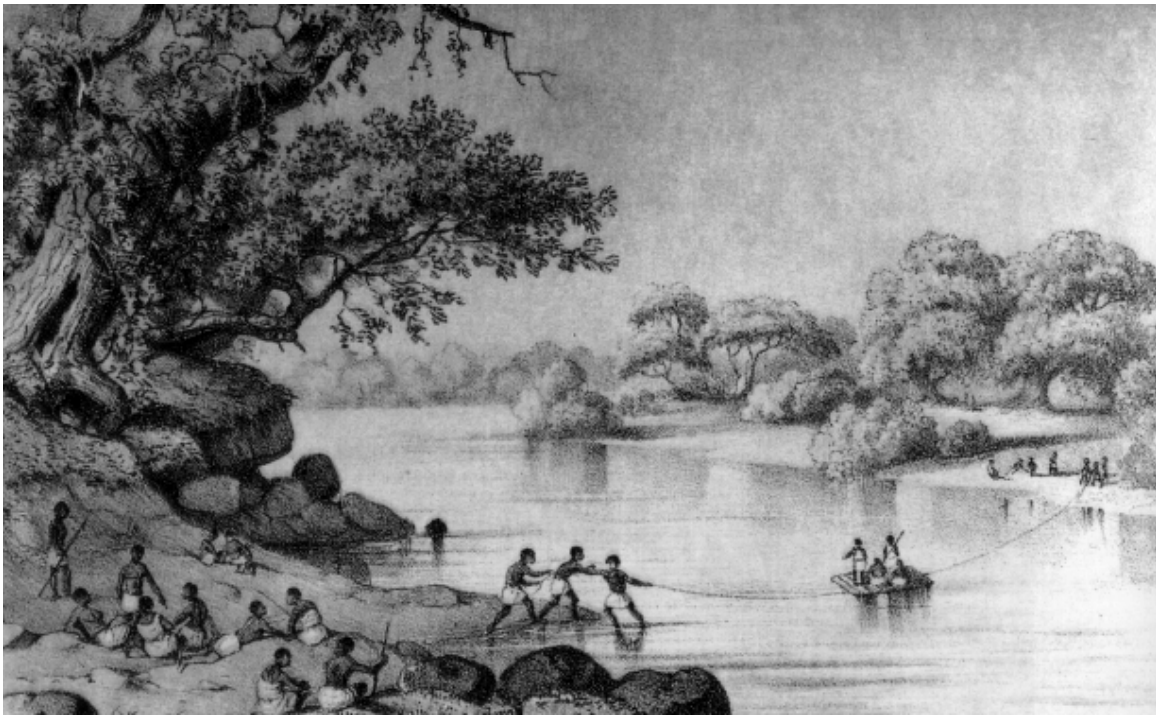


**PERMANENT AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENTS
ALONG THE WEBI SHABELLE RIVER IN GODE ZONE OF
THE ETHIOPIAN SOMALI NATIONAL REGIONAL STATE**



River Crossings: nineteenth century engraving; Krapf, Dr Johann Lewis

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PERMANENT AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENTS ALONG THE WEBI SHABELLE RIVER IN GODE ZONE OF THE ETHIOPIAN SOMALI NATIONAL REGIONAL STATE

1. GENERAL

1.1 Objective and methodology

This brief study is based on a short visit paid by the author to Kallafo and Gode towns in the Gode zone of the Ethiopian Somali National Regional State, for a period of 10 days starting 11 September, 1995. The author is a social anthropologist who speaks fluent Somali and has intimate knowledge of the Somali society and its culture. It is primarily based on general observations of the permanent agricultural villages in the vicinity of Kallafo and Gode towns as well as on limited data informally gathered from local leaders, peasants and government officials.

The study seeks to achieve two primary goals. The first is to generate general information on the local food economy, which may be of use to the upcoming FAO/WFP Crop and Food Needs Assessment Mission, and since such missions rarely have time to examine in detail the particular needs of the predominantly pastoral economy in isolated lowland areas of the country. The second is to provide basic information for further comprehensive socio-economic research work relating to this previously marginalised, and often misrepresented and misunderstood predominantly pastoral area.

1.2 Zonal administration

Gode zone constitutes one of the nine zonal administration units that form the administrative set up of the Ethiopian Somali National Regional State (see map), formerly known as 'Region 5'. Gode town is the principal trade centre and capital city for the six weredas or districts that make up the Gode zonal administration: Gode, Dhanan, Iimey, Kallafo, Mustahil, and Ferfer. The predominantly nomadic wereda of Dhanan is the only district not traversed by Webi Shabelle River, while the other five district centres are located along the banks of the river. In addition to the interaction and trade that these district centres have had with the local economic groups, permanent settlement and cultivation along this "farming corridor" is also partly responsible for their development as wereda centres.

In contrast to Kallafo district, which is populated by agricultural groups with a long history of farming, the establishment of Gode as an administrative centre and farming area was started about thirty years ago. Its strategic location at the heart of the Somali region led to the development of an airport for military use during the rule of Haile Sellasie. A state farm for resettlement of local nomads affected by the drought had also been established shortly before the downfall of the monarchy in 1974. The succeeding military regime under Mengistu found the military facilities at Gode invaluable. During the Derge period, highlanders were resettled at the state farm as part of the state resettlement campaign, especially as many of the resettled Somalis had fled during the 1977/78 war between Ethiopia and Somalia over the "Ogaden".

The first Ogadeni dominated regional administration in 1993 selected the isolated Gode town as the capital of Region 5 (currently the Ethiopian Somali National Regional State). Its remoteness from the more developed highland areas of the country - the seat of economic and political power - as well as its lack of basic infrastructure and communication facilities, led to the capital being officially transferred to Jijiga in the middle of 1994. These formidable constraints were also aggravated by turmoil and strife affecting central areas of the region, which at the time was the centre of activity for several extremist Ogadeni groups.

The transfer of the regional capital from Gode to the relatively cosmopolitan town of Jijiga coincided with the third change of the regional administration. Regardless of its merits or demerits as a regional capital, Gode is the unrivalled capital of its home area. The military airfield is presently used by Ethiopian Airlines for civilian flights three times a week to move people and supplies between Gode and the urban centres of Dire Dawa and Addis Ababa. It is also the only town in the region outside Jijiga with a telephone service.

The head of the zonal administration in Gode, Abdi Raho, is a member of the regional council elected from Kallafo wereda. He is also a member of the local kin group controlling the Gode district, a social connection that extends his support and loyalty outside his electoral constituency. The head of the zonal administration is also an active member of the regional state council which is presently dominated by the Ethiopian Somali Democratic League. Efforts to bring allegedly corrupt past government officials to justice is already underway in the zone. However, previous government officials, many of whom are accused of mal-administration, inefficiency or inappropriate recruitment, are still holding offices. As the only functioning government office, the head of the zonal administration office carries out the essential administrative duties.

II. POLITICS

2.1 Segmentary lineage politics

In the Gode zone, rivalry and opposition is at the highest level between the Hawiya and Ogaden clansmen - the largest groups in the area. Conflict commonly takes place between clans belonging to these groups due to such rivalry. In the past, for example, the Jidle of the Hawiya and the Bah Geri Ogadeni had feuds at the border areas of their traditional territories in the neighbouring districts of Kallafo and Mustahil. However, competition for access to grazing land and water is more commonly the cause of these essentially nomadic conflicts. Such conflicts between distantly related groups, however, is usually more brutal and difficult to resolve than inter-clan strife within the Hawiya or Ogaden clans.

Competition between the predominantly powerful pastoral groups for access to prime agricultural land along the banks of the river, or securing over-lordship over the minority farming communities there, forms another potential source of turmoil between the powerful pastoral groups. In 1992, the Bah Geri clan of the Ogaden chased away the Hawiya and associated Rer Bare settled farming groups from Kallafo town and neighbouring agricultural area. The displaced Hawiya and associated or allied Rer Bare (see attached annex for details) sought refuge and assistance from the Hawiya in Beletwein. They regrouped and launched a large concerted offence that brought them back to their vandalised permanent agricultural settlements in Kallafo district.

After the 1992 experience, the conflicting parties have decided to live together in harmony in the socially mixed town of Kallafo and the agricultural areas in the district. Most importantly, they agreed to share any external assistance delivered to the district, especially as impartial access to external resources is said to have been one of the main causes of the 1992 upheaval between Bah Geri and the Hawiya and its associated Rer Bare.

As the distribution of the local clans in the districts illustrates (see Table 1), land tenure is based on social organisation. Local clans in Gode zone and elsewhere in the region reproduce their segmentary social formation on this basis. Therefore, each clan is associated with a particular territory, in our case the entire district or specific areas of the land in the district. Segments of the land-holding clan tend to occupy distinct parts of other clans customary territory which could coincide with the boundaries of a wereda, or form distinct part of a wereda. Nevertheless, the traditional territory of some of the large clans extends across the boundaries of more than one district. The boundaries of the clan territories are commonly defined by reference to the names given to known landmarks, although the boundaries are

practically no more than buffer-zones, and are often a source of contention and conflict between neighbouring clans. In the pastoral areas, clans defend their territories with force if necessary; however, intermingling between herding clans is usually allowed to make effective use of often scarce and widely distributed nomadic resources.

Despite the association between the clan and its customary territory, the dominant pastoral tradition in the Gode zone and elsewhere in the region does not strictly tie social units to locality. In the permanent agricultural villages stretching along the banks of the Webi Shabelle, settlement and cultivation developed links with fixed-territory farming villages. Here social solidarity and economic co-operation depends not only on kinship ties and common interests resulting from agricultural land; residence in permanent villages is also an important force defining the limits of co-operation. Thus, agricultural settlements along the Webi Shabelle “farming corridor” are mapped in a such a way that each settlement is given a particular name; some of the settlements bear the name of the local clan, although this is not often the case (see Table 1).

Table 1. Social and territorial distribution of the agricultural settlements between Gode town and the Somali border

Name of the Settlement	Rough Location	Major Centre	Local clan/clans
1. Ban Abdille	Gode to Kerinka	Gode	Tolomogge (Ogaden)
2. Bayahow	Kerinka-Arirey Gan	Dagine	(Hawiya+Rer Bare) + Tolomogge
3. Bur Adde	Arirey-Galweyne	Kallafo	Bah Geri+Rer Gedow+Ali Mad (Hawiya and Rer Bare)
4. Barwaqo	Galweyne-Da'are	Afdub	Rer Ise (Hawiya+Rer Bare)
5. Gumare	Da'are-Niman	Moyko	Bajimal+Gasar (Hawiya + Rer Bare)
6. Shabelle	Niman-Gobyal	Dhurdhere	Bajimal (Dir)
7. Shubo	Gobyal-Bulo Olow	Shuubo	Gasar (Hawiya+Rer Bare)
8. Hobay	Bulo Olow-Budul	Budul	Hobay (Hawiya+Rer Bare)
9. Qodi	Budul-Burdhinle	Mustahil	Jidle+ Habar Gidir Hasan

2.2 Territorial distribution of local clans in Gode zone

Gode zone is one of the areas in Region 5 inhabited by diverse groups of different clan origin. This social diversity is carried further by the presence of a distinct farming group, constituted of an association of Hawiya and Rer Bare, who live in mixed permanent agricultural settlements along the banks of the Webi Shabelle River in Kallafo district. This cultivating mixed group is known in literature as Rer Bare. The Rer Bare, who are associated with the Hawiya in Gode zone, physically resembles minority Bantu cultivating groups that occupy downstream Webi Shabelle and Juba rivers in southern Somalia.

Out of the six districts in Gode zone, two are largely occupied by Hawiya clans (the border districts of Ferfer Fer and Mustahil), two by Ogadeni clans (Gode and Dhanan), while the remaining two are socially mixed and therefore jointly controlled by the Dir and Ogadeni clans of Kallafo and Iimey (see Table 2 for the distribution of clans in the districts of the Gode zone).

Hawadle and Jidle Hawiya clans form the largest groups in the border districts of Fer Fer and Mustahil respectively. Tolomogge and Rer Ugas Nur form the largest Ogadeni clans in Gode and Dhanan districts respectively. Bah Geri clan of the Ogaden and associated Hawiya and Rer Bare form the dominant groups in Kallafo, while Iimey district is jointly controlled by the Duba of the Dir family and Rer

Ammadin of the Ogaden. As Table 2 illustrates, the italicised clan represents the largest group of the district. Smaller groups living with the dominant group are not underlined.

Table 2: Distribution of clans in the districts of the Gode zone

Name of the District	Largest Clan/Clans
1. Fer Fer	<i>Hawadle</i> (Hawiya), Rer Aw Hassan (Religious Lineage)
2. Mustahil	<i>Jidle</i> (Hawiya), Habar Gidir (Hawiya), Rer Ise
3. Kallafo	<i>Bah Geri</i> (Ogaden)/ <i>Hawiya</i> and associated <i>Rer Bare</i>
4. Gode	<i>Tolomogge</i> (Ogaden)
5. Dhanan	<i>Rer Ugas Nur</i> (Ogaden)
6. Imey	<i>Dubo</i> (Dir or Hawiya?)/ <i>Rer Ammaadin</i> (Ogaden) and Galameys

2.3 Current politics

Election results of three constituencies in the region, including Gode, were cancelled by the Electoral Board to the dissatisfaction of the Ethiopian Somali Democratic League (ESDL), which anticipated victory. Therefore, the federal and regional parliamentary elections were rescheduled and held on 19 August, 1995. Three different political organisations won seats in the elections (see Table 3).

Table 3: 1995 election results for the Gode electoral constituency

Political Organisation	Federal Parliament	Regional Parliament
ESDL	1	4
ONLF	3	0
WSDP	1	0

The results of the election indicate the mixed social composition of the population in the Gode zone. Three political organisations fielded candidates: the Ethiopian Somali Democratic League (ESDL), the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and the Western Somali Democratic Party. The ESDL won the largest number of regional council seats (4) and became the zonal representative in the federal parliament.

Non-Ogadeni groups in the Gode zone, the Hawiya and the associated Rer Bare and the Dir unanimously support the Ethiopian Somali Democratic League, which unites a coalition of more than a dozen Somali clans in the Somali Region. They believe that they are relatively well-off under the ESDL administration in terms of power sharing and distribution of political resources. This is particularly true in the case of small groups that were politically marginalised under previous ONLF-dominated administrations. For example, the Rer Bare in Kallafo were not represented in the past administrations, but now have two representatives in the regional council - both of whom are executive members of the council.

Disappointment with mismanagement and malpractice of previous administrations is also partly responsible for the support of the ESDL by non-Ogadeni entities in Gode zone. There is a widespread perception that the ESDL is determined to uproot corruption and establish an effective administration that serves the interest and well-being of the public. If the ESDL fails to capitalise on this popular support or does not carry out expected administrative reform and economic benefits, it will certainly lose the wider support and appeal it currently enjoys in this zone and throughout the region.

Among the Ogadenis there has been a significant shift of support from the ONLF to the ESDL in Gode zone. This is based on the perception that Ogadeni clansmen will be better off under ESDL

administration than the presently divided ONLF. Therefore, the Tolomogge Ogadeni clan in the Gode district supports the ESDL.

The only member of the Western Somali Democratic Party (WSDP) who won a seat in the regional parliament belongs to Awilyahan clan of the Ogaden. Some members of this large Ogadeni clan live in Gode zone, although the majority of its clansmen live in the neighbouring Afdher zone. The second president of the regional administration, Hassan Jire, who himself is Awilyahan, is the chairman of the WSDP. The formation of this party followed the establishment of the Ethiopian Somali Democratic League at the beginning 1994, which consolidated the factional political association and also ended ONLF's domination of the regional administration. Therefore, it would appear that the WSDP was created as an attempt to form an Ogadeni dominated Darod political organisation that could balance the ESDL.

III. ECONOMY

3.1 Food production

Two distinct economic and ecological zones dominate the physical landscape of the lowland areas in the Gode zone. The most prominent geographical feature is the sparsely populated vast pastoral region that supports the seasonally migrating nomadic clansmen who herd a primary stock of camels and additional flocks of sheep and goats. The monotony of the barren rolling lowland grazing areas growing often scarce and variously distributed surface grass, scant shrubs and acacia trees, is broken by a relatively verdant cultivated farming flood plain stretching along the forested banks of the Webi Shabelle corridor. Maize and sorghum are the staple crops produced by hoe cultivators living in permanent villages along the banks of the river. In good years, such as the present year, this farming belt in the Gode zone produces a grain surplus which is consumed by both the pastoralists in the region and those in neighbouring Somalia.

As elsewhere in the region, the predominantly nomadic economy does not produce all its food requirement. The traditional nomadic diet of mainly milk and meat is increasingly supplemented with grain purchased from the local markets of Gode, Kallafo and other towns. From 1977 until as recently as 1994, large scale relief grain delivered to the camps in Eastern Hararge and Somalia was widely traded in this linked economic zone to satisfy the pastoralist grain demand.

This wheat grain, which was traded in the local markets in the region, has been substituted this year by a bumper harvest in the agricultural belt of Gode zone. Locally produced maize and sorghum in the Gode area have replaced the relief wheat as the main cereals traded in the markets of the region and are also currently sent to neighbouring Somalia.

Settlement and cultivation along the Webi Shabelle River led to the growth and development of permanent villages. This contrasts with the ephemeral and temporary nomadic encampments that appear or disappear across the range lands depending upon the distribution of nomadic resources of pasturage and water, which are determined by the erratic and bimodal rainfall. Permanent agricultural villages, particularly those in Kallafo district credited with a long history of cultivation, are generally compacted and densely populated. On the other hand, the nomadic areas are relatively sparsely populated. The collapsible nomadic hut is the main dwelling for the pastoralists, while the relatively durable mud and wattle hut with a conical roof is the common dwelling for the farming groups.

Production strategies of the old agricultural groups, most importantly the Rer Bare, differ markedly from those of recently established settlements that are chiefly populated by resettled drought affected nomadic groups or returnees with strong pastoral background. Crop production is also more diversified among the cultivating village groups in the established agricultural settlements in Kallafo district. In addition to the

staple crops of sorghum and maize grown by both groups of farmers, cultivators in the old villages grow secondary crops of cow pea, sesame and, to a lesser extent, vegetables. These secondary crops not only diversify the mainly agricultural diet of these farmers but are also used to exchange for cash. It is also common among the peasants in the established agricultural villages to keep with them between one to three milk cows to satisfy the domestic need for milk, since milk is the preferred diet for infants and is also taken with the staple diet of maize.

Resettled nomads and returnees in the newly established agricultural settlements commonly practice a mixed economy of crop production and livestock husbandry (cattle and flocks of sheep and goats). Cattle, which are usually associated with settlement and cultivation, replace the fast and frequently moving camel herd as the primary stock. However, these recently sedentarized families cannot keep their large cattle herds in the settlement all the time. Therefore, except the few milk cows which are kept for domestic use, most of the cattle are raised in grazing regions outside the settlement. A member of the settled family moves with the cattle or the task is entrusted to a nomadic kinsman in the hinterland. Since their traditional land is confined to the flood plains along the banks of the river, raising a large number of cattle in grazing areas controlled by antagonistic nomadic clans is not an option for the farmers.

The large number of animals raised by settled nomads has additional advantages lacked by the primarily cultivating groups. For example, animals and animal products can be turned to cash more readily; therefore families with large herds can realise more than the cost expended on essential commodities. This surplus income could be invested in trade or female cattle to increase the herd. Nevertheless, the labour demand at the peak agricultural seasons constrains the practice of mixed economy as a viable enterprise. Owners of large cattle herds use hired labour to carry out vital agricultural tasks such as preparation of land, weeding and harvesting, although casual labour is difficult to find at the peak of the agricultural seasons. Shortage of hired agricultural labour is most acute in the planting season when every farmer is tilling his land.

If an enterprising farmer manages to realise a large income from the sale of agricultural products, livestock, or from both, he is most likely to replace the income with one of the following forms of desired investment in the rural areas of the region: women, cattle, guns and trade. Also, although traditionally nomadic, Somalis carry weapons, and since the recent crisis, the possession of a Klashnikov has become a legitimate defensive weapon that is vital for the protection of ones' life and property. Nevertheless, the deadly Klashnikov and other modern weapons tend to be misused by irresponsible people, and pose a problem that will not go away until a viable rule of law is established in those remote areas such as Gode zone.

In addition to the prestige associated with having more than one wife, having numerous children is promoted as they are a possible labour force on the farm, and since the nuclear family is the main unit of production. Shortage of labour and irregular supply of river water for irrigation are foremost among the factors restraining agricultural production in the area. The most rudimentary agricultural implement, the hand hoe, is still used for tilling the land. The traditional ox-plough, which is employed in the highland regions of the county, in Jijiga and in the north-west agricultural region of Somaliland, is not known in the farming areas along the Webi Shabelle River on both sides of the border.

In an average year the river floods twice: during the main *gu'* rainy season (April-June) and minor *deyr* season (November-January). Planting takes place during these two periods when the river is also flooded. Since rainfall is erratic and often scarce, sufficient flooding of the river and favourable rains are imperative for a good harvest.

Maize is the principal staple crop produced by the cultivators in the Gode zone. Other important food crops grown in the area are sorghum, sesame, cow beans and pumpkins. Small-scale fruit and vegetable plantations are also increasing in the Kallafo and Gode areas. Mostly started by returnees, these

motorised commercial farms produce sufficient fruits and vegetables (guava, banana, papaw, mangoes, lemon, oranges, tomatoes, etc.) for local consumption.

3.2. *Distribution of goods: markets and trade*

Common economic interest between rival clans and unstable association of clans controlling their areas of influence allows an effective network of trade linking the economic and cultural zones of the Ethiopian Somali Region and Somalia and "Somaliland". This "trans-clan" robust trade network effectively distributes imported manufactured goods and local produce across the connected economic zone. The economic and social interaction in the region is more important to the well-being of clansmen in Gode zone and in the other zones of the Ethiopian Somali Region than the minimal link the region has had with the relatively developed highland areas of the country.

As elsewhere in the region, Gode zone is intricately linked to neighbouring Somalia and the self-proclaimed "Republic of Somaliland". Along the banks of the Webi Shabelle River, which extends to the agricultural region in southern Somalia, flood recession agriculture is practised by farming minority groups. Moreover, sections of the local Ogadenis and Hawiya are "trans-national", with clansmen living on both sides of the practically notional border.

The dominant pastoral economy in Gode zone is diversified by riverine agriculture that produces surplus grain in good years. Live animals produced in this region are exported to the Gulf states via the northern ports of Berbera, Bosaso and Mogadishu. The proceeds from exported live animals are used to purchase manufactured goods and food stuff. Manufactured goods and food items imported from the Gulf countries through the Somali ports enter the Gode zone through local trade centres, most importantly Gode and Kallafo towns. These local trade centres are connected to Mogadishu and Bosaso ports through land a transportation network via Beletwein and Baidhawa towns. Gode and Kallafo towns are also connected by road to Dhagahbur, the most important trade centre in the interior of the Ogadeni sphere of influence. Dhagahbur has vital trade links with other trade centres in "Somaliland" and southern Somalia.

As in other parts of the Ethiopian Somali Region, distribution of goods between the Gode area and highland regions of the country is relatively limited in scope. Nevertheless, this region receives some agricultural goods produced in the highland areas of Hararghe. The most of important of these is *chat*. Though some supply of *chat* is sent from Dire Dawa with Ethiopian Airlines on its scheduled flights to Gode, this mild but addictive narcotic is regularly sent by road from Jijiga to Gode and Kallafo towns. Other goods, such as coffee, alcoholic drinks and teff, which are mostly consumed by the highlanders in the urban centres in the region, are brought from Harar town. Due to religious beliefs, Somalis do not generally consume alcohol and prefer very sweet tea to coffee. The region also receives vegetables, mostly onions and potatoes, produced in the highlands of Hararghe. These agricultural products are also exported across the border to Somalia.

In a good year, the riverine peasant agriculture along the banks of the Webi Shabelle River produces a surplus of sorghum and maize. The yield from the *gu'* season has been very good this year, and therefore Kallafo and Gode markets were busy buying and selling maize and sorghum. Part of the production from the zone is locally traded and goes to the interior towns of Dhagahbur and Kebridheherre. Nomadic families in the Ethiopian Somali Region exchange the proceeds from the sale of livestock for sorghum. Sorghum is the preferred staple food among the Somali nomads on both sides of the border. Hence some of the sorghum produced in Gode zone is sent to "Somaliland" through Dhagahbur. The reduction of relief wheat grain delivered to the camps in Eastern Hararghe and food assistance to Somalia is also a factor that has brought about a demand for sorghum in "Somaliland" and Somalia. Maize produced in the Gode region is sent to southern Somalia through Beletwein and Baidhawa, where maize rather than sorghum forms the staple diet.

3.3 Cash economy

Gode and Kallafo markets operate on a number of currencies. The Somali Shilling, Ethiopian Birr and US Dollar are freely exchanged by local traders, usually shop and store owners. There are no specialised money dealers exchanging these currencies and the “Somaliland” Shilling, such as those found in Harta Sheikh town in Eastern Hararghe, functions as an important trans-shipment centre for manufactured goods entering Ethiopia. Even though Gode is the only town in the region outside Jijiga that is served by a bank, exchange of different currencies in the interior market centres in Gode zone takes place informally outside the bank. Thus, private business people who run enterprises such as restaurants, shops and wholesale stores, as well chat dealers, deal with exchange money as a supplementary activity. Merchants also undertake another important banking function, acting as a repository of money deposited by their customers who are mainly kinsmen. Some traders also use the money deposited with them to invest in business, and offer credits to trusted kinsmen.

In the *chat* trade, having the right cash to get the desired commodity makes the exchange of money a vital part of the business. Since *chat* is grown in the highlands of Hararghe where Ethiopian Birr is the accepted currency, dealers in the interior towns of Gode zone, where the common currency is the Somali Shilling, need to exchange Somali Shilling to Ethiopian Birr. The regular need for Birr by the *chat* dealers insulates this currency from devaluation and fluctuation. Therefore, Birr is the second most desired currency after the coveted US Dollar. Although traders like to keep their cash in either Birr or US Dollars, both currencies are in short supply in Gode and Kallafo. Money remitted by relatives abroad, which is paid to beneficiaries in the zone by money transfer dealers based in Addis Ababa, and wages of the government staff, are the chief sources of Birr.

The bank in Gode has little control over the flow and exchange of currency in the zone. This reduces its major activity to transferring government funds for state projects and salaries of government employees. In spite of the fact that some Somali traders have Birr accounts in the bank, it is more common among business people from the highlands to have bank accounts.

3.4. Who are the traders

Gode town has two distinct market places. The old market place, mainly south of the telecommunication office, is dominated by traders from the highlands. This section of the town also contains the bars and restaurants that serve highlander traders and government employees. North of this lies the rather straggling new market which is dominated by Somalis.

Shops, stores and the open market that crowd in front of the dusty streets containing these enterprises sell similar but a wide range of manufactured goods: clothes, utensils, food (both imported and local) and condiments, detergents, perfumes, and lots of other essential items. Although the old market dominated by the highlanders appears to specialise in clothes, lack of specialisation is the most important feature of the market in Gode and elsewhere is the zone.

Excluding *chat*, which is handled by Somali traders, goods brought to the zone from Harar (there is little trade in manufactured goods from the closer but less accessible Bale area) are dealt with by highlanders. More manufactured goods are imported by Somali merchants from Somalia and "Somaliland". It is very difficult for non-Somalis to be involved in the trade of goods from Somalia, because it is not only risky, given the absence of a security forces of a central authority, but also because kinship ties play an important role in business transactions among the Somalis.

Security of the life and property of a Somali trader, or that of any Somali, is ultimately guaranteed by his corporate kin group. Fear of reprisal from his kinsmen ensures the security of trucks and goods moving outside the sphere of influence of a merchant's group. Thus, if a trade truck or merchandise belonging to a member of 'X' group is robbed by bandits belonging to 'Y' clan, closely related kinsmen of the victim will avenge the loss by taking possession of a trade truck or goods belonging to a close clansmen of the miscreant. In addition, the Somali customary law and the *sharia* strongly sanction the inviolability of private property. In contrast to the respect afforded by the Somali to private property, there is a remarkable lack of similar cultural sanction protecting the public property which makes it easy for miscreants to vandalise and abuse it. This implies that NGOs and government organisations working in remote areas of the Ethiopian Somali Region have to take precautions to protect vehicles and other valuable assets, or else obtain the trust and co-operation of the beneficiary groups. If convinced that a development agent is doing good work, the beneficiaries take interest in the safety of the vehicles and property of the external agent.

Annex

Segmentary lineage politics

The all-pervasive and highly segmented social formation is an important feature of the Somali culture. In this system of formed segmented and often opposed social units, clan is the most important political unit. Large political units or associations are notoriously unstable, since they depend upon the political context and are usually formed in opposition to others. Despite the highly segmented nature and fluid social situation of the traditional Somali polity, important levels of political grouping could be discerned. Clans belonging to three large families of clans inhabit the Gode zone - Darod, Hawiya and Dir. In anthropological terms, these large groups are described as clan-families. The Somali population in the Horn of Africa is divided into the six large clan families of Darod, Hawiya, Isaq, Dir, Digil and Rahanwein. Since members of these large groups are usually widely distributed across the boundaries of the neighbouring countries in the Horn, an exact association at this level is often symbolic.

Within the clan-family, the most important political unit is the clan. Traditionally, this marks the upper level of political action. In the wake of the downfall of Siad Barre's centralised regime and the following disintegration of the Somali society, the clan emerged as the most stable political unit. The clan and some of the large sub-clans have a nominal head commonly known as *suldaan* or *ugaas*.

In our case, the Ogadeni (Darod), Hawiya (an association of Hawiya and Rer Bare) and Dir clans, whose clansmen dominate the affairs of the different districts in the Gode zone, act as independent political entities. Each clan subdivides to constituent lineages whose co-operation or opposition is based on actual or perceived collective interest. Nevertheless, co-operation and solidarity of clansmen could be mobilised when its corporate interest is threatened by an antagonistic group.

Pervasive but often diffuse loyalty to kin groups is strengthened by contractual treaties defining payment and receipt of compensation for homicide and minor damages. These customary ties form the basis for the most stable political unit within the clan, the *dia*-paying lineages. The strongly bound kinship ties binding kinsmen belonging to closely related *dia*-paying lineage, is supplemented by a common contractual treaty sanctioning members to pay and receive collectively blood compensation (*dia*) and minor damages.

The Hawiya and the associated Rer Bare in Kallafo district

The Hawiya and associated Rer Bare in Kallafo wereda are probably the prototype peasant community in the Shabelle Valley on the Ethiopian side of the border. Their social composition is distinct from that of recently settled Somali farming clans which still retain the pervasive kinship-organised political culture. These farming communities in Kallafo district are composed of an association made of two diverse social groups who show distinct physical characteristics. One section of this association, the Rer Bare, have Bantu features similar to those of the minority farming communities in southern Somalia, while the other section are actually sedentarised, and mainly Hawiya groups.

The mixed Hawiya and Rer Bare agricultural groups are segmented like the Somali social clans. Each farming associated mixed segment functions as an independent unit in relation to similar cultivating units and also in opposition to the predominantly powerful pastoral Somali clans. Nevertheless, the unifying forces that claim common ancestors and ties to a fixed territory have not produced any significant intermingling between the mixed Hawiya and Rer Bare groups. The institution of marriage maintains this social distinction, for Somalis do not allow intermarriage with their Bantu allies who have more pronounced African features.

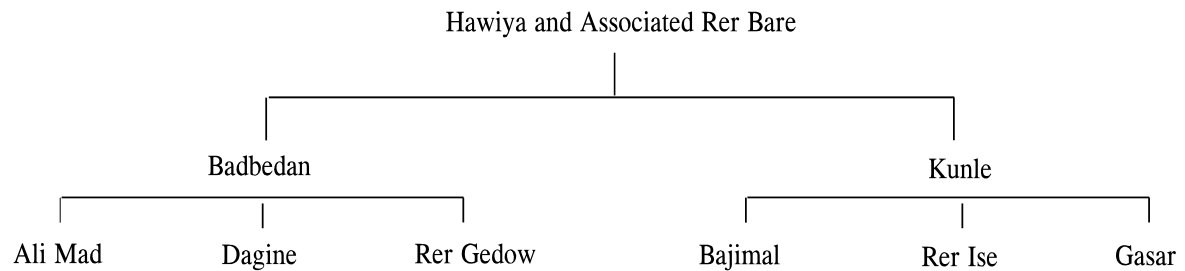
The Hawiya and associated Rer Bare farming groups distinguish themselves into two social categories, known in Somali as *bah iyo boqor*. This literally translates to "subjects" and "kings". This clear

distinction which falls along ethnic lines defines the differentiated hierarchical status of the Somalis (mainly Hawiya) and the Rer Bare division. The latter are classified as “subjects” or “commoners”, while the Somali are acknowledged as “aristocrats” or the “ruling group”. Thus, it is no wonder that many of the ancestors of the Rer Bare belong to the Hawiya “aristocrats”. Another idiom, hair texture, is also commonly used to differentiate between the two associated settled groups. The “noble” Somalis are known as those with the soft hair (*jileyc*), while their Rer Bare associates are described as those with thick hair (*jareer*).

The mainly Hawiya and Rer Bare associates are said to be the descendants of two ancestors, namely Badbedan and Kunle. Each of these two associated groups is further sub-divided into three important sections that are further segmented into small lineages. Except two sub-divisions of the Badbedan, Ali Mad and Dagine, who are largely composed of Rer Bare, these mixed settled communities usually consist of a mixture of mainly Hawiya and Rer Bare. Because of internal discord in the past, the Ali Mad and Dagine seem to have formed independent and exclusive Rer Bare groups (see Figure 1). The Bajimal contains a large number of Dir, while Rer Gedow, Rer Ise, and Gasar contain a large number of Hawiya groups, most importantly the Ajouran.

It is important to bear in mind that ethnic labelling in the socially mixed farming communities of Gode zone, and particularly in Kallafo district, is very sensitive. It is also very flexible. The primarily pastoral groups in the zone tend to despise these settled agricultural groups, who themselves despise nomads. Although the Rer Bare generally acknowledge the “aristocratic” status of the Hawiya, they also tend to assert their independence as a separate entity and demand equality with their Somali associates.

Figure 1: The Genealogical Chart of the Hawiya and Associated Rer Bare



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