about Siltie of Dalocha
9	Nesro Abdela (Ato)	M	66	8/8/2014 E.C	Jigna lasho	He is a merchant and he has knowledge about the Neftegna Gebbar system
10	Husssen Shukure	M	70	8/8/2014 E.C	Ferejat 02 kebele	He is a merchant and he has knowledge about socio-cultural history
11	Mitiku Woldmeskel	M	50	8/8/2014 E.C	Sojat 02 kebele	He is an employed workers and he has good understanding about economic, socio-cultural and political life of Siltie
12	Mohammed Ibrahim (Sheik)	M	90	12/8/2014 E.C	Ferejat 02 kebele	He is well known local elder and good narrating about the Neftegna Gebbar system
13	Bamud Surur (Ato)	M	75	12/8/2014 E.C	Ferejat 02	He is a farmer and he has knowledge about culture of the area
14	Keiredin Sherif (Hajji)	M	70	12/8/2014 E.C	Sojat 02 kebele	He is a Muslim religious leader and he has good knowledge about agricultural history
15	Sultan Mohammed	M	75	12/8/2014 E.C	Ferejat 02 kebele	He is investor and he have knowledge about agriculture of the district
16	Awol Mossa (Ato)	M	80	19/8/2014 E.C	Dalocha Talikisa	He is a known farmer and he has knowledge about agricultural economy
17	Mulugeta Ketsela (Teacher)	M	80	19/8/2014 E.C	Fereja 02 kebele	He was a teacher and he has knowledge and good memory about landlord and the removing of peasant from their land

No	Name of informant	Sex	Age	Date of interview	Place interview	Remark
18	Bejada Astatike (Ato)	M	80	19/8/2014 E.C	Wanja Shola	He is respected local elder & Derg soldier when Somalia invaded Ethiopia and he has knowledge about Neftegna system
19	Detamo Darsebo (Ato)	M	69	19/8/2014 E.C	Wanja Shola	He was soldier of the Derg regime and he has a memory of land privatization since imperial regime
20	Abdi Shifa (Ato)	M	60	19/8/2014 E.C	Ferejat 02	He has an employed workers and he has knowledge about tenancy
21	Mohammed Hajji (Ato)	M	80	26/8/2014 E.C	Sojat 01 kebele	He is merchant and he has understanding about Dalocha interrelation with neighbor
22	Yekesi Nesro (Ato)	M	79	26/8/2014 E.C	Dange	He is respected elder and he has knowledge about religious toleration
23	Hajji Argaw (Hijji)	M	83	26/8/2014 E.C	Kerate	He is local elder and he has knowledge about Italian aggression
24	Jemal Chalemo (Ato)	M	76	26/2/2014 E.C	Brihan Kikita	He is a farmer and he has knowledge about trade of the area
25	Kedir Saliya (Ato)	M	71	26/8/2014 E.C	Kerate	He is a farmer and merchant he has knowledge about trade item about the Dalocha history
26	Terefe Assefe (Ato)	M	80	26/8/2014 E.C	Kerate	He is respected local elder and he has a memory about trade route
27	Hussen Sheik Wajo (Sheik)	M	74	26/8/2014 E.C	Kerate	He is a farmer and he has memory about the migration
28	Munaja Gutago (Wro)	F	80	3/9/2014 E.C	Dalocha town 02	She is respected elder and she has knowledge about villagization and land privatization about Derg
29	Ato Busser Mohammed	M	69	3/9/2014 E.C	Wacho	He is a farmer and he has knowledge about villagization during Derg regime
30	Wonda + Mulugeta (Ato)	M	68	3/9/2014 E.C	Worabet	He is a farmer and he has knowledge about villagization in Derg period
31	Alemayehu Atnafe (Ato)	M	67	3/9/2014 E.C	Brihan Kitkita	He is a farmer and he has knowledge about the opposition of Derg regime
32	Shemse Ali (Ato)	M	64	3/9/2014 E.C	Ferejat 01 kebele	He is an employed workers & he has knowledge about right of land privatization of EPRDF
33	Hamdela Hawkesh (Ato)	M	70	10/9/2014 E.C	Sojat 01	He is merchant and he has a knowledge about land privatization right of EPRDF
34	Kedir Hegrno (Ato)	M	80	10/9/2014 E.C	Fereja 02	He is a farmer and he has knowledge about land reform proclamation
35	Kedir Issa	M	71	10/9/2014 E.C	Kerate	He is urban dweller and ha has good knowledge about Siltie identity
36	Shifa Ibrahim (Sheik)	M	80	10/9/2014 E.C	Kerate	He is religious leader and he has knowledge about religious tolerance and cooperation

Appendix IV

የሰልጣን ህዝብ ግንኙነት ለማስከበር ራሱን በራሱ የሚያስተዳድርበትን
 ዲሞክራሲያዊ እንደነት ፓርቲ ከተመሠረተበት ታህሳስ 10/1985 ዓ.ም. ጀምሮ
 በሰልጣን ህዝብ ግንኙነት ለማስከበር ለሚያስፈልገው የፖለቲካ አቅጣጫን
 እንደ ለህዲሊፓና በዋናነትም እንደ ሰልጣን ህዝብ እምነትና ፍላጎት የሰልጣን
 ህዝብ በትክክልና ግንኙነት ተደራጅቶ እንደሚገኘውም ብሔር ብሔረሰብ ራሱን
 በራሱ ለማስተዳደሩም በላይ መሠረታዊ የሆነው ግንኙነት አልተከበረለትም።
 የሰልጣን ህዝብ የራሱ የሆነ ስልጣን ቋንቋ ታሪካዊ ፍልሰት ስልጣን ስን
 ልዩነት በኩል ገጠም መሪት የሰረረ መልካም ድርጅቱና የብሔረሰብ መሰረትን
 ያደገ ሆኖ ሳል እደረጃጅቱ በጉራጊ ብሔረሰብ ሥር በጎሳነት "በጉህእዲን"
 እንዲደራጅ በመደረጉና በተለያዩ ዞኖች ተከፋፍሎ በቋንቋው እንዳይጠቀም ባህሉን
 እንዳያዳብርና እንዳያሰፍፍ በመደረጉ ህዝቡ እራሱን በራሱ እያስተዳደረ ነው
 ለማለት እያስደፍርም ግንኙነቱም አልተከበረለትም መደራጀት የሚገባው ለሰልጣን
 እንጂ በጉራጊነት እደደለም። በግንኙነቱም መሥረት የሰልጣን ህዝብ ስልጣን እንጂ
 ጉራጊ እደደለም። የሰልጣን ህዝብም ራሱን በራሱ እስተዳዳሪ ወይም እያስተዳደር
 ነው ለማለት የሚያለው ግንኙነት ተከብሮ እራሱን ሊያንፀባርቁ የሚችሉ ሁኔታዎች
 ለመቻላት ብቻ ነው።
 ምንም እንኳን የሰልጣን ህዝብ ግንኙነት ሳይከበርለትና ዲሞክራሲያዊና ህገ
 መንግስታዊ መብቱ ያልተረጋገጠለት መሆኑን ለህዲሊፓ ቢረዳም ህዝቡ በመብቱ
 ተጠቃሚ ሊሆን የሚችለው ይህንን የመብት ጥያቄ በተገኘው የሰልጣን ህዝብ ግንኙነት
 መደረክ በሰላም በመጠቀም መሆን እንደሚገባው ሲያስተምሩ ለሰልጣን
 ያጋጠሙትን ፀረ ዲሞክራሲያዊ የሆኑ መሰናክሎችን በሰላም
 ለስፋት

ቁጥር 2/4/1/153/04)
 ተገ 28/12/85



Appendix V

የኢትዮጵያ ዲሞክራሲያዊ ፍላጎት ፓርቲ
 የብሔራዊ ክልላዊ መንግሥት ምክር ቤት

The House of Federation
 of
 The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

ቁጥር/ቁጥር-ባህሪ/ቁጥር
 №
 ተ/ 12-01-90
 Date

አደባብ ቤቱር: ብሔረሰቦችና ሕዝቦች
 ብሔራዊ ክልላዊ መንግሥት ምክር ቤት
 ልዩ ልዩ

ጉዳይ: የሰልጠና ሕዝብ የማንነትና የመብት ጥያቄ በግል
 የተረጋገጠ ለቤተ-ታዲያዎች

የሰልጠና ሕዝብ ዲሞክራሲያዊ እንደገና ጋርቲ ገቢ 28 ቀን
 1989 ዓ.ም. በቁጥር ስ/ሀ/ጋ/153/04/89 በጻፈው ለቤተ-ታዲያዎች የሰልጠና
 ሕዝብ የማንነትና የመብት ጥያቄ በእኛ በኩል ታይቶ አልባት እንዲሰጠው
 ጠይቋል።

ይሁንና በሕገመንግሥቱ መሠረት የማንኛውም ብሔረሰብ የማንነት
 ጥያቄ በታዲያዎች በክልሉ መንግሥት መስተናገድ ያለበትና በረዕይ ገራጽ
 ምክር ቤት በኩል ውሳኔ ማግኘት አለበት ከተባለም ክልሉ በራሱ ደረጃ
 ማንኛውም የሚገባውን ቤት አላገኘም እንደሆነና ከእንግዲህ የረዕይ ገራጽ
 ምክር ቤት ይህ ውሳኔ ማግኘት በሰልጠና ሕዝብ በኩል ታይቶ
 አስፈላጊው እንዲሰጠው የሌለበት ነገር እንደሆነ ያላካን መሆኑን
 እንገልጻለን።

ሰልጠና ሕዝብ ዲሞክራሲያዊ እንደገና ጋርቲ
 ለዲ.ዲ.ሪ.ሸን ምክር ቤት አረጋግጫ ጽ/ቤት
 በሕዝብ ተወካዮችና በዲ.ዲ.ሪ.ሸን ምክር ቤት ጽ/ቤት

ሰልጠና ሕዝብ ዲሞክራሲያዊ እንደገና ጋርቲ
 ለዲ.ዲ.ሪ.ሸን

ደ/ር መስመድ ሠርዖ አደገ
 የብሔራዊ ክልላዊ መንግሥት ምክር ቤት

430

የግንባር ጽ/ቤት

አዲስ አበባ

Appendix VIII



Appendix IX

የዳሎቻ ከተማ በከፊል

