

Chapter One

1.1 Introduction

Many countries in the world have multi nationalities and multiple ethnic groups. A case in point is, Ethiopia. Ethiopia is a country of diverse cultures, languages and ethnic groups. Currently, it follows federal government structure. The structure comprises nine federal states and two city administrations. The Southern Nations, nationalities and peoples Regional (SNNPR) State is one of the states. This regional state is a region where multi-nationalities and multiple ethnic groups, each with its own distinct cultures, languages and heritages co-exist. The cultural values, norms, customary institutions, social systems, and methods of economic activities reveal ways of living; and sustaining the daily life of the people. Halaba is one the ethnic groups of the regional state with its unique culture and history.

The Halaba have shared various cultural practices and life style with various other peoples' cultures. The cultural interaction established with others and the contacts with outsiders have to some extent influenced the culture, customs, institutions and artistic heritages of the nationality.

Research and experience in the field reveals that nationalities in the region in particular and in the country at large at different times are influenced by other cultures and religions, which resulted in uprooting of the young generation from its local cultural setting and to an extent becoming stranger to its own cultural practices and life styles. They have even developed a misconception about their indigenous cultural practices and wisdom. This is mainly because of modernizations and globalization that are forcing the youth to undermine their own traditions and adhere to the cultural practices and life styles that are uncommon to the culture of their own. Young generation of Halaba is by no means free from this since they are dwelling in the same region or country.

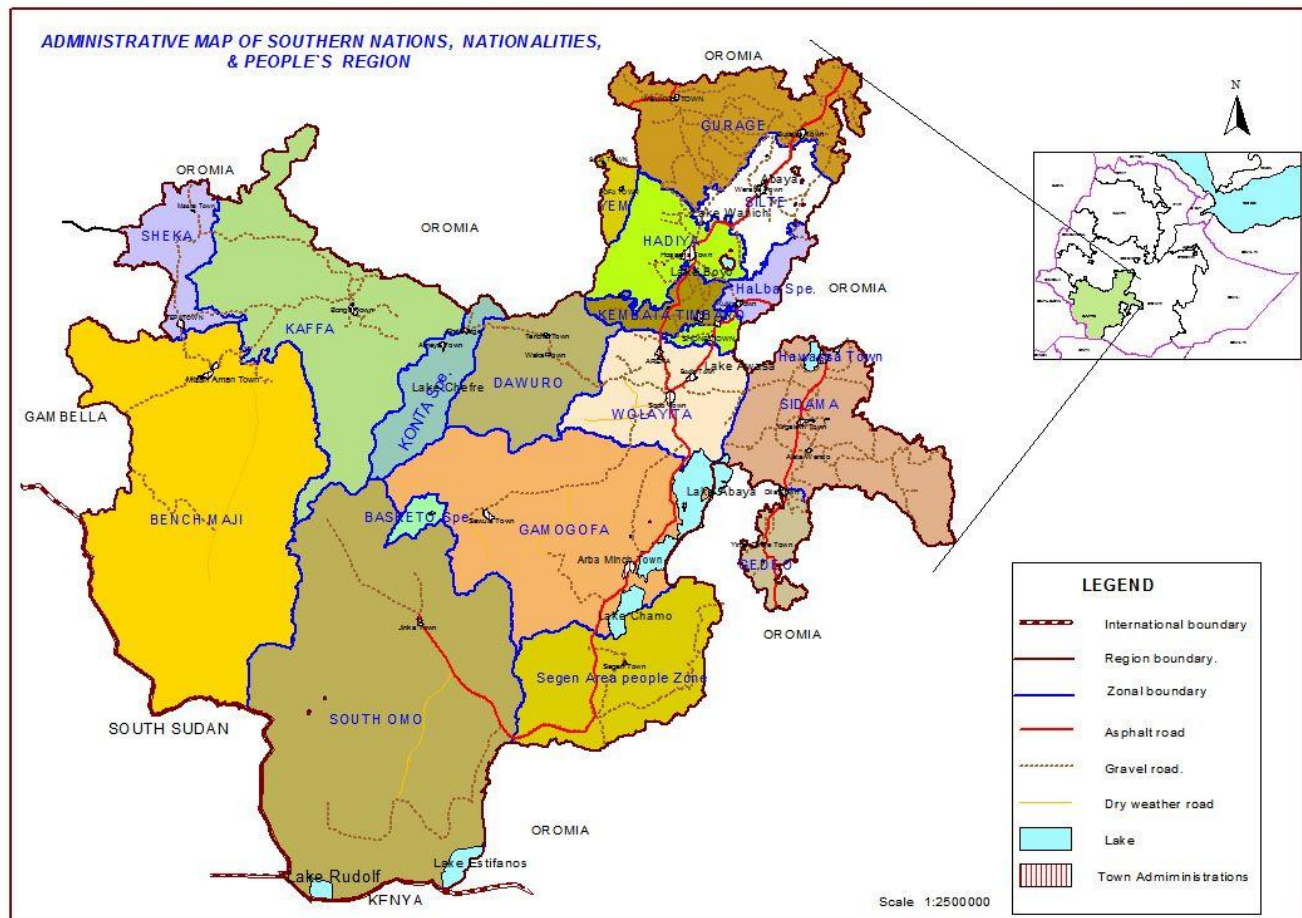
Thus, this study was initiated because so far there was no adequate and reliable scientific information on the ethno-history and culture of Halaba nationality despite the existence of some bits and piles of such information. Another reason was the availability of policy support that encourages the study of ethno-history and culture of different Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of the region. To this end, it was high time, to undertake a comprehensive, scientific study of the Halaba people's ethno history and culture. The information gathered through careful and critical evaluation of the existing literature and collecting and analyzing the field- based data would be a valuable asset for the Halaba nationality, the Bureau of Culture and Tourism,

and the country at large. The study would fill the existing gap, but not all the gaps by providing, in the ethno historical and cultural information and facts of the Halaba nationality in particular and thereby the region at large.

1.2. The Study Area

The Halaba special woreda is one of the 14 zones and 4 special woredas which are the constituent elements of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS) administrative structure. It was formerly part of Kambata, Halaba and Tembaro Zone. It had got its present special woreda status in 2001/1993 E.C. The administrative center of the special woreda, Kulito Town is located at a distance of 245 kilo meters south of Addis Ababa via Butajira; 315 kilo meters via Shashemene; and 87 kilo meters North West of the regional center, Hawassa (Halaba Woreda Finance and Economic Development Office, 2006 E.C:4).

Halaba special woreda borders with Silte zone in the North, Hadiya zone in the North West and south, Kambata Tembaro Zone in the South West, Oromia regional state in the East and Lake Shalla in the North East. It relatively stretches between 7⁰ 16' 22" to 7⁰ 33' 49" North latitudes and 38⁰ 04' 22" to 38⁰ 13' 05" East longitude relatively (Halaba Woreda Agriculture & Rural Development Office, 2003 E.C).



Map 1: Administrative Map of SNNPR State (Source: SNNPR Bureau of Finance and Economic Development, 2005 E.C).

The total land surface of Halaba special woreda is 994.66 square kilo meters. The highest point in the land is 2396 meters above sea level, and the lowest point is 1500 meters above sea level. To mention some: Bilate river valley, 1700 meters; Goljo, 2000 meters; Rekame, 2191 meters; Abokicho- Matokoma, 2396 meters; and Lake Shalla 1500 meters above sea level (Halaba Woreda Agriculture & Rural Development Office, 2003 E.C).

Regarding the topographic feature of the woreda, 3% is mountainous, 70% of the total area is plain level and 27% is sloppy or undulating. Mountains found in the woreda are Mount Motokoma, Bubisa, Rekame, Goljo and Kora (Halaba Woreda Finance and Economic Development Office, 2006 E.C:4).

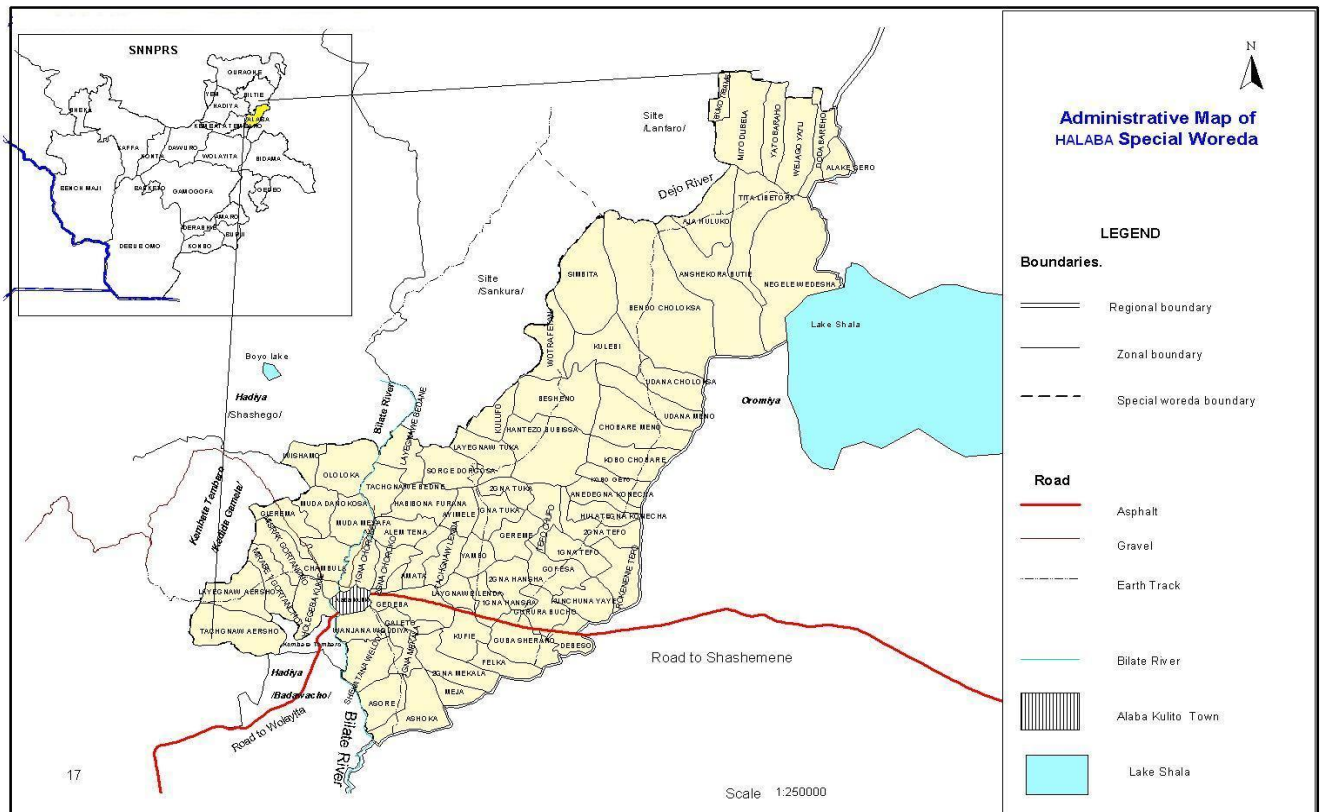
The soil types of the woreda are chronic and orthic Luvsols, and Eutric Nitosols, which have good potential for agricultural activities. The Eutric Nitosols is the most renowned for its fertility. Regarding the soil texture of the area 80% of the soil is sandy loam; 15% is clay, and 5% is sandy. The land teems with two major rivers Bilate and Dijjo. However, the Dijjo River is seasonal; it flows only during rainy periods. Springs and waterfalls of Bilate alone houses to major waterfalls at different location, between the origin and destination of the river (Halaba Woreda Agriculture & Rural Development Office, 2003 E.C).

According to the same source, over 80% of the woreda lay under moist woina Dega (warm temperature rainy) Climate, while the rest stretching south to north in the dry Kola climate. The annual mean temperature of the woreda ranges from 23 degree centigrade to 25 degree centigrade (Halaba Woreda Finance and Economic Development Office, 2006 E.C:4).

The average annual rain fall of the Woreda ranges from 857 to 1085 millimeter. Generally, the rain fall pattern is semi-bimodal and bimodal with the highest rain fall in kiremt (summer). Currently, the woreda is poorly covered with forest and other vegetations. This is mainly attributed to large scale deforestation and intensive utilization of land resources for cultivation. The cultivable land of the woreda out of the total area of the woreda is 73.3%. The pasture land coverage is 5.4%; cultivable but not used area is 4.2%; forest land is 2.1% and uncultivable land coverage is only about 1.2%. This implies that there was an accelerated deforestation (Halaba Woreda Agriculture & Rural Development Office, 2003 E). So, this tells that a continuous program of reforestation, water and soil conservation and management is required.

The people of Halaba are basically agrarian. Most of them have engaged in mixed farming (land cultivation, animal husbandry, and apiculture). The land is suitable for cultivation of almost all types of crops, cereals, vegetables, and fruits

The major cash crops include maize, teff, wheat, redpepper, and haricot bean. The major open market days are: on Thursday in Kulito, Tuesday in Guba and Besheno, Saturday in Abokicho, Friday in Mitto Dijjo and Kobo.



Map 2: Administrative Map of Halaba Special Woreda: the map does not include the three kebeles which joined the Special Woreda recently (Source: SNNPR Bureau of Finance and Economic Development, 2005 E.C).

The 2013 (2005 E.C) population and housing census result shows that the woreda total population was 296,540; of which 149,887 were males and 146,653 were females. There are 77 rural kebeles and two urban sub-towns or kebeles (SNNPR Bureau of Finance and Economic Development, 2005 E.C). However, according to 2006 E.C Halaba Woreda Finance and Economic Development Office information, the number of kebeles was grown to 84. Out of which, 79

are rural, and 5 are urban and sub-urban (Halaba Woreda Finance and Economic Development Office, 2006:5).

Since the woreda attained its independence to the special woreda status in 2001 (1993 E.C) significant improvements have been registered in the social-economic and infrastructure aspects. There are two hospitals, 10 health centers and 79 health posts. There are 100 primary schools. There are four secondary schools, of which one is a preparatory (grades 11-12) and the others are general secondary schools (grades 9-10). There is one Technical and Vocational College in Kulito town. In addition, there are two muslim Koran schools, 11 private kindergarten and primary schools (Halaba Woreda Finance and Economic Development Office, 2006 E.C).

The Halaba speak Halabissa. It belongs to Eastern highland Cushitic language sub-family together with Sidama, Hadiya, Gedeo, Kambata, Tembaro, Burji, Marako and others. As far as linguistic relation is concerned, the Halabissa is closely related to Kabena, Kambata, Tembaro, and Sidama languages.

Some historical sources and oral traditions revealed that the ancestors of the present day Halaba were originally speakers of Arabic language and then they used Adare language after their settlement in Harar and Dijoubuti areas. At the end as a result of the

Kambata Tembaro languages influence during their long year's settlement in Tembaro vicinity, their language was completely changed from Semitic to Cushitic language group (Braukamber, 1973; Tadesse, 1977; Lapiso, 2003). At present the Halaba language, other than serving for communication purpose, is not used in schools as a medium of instruction; this has influence on the development of the language. Hence, to promote it further in-depth study is required in this regard.

Urban life was not as such part of Halaba. However, Kulito emerged as a small hamlet by Emam Nunede, the famous leader of Halaba in about 1888 A.D.

The main reason behind the foundation of Kulito at its present location was to protect the Halaba Women from rape and danger while traveling Jimma for trade. Other reasons were because of the presence of perennial River Wera (River Bilate) from which inhabitants could get adequate water, and because the area is located at a crossroads where caravan traders from different directions met. Since then, Kulito has become an important commercial center, and it eventually developed in to an important market and trade center where by merchants coming from Bale, Jimma, Wolayta, Gofa, Silte, Kambata and Saddo Guraghe as well as from the nearby regions met. (NUPI,2002).

Kulito town has got 24 hours hydroelectric power services since 1981 E.C. There is a digital telephone center. More than 1,500 people use digital telephones on private bases. What is more, 47 rural kebeles are beneficiaries of wireless telephone service in the special Woreda (NUPI, 2002).

Chapter Two

Socio-Political History of Halaba

2.1. Origin and Early History

The exact period Halaba came to their present territory is difficult to estimate. However, it is associated with the coming of some Arab tribes for business and the expansion of the religion Islam from Arabian Pensula, called Hijaz; others moved to Yeman and then entered in to Ethiopia through the port of Zaila. Based on written records, such as Medieval Ethiopian chronicles and Arabic reports, the origin of Halaba dated back as far as the 8th - 11th century A.D (Braukamper, 1973; Tadesse, 1977).

According to some informants, who participated in this study, the Halaba entered into Ethiopia via two directions. First, they entered through Maghreb countries (Tunisia, Morocco, Libya and Egypt) then settled in the Northern part of Ethiopia (Eritrea). Those who entered into the northern part of Ethiopia, through time moved as far to the lake's region. Others went back from Maghreb land to their original place Hijaz, which was a place located between Mecca and Yemen in South Arabia. Then, they moved from that place towards south Yemen, and then to Djibouti area via the port of Zaila. After they lived for a few years in Djibouti area of Aljebarti, they quarreled with Christian rulers of the area due to tribute payment and other social

issues. After that they left Djibouti area and moved to Harar and established Islamic kingdom in Harar. Sheik Seyid Abadir, who was the leader of their movement when they came from Arabia, became the ruler of the kingdom (Braukamper, 1973; Tadesse, 1977; Bahru, 2002; Lapiso, 2003).

Most of the materials referred here are from oral tradition, but some available written sources also supplement the oral traditions regarding the origin and early history of Halaba especially their entrance through eastern part of Ethiopia.

As stated by Arabic literature entitled as “Jewahire/ Hissen-Fitarical Habesha” which was written by the scholar of Al-Azhar university of Egypt named Suliman Bushra-Al

-Malik, it was in the years between 1000-1020 AD, in the land of Arabia up to Egypt along the shores of the Red-sea, there were peoples who were said to be descendants of Ibrahim / Abraham/ and Ismael, who settled in the area and then latter crossed the red-sea and settled around the port of Zaila across the red-sea. While living there, they had conflicted with the Christian Habesha population of the area (Braukamper, 1973; Tadesse, 1977).

Even though they got military support from the Turks, who were already settled in the neighboring area they were unable to withstand and most of them returned back to where they were. But one of them,

Seyid Abadir, leading his family moved towards the town of Harar and started to live in a harmony with Turks and Adare people of the area. In Harar, after staying for years as a result of their religious similarity, the leader of the movement, Seyid Abadir, died and was buried in Harar within the present day's wall of the Jagol (Braukamber, 1973; Tadesse, 1977).

My informants also indicate that during their residence in Harar, the members of the clan have trade relation with Arab lands. Their trade was mainly bartering, taking out agricultural products, minerals and castrated slaves from Ethiopia and brining in various kinds of cloths, silk, weapons, food spices and others from Arabia.

They lived peacefully with neighboring Habesha and Oromo people and they tried to convince them to follow Islam religion and worship Allah. They used to offer gifts for individuals, especially for rulers of Bahra Negash and the Abba Gadass of Oromo (Ibrahim, 2005; Ribato, 2006).

There is a controversy among the informants regarding the original name of their tribe, which was named Hadiya. Some informants state that the ancestors of Halaba before coming to the land of Ethiopia lived in Hijaz, the place found between Mecca and Yemen, which was suitable for agricultural activities, and they were productive. When

they were living in that area, they used to provide gifts to the peoples of Mecca, and they were named “Hadiya” which means ‘gift’ in Arabic language, to mean people who provide gifts. The informants continued their explanation in saying that, they moved from Arabian Peninsula /Hijaz to Yemen, and after a few years of stay in Yemen they moved to the port of Zaila, then to Djibouti. When the members of the tribe were living in Djibouti, they had conflicted with the Amhara of the area and they moved to Harar. In Harar, they established Islamic kingdom under the leadership of Seyid Abadir the leader of their movement and lived about 50 years there (Ibrahim, 2005; Ibrahim et al., 2006; Ribato, 2006; Baharu, 2001).

As pointed out by informants, after the death of their leader Seyid Abadir in Harar, because of occurrences of some grievances, they were not interested to stay there and moved to the mountainous areas of Charchar. Usman, the son of Seyid Abadir was with them up to charchar. Then, they gradually moved towards west and southeast directions to Arsi and Bale mountains. Those who entered through the Northern part of Ethiopia and through the Eastern part met around Bale Mountains. They stayed for years in Sabure, Dida, Amaya, Asasa, Sherka-Gedeb and Halabe mountain area and gradually they extended to Dawa River in the west south direction and established their own strong administration or Muslim sultanate and continued to live a peaceful life with the neighboring people. They lived about 70

years there. After that, they moved to the present day Sidama land and settled in the Guguma and Shebedino area.

This oral traditional of the elders (informants) is supported by some historical sources which indicate the relation of Ethiopian region with Islamic world and Arab immigrants during that time. Regarding Arab migrants towards Ethiopian region through port Zaila, by quoting Makrizi, Lapiso (1990:40-41) stated:

During the reign of Agew 1100-1270 members of the Hashimite clan of prophet Mohammed from Hijaz-Arabia entered to Ethiopia through port Zaila and they first settled in the country of Jeberti low lands and they moved to central Harla land of shoa sultanate, they settled there and established their own new Wolasma dynasty sultanate under the leadership of Umer Wloasma by overthrowing the mentioned sultanate in 1285.

As far as territorial extension of the ancient Muslim sultanate of Hadiya is conceded, by the 14thc. Hadiya in the south west had occupied parts of northwestern Hararghe, Northern Bale, Northern Sidamo, Southern Shoa and Arsi (Lapiso, 1993).

As Braukamper stated, the exact date of the Hadiya origin has proved to be impossible but those oral traditions are important to the feeling of ethnic identity and to value concepts in the northeast Africa

societies, which are known for their historical consciousness. Most of the traditions are characterized by the Muslim influence and tell of Muslim Arabs migration from Arabian Peninsula and their mixing with the existing people in present day Somalia and East Ethiopia and constituting a new ethnic group called Hadiya, which includes Halaba and others (Braukamper, 1973:429).

In addition, Taddese Tamirat (1977:126) state that:

The Halaba people were settling in lakes region part of the great rift system of Ethiopia with the other “Sidamo” tribes before the Semitic migrations from the northern parts of Ethiopia. the ancestors of Halaba and Kebena (Halaba Garad and Kebena Garad) have their origin from the Semitic people of south Arabia, who came to Ethiopia through the port of Zaila and settled in Harar area in 800- 1000 A.D.

The first political entity of the state Hadiya was most probably situated on the Harar plateau in the direction of the lakes region and established the western most point of Islamic states which were combined in the federation of Zaila. In a written document, the name Hadiya was for the first time mentioned in the ‘Kebra Negest’ (Glory of kings) an Ethiopian chronicle dating back to the 13thc. The people

to whom it referred seemed to have been the hereditary enemies of the Christian empire.

When Amdeseyon (1314-1344) ruled Ethiopia, the Hadiya were conquered and became tributary to the Christian kingdom but still maintained some political independence. Culturally, as described by the Arabic historiographers, the Hadiya must have been at relatively high level with agricultural production, one of the biggest armies in the region and a well established trading system. The healing of the castrated slaves and their exportation to the markets of the Islamic world was started.

According to the topographical data collected by Abulfida, the region of Gedeb, west of Bale Mountains could be identified as the center of Halaba territory in the 14th centure (Braukamper, 1973).

In addition, Braukamper (1973:429) noted that Amdaseyon's successors Dawit (1382-1431) and Yishak (1414-1429) were engaged in wars against their Islamic neighbors which involved heavy losses. After Zaria Yakob (1434-1468) came to power, the Ethiopian Christian empire reached its highest point and extended its political and cultural influence over large parts of the present days south Ethiopia. 'Zar'a Yakob married the Hadiya princes Eleni of the most outstanding female personalities in Ethiopian history who played a great role in politics and cultural affairs until her death in 1522. The

chronicle dedicated to Zar'a Yakob reported the relation between the Christian kingdom and the Hadiya whose sub tribes were listed there thus enabling us to verify the historical continuity of contemporary ethnic groups like the Kabena, Halaba, Genz, Gedeb and Gudela up to the 15th century (Braukamper, 1973).

The facts reported by the chronicle are closely supported by oral traditions. From all sources of knowledge it can be concluded that the name Hadiya mainly existed as a political term.

Furthermore, Trimingham (1952:183) stated that the Halaba people who live between the river Bilate and Lake Awassa, and speak Cushitic language family of Afro-Asiatic group are mentioned as part of the kingdom of Hadiya Sultanate in the chronicles of Zar'a Yakob (1434-1468).

For Braukamper (1973), the Hadiya during and before the reign of Zar'a Yakob existed as a political term and was lacking a common leadership with both culturally and linguistically heterogeneous population. In its northern part there is an agricultural Semitic (Adare) speaking elements presumably the Halaba and Kabena seem to have predominated and in the southern parts a more pastoral Cushitic speaking one. Some of the people were Muslims and the others were

non-Muslims. These two ethnic components also constituted the population of the neighboring states Dawaro, Sharka, Bale and Ganz.

Regarding Halaba people as part of ancient Hadiya Sultanate, Lapiso (1990:65) also states as follows:

In the 15th century in the area under reference the Hadiya land people were divided into the following ten tribal regions of Gadaycho, Gudela ,Diho, Hadabo , Genz, Sega, Gab , Kabena, Gogala and Halaba'. According to Braukamper's research "Islamic principalities" and Hadiya, the people of today's Sidama in Sidamo administrative region was a part of the medieval Hadiya sultanate until the Imam Grawn Ahmed war of 1524-1543.

Under Zar'a Yakob's successors Baeda Mariam (1468-1477), Eskenir (1478-1494) and Na'od (1494-1508) the population of the Christian empire in its southern dependencies become more and more precarious. People from the east, the Maya, distantly related to the Halaba, over whelmed the Ethiopian province of Wag. Emperor Lebna Dengil (1508-1540) interfered with a civil war of the Halaba and for a short period managed to consolidate the power of his state

in the border lands. This was documented by European travelers (Braukamper, 1973).

As the name of the people is concerned there are different opinions among the sources that are available from the oral traditions. Some of the informants believed that the name Halaba was used for the people after Mount Halabe, found between Sidama and Bale where the ancestors of the people were settled. But some sources indicate that the name of the ethnic group had been called Halaba before they reached Bale area where they were living in Harar plateau. Since they were pastoralists they breed cattle and they milk them; so, at that time the people who were settled in the area called them 'Halabata'- to mean they milked the cattle and from that time onwards the people were called Halaba (Ibrahim et al., 2006).

One of the informants emphatically said that 'we are Halaba, our land is Halaba our language is Halabissa and our ancestors are called Halaba in their original Arab land even before coming to Ethiopia since the term Halaba is known in Arabic language to mean fresh milk i.e., 'ibaa Azuta' in Halabissa. Thus, the original name of the people itself is not Alaba but Halaba and the term Alaba come to be used to call the people latter on through time. Therefore, the name of the people according to the nationality elders, elites and other relevant

sources is Halaba but not Alaba. The name Alaba was called by other people.

In general, from the above stated oral traditions and written documents, it can be understood and concluded that the ancestors of the Halaba nationality originated from the Arabian Peninsula, called Hijaz of Arab tribe in the 8th to 11th Century A.D (Braukamper, 1973; Tadesse, 1977). However, the oral tradition claiming Halaba people came through Maghreb countries (Tunisia, Morocco, Libya and Egypt) then entered into Northern part of Ethiopia and through time moved to the lakes region and finally met those who entered in the eastern direction through port Zaila around Bale Mountains is not supported by written sources. Hence, further study need to be conducted to clearly verify this claim.

2.2. Expansion (16th - 19th Century)

As has been derived from oral traditions and limited written sources, most parts of the ethno history of Halaba nationality is dominated by political history. This is mainly because the available sources are biased towards political events, conflicts and wars.

Moreover, the ethno-history of Halaba is highly associated with the early history of the people. This is mainly because of the patterns of

movement of the people from their origin and settlement which was made under the leadership of their various leaders.

The 16th century was among the important historic period which began with an increasing efforts of the muslim-christian struggle for domination in North post Africa, which culminated in the long- lasting “holy war” (Jihad) waged by the muslims of Adal under the leadership of Ahmed b.’Ibrahim (nick named Giragn) against the Ethiopian empire (Braukamper, 1973).

Braukamper (1973), further stipulates that the Halaba voluntarily joined the Adalits in 1531, established marriage relations with their leaders and fought the Christian force fully until the final collapse of the Muslim offensive in the battle of Woyna Dega by the allied Ethiopian and Portuguese forces in 1543. There is no other personality in Ethiopian history with whom so many legend and folktales are associated with Ahmed Gagn. Among his generals, Abd an- Nasir, surviived in the memory of the Halaba, with whom he had been in close cooperation after the death of Ahmed Gagn.

The Ethiopian Christians under their emperor Galawdewas ((1540-1559) initiated a campaign to reconquer the lost territories in the south, such as Halaba and Dawaro. However, their success remained limited because the people of Adal proclaimed, ‘Mir Nur b. Mujahid’

as a leader of a new jihad and invaded the Christian state after 1551. Galawdewas did not succeed as he designed. The Halaba apparently played an important role in the Muslim armies and provoked for reaching changes in the ethnic situation. Segments of the Halaba were moved south ward to what is now Sidama land, while other groups crossed the lands of the lake region and occupied a territory east of Kambata (Braukamper, 1973).

The Muslim-Christian war which had been accompanied by military action did not come to an end until the time of the death of Emir Nur in 1568. It highly affected the demographic and cultural condition in the north east Africa. Among the territories that had been devastated highly was that of Halaba and in the course of the military action many of its inhabitants had moved west ward direction to Kambata, Guraghe and Wag thus leaving the whole open areas east of the rift valley. This provided a favorable condition for the Oromo people who were neighbors of Halaba and occupied the area south of the upper Ganale (Braukamper, 1973).

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In supplement of the movement of the Halaba from their area of settlement to other places as a result of Muslim Christian conflict, Lapiso (1990:45-46) stated:

The Adal wars of 1524 -1543 accelerated the place of great Ethiopian ethnic migrations of 1520 to 1660. During this migrations tribal and Ethnic groups of Genz, Gudela, Wetogira, Gedebicho, Alaba, Kabena, Ulbarag, Siltie, Sheshogo, Malge Bushe and Marako of the Hadiya Sidamo people partially or totally moved from their former positions in southern Ethiopia.

Another great historical event of the 16th century in Ethiopia was the Oromo expansion and movement. This event had affected peoples, places, ethno- linguistic and socio- political landscape of the country (Bahru, 2002, Lapiso, 1991, 1992 and 1993). The South west Ethiopian people were directly or indirectly affected by this event. During Oromo expansion and movement the Oromo people started in the area and they first invaded the region of Dollo a place where the Halaba were completely assimilated. From 1537 onwards, they continued to overcome the Ethiopian province of Bale, partly inhabited by Christian settlers and partly by the people of Halaba (Sidamo stock). Since both groups were weakened by the long lasting Muslim Christian war, it become easy for the Oromo to take over political control and to absorb some of them within a short period of time.

In the second half of the 16th century the expanding Oromo crossed the Wabishebele and they pushed the Halaba as far as Harar and the border land of Shoa. The Halaba were left in the two alternatives, either of submitting to the Oromo leaders or of being expelled. Hence, the Halaba groups who maintained their ethnic identity (among the Hadiya group) were forced to move west ward to the lowlands of the lakes region. Then, these various ancient Hadiya-Sidama groups left for their ancestral region for southern shoa and north western Sidama where they had began a process of assimilation with the local people of Guraghe, Kambata and Gedeo (Braukamper, 1973).

The strength of the states of that time to reflect their identity challenged as a result of continuous wars and they obliged to leave their original place of settlement. Among the peoples who failed on such influence were the kabena and Alaba in which they left the mountains area of Bale Sherka-Gedeb and settled for years together with peoples of Sidamo in Sidama land. By the second half of 16th century they were already in the area of Shebadino and it was from this area that they moved to their present area of settlement (Lapiso, 1991).

According to informants, peoples of Halaba and Kabena after their stay for years together with Sidama people in Sidama land they moved west wards leaving the area of Guguma and Shebadino as a

result of over population in the area which resulted from the coming of the remnants of the Sidama who were pushed from the area of Bale high lands by Oromo population expansion movement.

One of the kinsmen of Halaba, the family of Hassen, left the Shebadino area of Sidama and crossed the high lands of Lalima areas through Shamena and stayed for a short period of time in the hills of Lalima and Fande areas. Then, they continued their movement across Damine and reached Halaba and settled in the eastern shoeres of River Bilate in the vicinity of Mekala, Lenda and Ansha areas in the mid 16th century.

However, the other kinsmen of Halaba, the family of Nasro together with people of kebena, crossed the Bilate river and then moved to Kerenso, Keta and to Tembaro, and they settled around Elgira and Donga for about half a century. People of Halaba and Kabena, in the early 18th century, left the area of Donga and Elgira in present day kambata-Tembaro zone as a result of conflict among the pre existing peoples and the new comers. The new comers moved to the area of the present Hadiya (Badogo, Guna, Bena, Gedesha, kunfa, etc). But later on, the Hadiya clan of Lemo pushed the Halaba and kabena tribes to the east to leave their area of settlement in Guna. The Halaba and the kabena who had tribal relation and had lived together for a long period of time separated after they left Guna. The Kabena moved to western parts of Guraghe and settled in Zenna - Benner.

But the Halaba moved to east Guraghe of Enner area of Mafada in 1815 A.D (Ibrahim et al., 2006; Ribato, 2006; and the informants).

In supporting of this oral tradition regarding the movement of the peoples of Halaba and Kabena from Sidama land to Tembaro, Wachemo and Guna Braukamper (1973:432) states:

For unknown reasons the Kebena and Alaba left their homes in Sidama land in about 1720, crossed the Bilate and settled in the vicinity of the Tembaro. More than half a century of close contact with this people made them abandon their Semitic (Adare) language in favor of the Cushitic kambata-Tembaro idiom. C.1790 the Kabena and Alaba proceeded north ward to the region of Wachamo and Guna south of the Guraghe Mountains. They were chased from there by the immigrants of the Lemo about 1815 A.D and the kabena moved north ward to Guraghe. They crossed Ennammor and Cheha and finally settled in Zenna-Banner C.1860.

As described by informants, after settling for some years in Guraghe land, there was a conflict between the Guraghes and Halaba; the Halaba people those who settled in Mafada area moved to the area of Ulbarag in search of good and peaceful condition for practicing their

religion Islam and to lead peaceful life condition. On the other hand, when Halaba left Mafed, there were some groups of Halaba people who went to Kabena and still they are living in that area and they call themselves Halaba.

During that time when the Halaba were in Guraghe land Mafed, the Guraghe of Geeto were settled in the area already before that of Halaba and they opposed the settlement of Halaba people in the area and pushed them back towards the area of Ulbarag. Even though the Halaba tried to continue settled way of life in Ulbarag, they could not manage because, when they were living in Ulbarag area there was again conflict created between the peoples of Ulbarag and Halaba for the latter were becoming stronger and stronger in every aspect of life. The Halaba were informed by their daughters who got married with Ulbarags that the people of Ulbarag were conspiring to open fire on them by saying “Hitate shifotat leek Murot Fayan,” - which means it is better to clear away this bush before it grows up as a forest- to mean that it is better to expel this people from the area before they reproduce more (Source: The informants).

It was during this time that the Halaba understood that they could not live together with Ulbarag people and they sent a kind of diplomatic mission to Arsi to deal with the leader of the Arsi Oromo called Tuke Mama under the leadership of eight prominent Halaba leaders like

Abegaz Koto from Torombora clan, Abegaz Wuda Hamde from Wshira clan, Abegaz Game from Darimo clan , Abegaz Emmo from Sefato clan, Abegaz, Babiso-Boyamo from Washermine clan ,Abegaz Shirko from Siide clan , Abegaz Taso from Azobada clan, Abegaz Hato from Kolmine clan.

After an agreement had been reached they left the area of Urbarag and moved to Arsi of Timbame leaving male donkeys, male goats and hens in their homes at night to assume as they are in their homes. They were welcomed by the Arsi Oromos and started living together with them around the areas of Shalla, Ziway and Kuyera. By the support of Tuke Mama through their leadership of Abegaz Koto, the Halaba went back to revenge Ulberag and laid a heavy attack on Ulberags (Source: The informants).

After living for some years in Arsi area in good relationship, unity and respect one another, conflict among Halaba and Arsi arose. The two groups were not similar in religion, language and culture. In addition to this, there was cattle robbery and theft between the two groups around Shalla area. Another problem which led them to conflict was that through time the Arsi Oromo tried to dominate the Halaba and started to influence them to accept the supremacy of the Arsi Oromo over Halaba. The Halaba didn't want to surrender their identity to self rule and they started to struggle with the leader of the Arsi Oromo named, Tuke Mama. As a result of the conflict, the Halaba people left

the land of Arsi Oromo and moved back to the area of Mitto, in present day Lanfuro woreda of the Silte Zone and then stretched to the area of present day Alage (Source: The informants).

According to the informants, at present, because of all the movements some decedents of the Halaba are found in different areas of the country.

Regarding the Halaba tribes who were engulfed by the Oromo, Braukamper (1973:432) states:

Another part of Halaba had mixed with Oromo groups in the area of Duro south of lake Langano and constituted a new ethnos, named Alabdu. About 1800, evidently pushed by Arsi, they left for a region in present Guji land east of Lake Abaya and were fully Oromonized.

After they were pushed back from the Arsi Oromo land to Mitto area, as they were pastoralists, the Halaba continued their territorial expansion in search of water and grazing land for their cattle. They moved from Mitto and the present Alage areas up to the area of Hansha east of river Bilate. In this movement and expansion they met with their kinsmen in the area of Mekale, Lenda and Hansha who settled in the area formerly in the second half of the 16th century.

These earlier settlers came from Sidama and were descendants of Hassen and were named Ulla Halaba.

In relation to Nasro's family southward movement Braukamper (1973:432) writes:

“ they stretch south ward about 1825 and joined their kinsmen the Ull-Alaba driven from (Ulla) earth i.e. the home steadying people, in contrast to the roaming segment called Hassen-Alaba after an ancestor, who had occupied a territory east of the Bilate since the second half of the 16th century”.

From the above quotation, it can be understood the key terms, Ulla means the land, Halaba means the people, and Ulla Halaba means the Halaba Land.

As they met, they discussed everything, convinced each other and accepted as they are the same. After that, they formed what is at present known as Hassen-Nasero Halaba, to mean 'all Halaba', and then, they started to live together. After that, the Ulla Halaba or Hassen-Nasero Halaba started territorial expansion in different directions especially to the east towards the Arsi-Oromo and in the west towards west of Bilate river (Braukamper, 1973).

According to informants, the Halaba in their ambition and intention of having vast pastoral land, they fought in the east direction with Arsi Oromo. During that time of fighting, they fought in the areas as far as to Bulbula, Meki and Koffole. The evidence for this until present time, there is a tomb on the road side in between the towns of Bulbula and Meki whose written sayings indicate the people died and buried in the war between Alaba and Arsi Oromo. In this conflict, Halaba were victories by the support given by Islam federation (Gogot) by their appeal for this association (Source: Informants).

In the second half of 19th century, however the demographic pressure in the densely populated mountains had intensified the interest of east Guraghe towards Marako, but the Marakos resisted. This effort of the territorial expansion was favored by the establishment of strong regional political federation known as 'Gogot' which was initiated by the Islamic leaders and the eight elected leaders of Halaba tribe (Ibrahim et. al., 2006).

The Islamic solidarity and establishment of such regional political federation helped Halaba to devastate the force of the Arsi Oromo with the help of their allies and that of Marako and some tribes of Hadiya. Using the opportunity of their alliance with the Gogot the Halaba were expanded their territory both in the west and in the east and penetrated deep into the interior parts of their neighbors and

occupied large territories which extend from west bank of the Bilate river up to unrestricted Arsi land (Ibrahim et al., 2006).

The united force of the Muslim community which was led by Imam Sugato of Azernet-Berebere interfered in the conflict between Halaba and Arsi Oromo in the side of Halaba people and this gave strength for Halaba and they pushed back the Arsi Oromo from their original residence to north east of Lake Shalla. That is, Bulbula and Adam-Tulu up to Kofale become under the control of the united force and the Arsi Oromo were attacked and had got a heavy material and human loses. After the war was stopped peace treaty was made in both sides not to cause combat or conflict (Ibrahim, 2005).

2.3. Traditional Administration

Like other societies and peoples in different countries of the world, the Halaba people have their own rules and regulations of government at different times, and they came up with their own cultural administrative system which they are using it until today.

As pointed out by key informants, the exact time the Halaba people started the application of traditional administrative system termed as 'Serri Dagnomata' is not known. They used to maintain peace resolve conflict and perform other cultural activities among the society using

this traditional law. It was passed from generation to generations. However, according to the elders, the traditional administrative system among the Halaba society was mainly related to the history of the people. When the members of the society used to live in Mitto, Alage, Lenda, Mekala and Ansha, there was administrative gap. To fix such a gap they started to use the combination of Islamic laws and traditional administrative system which they have developed in their long movement and expansion. In Halaba, all cultural issues and activities are carried out using 'Halabi Serra' or cultural traditional administrative system. The ruling system is also known as 'Serri-Dagnometa'. The major aims of the traditional administrative system of the Halaba Serra are regulating peaceful co-existence with neighboring nationalities, resolving conflicts that may arise among different families and individuals, and to run other administrative activities that may be useful for the community as a whole.

In the tradition of 'Halabi Serra', if any family or clan faces any kind of problem any kind of problem they may discuss together and seek solution for the problem through the assembly known as 'Ogate'. 'Ogate' is an assembly which takes place in the place where the case arises or in the areas where the personalities who lead the assembly live. It takes place under a huge tree known as 'Ogate Halla' (shade of the great tree).



Fig.1: Ogate Halla (Photo, HWCTO, 2006 E. C, Kulito)

In the assembly of the Ogate, the head of a household, the father, represents each family at the village's clan level meeting. He is a member of the 'Boki-ogate', the council of the nearby settlements (Village) that is led by the 'Boki-muricho', the head of the Boki-Ogate. The clan council, the 'Debo Ogate' is led by the respective clan chief Debo-Muricho who with the Boki-Muricho represents its respective clans, solve whatever cases arise at the clan level. There can be more than one Boki-Muricho because of the presence of many clan members in different villages. The clan chiefs in any level of ogate

assemble under the “Ogate Halla”. The ogate assembles and forms the Halabi-Ogate, the final council, when issues concerning all the tribe are to be discussed, and decisions are to be made. The structure of Halaba traditional judiciary system is shown in the figure one below:

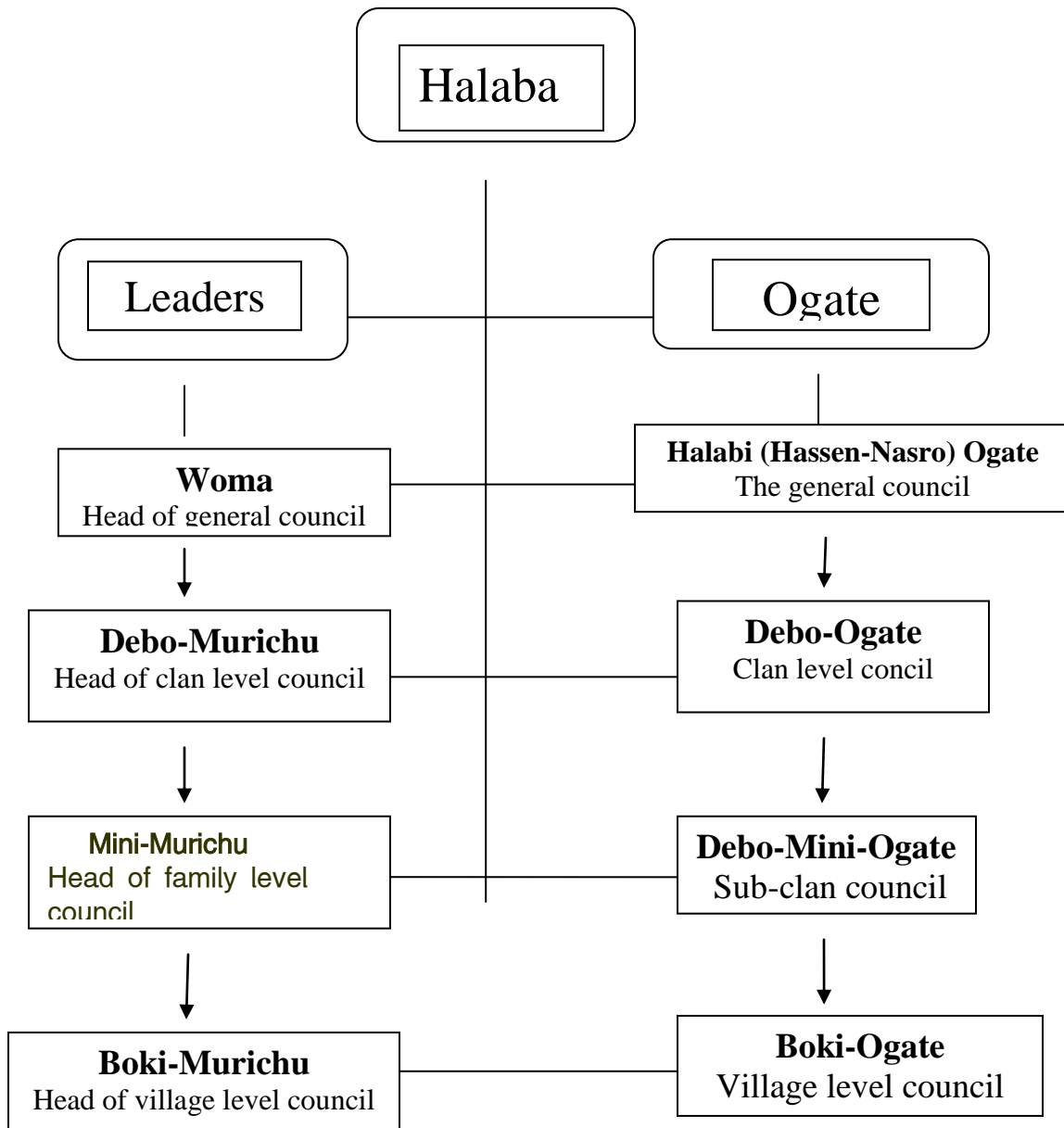


Fig 2: The Halaba Judico- Socio- Political Structure

Traditionally, there are four levels of administrators' among the Halaba. These are: *Boki-Murichu*, Mini-Murichu, *Debo-Murichu*, and *Womma*. *Boki-Murichu* is the head of a particular clan at a village level; Mini-Murichu is a head of family level council; and the *Debo-Murichu* is a head of Debo Ogate ((clan level council); and *Womma* is the head of *Halabi (Hassen Nasro) Ogate* general assembly of the Halaba.

The highest authority of the Halaba traditional administration system is the Halaba (Hassen-Nesero) Ogate. It is the general assembly of Halaba and is headed by *Womma*. Some leaders of the Halaba Ogate had been from the other clans, such as Imam Nunede of the Kolmine clan, who led the Halaba tribe when Hassen Enjamo of Kebena reigned in 1886 A.D. Emam Nunede is remembered for his establishment of kulito town and introduction of crop cultivation in the Halaba farming system by brining maize, teff, pumpkins and other crops from Kawo Tona, the king of Wolayta. The cultivation was first started by females. The males were pastoralists; they need to have vast pastures and did not want their land to be cultivated (Baharu, 2001; Ribato.2006).

There is no clan superiority among the Halaba community rather each and every clan of the people has power to administer and settle its

affairs. When a problem arises that needs the involvement of other clan leaders, they invite them to settle the matter together.

According to the Halaba culture and tradition, when matters pertaining to the whole Halaba arise, the assembly is led by the '*Womma*'- leading person who is chosen from the Siide clan since Siide in Halaba is accepted as an elder among the other clans of the Halaba. The siide clan is also named as 'Lahi- Boku', seat of the Laha, was sign of the authority of the Laha of the Halaba. The '*Halabi Serra*' is a strong code of conduct that anyone who violated it will be out casted or ostracized from the society.

The Halaba Judico- Socio- Political Structure keeps the unitary authority of the 'Halabi Serra'. The elders and the religious leaders are highly respected in Halaba Culture. The people followed the unified voice of Serra and that of the Halaba Shehoch as their religious leaders. The Halaba shehoch was one of the system in which the people of Halaba used to resolve religious and social problems since 1950s. In the system traditional or cultural activities of the people and Islamic religious laws are unified to solve problems. The Halaba sheiks (shehoch) were highly respected by the Halaba nationality.

Halaba Serra Holy Day Celebration

Halaba Serra Holy Day is an occasion in which all Halaba demonstrate their unity, solidarity, and integrity. Since 1996 E.C, the Halaba Serra has been celebrated as a big Cultural Holy Day every two years at the woreda level in Kulito town and every year at the local or Kebele level at the end of 'Mangesa' and at the beginning of the Halaba New Year at January or 'Wotoota'.

The main objective of the Serra Holy Day celebration is to promote the social, cultural, economic and political developments of the nationality. It helps to develop the physical and spiritual values of the nationality and to reflect and introduce to the country and to the world in general. It also helps to record and preserve the cultural, natural, and historical heritages to the new generation (Woreda Culture, Tourism and Public Information Office, 2006 E.C).

On the occasion various cultural shows are such as, 'Yaka'- Youth's dancing; 'Kala'- Women's dancing are performed. Miss Halaba or Halaba beauty (Halabi Higamie) contest is made; model farmers and contest winners' are awarded; different inauguration are made, etc. Some photographs of the 2006 E.C Serra Holy Day celebrations are shown below.



Fig. 3: Inauguration of Water Project in Halaba on Serra Holy Day (Photo Nigusu, 2006 E.C, Kulito)



Fig 4: Halaba Youth Celebrating Serra Holy Day (Photo, Nigusu, 2006 E. C, Kulito)



Fig. 5: Youth Yaka Dancing on Serra Holy Day (Photo Nigusu, 2006, Kulito)



Fig 6: Halaba Girls Dressed for Beauty contest on Serra Holy Day (Photo, Nigusu, 2006 E. C, Kulito)



Fig 7: Halaba Girls on Higamie/Miss Halaba, Contest (Photo, Nigusu, 2006 E. C, Kulito)



Fig 8: Girls who stood 1st to 3rd from right to left on 2006 Miss Halaba contest, (Photo, HWCTO, 2006 E. C, Kulito)



Fig 9: Halabi Higamie (Miss Halaba), 2006 E.C (Photo, HWCTO, 2006 E. C, Kulito)

2.4. Conflict Management Methods

As has been already discussed, the assembly of the Halabi (Hassen-Nasero) Ogate sits under the great tree known as 'Ogate Halla (canopies of great tree in which Ogate assembles). The type of tree can be 'Girrar' or 'Sholla' or can be 'Warka'. During the time of their

assembly, the Ogate of the three levels communicate current news and issues concerning their respective area or peoples before beginning the issue of the day. Such an exchange of new information is known as 'Dudubu Akemu' to mean exchanging of news or issues. After this, they bring the issue of the day and saying 'kayahando yadaha' meaning, is the case new or the preexisting. The regular assemble of the Ogate; is conducted every two weeks.

Regarding the sitting arrangement of the assembly, the leader of the assembly and the speaker sit face to face looking one another to exchange their ideas easily. If the case was already preexisting and the person asked about it replies saying 'kayaha' and if the case is new, she/he replies 'Yadaha'.

Two leaders are selected to lead the discussion of the assembly. They also sit face to face and continue the discussion. These two people are called 'Korto Annakata' meaning fathers of the Jury. The system of assembly is more of democratic type, in which each member of the assembly is a part of the decision making through the process of ' Gumgmu', that is the voice of participants in which each member forwards his idea by supporting or opposing. Finally, through the majority vote, the decision is made.

During discussion, if there is no consensus one may direct saying ' Hayut Alayye' or ' Lucuta Alayye' meaning- let me show the direction;

and after he gets the chance he explains clearly how the process was going and should go on.

The Halaba Serra contributed a lot for the people in that it saved time, money, and energy. It helped in reducing false accusations among the people. Even if a person commits hidden crime and if the case is submitted to Halaba Serra for arbitration, they tell the truth without hesitation. When the conflict is resolved by Halaba Serra based on their procedures, people do agree one another trust their opponent hence, revenge is not expected.

2.5. Punishment and Compensation

The types of punishment would depend up on the kind of problem at hand. For example, in the case of simple conflicts and faults, there may be discussion on the matter and after the guilty is identified both parties are asked to compromise each other by saying ‘Wolihafayitu’ /’Awuf’/ which means ‘apologize’.

In the case of serious crime, for example, robbery of cattle, burning of houses, attacking of others etc.. the punishment would be serious. Even the criminal would provide money, Bull or Honey which is in the culture known as ‘Wodefa-worjamu’ which means punishment by providing Bull, male goat, sheep or money that can replace these animals. ‘Wodefa means providing Honey full of a big pot.

If the criminal is not ready to accept what was decided on his as punishment the case may be taken to the last step decision maker of

the tribal leaders and to the last level of the 'Ogate'. If the criminal has continued with his reluctances, the last measure would be ostracization or casting him away from the group, in which case his family, cattle and property would be discriminated or isolated from the others. However, according to the culture, if the criminal seeks excuse, he calls his kinsmen (relatives) for reconciling him in compensating what he was supposed to do. Then, he knells down on the legs of the elders and asks for mercy. By doing so he is excused (Source: The informants).

2.6. Halaba and its Neighbors

The Halaba believed in the dispersion of their kinsmen at different parts to the areas they had moved and inhabited them, such as the present day Sidama woredas: Siide, Sefato, Mencheno, Toronbora, and Woshermine clans; in Hadiya and Hossana: Woshermine, Toronbora; in Guraghe Ankamoto, Mogomogne, Aliro, Wezerit Gedebano, and Sefato; in Kebena Genza and Aysebo clans. In Ilubabor Darmu-Diqlo clans; in Arsi: Kolmine, woshermine, Sefato, Wishira, Siide, Toronbora and Mencheno clans; in Bale: Kolmine, Siide, Sefato Toronbora, and Wishira clans; in Wolayita: kolmine, Toronbora, Toroda and wushira clans; in Kambata: Kolmine, Anasheko, Kuche, , Genza, Malga and Siide clans; in Silte: Woshermine, Sefato, Karusa, Azobada, Toronbora, Wishira, and Kuche clans; in Dire Dawa: Sefato, Woshermine and Siide clans; in

Yem special woreda: descendents of Sied Ibrahim and Esmael (Source: The informants).

The Halaba people during their movement across different areas, different tribes of Halaba were dispersed into different direction and still today live together in their respective areas of settlements and live peacefully with other nationalities. At present time Halaba has a good relation with the neighboring nationalities. They interact in marriage, marketing, weddings, funeral and other social issues except with Arsi Oromo, with whom they have occasional conflict due to resources, such as land.

As these peoples were claimed to have dependency from the same or similar origin, there is uninterrupted effort made to strengthen the relationship of these same peoples through different mechanisms, such as timely arranged conferences, panel discussions on the matters of socio- economic and development activities to bring about integration among themselves for mutual benefits.

2.7. Incorporation of Halaba into Ethiopian Empire

According to the elders and elites of the nationality, until the last quarter of the 19thc the Halaba people were administered by their own local chiefs such as Garads and Abegazes. Halaba ceased to have been autonomous in 1891 AD when Dejazmach Wodajo

Gobena subdued and consequently incorporated Halaba into the Minelik's Empire.

The governor of Sodo and Gurage area Dajjazmach Ashagre started the conquest of the Hadiya and Kambata area in 1886, but this act was interrupted by the Kabena whose leader Hassen Enjamo proclaimed a war against the Christians. The people of Halaba although not protracted said to have put up considerable resistance on the conquerors, because of the superiority of Wodajo forces in the fire arms the Halaba suffered heavily casualties. At the end, many Halaba people were taken as captives. At that time, the Menelik army burnt Koran, 'the Holy Book of Muslims', killed many bride grooms, destroyed materials of Halaba and the leader Abegaz Higiso. Others were also taken to Ankober and imprisoned for about five years.

At the time of the subsequent rise of muslim revivalist movement led by Hassen Enjamo against Menelik's expansion, the Hadiya Gurage coalition force fought Menelik's force under the leadership of Hassen Enjamo. The coalition also consisted of Halaba, Siltie and Kabena. But the movement was crushed by the forces of Minelik's general Gobana Dache in 1888. During the time of Menelik's expansion towards south the strong and fantastic leader of Kabena Hassen Enjamo was not easily defeated by Minelik; he resisted strongly and gave hard time to Minelik's army (Bahru, 2002).

Though Hassen Enjamo, the leader of kebena, made effort to push back the forces of Menelik at different times, he lost ability and needed the support of neighboring Muslim communities. It was during that time that he tried to seek supporters and started to agitate the Muslim peoples of Hadiya, Sheshogo, Halaba, Siltie, Endegagn, Azernt and Kambata. For this effort of Hassen Enjamo, the religious leader of Halaba people of that time Imam Nunede gave quick response to him and for this the sword inscribed with the Arabic letters the word “Islam” was awarded for his practical military support (Informants; Ibrahim et al., 2006; Ribato, 2006).

Before the resistance was made, community elder named Waqqo requested Wodajo for truce on condition of paying tribute to Menelik. The Dejazmach agreed and Halaba was granted tributary status. It was in 1894 the Halaba people were subjugated by the forces of Minelik and then incorporated into the Minelik’s Empire. During that time, most parts of Halaba were covered by dense forest and people used to hide in it, and even after the area was controlled by the forces of Menelik, the Halaba peoples were unwilling to accept the gabar system of the time. As a result of the unwillingness of the people Minelik used pacification process of the area by ruling through local representatives of the people. The ignorance of the local language and customs as well as fought fullness of long lasting loyalty of the

southern traditional authorities, granted the recognition and economic privilege, and their traditional chiefs were promoted to a new status Balabat title, and the rest of the people confiscated of their land and reduced to the status of so-called 'gabar' i.e. serfs of the state after their land was consificated (Informants; Ribato, 2006).

The advent of Amhara was the turning point in the history of Halaba in general and the town at the Halaba - Kulito in particular, In which with the coming of Amhara generally called 'nafteгна' (gun-men) Christianity which was unknown to the area before was introduced. The chiqashum system came into existence and social stratification become apparent; new culture and language were introduced (Ribato, 2006).

Coming back to the administration, after its subjugation, Halaba district continued to be ruled by the emperor or being combined within the administrative structure of the then Kambata and Hadiya Awraja, which was governed by Dajazmach Wodajo Gobana. The Dajazmach further appointed a viceroy Ahmed Abaro from among the influential nationality members of Halaba. Ahmed Abaro was succeeded by Jebir Geega, who was again, succeeded by Ali-Hundito and Fitawrari Bushra Ali who consecutively served as viceroy until 1935 (Ribato, 2006).

2.8. The Period of Italian Invasion (1936-1941)

During Italian occupation, Italians did not face any challenge to occupy Halaba since the people who were subjected to heavy taxations, arbitrary rule, nepotism, bribery, injustice and other feudal burdens at the hands of Amhara were easily won over by the Italian propaganda which actively explained the grievance of the people against the Amhara rule. They for instance reduced taxes, repaired and improved the church and mosque in Kulito town; distributed gifts to the people, etc.

Since Italian occupation and rule in Ethiopia was mainly confined to the town. Italians built their residence on the area where now the district administration office of woreda is situated in Kulito town. They also built prison in the place where the present municipality of Kulito town is located. It was also the Italians who for the first time have constructed all weather road linking Sheshemenie with Kulito town. They also introduced trucks, construct bridges over river Bilate and built the first model Hotel called 'Ispagno Arosto' in Kulito town.

When Italians were expelled from the area pre Italian occupation administration was recreated, many of the officials were re-instituted with some new appointee. After libration, Fitawrari Bushra once again acted as governor of the region until his death in 1954. Finally, Halaba was made part of Kambata and Hadiya Awraja in Arsi

province. In May 1960 it became part of the then Haikoch and Butajira Awuraja of the shoa province. In 1974 revolutionary movements against the emperor regime, the Halaba peasants used to go out in mobs and raid indiscriminately both government and individual properties.

As far as Socio-political administration is concerned after the Menelik's territorial expansion the Halaba were ruled by chiq-shums or local governors, up to the time of Haile-Sellassie, from Assela and Hossana.

During this time, among the personalities who governed Halaba among local leaders of clan chiefs were; Fitawurari Saliman Bushura, Grazmach Muzie, Balambaras Husman, Juar, Araro, Abegaz Higiso, Balambaras Datego, Emam Ramiso. At that time the Halaba land was managed in two systems: tenants (Melkegna) and landlords (Balarists). For instance, the Mekala, Lenda, Kufe, Kulito, Choroko, Basheno, Sankura, Udana land were managed by landlords (Balerists) themselves. While the Girme, Habibo, Fuirana, Sorge, Aymale, Hergdina, Yambo and Tuka area were managed by tenants (Melkegnas).

2.9. Dergue Regime (1974-1991)

During the Dergue regime land was declared to be in the hands of the peasants under the slogan of “Land to Tiller”. But all peasants of Halaba were not free to use the output of their efforts due to the command economic policy of the military government that was hindered the free market economy. The Halaba nationality as all nations, nationalities and people of Ethiopia was not having the democratic right to self governance. It's during that time the administrative center was shifted to Haikoch and Butajira Awuraja, Ziway. After that Halaba was given the status of Awuraja called Siraro Awuraja until the down fall of the Dargue regime. After the overthrow of the Dargue regime it become part of Kambata, Halaba and Tembaro zone and has got the status of special woreda since 1993 E.C.

2.10 Halaba and the FDRE government

After the coming EPRDF Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front to power, the human and democratic rights of the people of Halaba have been protected and they begun to exercise their democratic right. They also began to enjoying political, economic and social rights together with all other nations, nationalities and people of the Ethiopia, which is the fruit of the 1987 E.C democratic constitution. The Halaba woreda was within the Kembata Tembaro Zone till 1993 and it became a special woreda. Since then the woreda

is an independent special woreda in which the people of Halaba enjoying self-governance. They are using their own language, promoting and preserving their culture and history. Now they are working hard to bring the socio economic development to ensure their better live and future.

Chapter Three: Economic Organizations

3.1. Land and Property Ownership

According to the elders, in Halaba culture women or wives are expected to subordinate themselves to the wishes of their husbands, The husbands have full control overall the properties of the family except the special gift granted by her family in the form of 'Nikise Giza' during their marriage.

Since daughters are highly respected in the cultures, they have the right to claim the inheritance of plot of land of their parents. However, in the past it was customary that only sons were eligible to inherit a plot of land, livestock and other property from their parents. Culturally the Halaba husband can have more than one wife. Compared to his other wives, the elder (senior) wife takes on the upper position next to her husband and plays the role of the husband and controls over the daily activities of the other wives and the children. Families of Halaba are extended, where grand fathers, fathers, mothers and children live in a compact area. All the wives have rights to have their own plot of land in the culture. One of the major purpose of marriage in Halaba culture is reproduction and it is no use to think about marriage without children. Those, families with many children mainly with sons, are respected and their progeny are taken as sources of prosperity and

imperviousness to external attack and as insurance when the parents get older. Mothers are mainly responsible for the day to day upbringing of their children until they reach maturity level. Halaba wives with their daughters collect fire wood, fetch water, collect grass for cattle and prepare food and drinks for the whole family. Tending cattle and shopping's are also roles of women.

The Halaba sons are taught the art of farming, riding horses, hunting, fighting, fencing, etc to follow along the treads of their fathers. To the contrary, the Halaba daughters are taught the art of domestic activities as performed by their mothers like preparation of food, drinks, managing house, tending babies, herd cattle, etc.

The elder son, the one born to the first wife in particular, is taken and brought up as a successor to his retired or dead father to lead and care for all the family that are under his father's domain. All other sons are endowed with the right to inherit plots of land from their parents. Traditionally, Halaba girls are not allowed to go to school even to Koran schools. It is the girls who are burdened with much of the labor needed in the household, in the farm plots, particularly during plowing, harvesting and threshing time.

3.2 Crop Production

For a long period of time, the Halaba people remained pastoralists, because they were entirely depend on cattle breeding. It was towards the end of the last decade of the 19th century cultivation of the land was introduced by one of the prominent leader Imam Nunede. Imam contributed a lot in bringing seeds of pumpkins and maize from neighboring peoples of Wolayita (Kawo Tona) who were agriculturalists at that time. And then he planted the seeds by digging anthills (kuyisa). As they were pastoralists, initially the Halaba rejected and strongly condemn the idea of cultivation of land. Later, after continuous efforts the Imam succeeded in convincing his people through their wives and as a result they started to adapt settled agricultural life (Halaba Woreda Agriculture & Rural Development Office, 2003 E.C).

The main types of cereal crops that are produced in the special woreda are: Maize, Teff, Wheat, Millet and Beans; and Vegetables: Potato, Cabbage, Onion, Carrot, Red Pepper, etc. In the special Woreda, farmers produce red pepper next to cereals in large amount for it has high economic demand and value for the Halaba nationality. It is from this point of view that people used to call the land of Halaba “Yeberbere Hager” meaning the land of red pepper. In addition, “chat”

is produced in Halaba for consumption and marketing purposes (Woreda Agriculture & Rural Development Office, 2003 E.C).

3.3. Livestock Production

The Halaba people raise different types of livestock species including cattle, equine sheathes and poultry. In both rural and urban areas of the special woreda modern farming is not exercised. The livestock are raised in a traditional way that mostly uses open field grazing.

As a supplement they use to feed hays and crop residues to the livestock. The prevalence of overgrazing caused low livestock price since livestock are not well feed. Over grazing has also resulted in land degradation which mainly is reflected in low productivity and poor vegetation coverage.

They breed livestock, like oxen, mainly for plowing, consumption; equines for loading and transportation purposes. They also raise sheep and goats for marketing and occasionally for meat consumption. As compared to other neighboring nationality, Halaba has larger number of cattle and better way of cattle production (Woreda Agriculture & Rural Development Office, 2003 E.C).

There is a serious problem of livestock feeding in the area due to shortage of grass land, grazing area and lack of practice of

supplementary feeding system by farmers. The other problem is prevalence of livestock diseases such as render pest, liver and prynoposomiasis. The other problem is the farmers' reluctance in accepting new technologies which require the effort of concerned people to change the attitude of the people and the practice (Source: Woreda Agriculture & Rural Development Office 2003 E. C).

3.4. Apiculture

Halaba have practiced apiculture since they realized and discovered the art some time ago. Halaba land and agro- ecology is said to be suitable for the production of Honey. Honey has been an important and socio- culturally valued product. It has been used as part of the ordinary dietary and basic ingredient in local drinks. It also has a high value to generate income for the household.

The traditional way of honey production involved smoking around trees to attract the swarming bees; and once they are captured the bees would prepare a place for them to rest. Beehives (kafuta in Halabissa) are hanged on trees, which has cylindrical shape with about 120 cm long and about 100 cm circumference. It is made by men or women. Beehives are purchased from the market, since it is made of bamboo, which is not grown in Halaba land due to its low altitude.

3.5 Transportation and Marketing

The other economic activity of the Halaba is commerce or trade. The geographical location of the special woreda is suitable for commercial activities. They trade with neighboring zones and towns and there is high commercial activity, especially in the town of Halaba kulito.

Regarding commercial practices there are more than five open markets in the woreda. Among these the largest one is kulito market which is located at the center of the woreda capital. Other markets are located in the rural localities of Halaba ranging from 10 to 32 Kilo meters from Halaba kulito town. For instance, kulito market is said to be the largest commercial center in the region that attracts merchants of various kinds from different neighboring zones and regions like Wolayita, Kembata, Hadiya, Gamo Goffa, Silte and other zones as well as Oromia region.

The market days are: Thursday at Kulito; Friday at Kobo and Mitto Dijo; and Saturday Arsho-Abokicho; Tuesday at Guba and Besheno (Woreda Agriculture & Rural Development Office, 2003 E.C).

As per the information of the woreda culture, tourism and governmental information office, currently there are over 400 Isusu (medium level cars) for transportation of various trade items from one

place to another. Besides, the Halaba from the traditional time up to now use donkeys, horses and mules for transportation in the rural markets. At present, horse carts takes the highest share for transportation both in rural and urban areas next to ISUZU and other transport cars (Halaba Woreda Culture, Tourism and Governmental Information Office, 2003 E.C)

3.6. Communication

For the first time motorized vehicles were seen in kulito during the Italian occupation. Some elders also noted that the Italians built a dry-weather road that linked kulito with Hossana and the road was predominantly used for military purpose. The Italians had a military camp at kulito and as a result military vehicles were going to and from the Town. Moreover, a number of vehicles travel through the high way that runs from shashemene via kulito to Wolayta (Getnet, 2005). After liberation from Italians, the road that runs from shashemenie via Kulito to Wolayita has continued to serve as a major high way from which the town has been benefited. Until 1970^s Kulito served as a transit center for some of the neighboring towns which were located in the Kambatta and Hadiya Awraja. It was only via Kulito that people from Hossana could make contact.

In 1958, there started upgrading of the main high way that runs between shashemenie and wolayita. In due course, the direction of

the road that had formerly been passing through the old settlement area was diverted instead, and made to pass along the eastern portion of the town. Citizens of the town reacted against the proposed design and appealed to authorities by organizing petitions, but end up without changes in the new plan. In 1960/61 the work of upgrading was completed, as a result of which the transportation system of the region was improved (Getnet, 2005).

Telephone service access was made in the town since the 1950s. The system was manual until the 1980^s. Since then, it has been upgraded to a semi-automatic and digital-telecom service. A broad band internet service is also available in kulito town these days. Postal service had started since the early 1960^s and by the 1980s the service had been improved by opening regular post office in kulito town (Getnet, 2005; Yehalem, 1987).

3.7. Cultural Foods and Drinks

3.7.1 Cultural Foods

In Halaba, different festival foods are prepared from maize, barely, sorghum, millet, teff, beef, mutton etc. Some of these foods and their preparation methods are described briefly here under.

‘Buirrato’: a kind of special food made of barely flour. A ‘torosho’ (bread) made of a barely flour is placed until it dries over the fire place. Then it is made in the form of flour and then add a melted butter and condiments. Then, it is served for honorable guests, close relatives and intimate friends.

‘Merka’: is also a kind of food prepared from maize flour. It is a porridge-like diet, which is cooked while stirring it. Much butter and condiments are added before it is served. The culinary process is not that much complex, like ‘Atakano’, which is prepared from Enset flour (Builla). Merka could be cooked (prepared) at any time in local Halaba.

‘Maala’ (Meat): is a food made of beef or mutton. It could be eaten raw or cooked. When it is eaten raw, pepper, butter and Taabiita (Injera) or Torosho (bread made of maize, barley etc) are prepared. It is cut into pieces, buttered and mashed meat termed as ‘sulso’ is prepared which is served to people on special occasions.

‘Keessa’ (Cheese): is made by pouring churned up milk separated from its butter into a pot. The pot with the milk is then put on fire side (not on the hearth). It is covered at its top. Then,

it is kept there until it is cooked. Finally it is taken out from the side of the hearth. The cheese is then separated from the fluid part (ugate) in the pot. Then, they make readily melted butter and condiments. They use a kind of good smelling wood called 'Wetecho' to wash and smoke the bowl (shaateta).

They pour the dried cheese on the bowl. They stir by adding butter and condiments. Thus, the cheese prepared in this manner is served with bread (Torosho) made of Maize, Sorghum, Millet, or 'Taabita' Injera made of Teff or maize flour).

- **'Taabita'**: Injera, a type of food made of maize, teff flour, etc.
- **'Torosho'**: Bread made of maize, barely, sorghum, millet, teff flour etc.
- **'Atakano'**: a porridge -like diet made of Enset (builla) products, butter, milk and other condiments. It is served for women when they give birth to a child.
- **'Hateno'**: is diet made of Enset (builla) plant, butter, milk and other condiments, and served for boy's during party (Hamamota), during marching to bring a bride.
- **'Chuku'**: is a type of food made of roasted barely flour with excess butter and served rarely.
- **'Udurgafuta'**: A kind of food made of fresh maize flour. It is cooked inside a medium size pot .It is prepared seasonally.

- **‘Hamiilu’**: Cooked cabbage, served for daily consumption.
- **‘Dinicha’**: Cooked potato, served for daily consumption.
- **‘Haatuta’**: Roasted cereals served for daily consumption.
- **‘Mishiri Wotita’**: A ‘stew’ prepared from lentil.
- **‘Foshamo’**: a type of food prepared from maize flour in dry form
- **‘Bukuta’**: a bread made of fermented maize flour
- **‘Dir Dabuta’**: bid sized bread made of fermented maize flour



Fig. 10: Special foods such as: 'Sulso', 'Keessa', 'Mala' (Photo Zena, Kulito 2006 E.C)



Fig. 11: Some special foods kept in pots ('Keessa', 'Chuku', 'Sulso'; Photo Zena, Kulito, 2006 E.C)

3.7.2. Cultural Drinks and Beverages

Most Halaba local drinks are prepared without adding the alcoholic elements, the elements that induce intoxication. These elements include 'geesho' and 'bikil' (Kunita in Halabissa). There are different kinds of soft drinks such as: **'buluku'** or **'shameeta'**, **'Kaaributa'**, and **'malebu'**. These local drinks and beverages are made using different ingredients. For example, **'Buluku'** or **'Shameta'** is made of roasted barely flour and appropriate ingredients and condiments.

The same ingredients are used for '**Kaaribo**' but the culinary process is not necessarily uniform. In 'kaaribo' culinary process, there is no adding of other ingredients and condiments. It is prepared simply by mixing roasted barely or maize flour with water and some amount of sugar. The fermentation process for both may take two to three days. The other type of Halaba drink is '**Malebo**'. It is a common soft drink made of honey. All these drinks are prepared during festivals and other occasions; but they are not prepared always. At least in the past in most households' milk was always available and served for the household, any caravan traders and guests.



Figure 12: Malabo preparation for drinking (Photo, Zena, 2006, Kulito)

Chapter Four

Socio- Cultural Organizations

This chapter presents various social and cultural issues. First it presents about the clan structure and religious practice. Then, it deals with voluntary associations and labor organization. It also discusses about beautification, hair and dressing styles. It briefly presents about cultural music, songs, dances, games and sports. Human and animal diseases and their treatments, and colander of Halaba are explained briefly.

4.1 The Clan Structure

As revealed by oral tradition, the origin of Halaba was South Arabia, its clan system here starts with Ummer, the grandson of Seid Abadir who lived and led the Halaba around Halabe Mountain in Bale. Ummer has got four sons. The four sons branched into 13 clans and each clan has its own sub-clan or family (Source: Woreda Culture and Tourism Office, 1998 E.C).

The chart below shows the family tree of Ummer, the ancestor of Halaba.

Family Tree of Halaba

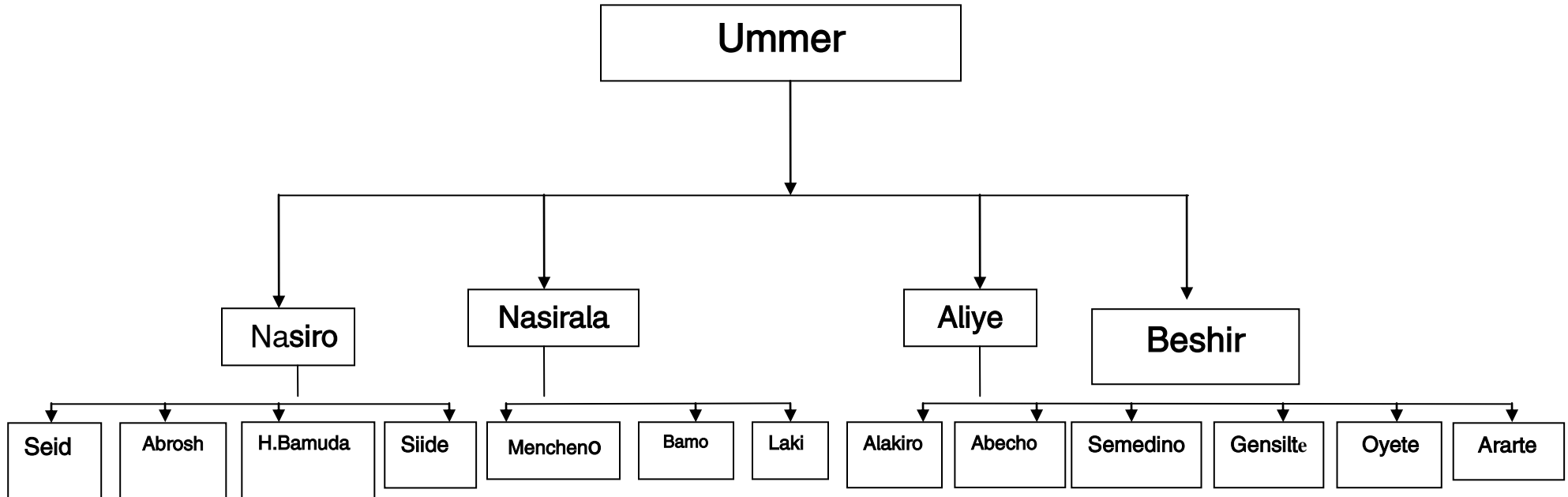


Fig. 13: Family tree of Halaba

From Nasiro's family, seid, Abrosh Haji Bamuda as well as Siide are found in Halaba special woreda and known as Semerdin: include the following six personalities: Wom Dilapha, Wom, Nure, Wom Sultano, Wom Gongina, Mundoka and Jigona. Of these: Wom Dilapha's families include: Wom Urago, Wom Setegne, Wom Mendida, Zogo, Hano and Mekesie. In addition from this family Tibile, Dargifo, Bubala, Jemato, Lerebo and Hetile are found in Kebena.

Wom Nure's families include: Fufe, Mekesie, Genzebo and Sadiko.

Wom Sultano's families include Haituma, Aba, Gidano, Agudo and Shawo.

Others Gongina, Mundiko and Jigana's families are found in Halaba.

From Nasiro's family, Siide clan is found in Oromiya and Kebena and known by a clan name called Ajamu.

The Siide clans found in Sidama are: Maldia, Sawela, Hawela, Kawanana and Aleta.

- Some families of Seid Ibrahim and Seid Esmael are living in Yem, Dawuro and Oromiya region.
- Enakomt, Mogomogna and Alero are living in great number in Guraghe, Silte and Kebena.
- Nasirala's family include: Mencheno, Bamo and Laki. But Bamo and Laki are living in Arsi Oromiya.

Mencheno's families living in Halaba include Hassen, Bukana and Udamo.

- Hassen's families include: Sefato, kitabo, Kenasa. Wosherimine, Torombora, Bushe. from Bushe families currently living in Sidama are Yabela, Yanase, Shebedino, Asrado, Hollo, Arbegona, Araso, Gerbicho and Hadicho.

The above clans of Halaba are living in Halaba special woreda and in different parts of the country. However, among these, 37 clans are found in Halaba and they are listed in the following table.

No.	Name of Clan	No.	Name of Clan
1	Siide	20	Darimo
2	Sefato	21	Kolmine
3	Kitabo/Anesheko/	22	Chalmine
4	Kenassa	23	Azobada
5	Woshermine	24	Zebada
6	Torombora	25	Hakule
7	Wishira	26	Jora
8	Genza	27	Aja
9	Toroda	28	Kuche
10	Melga	29	Awda
11	Megne	30	Negeda
12	Shadgar	31	Kenche
13	Korjo	32	Manola
14	Alekiro	33	Sabola
15	Erazo	34	Gumbe
16	Toko	35	Bergage
17	Zizancha	36	Arado
18	Ejaro	37	Abaro
19	Dambalacha		

(Source: Halaba Special Woreda (HSW), 1998 E.C)

The above clans have their own sub-clans (house/family).

For example:

1. Siide clan (13 house or family)

Wom Dilapha, Wom Nure, Wom Sultano, Wom Gongina, Mundaka, Jigana, Wom Urago, Wom Setegne, Wom Mendida, Zogo, Hanno , Mekesie, in Kebena Ajamu families Tible, Dargifo, Bubala, Jamato, Larebo and Hetile.

2 Sefato clan (9 House or family)

Abito, Urago, Gidano, Firato, Chino (Aneshako), Auma, Lanko (Manola), Temamo and Toko.

3. Torombora clan (6 House or family)

Garino, Damota, Jewaro, Alero, Loke and Menola.

4. Wishira clan (8 house or Family)

Aleko (Wachemo), Yetiyaro, Zeraro, Murado, Umnano, Asasa, Nure, Ajuka and Mukada.

5. Darimo clan (9 House or family)

Wachemo, Fuchare, Amano, Azmaro, Sitagne, Dilapha, Abecho, Ajamlencho and keshlaba.

6. Woshermine clan (2 House or family)

Taramo and Hamdigne.

7. Kolmine clan (5 House or family)

Dekino, meltano, Hamida, Dugero and Samincho.

8. Kenasa clan (7 House or family)

Bulamo , Atalo , ketema , Burusie, Susa, Girja and Urago.

9. Toroda clan (4 House or family)

Mayto, Oefare, Dare and Bacho.

10. Toko clan (2 House or family)

Kadamo and Temamo.

11. Genza clan (5 House or family)

Hagago, Buchacha, Ratosie, Shifata and Dusasa.

12. Kitabo clan (17 House or family)

Naute's family kuche, Bulansa , Ribana, Zatwalamo ,
Gumagena , Richana, Bade, Barsaba, Gessa, Abite,
Kuche's family kusunbo, Gazuba, Siko, Daru, Lufta,
Asaklata.

13. Zibada clan (1 House or family)

Hankodino

14. Melga clan (6 House or family)

Awusanba, Guder, Jafar, Hallo, Abubaker and Kesifa.

(Source: HSW, 1998 E.C)

Family Tree of Siide Clan (Shown here as an example)

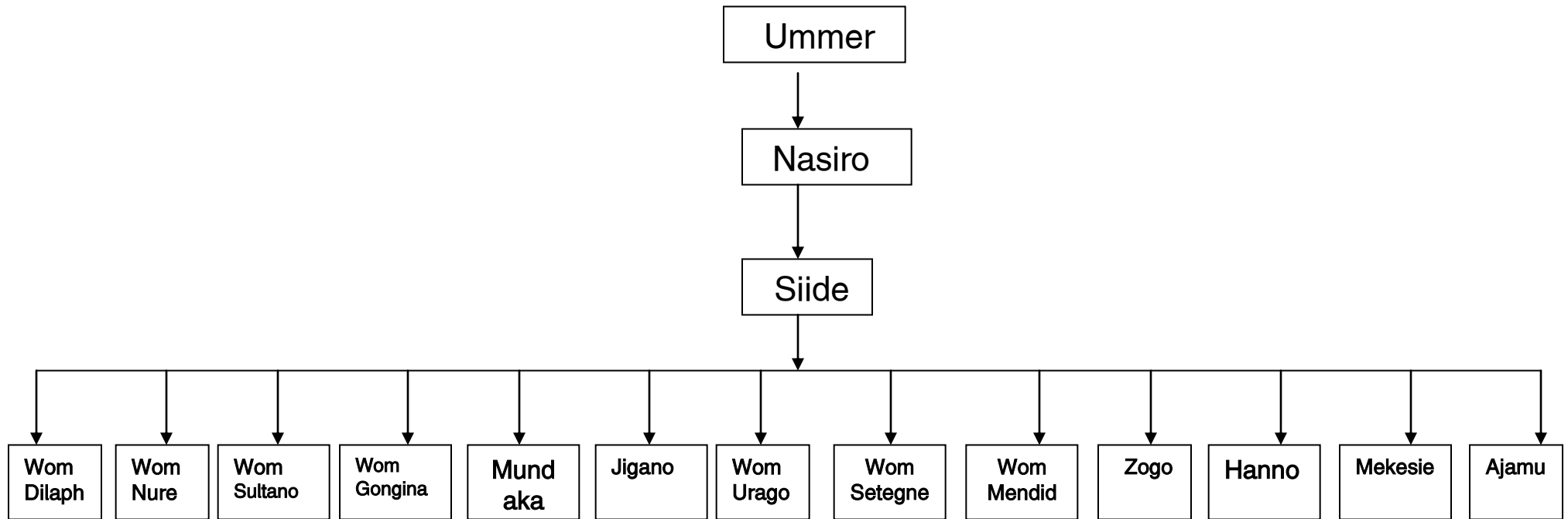


Fig. 14: Family Tree of Siide Clan

4.2. Religion

It seems a commonsense that every society possesses certain distinct and well established models of ideas and beliefs about the world. Although these systems of beliefs about the world may vary from place to place, the underlying motifs and philosophies seem to be generally converging. Meaning about certain fundamental questions, such as life, death, etc appear to have universally been sharing basic principles.

In Halaba nationality there are no significant data to narrate about the various belief systems (cult system) and world views of different clan systems. Rather, all informants including elites of the nationality on this issue pointed out that the different clans of the nationality seem to share similar belief system about the created world. There is no other popular religious cult in Halaba nationality (Source: The informants).

From past to present the Halaba are totally Islamic religion believers and Muslim dominated community. In Halaba

Islamic religion seem to have been of major historical significance. It was an indigenous and original religion. It appears to have been for Halaba in Halaba land for a longer time since the origin of the ethnic group (Source: The informants).

Muslims of Halaba usually sat at their home in small mosques for serving, worshiping and praying for Allah. For example, on Tuesday, 'Sheik Hussen', Saturday 'Seidina Kedir', Wednesday 'Jilanie'; Thursday night 'Mohammede or 'Leilatal Jumm'aa'; Mondays 'Isnain'. Women usually pray on Sundays 'Giste Fato' or 'Dado'. In these days and occasions they usually chew 'Chaat' (scientific name called *Catha Edulis*) an addictive stimulant plant grown mostly in the high lands of Ethiopia (Source: Informants).

There were many private and collective mosques (public worshiping places) in every village of Halaba. There are a number of modern mosques in Kulito town and Halaba rural villages at present. The largest mosque is found in Kulito and termed as Grand Nur Mosques. When there are religious ceremonies and festivals, it is used for worshipping and prayer.



Fig 15: Grand Nur Mosque in Kulito (Photo, Nigusu, 2006, Kulito)



Fig 16: Muslims on Prayer/Worshipping (Photo, Nigusu, 2006, Kulito)

4.3. Voluntary Organizations

‘Lelizeemo’: is one type of voluntary organization of Halaba. Households of the village usually form an association to cooperate in keeping their herd. It is usually arranged in a rotation manner. The number of the members may vary depending on the size and geographical location of the villagers. A member or two as per the number of herd will be assigned to keep and take care of the members stock for one or two days. Damages caused by the herd on one’s property, or failure to take the duty on one’s turn or mismanagement of the herd on the duty like keeping on unfavorable pasture or watering the stock on bad water stream or river could incur punishment. The leaders have exclusive power to impose sanction. The common punishment would be giving the duty of keeping the herd for one or more extra days.

‘Ukuma’ (Idir Amaharic equivalent): is an association formed in for assisting each other during the funeral/burial occasion in Halaba. ‘Idir’ serves the people in times of bereavement. In local term it is called ‘Alfate Serra’.

All Halaba household in a village are members of their own 'Idir' or 'Alfate Serra'. The institution requires member's cooperation at times of death in terms of facilitating funeral, burial ceremonies and providing service for mourning. It has its own rules and procedures. It is lead by Idir committee having a leader.

Every member of the 'Idir' is obliged to attend and participate in funeral burial ceremony. The members would be assigned to execute various activities. For instance, some members would be assigned to dig and prepare burial hole (thomb). Some would prepare fire wood. Others would be assigned to disseminate the information of death to all the kinsmen or relatives of the deceased who might live at the nearby or remote areas within or outside the Halaba land. They would get chance for attending the funeral ceremony and take part in the mourning.

Furthermore, leaders of 'Idir' or '*Alfate Serra*' have obligation to assign and follow up the members people to facilitate reception for guests, fetching water,

construction of tent and taking care of some other functions.

The body of the deceased would be buried by 'Idir' members in a burial hole prepared for the purpose. Because of the Islamic religious culture coffin preparation is not allowed in Halaba nationality.

4.4. Labor Organizations

Labor activities in Halaba are carried out both independently and on team basis. Much of the routine households chores, farm works and other artesian works are performed at private household level. Certain aspects of productive activities, however, demand the pooling of labor. Therefore, there are much group based cooperative works in farming and food preparations. Some are listed below.

'Geza': a form of labor organization consists of 5-8 boys or Youth. It is organized for weeding of crops and other farm works. They work in team turn by turn in each other's farm.

‘Elfigna’: is another most important type of cooperative labor organization in which one person is responsible for arranging and bringing cooperative groups of households or individuals to carry out certain activity for a close relative or companion within a specified day. The host is responsible for preparing lavish feast. Since the group come voluntarily, the food and drinks are usually better than any of the feasts of other labor organization.

‘Dawaa’: is the name for a large group of individuals organized together. In ‘Dawaa’ labor organization, several family heads or household members become members on a particular labor work day. The wives in the neighborhood would participate in preparing and providing food and drinks for the guests. Construction of residential house building is also another work that demands cooperative labor. In the past, before modern flour mills were in place, women often share their labor to grind grains by taking turns.

4.5. Beautification, Body Marking and Hair Style

In Halaba culture, the hair making style varies with age. Boys (before circumcision, 3-8 years) cut their hair leaving at tip some hair at the center left. This hair is called '**Gutto**'. Hair of young males is often cut short. When boys and girls are engaged or circumcised, '**Ebijita**': at ages 5-8 years, prior to circumcision, they avoid 'gutto' and change their hair style. '**Gademoje**': is the style of hair for boys after circumcision; they grow their hair in afro style and smear it with butter until their circumcision period ends.

In Halaba, there are about eleven or more types of hair styles of girls and women. For instance:

- 'Gutto': girls at early stage (below 5 years), would cut their hair on both sides with some part of hair left.
- 'Guragema': a hair style of girls during ages 5-8 (prior to circumcision); they avoid 'gutto' and make this style.
- 'Sija': a style during circumcision stage, girls let their hair grow into medium height, and they comb it erected up in Afro style; they smear it with butter and plait it.
- 'Semu Kesu': a hair style after circumcision for the first time

- 'Belito or 'Sintra': hair style after circumcision for the second time up to engagement
- 'Koome': after engagement
- 'Bajo': hair style two or three months before wedding
- 'Chilfa': hair style during bride time
- 'Harshima': hair style after having the first child
- 'Keimeta': hair style during breast feeding
- 'Dindima': when they are aged and stopped giving a birth to a child.



Bilito

Chilfa

Harshima



Bajo

Koome

Sija

Fig. 17: Sample Hair Styles (Photo Zena, 2006 E.C)

Having various style of hair has its own meaning in Halaba. It helps to know the status of a girl or woman and helps to distinguish married from unmarried. By simply looking at the hair style of a girl or a woman one can tell their status.

Halaba married women usually grow their hair and cover it with pieces of apron, in accordance with Islamic culture.



Fig 18: The Halaba Woman with 'Dindima' hair style covered with apron (Photo, Zena, 2006, Kulito)

Girls wear bracelets made of brass, copper or hard plastic on their both arms. They are not allowed to cover their hairs with scarves or piece of apron.



Fig. 19: The Halaba Girl (Photo, Nigusu, Kulito 2006 E.C)

Occasionally they tie belts around their waist. A strip of cloth similar to a belt worn by females over their hair signals married women.

Engaged girls plait their hair and tuck beads, connected together by pins, on their back. Shells are attached on sleeves of shirts or on rims of skirts for decoration. They also wear rings of various kinds on their fingers.

Body marking included a tattooing of three to four strips on their chin and around their cheek on both sides. This tattooing is called 'danakechu' - meaning, beautification.

4.6. Dressing Style

Like other traditional societies, Halaba dressing style has a history which starts with wearing cows or goats hides which were used as apparels. As recent as early 20th century, women wore a strip of bids tied threads (strip of hide) that was worn under the waist, covering the genitalia, but the buttack un-covered.

Males wore cow hide covering their genitalia. Gradually, these dresses were replaced by cloth made of cotton-woven sheets. Then beginning from the late 20th century on wards a type of factory made clothes were introduced for both sexes.



Fig 20: Cultural male wearing/dress style at present (Photo, Nigusu, 2006, Kulito)



Fig 21: Halaba Girls' Dressing Style (Photo, Nigusu, Kulito 2006 E.C)

Following the down fall of the feudal and coming of the Dergue regime in 1974, more improvements were registered; with culmination in wide spread use of modern cloths and abandoning of indigenous ones. This process reached its peak with the coming of EPRDF to power. Indigenous cloths representing cotton-woven ones are now being reintroduced as expressions of ethnic identify. However, they are being worn only by selected few during festivals, shows, etc.

4.7. Music, Songs, Dances, Games and Sports

4.7.1 Music, Songs and Dances

Boys and girls, usually unmarried ones, entertain themselves by singing and dancing especially during festivals and weddings.

There are a typical songs and game for males in Halaba. Both sexes sing different sorts of songs and perform dancing during wedding and circumcision ceremonies. Among the songs which is played by circumcised girls during '*Neketa*' occasion for appreciating their leader' of the year (Higamie) is:

Jalaneba Higameba Menaami

Higoon Diroon Angaami

Lemmu Baara Tonnami

Lemlemta Kandaami

Haweshasie Angami

Hansharusie Konphami

Azuntasie Shanfami

Debuntasie Ronsami

Hay Higamie Heie'!!

Males circumcised while appreciating themselves singing the following:

Ho Lole Lole Yiye

Abo Alaphye!!

The content of most of the song during wedding and circumcision would focus on teasing or appreciating opposite sex. There are also songs for appreciation (Geraro in Halabissa) of worriers or patriots of Halaba.

An example of appreciation songs is presented below:

Kooru Korenoga, Wodoo Balikiga

Lamachi Husseniga, Lendi Ramisigga

Batise Agagiga, Orsebi Tiiphamiga

Ogati Hemachiga, Gamedi Legamiga

Dole Langoga, Muze Mitoriga

Toro Harariga, Waabet Emaliga

Dalochi Lansebiga, Tiikemi Gidaniga

Boyami Babisoga, Fagagi Bariga

Worabe Garabiga, Dugni Agebiga

Debli Ergichiga, Kooru Korenoga

Kooru Korenoga!!!

This is also a type of song played by women to initiate worriers/hero's.



Fig 22: Women in Kala Dancing (Photo, Nigusu, 2006, Kulito)

When marching for various group work in farming, they have their own songs. Much of the entertainments and recreational plays were done by girls, women and boys. Some musical instruments of Halaba are:

‘Karabuta’ – a big size drum

‘Terbeta’ – a smaller size drum

‘Dibita’ – a medium size drum used for religious ceremonies.

These are Musial instruments that are made of cylindrically hollowed wood covered on both sides by hide or a pot covered with hide.

Wind instruments include:

‘Turumba’ - is a musical instrument made from horn, cooper, sliver or other metals. Although ‘turunba’ is mostly used at weddings, it also serves to announce something to the public.

‘Hululeta’ - (flute) - is made from a bamboo tree and mostly used for entertainment by boys during circumcision, cultural and other occasions.



Fig 23: Some Musical Instruments (Photo, Zena, 2003, Kulito)



Fig 24: Youth's Dancing in Halaba (Photo, Nigusu, 2006, Kulito)

4.7.2 Games and Sports

Much of the traditional plays and games were usually associated with the events following circumcision rituals and wedding ceremonies. One such game is a free physical struggle (wrestling) between boys following recuperation of their circumcision wounds. It is called 'Gamisu'. It is a game that involves a free physical struggle between two males after the healing of their circumcision wounds. It would attract the spectators who would enjoy the game. It is meant for testing which of the two is well fed by his mother and family. It is also a form of checking how much parents gave care for the circumcised son.

Another type of game is 'cheransha' a kind of play in which male peer groups play during caw herding, circumcision, and spare time using bids, coins, buttons, etc to entertain themselves.

4.8. Human and Animal Disease and Treatments

Due to weather condition, the main health problem in Halaba land has been malaria (Hutissa). Informants have claimed that malaria has existed in Halaba land for centuries. Traditionally, treatments for malaria included slaughtering a

black goat, cooking the meat in a big mouthed pot, and then let the patient's head into the pot's mouth and apply the smoke. It was believed that malaria would be cured this way. Another way was letting the patient drink the gall bladder of a black goat for malaria. Some people would also drink a juice of a sour plant called 'anamura'. Their common disease include:

- 'Damumita' – Headache
- 'Dana'-- Migraine
- 'Kashkudula'- Amoeba

Some traditional human medicines are:-

- '*Anamuro*' - anti – biotic, prepared from a plant.
- '*Damakesie*' - anti -pain, prepared from a plant.
- '*Masseni Qutta*' - for wounds, ring worm, etc
- '*Masseni Teffa*' - for wounds, stomach ache, etc.
- '*Dash kone*' - for mental illness and antibiotic, etc.
- '*Gamballa Anjanata*' - for cough, pneumonia, etc
- '*Harre hammichu*' - for liver, kideney, urinary problems, etc.

Well known animal diseases included 'Habusa'-Anthrax (Abagorba), 'Desta' and 'Gandi'. 'Gandi' is a disease

which is killing and damaging the scarcely present livestock.

‘Gandi’ is treated by applying pounding ‘Arfinja’ (a tiny, highly pungent pepper) and letting the animal drink the juice of the plant. For ‘desta’ they burn the sick part with a hot iron bar. For ‘Aba Gorba’ there is no traditional treatment. Such veterinary practices are done by farmers themselves. The skill was acquired through traditional experiments and trial and error methods.

They also use the juices of same plant’s roots, covers and leave such as:

‘Tappilalo’ (root)

‘Atamaako’ (leaf)

‘Timbibilla’

4.9. Colander: Days, Months and Seasons

Like most other nationalities in the country, Halaba have seven days in a week and thirteen months in a year. The months have 30 days each, except pagume having 5 days each year and 6 days in every leap year. They also use lunar colander system.

Name of Days in English

Name of days in

Halabissa

1. Thursday	Kamsa
2. Friday	Jiemateta
3. Saturday	Hofichuta
4. Sunday	Abbata
5. Monday	Wotatita
6. Tuesday	Magargeba
7. Wednesday	Harpha

Name of Months:

1. September	Eddara
2. October	Masheta
3. November	Entangota
4. December	Mengesa
5. January	Wotoota
6. February	Maaza
7. March	Asireta
8. April	Seneta
9. May	Hamleta
10. June	Naseta

11. July	Masero
12. August	Tikmita
13. Pagume (Amharic)	Qaqumeta

Seasons:

- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| • Spring | Lammutta |
| • Summer | Karmee |
| • Autumen | Maarita |
| • Winter | Haggo |

The seed sowing season make up an important part of traditional seasonal colander in Halaba. The seeds sowing colander begins after Masero first week (Masero 1-7 called Habarate). The second week called 'Tonne sanna' (10th week) followed by 'Honse sanna' (9th week) and then '*Hezete sanna*' (8th week) then it comes '*Lamale sanna*' (7th week) which is the last week for seed sowing in Halaba.

Crops sown during the first Tonne sanna' to '*Lamale*' sanna' include the 'meher' (spring) crops like teff, barely, etc. Maize which is the staple food of Halaba, is sown in 'Saneta' depending on the coming of regular rain in winter season. Pepper is planted in Halaba at summer season.

In Halaba, there are special times and dates not to cut trees, saw crops. It is called 'chagana'. The assumption behind is that the crops will not grow well and decay easily; the trees will decay easily, etc.

Chapter Five

The Family, Circumcision and Marriage System

5.1. The Family

Family is said to be the first institution for socialization of a child. As key informants pointed out the Halaba family is an extended type, consisting of the husband, his wife and children. Since the marriage system is essentially polygamous, authority is mostly vested on the husband. The wife (wives) will play the role of the husband, if he dies. The authority and the respect pattern among the children follows from senior to junior. Children always show obedience and respect for their parents and should receive their blessing throughout their life. Boys usually support their family while they were under their parents control by herding the cattle, tilling the land, sloughing the field, generating additional income for the family by performing various activities, etc.

In Halaba culture, daughters usually help their mothers in fetching water, collecting fire wood and helping in domestic chores. Moreover, daughters are responsible for keeping their younger children. The sons and daughters assistance

for parents continues even after marriage and after establishing their own family. They are supposed to help their parents as well as relatives during their old ages, illness and when they encountered any problem.

The Halaba call father '*Anna*' and the mother '*Ama*.' Daughters are called '*me'a Betuta*' and sons are '*Laba*.' Male siblings are called '*Anni Boku*' and female siblings as '*Ama Boku*'. The grand sons or daughters are called '*Maacheba*'. The first son in the culture is called 'Hangafa'.

The Halaba kinship system in general follows the bifurcate collateral type, like father's, brother's and mother's brother, differentiated from each other by the term 'Lenkana; and 'Eshima' respectively. Likewise, father's sisters and Mother's sisters are differentiated from one another by the terms 'Ada' and 'Lenkama', respectively. Father's father is called in Halaba 'Abena' and father's Mother as 'Abema' and the same for mother's father and mother.

As has been practiced in most patrilineal societies, the Halaba prefer male children than female. A woman who gives birth to a male child would be served well after giving

birth. She would receive privilege. Male children usually enjoy their childhood than their sisters.

5.2 Circumcision

According to informants, one of the most important occasions in Halaba is circumcision. The philosophy behind this ritual is that uncircumcised guys are unclear, girls become sexy and they 'break' household goods, behaving unruly and uncircumcised males find it difficult to make sex, and so on.

The circumciser (experienced person in circumcision) would cut the clitoris of the girls. Usually boys are circumcised by the male circumcisers. The circumciser would use a knife (maglale in the local term) or Razor Blade to cut the prepuce; he would pull the prepuce and tie it with a clipper and cut the prepuce.

Circumcision would start at age of 8 for both sexes. According to Halaba tradition boys and girls are not allowed to get married before they are circumcised. If they are not circumcised in their right ages, they will be subjected to

every kind of himulation, condemned and shame by their age mates.

According to the culture, the circumcision period would be the beginning of every summer (kiremt) seasons, for it is a convenient time for the purpose. The parents of the would be circumcised prepare all the necessary materials including feast items like butter, cheese and others a year ahead.

Prior to the eve of the circumcision day a special bed about 2 meters high is constructed to protect the circumcised from any kind of bad smells resulted from equine and cattle rubbish, dusts and wind.

The date for circumcision is decided by the parents. Some days before circumcision the parents inform to their kinsmen attend the ceremony. On the eve of the circumcision morning, the would be circumcised invite their friends who would spend the night playing and encouraging them.

The parents of the circumcised serve the guests with all types of lavish feasts (food and drinks). In addition, close

relatives bring various types of food and drinks to join the ceremony.

Up on completion of the necessary preparations on the eve of the ceremony the one who would be circumcised, with his /her best friend, drink kosso (a bitter juice made of a fruit of a kosso tree). Before circumcision, the parents and close relatives promise to give some gifts in cash or in kind for the circumcise. This kind of gift in Halaba culture is called 'Erifo'. At the end of 'Erifo' program the person who is ready to cover eyes orders and leads the circumcise to get out.

Circumcision always takes place in the morning. Girls are made to sit on a chair made for the purpose. Then open their legs wide, one woman holds the feet and another covers her eyes. Then the circumciser cuts the clitoris.

The circumcision period in Halaba culture takes six months. Some of the important institutions or occasions related to circumcision are the following.

- 'Neketa': is a place under a great tree where all the circumcised in the neighborhood would be gathered. In

‘Neketa’ various types of cultural plays would be undertaken. Various kinds of new names are provided for the circumcised depending on the clan stratification.

According to the tradition, the circumcised who belongs to the ‘siide’ clan and arrived at the place of ‘Neketa’ prior to others would become the ‘Womma’ (a king) of all the other groups.

It is the Womma that provides the nick (circumcision) names for both boys and girls circumcised. The age mates who are circumcised in the same year and who join in the same ‘Neketa’ are called ‘Gedaa’.

The ‘Neketa’ ceremony is carried out under a great tree in their village. The circumcised boys and girls attend ‘Neketa’ ceremony in similar proximity side by side.

The circumcised would start meeting among themselves in ‘Neketa’ in four weeks time after their circumcision to dance cultural dances, to sing and play cultural plays. Then, they meet at ‘Neketa’ place three days a week on Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays until they attend ‘Huluka’ ceremony.

Mean while in 'Neketa' all of them would be eligible to get new names called circumcision names. For example, for boys:

'Burago/Suluba'- When one has many cattle

'Buluko'- when crops available

'Helamo'- if grand father and mother alive

'Legamo'- if tallest

'Atara'- if revolutionary

'Wote'- if younger

'Sificho'- if strongest

'Helisa'- if family are rich in everything

For girls:

'Higamie'- if very beautiful

'Higime'- if beautiful

'Bara'- if red (Key in Amharic)

'Loko'- if fair complexion (Teyim in Amharic)

'Kubila'- if black and beautiful

'Helame'- if grand mother and father alive

'Etuka'- if elder

'Lego'- if tallest

In the 'Neketa' place the circumcised used to check themselves and boys exercise hard works, such as breaking

sticks, wrestling and the like. The physical exercise with one another is practiced by boys. This is primarily used to measure the level of strength of the boys. It is also meant for admiring as to which family has fed its circumcised boy in a good manner. Girls are engaged in fastening colorful buttons on their butter sacked dresses. Looking at one another and commenting.

Another popular activities which are performed during circumcision of boys and girls are the 'Hawesha' and 'Huluka'.

- 'Hawesha' in Halaba cultural circumcision ceremony is the occasion in which during the six months of the 'Neketa' period the circumcised boys/girls who live in the same village are called to each household of the peers and feast is prepared for them by each household turn by turn. In the preparation of food for 'Hawesha' ceremony the relatives of the parents of the circumcised participate directly in preparing the feast and arranging ceremony, in their home, inviting the circumcised relatives to come with his or her peers to their home, or indirectly by supporting the family of the circumcised by taking prepared food to

their home. In most cases the foods that are prepared for the 'Hawesha' ceremony are, 'Injera' 'cheese', butter, etc.

- 'Huluka' or stick fighting: is another important occasion which could be mentioned regarding the circumcised boys. Traditional stick fighting or 'Huluka' could be considered as one of the indigenous tradition of the Halaba which is mostly performed by circumcised boys after six months of their circumcision. In the stick fight, boys are expected to show their values, bravery and strength before the stick fight takes place. Stick fight (Huluka) ceremony is also a ceremony in which the circumcised members of Halaba at the end of the period of the Neketa ceremony and in the eve of their departure come to the market place of kuilito (the largest in the Halaba territory) and could take part in the ceremony. The ceremony takes place on the first Thursday on the month of Mengesa'. For the 'Huluka' members of different groups of ' Neketa' come to an open market place of kulito town by handling stick of about 2 meters long which is termed as ' Legaa' in the local term.

For the purpose of decision making for 'Huluka' fighting thirteen circumcised person eleven from boys and two from girls will be elected as judges for 'Huluka' fighters based on the concurrent principles of the cultural clan stratification as they are given nick (circumcision) names during the 'Neketa' ceremony. The eleven judges, from boys would be designated from various clans. For example, the first or the 'womma' should belong to the siide clan, the second should belong to Sefato clan and would serve as a vice 'Womma'. The third belong to Darimo clan and would serve as secretary, the forth should belong to Genz and would serve as cashier, and others from other clans would serve as members. The two girl judges, who were elected based on the level of their beauty 'Higamie' and 'Higimie' would act as heads of the girls' party and act as 'close friends, for the moment, of the 'Womma' and 'Wolebgere' boy judges respectively (Source: Informants).



Fig 25: Newly Circumcised Girls (Photo, Zena, 2006 E.C)

Prior to 'Huluka' at the end of 'Neketa', a reddish sheep is slaughtered by elected male leaders of the group called the 'Womma'. The circumcised girls, under the leadership of the 'Higamie' and 'Higimie', cook mutton and serve it for their mates. This ceremony and feast is termed 'Falla', which could be followed by 'Huluka' stick fighting with the other groups of 'Neketa'. When the fighting reaches its maximum level, ending with the winners and losers, elders interfere and reconcile the different groups.

Members of the circumcised 'Neketa' groups would come from two different directions (Lenda and Mekala) for 'Huluka' ceremony. One group meets at Lenda and the other group meets at Mekala, then they move to kulito town where the two groups meet. Then by crossing the open market they go to a big 'Sholla' tree. A group who reaches the place first would occupies the place and protects the other group not to enter into that place. At that time there may be conflict and fighting may arise between the two groups. To resolve such conflict and fighting, elders who follow the two groups interfere. The elders would call up on the ' Wommas' of the two groups to be involved for resolving the conflict and they would sit together and would reach on decision based on the rule of the culture. The leaders which participates in reconciliation include female elders as well.

In the 'Huluka' ceremony all boys and girl who were circumcised in that year participate. Boys would join by handling a smart stick called 'Legaa' meant for the purpose. The girls join and participant by singing cultural songs and performing cultural dances.



Fig 26: Newly Circumcised boys (Photo, Zena, 2006 E.C)

As a result of reconciliation, a peaceful environment is created. After that all the circumcised go to the nearby Bilate river to take shower and then go back to town in groups and then to their homes. After repeating this exercise for two or three consecutive weeks during the month of 'Mengesa', the 'Huluka' ceremony is adjourned.

The end of the 'Huluka' ceremony automatically signifies the end of circumcision period. Then the circumcised wash their clothes, bodies, and cut their hairs. This is the stage for boys

to be considered as responsible and mature persons and eligible for prayer and apply Islamic codes, to get married, etc.

The girls would also wash their body and cloths soaked with butter. They cut their hairs. Then, they let their hair grow into a medium height and comb it erect. In most cases they want to be styled with a style called 'Koome' which depicts they are mature enough for marriage.

5.3. Marriage Rules, Types and Processes

A. Rules

According to informants, the Halaba boys can have a wife or girls can have a husband to lead socially accepted life. When a boy reaches the age of adolescent usually talk a good deal about marriage and show a desire for sexual intercourse.

In Halaba culture premarital sex is completely difficult and not allowed for both boys and girls, since they are under their parent's supervision.

The main aim of marriage in Halaba community is reproduction for continuation of their generation. Since the people of Halaba are predominantly Muslims, the “Halaba Serra” and the religious laws of the people obliges the children to get married after adolescence. Because of the rule of exogamy which regulates marriage and the choice of wife, the Halaba boy is not allowed to marry a girl of his own patrilineage and his matrilineage (close relatives). Inter marriage among the neighboring Muslim communities is also a common practice in Halaba culture.

Sexual relations between unmarried girls and boys are strictly prohibited. Even betrothal couples are restricted from sexual intercourse before the wedding date. If a girl has lost her virginity prior to her marriage, she is hated by her husband and relatives of her husband. That disgraces her family. Pregnancy prior to marriage is uncommon and hatred act which calls for humiliation by her age mates, her family as well as the community. A fetus of such a spinster mothers is usually killed before its birth is known by other people. Marriage to such a dishonorable young woman is hardly possible and same times lead the girl to commit suicide.

Moreover, as described by key informants, in the past in Halaba, if a girl gets pregnant before marriage, it was considered horrible act and the girl was treated very contemptuously. No one would marry her except an old man or widower. She would live her life as a shameful and despised person. The fate of the illegitimate baby was to be thrown into a deep gorge or hole.

A bride with deflowered virginity is seriously hated and beaten by her husband and she is punished for her transgressor. When such a deflowered bride exposes the person who performed that act, the bride groom, according to the culture, can ask the person to pay not less than nine heifers as a compensation for his act.

B. Mate Selection

Spouse (Mate) selection in traditional Halaba was the task of the boy's parents and the boy himself. When a boy reaches adolescence, as indicated above, he will show certain signs. This could be spending with opposite sexes. This could be the first sign, and natural one. Then his parents would start the mate selection process.

Mate selection process in Halaba culture incorporates certain criteria such as the clan she belongs to, socio-economic status of her family, her physical and psychological development, her religion, her appearance and behavior and skills in preparing food and drinks, etc.

After the girl is identified by the boy or his parents, he would like to go to her homestead to look at and check her character or behavior. This act in Halaba culture is termed as '*Chichu Leu*' which means looking for the bird (fortune). This is not to mean looking at the flying bird but checking or proving the fortune whether it is good or bad.

The days for such fortune looking could be Sunday, Tuesday and Friday mornings. In these days the boy with his best man culturally called "Jala" would go to the homestead of the girl's parents. In a way, they follow and check each and every condition (fortune) that they faced or came across. The fortune is said to be good when they faced in their way females who carried full pots of water, if they get a home when coffee ceremony is prepared, if they met unmarried girls.

On the other hand, the fortune is said to be bad if they get the girl herself cleaning the house, if they met with married woman; if they are crossed by a fox; if the girl is not available in her homestead and so forth.

After repeating the visit two or three times, if the fortune is found good the boy tells his parents to send elders to the parents of the girl. The father of the boy together with other elders will go to the home of the girl's parents to inform about the case. At the first day, the elders would enter into the girls homestead and initially would start talking about general issues and lastly they disclose the purpose of their visit. In Halaba culture the girl's parents will not agree to give their daughter in the first visit of the elders.

However, in the second or third visit, the elder would emphatically ask the girl's parents to give their daughter for the asking family. The reply would be we have no daughter who reached adolescence or our daughter is already given to another people, etc. Even if the girl's parents may not give a positive response for the guests until the fourth or fifth visits, the elders will not get disappointed, and they keep on going and asking.

When the girl's parents want to express their agreement, they would ask the elders the parental and maternal relatives of the boy, family background, wealth and some other things. If they are satisfied with the relation, they would further try to see the reaction of the girl.

The girl would never be informed about the purpose of the elders' visit, but she would automatically contemplate about it. She would try to find out who the boy is and what he looks like, through her friends and close relatives. After a brief discussion with the girl, the parents would say to the elders don't come again, we have agreed to give our daughter to your son; keep your cattle which means do not waste your time in coming to our homestead. After that both parties arrange appointment for betrothal day (Source: Informants).

C. Types of Marriage

According to HSW (1998 E.C) as well as the informants, there are eight types of marriage in Halaba. These are briefly described below.

- i. **'Meisisu' /Arranged Marriage:** is the first type of marriage and the above description shows this type of marriage

among the Halaba. It is the most common and accepted type of marriage by the people. There are also other types of marriages. However, the following types are less common than the one just discussed above.

- ii. **‘Bureen Asua’ /Marriage after having buttered/:** is the second type of marriage among the Halaba and aimed at giving daughter after having buttered. This kind of marriage is practiced when the parents of the boy want quick marriage or when the man fails to pay the required bride price or if the parents of the boy understood the condition that the bride is interested to marry another man. In this case the parents of the young boy ask the parents of the girl to give them their daughters having buttered.
- iii. **‘Gosu’ /Abduction/:** is another type of marriage in Halaba culture. It is informal kind of marriage which was rarely practiced, in the past, in which the girl was taken forcefully without her or her parents’ consent. Later on the case is settled by sending of elders. Often the boy and his family punished for this act.

- iv. **'Heranata' /Eloping/**: is a forth type of marriage in the culture which means marriage by the agreement of the couples. In this case the young boy and the girl deliberately escape from their homes without the knowledge of parents of both sides. The condition would be settled later by sending of elders from the side of the boy as go-between.
- v. **'Regita' /Inheritance/** : is the fifth type of marriage in Halaba culture in which when a wife loses her husband due to death, the women is forced to marry one of the brothers of her former husband on assumption she should up bring the children of the deceased with his relative. However, at present, this is done only by the consent of the woman and not by force.
- vi. **'Ribanata' /Replacement/**: this type of marriage is practiced when a husband loses his wife through death; after the end of the funeral ceremony, the family of the woman replaces her younger sister to the man.
- vii. **'Woga' or 'Billa'**: is another type of marriage in Halaba culture which takes place through sending of a belt by

the parents of the boy or bride groom towards the parents of the girl (bride) asking for request of quick marriage. In the process, the bride groom with his best man, riding horses being buttered with fresh butter on their head, blessed by elders, and accompanied by the elders and parents of the bridegroom, would go to the home of the girl's parents. After they arrive at the girl's home they enter into the house and tie the belt on the pillar of the house, and then they sit on the bed of the house. The relatives of the bridegroom who accompanied him sit in front of the house. Until they are given the girl whom they want, they will not accept any kind of service from the parents of the would be bride. After an agreement is made, they accept any sort of provision. They also agree on what they are ordered to do by the parents of the bride. After they have fulfilled what they were asked, they are given the girl, by being buttered with fresh butter. These days, this type of marriage is not widely practiced in the culture.

- viii. '**Aagga**': is the other kind of marriage in Halaba culture which is uncommon in many cultures of the region. It is the marriage type which takes place when a girl wants

to marry a boy whom she loves by going directly to him or his parent's home. In the process the girl would directly go to the home of the parents of the young boy whom she felt in love with and by touching the pillar of the house of the boy's parents she says 'Gaajin Gaffiliin Agoom Fushiitonoche'e; 'Gaaja' means a piece of rope used to tie the two legs of a cow during milking.' and Gaffila' means the father's spirit; and the whole phase is to say that don't expel me, I came to this home because I felt in love with this young boy and his family'. This type of marriage was practiced in the past, but nowadays has ceased to exist.

The boy or man would accept her without any objection so long as the criteria, for mate selection according to the culture, are fulfilled. Mean while, the elders are sent as go-between to the girl's parents home to settle the case. The negotiation process takes similar trend with other types of marriage.

Except the marriage which takes place by the agreement of both parents of the couples i.e. Arranged Marriage, other

types of marriages are not followed by especial wedding ceremonies, according to the Halaba culture.

5.4. Betrothal and Wedding

'Angatsunku' refers to the day of betrothal, literary means kissing of hands of the girl's parents. The day usually fixed on fortune days of Halaba (Sunday, Tuesday, or Friday). At that day the boy's parents bring for the girl's family bride price in local term called *'Gebera'* in the form of cash money or in kind such as, *'Shema'* a cloth made of cotton and woven for the girl's father. This is a sign of honor. Parts of the *'Gebera'* would also be provided for close parental and maternal relatives of the girl. According to the culture the girl is provided with varieties of clothes and a heifer.

The girl's family often arranges a lavish feast to the guests who bring the *Gebera*. The food prepared for the feast varies depending on the economic status of the parents. For example, some economically rich or the well to do families serve beef or lamb (meat) while others may serve porridge made of maize with butter curry called *'merka'*. In addition drinks such as milk, *'Shaimeta'* or local non- alcoholic drink and coffee are provided for the guests.

In addition, according to the Halaba culture, after the provision of the 'Gebera' and other gifts, the 'Nikha', which is Islamic religious act of entwining a girl with a boy by parents in the presence of the religious leaders takes place. The 'Nikha' and 'Gebera' programs may take place at the same time or separately. After such ceremonies are held, the next step is to prepare for wedding ceremony.

The wedding ceremony takes place both at the girl's and the boy's home. The girl, since the wedding day appointment is fixed, begins to make herself ready for the wedding. Among the preparations include the ritual of finger nail cutting. The nails would be cut to the very roots. To medicate bleeding and pain, they soak the finger in a butter soup. During the finger nail cutting, she is assisted by her friends. As the wedding approaches, the girl also drinks 'Kosso', a concoction prepared from the fruit of a repulsive tasting tree (Kosso tree) which is used as an intestine purging and clearing potion. It is used as antidote against tape worm.

The aim of both finger nail cutting say it uprooting, and 'Kosso' drinking is meant to make a bride totally submissive

to her bride groom during sexual intercourse. It was traditionally believed that if the bride's finger nails are not plucked out, she may scratch the bride groom during sexual intercourse as she struggles hard due to the pain she may have while the husband deflowers her.

One month prior to the wedding ceremony, the girl invites her age mate girls and boys to sing and dance at her parent's home up to the days of marriage ceremony. Similarly singing and dancing takes place in the home of the parents of the boy. Just a week before the wedding, the bride accompanied by her friends, attend the big market in the nearby. On the way to the market, she is surrounded by both male and female friends of her. She wears especial dress and her friends carry umbrella to protect her head from sun or rain.

In the market, she buys ornaments and other equipment necessary while she may stay in speculation during honey moon periods. The money for buying things is often given to her by her relatives and friends. This act of attending the final date of the weekly market is termed as 'Ajaba' in the culture.

A day prior to the wedding ceremony, the bridegroom with his best friends goes to the bride's home to have a suit dress presented to him by his father in law. The next day according to the appointment already made and arranged, friends of grooms also called 'Hamamota', and relatives of the bridegroom arrive at the home of the parents of the bride to bring her to the groom.

'Hamamota':- means the selected guys organized to bring the bride from her home. On the day of the wedding, the bridegroom does not go to the bride's home, together with the 'Hamamotta', as per the rules of the culture.

Before the 'Hamamota' march to the girl's parents homestead, they are served with different kind of foods and non-alcoholic drinks. Then, they are blessed by elders. Then after, they begin their journey to the bride's home. When they arrive at the bride's home, they are welcomed by the bride's relatives and family. After they are served with milk or shaimeta, which is cultural drink made of maize ; the responsible persons from the bridegroom's side is invited to take the ' Gegawo' (dowry), which is presented to the bride (girl) by her relatives and family who also shared the '

Gebera' among themselves, The type of 'Gegawo' include cattle, household furniture, cloth and ' Gondoro' (flour of maize or barley), honey and butter which will be served on the next day for the parents, relatives, bridegroom and others in the bride groom's home.

After having the bride the 'Hamamota' would place the bride on the back of 'Gegna' (female horse) first and would transfer her to seat on the back of the Mule arranged for the purpose. Then the bride's parents, relatives and all other guests accompany the bride, especially her age mates by singing cultural songs like "Yaye Meree Meree Wogeret Meree"-meaning have a nice journey and good bye our lovely. After receiving of such gifts and the bride the ' Hamamota' of the bride groom would start their journey back to the home of bride groom's parents with bride by singing different cultural songs saying " Ala Daemo Daemo Ala Daemo Dae Yalaho"-which means God (Allah) is eternal, and this is a blessed marriage. When they arrive at the home of bridegroom's parents they are received warmly by the parents (relatives) of the bride groom and they submit the furniture, cloth, cattle and 'Gondoro which they brought with the bride. If the bride comes with attractive amount of gifts,

the relatives of the bridegroom especially females used to admire her in their cultural songs by saying 'Nori Yiyese Nuru Yose'-which means please well-come her she is very attractive. But if she comes with small amount of gifts, they used to disgrace her in their songs. There is a special naming time for the bride and the naming is based on events. For instance, they grant such name as 'Agnote', to say we arrived or get what we want to get; 'Shulmite', if she brought excess gift from her family; 'Adabe, if she is patient; 'Taphne', if she is polite or approachable; etc.

In Halaba the honeymoon period of the bride ranges from six months to one year depending on the economic status of parents of the bridegroom. She stays in the hut made of bamboo (honey nest). After the end of the honeymoon period, they start their independent life separately from parents of the bridegroom and by building a hut on a plot of land given to them by the father of the bride groom.

After marriage, if the bride is pregnant for the first time she is taken to her family. She stays with them for three to four months.

In the culture a pregnant woman prepares variety of food items to be served for visitors after delivery. During delivery,

her neighbors visit her by bringing lavish foods. One who gives birth to a child is respected, honored, supported and treated well by the members of the society.

No special ceremony is required for child naming in Halaba.. Naming can be carried out by fathers or other family members or religious leaders. There are two ways of child naming. The first way of child naming is associated with different circumstances and events during the birth. If a baby is born during fasting time, it might be granted such name as 'Somano'; if a baby is born at a happy time, it might be granted such name as 'Mundino'; if a baby is born during wealthy or prosperous time, they call 'Dubela'; if it is born at a rainy season, they call 'Tenebo'; if it is born after a death of boys in a family, they call 'Rebato'; if it is born at good or fortune time, they grant such name as 'Ayano', etc. Another naming is based on 'Kitab' (religious principles and practices). For instance such names might be granted like: Mohammed, Essa, Mossa, Abdulfetta, Abdulnasir, Nur Hussen, Nuradin, Abdulseamad, Kedir, etc (Source: The Halaba Profile, 1998 E.C; Informants).

5.5. The Divorce

Divorce does not frequently occur among the Halaba especially if the marriage is followed by male children. Halaba accept divorce in great contempt. But, it is permissible and rarely occurs due to certain factors. The reason would be the laziness on the side of the woman in keeping the house or in taking care of children or when there is lack of skill in preparing food and drinks. In addition, a man may divorce his wife if she is found committing adultery, and if she is unable to give birth to a child. If the woman finds her husband's treats her badly and if there is inadequate livelihood, she may go to her parents and complain. Even if the situation is unbearable, she is advised and encouraged to go back to her home.

In Halaba culture divorce is, exclusively a right of the husband, and he can do it if he feels so. The woman does not have any right in such circumstances. The woman has no right to claim any property except some of her personal belongings, such as dresses, ornaments and 'Nikase' (cattle given to her during marriage from her husband side). Divorce was generally discouraged in Halaba culture. However, this scenario has generally been changing,

especially since the Dergue time. In this regime many improvements have been registered particularly with regard to property rights.

5.6. Funeral and Mourning Ceremony

According to the Halaba culture, before the death of somebody neighbors from the surrounding villages and relatives from near and far areas repeatedly visit and ask a sick person. Mean while, if the sick person dies the first thing they do is immediately washing the body of the deceased with cold water. The people in the proximity come soon as they hear the voice of people weeping at the deceased home and home stead. After that, message is sent via 'Idir' members for kinsmen and relatives who live in far away or nearby areas. Since Halaba people are Muslims and conservatives of Islamic laws the next step would be arranging for the burial ceremony of the deceased soon, except in condition that the deceased died at inconvenient time. The burial ceremony takes place soon after Islamic prayer. The funeral of big, known and brave person involves extended mourning accompanied by dances and songs such as:

“Hoo, Hoo Mordoyuko”;

“Hole, Hole Mordoyuko” – which means, we are so sorry, a big man has died, we lost a nice man.

In the past, when a brave fighters who killed wild beasts, men, etc., died , a messenger used to go to markets and villages by mounting on a horse back, roam throughout the villages markets declaring the death of a famous man. He told the genealogy of the deceased, his deeds, and then informed the funeral date. This practice has now become obsolete. In Halaba, burial takes place in a day of the death of a person. If a small child dies, it would be buried within the same day. There was no tradition of keeping the dead body for weeks in halaba, like in some other nationalities. For children, the mourning takes place for three days and the mourning is not that much sevir.

When the day of burial ceremony ends the people who come from various areas for the funeral ceremony, are served Coffee, ‘Busho’ and ‘ Torosho’ a kind of bread made from maize or burley flour. Starting from the day of the burial ceremony up to the seventh or eighth days the mourning program would take place that is the seventh day ceremony is known as ‘*Alffateta Keisu*’ and the eighth day’s ‘Qurani Qereisisu (Hajeta).

'Alffateta Keiso'- means ending program of the mourning. *'Qurani Qereisisu'* refers to calling of those who have adequate knowledge of Quran education and ability for recitation of the verses of the Quran and reading Quran. In these days there is preparation of food in the house of the mourners and their relatives. Especially, in the case of first event, food like Injera and cheese are prepared and served. In the second case there are slaughtering of cattle and serving the people with Injera and meat. After eighth day, people start their day to day activities. However, people from other areas who did not hear or who heard lately about the death of the person may continue coming to express and share their sorrow up to months or more.

During every morning days of the week the neighborhoods come to the house of mourning with coffee and food for dinner. Mostly, at the day time, the neighboring people pass their time in the house of the mourners until the end of the ceremony. People of the locality also come with prepared local food called "Torrosho".

In Halaba culture, women who lost their husbands due to death do not marry for a year. In the funeral day, the woman

who lost her husband sits with women with her hair smeared with fresh butter. After the end of the burial ceremony, she cuts her hair and covers it with white garment (Source: Informants).

Chapter Six

House Construction, Household or Production Utinacles, and Heritages

6.1. House Construction

The construction, items for construction, the structure and type of the cultural house of Halaba is more or less similar with the cultural houses of the neighboring people like Hadiya, Kambata, Silte, etc. The top part is cone shaped and covered with grass. At the center of the house a thick pole about 8 meters long is erected. The house has one or two doors or entrances with no windows. The entrance door beams are made of hand chiseled wood beams. The door of the house is about two meters long. The inside part of the house is divided into two main sections. At one side of the house, there is a quarter for livestock. The other quarter is made for putting various items. It is called 'kota'. The construction of the house involves labor sharing. Neighborhoods contribute labor and material; women cook food, provide drinks and make coffee which is served to workers. As the house is ready for living in (needless to describe details) a ceremony is held according to the culture (Source: Informants).



Fig 27: Halaba Modern Cultural House (Photo, Zena, 2003, Kulito)

6.2. Household and Production Utencils

The Halaba traditional crockery and other cuisine utencils are made of pottery, grass-works, iron works, gourds, wood, etc. Food eating, cooking and water storing utenicils are generally made of clay. Pots and bowls of various sizes are used in the household for storing and food serving.

- Water storing pot made of pottery is called ‘ kooru’
- Torosho (bread) baking pan made of pottery is called ‘ Mitadu’
- Water drinking cups made of gourds‘ are called ‘Bulita’
- Coffee drinking cups made of pottery are ‘ Finjana’

6.2.1 Metal Products/Cultaries

Cultaries (metal products) are made of iron works by iron smiths. The following are some categories of such tools:

‘Zezerata’ (sickle): is used for mowing grass as well as cutting things. Indigenous and modern sickles are used side by side. Modern ones are bought from shops. The ‘Tumano’ often renovate when modern and indigenous sickles get dull.

‘Missanita’: is a heavy duty splitter whose iron material is about 30 cm long with 5 cm wide at its center. It is inserted into a hole at the end of a club with egg shaped head and about 70-80 cm length. The wooden handle is made of a local tree.

‘Hakekalta’: is a wooden hatchet, wooden part with angular shape at the end. The handle part is about 20 cm long. An iron blade is inserted to split wood.

‘Goloduta’: a knife used for cutting meat, onion, etc.

‘Bisa’: a knife used for cutting wood, shrubs, etc.

‘Meshata’: a knife used for cutting koocho (Enset Product).

‘Maglalita’: a small sized knife made of iron; used for circumcision of boys and girls.

At present, the indigenous metal products are being replaced by modern equivalents. However, they are also used side by side with modern ones.



Fig 28: Metal Products (Photo, Zena, 2003, Kulito)

6.2.2. Gourd Products

Gourd is called 'kula' in Halabissa and is used as a raw material for making liquid holding and drinking cups. Such cups are used especially for drinking local drinks and milk. Gourd products are also used for storing or putting important items.

For instance, some are listed below:

- '*Neeri kirichuta*' is used for putting bride's Joulary
- '*Azo kirichuta*' is a gourd used for storing milk.
- '*Assore kulechuta*' is a gourd used for putting food spices at the household.
- '*Salaat kulechuata*' is a gourd used for storing water during religious prayer.
- '*Kawi Koreta*' is a cup made of gourd and used for drinking coffee or milk.



Fig 29: Gourd Products (Photo, Zena, 2003, Kulito)

6.2.3 Grass Products

Halaba make use of beautiful art works from grass species called 'Wiitta' (a grass growing long, looking barely flowers in September). The stem of this grass is used for making various types of utensils. Some of the products are embroidered with beautiful colors, dyed with paints. Some of the grass work products include the following.

'Kunna': (**'Mesob'** Amharic equivalent) is a table shaped object with wide ends that stands on floor narrow at the middle by wider spread end at

the top. It is used for placing and putting cooked food items during meals.

‘Sapha’: is a wide circular tray which is of different sizes, on average measuring about 30 cm radius from center. It is used for winnowing cereals and also putting cooked and un-cooked food stuffs.

‘Kawu-Kunna’: is a small bowl used for placing roasted cereals and serving during meals. It is also used for similar other purposes in the household.

‘Memeta’ (Sieve): is used for winnowing teff and other cereals to sift dirt. These grass works are solely made by grown up girls and mothers.

‘Koomita’: is a hat used by boys and adults for protecting themselves from the sun and rain.



Fig. 30: Halaba Cultural Hat (Photo, Zena, 2003, Kulito)



Fig 31: Some Grass Products (Photo, Zena, 2003, Kulito)

6.2.4 Clay Products

The following are some of the pottery products used in households.

Mitadu: is a circular shaped earthen ware with about 30- 40 cm radius (different sizes).It is used for baking bread or 'Torosho' made of maize, sorghum, teff, millet etc flours.

Jebena: is a small sized pot used for making and pouring coffee or tea into a cup.

Kooru: is a medium sized pot used for storing and bringing water from the river, springs, ponds, etc.

Zaalita : is a bigger size huge pot used for storing water, distilled local drinks. Sometimes crop seeds are also stored with it. They are not often brought to markets, because of their big sizes. If a customer wants such a big sized pots (some pots might hold up to 100 liters), he/she would go to the potter's house and give orders. When the pot is ready two or more persons would go and carry it together inserting wooden club to a rope which ties the neck of the pot.

‘Mekinachuta’: is a pot which is used for charming milk to create butter.

‘Shateta’: are of different sizes, on average about 10 cm high and about 15 cm wide. They are bowls used for storing foods or eating food, usually meat, cheese and other festival foods. Some of the bowls have lids. They are embroidered with beautiful symbols, as are the grass works.

‘Tabatita’: is a small spherical beautifully embroidered pot used for drinking milk. It may hold about half a liter.

‘Shooteta’: (Amharic equivalent Yeshekla popo) is a bowl used for urinating at night time.

‘Bitirata’: (Amharic equivalent Chocho) is a small pot used for putting cooked meat, cheese and festival foods.



Fig 32: Clay Products (Photo, Zena, 2003, Kulito)

6.2.5. Wood Products

Halaba use different utensils made of wood both for the house hold and production purposes. Some are listed below with their Amharic equivalent

‘Borchimata’- Wonber (Amharic equivalent)

‘Mada’-Gabate

‘Meena’- Zenezena

‘Hokophita’- Yeenchat Chama-wooden shoe

‘Borkimata’- Tiraas - pillow

‘Sintira’- Yemushura Eka Maskemecha – jewellery store

‘Kawi Udulima’- Yebuna mukecha

‘Kawi Gabita’- Yebuna matebia gabete

‘Luha’- YeArabigna Matsafia

‘Sinahaka’- Yesini Maskemacha

‘Uduluma’- Mukecha
‘Kaduta’- Mofer
Wognita’- Erf
‘Kabala’- Digir
‘Angacheta’- Kanber
‘Wogga’- Yemososo Kisit
‘Hokuta’- Magotecha
‘Azafeja’- Yegirzagna Dula

6.2.6. Tannery Products

Halaba use various tannery products. Some examples and their Amharic equivalents are presented below.

‘Bikilita’- Yemategna Kurbet
‘Halangeta’- Alenga
‘Landa’- Ankelba
‘Hokomadu’- Silicha
‘Galba’- Yeehil Maregebia
‘Salati Bikilita’- Yemasgeja Kurbet
‘Gerengeru’- Gasha

6.3. The Halaba Heritages

There are some physically and historically significant heritages in Halaba. These include: Bilate River (Tatte)

waterfalls, Arto hot springs, Sifaame defense ditches (caves), Abicho Nuralah Ahmed worship place, Bedene the first mosque and Kulito Grand mosque. These are briefly described one by one hereunder.

A. Bilate (Tatte) Water Falls

The Tatte waterfalls are found on the Bilate river. Bilate river is found 1.5 kms west of kulito town. The water fall has got about 12 meters height and it is sharply coiffed or vertically faulted. The trend of this fault is nearly East-west and dipping to south with 80° - 85° .



Fig 33: 'Tatte Fama' (Photo, Zena, 2003 E.C)

B. Arto Hot Springs

Arto hot springs are found in Arsho kebele. These are hot springs found in Halaba of about 11 kilometers from the center of the special woreda town-kulito. The hot springs are widely used by local people for medication purposes for both humans and animals. They are also used for entertainment and cooking various types of foods like fresh maize, potatoes, cabbage, pit roots, soya bean, etc. Such foods get cooked within 10-15 minutes.



Fig 34: Arto Hot Springs (Photo, Zena, 2003 E.C)

The hot springs have got a number of out pours and the temperature of the water extremely high. The total discharge of water per second is estimated to be about 15 liters and sometimes even more. The water contains excess amount of fluoride and high PH values.

C. Sifaame Defense Ditches

The Halaba military defense system included digging ditches. Today defense ditches are seen as relics of historical events. Halaba had constant wars with its nearby and distance neighbors. One of the defense systems was to dig ditches along the sides where the national defense was weak. Ditches were dug by mobilizing all able bodied males. In Halaba sifaame defense ditches are found in the adjoining areas of

four kebeles of Halaba special woreda such as Alemtena, Amatta, Aymale and Habibo-Fuirana. Sifaame is about 10 kilometers north of kulito town. It was dug when Halaba people wanted to expand their territory towards Arsi Oromo areas for having more pastoral land. The campaign for digging these ditches was lead by Boyam Babiso and all the clan leaders of Halaba of that time. The ditches are fifteen in

number and each would accommodate a minimum of 15 persons. It was primarily meant for saving the lives of women and children during conflict and war times with the neighboring people.



Fig 35: Sifaame Defense Ditches (Photo, Zena, 2003, Kulito)

D. Abicho Nurala Ahmed Worshipping Place

Abicho Nur-ala Ahmed is a traditional worshipping place which is found at about 3 kms south of kulito town on the left

side of the main road when one goes from Addis Ababa to Arbaminch, and near the bridge of the river Bilate. It is a place of traditional worship in which the believers come to it twice a year, that is, one during the time of Muslim holyday of Ed-al-Adha (Arefa) and the other at the time of 'Gelgela-Gobana', which is six months later after the former.

According to the informants, this worshipping takes place to commemorate Nuralah Ahmed. Nurala Ahmed was religious father and preacher of Islam religion. He was wandering from place to place in the country preaching the religion Islam. In his movement Nurala Ahmed arrived at Halaba kulito and continued his preaching. He was sick and lost his life in Halaba in a place called Abicho. From that time onwards Abicho is a place where annual burial ceremony of Nurala Ahmed is celebrated by the Islam believers.

Informants further claimed that Nurala Ahmed was the son of Sheik Hussen of Bale. It was also believed and claimed that Sheik Hussen himself before that of his son Nurala Ahmed had come to the area of Halaba-kulito preaching Islam religion. According to them, Sheik Hussen accompanied by his brother Sheik Mohammed Burjaj and his friends Seyid

Ummer, Wadzar Geyir, Kazimiral Bahir and Miskinam travelled preaching Islam religion. Their journey was began from Bale and then moved to the areas of Assela, Marako, Siltie, Shashogo, Kambata and Halaba. When Nurala Ahmed died in Halaba area, Sheik Hussen was in Jinka and his friends called him there for the funeral ceremony of his son. After coming to the area, Sheik Hussen gathered the people and praid Islamic prayer on the dead body of Nurala Ahmed. The deceased was buried it in the place called Abicho.

According to informants, for burial ceremony of Nurala Ahmed, Sheik Hussen had searched the place for thomb in the area by scratching the land since the area was only stone and he found digging it difficult. Then Sheik Hussen started praying to his God to solve the problem he faced. After the prayer, the land by itself gets opened and the burial ceremony of Nurala Ahmed took place.

After the burial ceremony, Sheik Hussen ordered the people that even though Nurala Ahmed died and buried here, his good deeds are remembered for ever especially in Halaba kulito and Bale. After this by calling the name of the place Nurala Ahmed he ordered the people to celebrate annual

ceremonies twice in a year and returned back to Bale with the sense of sadness for losing his son. Because of these reasons, at present, thousands of people are coming to the area from different parts of the country twice in a year for worshipping purpose. The ceremonial time of Nurala Ahmed is more or less related to the ceremonial time of 'Anajina of Bale'. Muslims who are unable to go to Bale would take part in the ceremony of Nurala Ahmed in Halaba kulito (HSW, 1998 E.C).



Fig 36: Abicho Nurala Ahmed (Photo Zena, 2003 E.C, Kulito)

Chapter Seven

Social Stratification and the Status of Women

7.1. Social Stratification

Social stratification has been basically associated with the ascribed statuses of different groups and individuals within those groups. The social worth of an individual and family has been judged generally based on the person's family and birth background. Individuals and groups belong to certain allegedly 'higher', purer' and so are called 'more descent' (Sawoldi). Such families or groups have enjoyed higher social-political statuses and monopolized powers in their hands. Certain groups, on the other hand, have been subjected to categorically 'low' and marginal social statuses. However, among Halaba clans, there are no socially marginalized groups(Source: Informants).

As discussed earlier in certain part, all Halaba clans have equal status and considered as common peasant groups. All persons of Halaba are belonging to the so called 'descent' or 'Sawoldi' social categories. Some marginalized groups such as 'fugga' who are found in Halaba land have no ethno-genial relations with Halaba people. But they come from the

neighboring area of Kambata, Wolayta, Hadiya, etc for making and selling pottery and for tanning (Source: Informants).

7.2. The Role, Status and Participation of Women in Social- Political Affairs

Unlike some other nationalities in southern Ethiopia, the Halaba dietary rules were strict in the past. The husband (head of the house) was nearly a monarch who was treated with special care and differences as far as table etiquettes were concerned. The wife was considered like a servant, not an equal partner. The husband would eat alone; no one would share a dish with him, even his children (sons and daughters). The wife (woman) would serve the children and she eats finally after serving all others. The wife and children cannot share food with him when he eats such lavish dish. The wife prepares this lavish food and serves her husband. She and her children would eat the leftovers. In Halaba culture wives may be allowed to eat together with their husbands in some festival occasions, like in Maulid, Ed-al Adiha (Harefa) and Edalftir. This eating together is not a mark of genuine and equal partnership; but it is rather a

cultural mores to be fulfilled and honor the spirit of the festival.

Labor and works are assigned based on gender, age and social class in Halaba as in other similar traditional societies. Some works are clearly demarcated for females while some for males.

Household chores are exclusively for feels. Food preparation including bringing raw food items from farm, cooking, serving the meals, house cleaning, organizing house hold utencils, making certain home appliance for example, food serving utencils, sifting and containing equipment made from grass and farm trees), etc. are all women's work. Some farming works are also feminine. Every married woman has had a back yard, small plot of land where she plants some 'feminine crops' such as cabbage, condiments and the like.

Heavy works are generally carried out in Halaba culture by males. For example, tilling the land, sowing seeds, weeding, harvesting and storing crops are carried out by males. Women's participation in these farming activities has been limited to preparation and serving of food to the male laborers. Caring for livestock is carried out by both sexes.

Milking of cows and handling daily products are women task. Preparation, collection and provision of animal feeds are also shared among the two sexes. Carrying commodities to markets and selling are done mostly by women and girls.

The higher social class was in the past relieved of engagement in economic activities. The Balabat families never engaged in such activities. The ordinary citizens have voluntarily worked for the royal families in the past.

Although there exists some changes and improvements at the present time, over the years, the Halaba women were not treated and participated actively in political, social religious and economic affairs. The kind, content and intensity of problems these social groups have endured also changed over time. Even in religious sphere of life, women have occupied no positions and roles of leadership as well as active participation (Source: Informants).

It can be argued that through the entire periods, prior to the coming of Dergue to power in 1974, women have had lower status in the society. Males as fathers, husbands and ruling classes have had complete control over women. Women

have no place and participation in political decisions. Even the women of ruling classes (Balabats, and chikasums) did not command any useful authority except enjoying royal privilege (HSW, 1998 E.C; The Informants).

However, the Dergue regime of 1974 has brought some freedom and participation rights for women in political and social affairs. Women's freedom of equality and involvement in political, social and economic affairs has increased greatly with the coming to power of Ethiopian People Revolutionary and Democratic Front (EPRDF). The political and economic dominance and control of men over the women has been more or less broken these days. As informants pointed out "brighter years have come for women; they are now free to choose their husband, free to talk or discuss issues with their husbands and others.

Chapter Eight

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

8.1. Summary and Conclusion

From the array of information among various informants, relevant and available documents, the following summary and conclusions are drawn.

- From oral traditions and written documents, it is now safe, to conclude that the Halaba people, to preserve and secure their ethnic and religious identity beginning from their origin to their final settlement and to the present time, had paid a dozens of life and economic sacrifice. That is to mean, the people had attained their present state of ethnic and religious identity through centuries of dynamic, ongoing and multifarious factors. These preserved and secured ethnic and religious identities are results of long period intra-and inter-ethnic interaction at various levels and places.
- Halaba seemed to have been the first to occupy its present settlement area. There is no literature and oral tradition that depicts the presence of a group or a tribe

that pre-occupied the present Halaba land. However, there is a strong claim by the member of the nationality that a great number of their kinsmen or descendents are found in various regions and zones of the country. For instance, at present they can be found in Bale, Arsi, Illubabor, Harar, Dire Dawa, Somalia, Gujjland, Sidama, Wolayita, Kambata, Hadiya, Silte, and Guraghe Zone. This claim of the nationality was not confirmed by this study through going to the aforementioned sites.

- For centuries the Halaba had developed good work habits towards the creation of well established economic and livelihood history. They experienced commerce and semi-nomadic ways of life while they were in Djibouti, Somalia, Harar and Bale areas. They gave up these commercial and semi-nomadic ways of life in favor of a purely pastoral way of life when they were expelled from Bale and Sidama land and moved to their present settlement. Through time, they turned from purely pastoral way of life to advanced form of mixed farming. Today, the nationality experiences diverse forms of economic and livelihood practice like: land cultivation, mixed farming, commerce, crafts work, nomadism, etc. The land's topography, agro-

ecology and natural resources have enabled the existence of almost all types of plants and crops to grow in the land. Since the land was very fertile and favorable, food security problem was not a serious problem in the past. However, food security problem become intensified in the last few decades due to shortage of rain, and absence of irrigation strategies and practice.

- In Halaba, for centuries, there had not been discrimination, marginalization and exploitation of one clan from another as their origin was from the same source. However, the political, legal, military and cultural history of the nationality was shaped through the centuries of internal and external interactions among the various clans of its own and other nationalities. The political-legal structure of Halaba is a cohesive, which keeps the unitary authority of the Halaba 'Serra'. At present, to govern the people, safe-guard the sacred socio-cultural organizations and the political territorial integrity of the land, side by side with the official government structure, the Halaba follow the unified voice of the 'Halaba Serra' socio-cultural, political structure and of the Halaba 'shehoch'- the religious leader.

- The Halaba nationality has had an intense form of conflicts with the neighboring nationalities, especially with the Arsi Oromo, basically with regards to resources. Over the years, the nationality has managed to maintain its territorial, political and economic independence through its own clan and religious chiefs and leaders. The independence of the nationality was protected until they were incorporated into the Minielikian Empire in 1891 A.D.
- For centuries, they did not have religious diversity. The people, almost all, were following Islam religion. Islam religion was said to have been highly influential and dominant over the Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant Christianity which were introduced lately both in urban and rural areas of the land. Islam religion had played key roles in organizing the peoples' social, economic and political activities and in providing a sense of purpose, responsibility and direction in all affairs to the members of the nationality.
- A number of historical sources and oral traditions revealed that the ancestors of the present day Halaba were originally speakers of Arabic language and after a long

years stay, they learned and spoke Adare language after their settlement in Harar and Dijoubuti areas. At the end, as a result of the Cushitic languages influence during their long year's stay and settlement in the vicinities of these language speaking groups. They completely shifted from the Semitic to Cushitic language group. Currently other than serving for communication and office purposes, the language is not used as a medium of instruction and its morphology, syntax, phonology and folklores aspects were not adequately studied.

- The ethno- history and cultural study conducted on Halaba nationality at present time is by no means said to be exhaustive and detail. The study focused on key aspects of the two dimensions. Much of the cultural dimensions depicted in this study is what was used to be in the past. There exists an ongoing, active and rapid hybridization of traditional and modern values, with the former more rapidly giving way to the latter in Halaba land.
- Halaba land seemed to have been rich with various types of natural, cultural, religious and historical heritages. However, due attention have not been granted for all these various kinds of heritages towards advocating,

studying, inventorying, documenting and making use of them for the economic development of the nationality in particular and the country at large.

8.2. Recommendations

Based on the summary and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are forwarded.

- Halaba is said to have been a nationality with relatively complex culture and ethno history. Its ethno-history and cultural dimensions are too vast to be addressed exhaustively and in detail in this small scale study. Therefore, it is important to continue further studies to document these rich and relatively complex ethno history and culture of the nationality.
- In struggling for preserving and securing ethnic and religious identity, the Halaba paid greater sacrifice in various aspects. Because of these descendents of Halaba were identified as living in different regions of the country as indicated in the study as well as in the summary and conclusion parts. Thus, adequate attention should be paid to deeply investigate about the:

- Descendents or kinsmen who were left at various times and areas and who were completely assimilated with other nationalities.
 - Descendent or kinsmen of Halaba who were left at various times and still secured or preserved their identity in other nationalities.
 - Type of clan to whom these people belong and the level of their relationship.
-
- It was revealed that currently the Halaba language other than serving for communication and office purposes, it is not used as a language of instruction in schools and its morphology, syntax, phonology and folklore aspects were not adequately studied. This has negative influence on the development of the language. Thus, adequate attention has to be given by the concerned bodies to conduct a study the language aspect in detail and to use the language as a medium of instruction in schools.
 - Although Halaba land seemed to have been rich with various types of natural, cultural religious and historical heritages, due attention has not been given. Therefore,

the government officials of the special woredas, famous members of the nationality, Regional Bureau of Culture and Tourism, Officials of the Region (SNNPR) and other relevant and concerned bodies should give due attention for advocating, inventorying, studying, documenting, commercializing and popularizing these attractive and beautiful heritages for the benefits of the public.