

## THE SETTLEMENT AND PATTERNS OF THE MACCAA OROMO

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### Abstract

*This paper deals about the patterns and settlement of the Maccaa Oromoo and how they formed their own socio-economic and political center after they left Odaa Nabee. It also deals about the traditions of the separation of Maccaa from Tuulamaa. Different traditions tell different causes of their separation. One tradition a fate of separation on the other. In whatever, Maccaa separated from Tuulamaa. They founded Odaa Bisil, Odaa Bulluq and other centers of sub-caffee in different areas of the present Maccaa territories of south and north Mormor River.*

**Keywords:** Settlement and patterns, Expansion, Gadaa System, Odaa and Caffee.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper deals about the settlement and patterns of the Maccaa Oromo. The Maccaa and Tuulamaa were the strong warriors among the sons of Booranaa. Maccaa left Odaa Nabee for Odaa Bisil in West Shawa and expanded into present day territories of West Shawa, Southwest Shawa, Jimmaa, Ilu Abbaa Booraa, Wallagga. Both Maccaa and Tuulamaa were separated when Maccaa formed sub-Maccaa confederacies of Afree and Sadachaa. The process of expansion is not an overnight process. Rather, it is a gradual and slow process. Maccaa had twelve sons. These were: Jaawwii, Liiban, Galaan, Jibaat, Hoboo, Aboo, Dahayee, Daallee, Tumme, Laaloo, Abballan and Gundee. Among these twelve sons, Abballan and Gundee expanded into North of Mormor River. The rest ten sons said to be expanded into South of Mormor River.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

To compose this paper, I used both primary and secondary historical sources, which include both published and unpublished. The materials which I used as source are also not specifically produced for the Settlement and patterns of the Maccaa Oromo. Rather, these sources are general and mainly produced to explain about the issues of the original homeland of the Oromo people before 16<sup>th</sup> century. I also used both archives and manuscripts from what I have collected for my BA and MA thesis. The archival documents and manuscript used in this paper were collected from different institutions and individuals in Oromia Regional State and in different zonal and district administration Offices of this region. Apart from these, I also used oral traditions what I have interviewed key informants during my field work for the fulfillment of my BA and MA thesis from 2012-2018.

## THE SETTLEMENT AND PATTERNS OF THE MACCAA OROMOO

The issue of the original homeland and the cause of the Oromo expansion became the hot and contradicting issues in the history of the Horn of Africa. These controversies start from the pejorative term used by some authors in place of Oromo to call the people. This was why the different writers located the original homeland of the Oromo people into different places and presented different reasons based on their perspectives (Woliye, 2006).

Accordingly, Lewis located the original homeland of the Oromo people before their expansion to the southern Ethiopia and northern Kenya. On the other hand, Bahrey as in Lewis located the original homeland of the Oromo people to Walaabuu and Galaana. However, the term Galaana refers to River in different areas of the region. Even though he tried to locate the original homeland of the Oromo people before 16<sup>th</sup> century by using his two twin terms of Walaabuu and Galaana, *QesAbba* Bahrey confused and still confusing amateur and humble writers as he unable to tell the definite place where the Galaana and Walaabuu found. The oral tradition of the Maccaa Oromo also located their origin to Walaabuu Abbayyaa. Nevertheless, the name Walaabuu Abbayyaa found in the northwestern Wallaggaa and southern Ethiopia (Lewis, 1996; Wandimu and Boni, 2015). Hence, which Walaabuu and Galaana were *Qes* Bahrey used to explain the original homeland of the Oromo people before 16<sup>th</sup> century was not more than to explain his limited knowledge of the Oromo people and their territories.

“The oral traditions of the [Oromo] relevant to the problem of their origins are in remarkable agreement with each other and with the written evidence. Because of the consistency of different accounts, their agreement with Bahrey and with the linguistic evidence, their unembellished nature, and the relatively short period of time involved, these traditions are worthy of careful consideration (Mohammed,1994).

According to Tesema(1986), there was conflict between the northern Christians, eastern Muslims, and the so-called “pagan” (as pejoratively called by the dominant power of the day) states of the Southwest Ethiopia. He also attested the aims of the war between the Muslim and Christian states. For him, it was the hidid politico-economic reason, which seemed the religious war among the two starting from the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The motives of the Christian kingdom were to expand their territories into the buffer zones of Ethiopia; to control over items trade and trade routes, and to spread Christianity.

Hence, the similar ambition of both the Muslim Sultanates and the Christian highland kingdom disturbed the socio-political, cultural, and economic conditions of the rest Ethiopians. Thus, as a means of defensive mechanism, the need to organize oneself under the specific military group came to being in Ethiopia and the horn of Africa. The formation of the two Oromo confederacies of Booranaa and Baarentuu also coincided with this condition (Lewis,1996).In line with the above explanation of Tesema and Alamayo and *et al.*, Mohammed also enumerated that the conquest wars of Amde Tseyon (1314-1344) had an impact on the *Gadaa* system of the Oromo people. The center of *Gadaa* system was changed from place to place to safe itself from the destruction of the wars between Christian kingdom and Muslim sultanates of Ethiopia. Later, the pressure from the Christian highland dictated the Oromo to shift their socio-political, religious and economic center to *Odaa Roobaa* (Northeast Baalee) in 1316 (Alamayo Haile and *etal*, 2006).

In addition, Alamayo and *et al.*, also described that the year 1450 was the great renaissance for Oromo people. It was the year when the *Gadaa* again moved to MaddaWalaabuu from *Odaa Roobaa* in Baalee zone of Gindhiir district. Different *Abbaa Gadaa* (ruler of Oromo), *Abbaa Duulaa* (war commander) and *Abbaa Muudaa* (the father of an ointment) went to *Madda Walaabuu* for the so-called *jila Gadaa* or *Godaansa Gadaa* (the *Gadaa* Movement). The already started groupings of the Oromo according to the direction of their territories began to organize themselves under the two confederacies of Booranaa and Baarentuu. These two confederacies of Oromo came to meet each other from the place where they were. The place of their meeting was later associated as the original homeland of the Oromo before their expansion. Thus, the Oromo tradition associates their original homeland to Madda Walaabuu, the Baalee-Sidaamaa bordering area of the land (Trimingham, 1952; Marcus, 1994; Merid, 1971, Lewis,1996).

On the other hand, the war between the Muslim sultanates and the Christian highland kingdom of Ethiopia challenged the pastoralist Oromo people of the region. The life of these herdsmen based on the existence of peace and the freedom of moving from place to place in search for water and grass for their cattle. In 1520s, the pressure of the wars between Christian and Muslim blocked the Oromo herders from reaching the sources of the basic needs for their cattle. However, herding found to be the dominant economic

activity of the Oromo people. This external pressure accelerated the process of the 16<sup>th</sup> century mass migration. Hence, the pastoralist Oromo peoples waiting for the defeat of one or the exhaust of the two rival states of Ethiopia as an opportunity. "Migration was the response to the mounting socio-economic and political pressures forced the Oromo to fight against the neighboring Christians, Muslims and the 'pagan'" (Tesema, 1986).

Therefore, *Gadaa* system as the Oromo socio-political, religious and economic organizations of the Oromo people discussed to strength the two confederacies. They organized under the armament group of their own. Then, *Abbaa Muudaa* named these groups of the Oromo people as Booranaa and Baarentuu. These names were an armament names, which given for the groups of the Oromo people based on the directions of territories where they were living. The name Booranaa derived from *Afaan* Oromo word 'Boroo' and '-aanaa' to mean West and those who related respectively. Thus, Booranaa refers to the Oromo confederacy those who ordered to unite from the western direction under the Booranaa as senior from the Oromo of this direction. The organization was to cope with existing situation of the day. The members of this confederacy included the Maccaa, Tuulamaa, Southern Booranaa (Sabboo and Goonaa) and Middle Booranaa or Gujii (Kontomaa and Daarimuu) (Alamayo and *et al.*,2006; Tamam, 2010; Trimmingham, 1952).

In the same way, the name Baarentuu from the *Afaan* Oromo words of 'Barii' and '-aantuu' to mean 'East' and 'those who related to' respectively. Hence, the name Baarentuu implies the armament organization of the Oromo people of the Eastern direction under the leadership of Baarentuu. In this direction, as Booranaa from the west, Baarentuu was senior of all and called elder. The Oromo of this group call themselves as *Baarentummaa*. The *Baarentummaa* include Humbaanaa (Arsii), Akkachuu, Karrayyuu, Marawaa, Ittuu, Afran Qal'oo (Alaa, Noolee, Baabbilee and Oborraa) and the seven houses of Walloo (Warra Baabboo, Warra Iluu, Warra Himaanoo, Warra Qaalluu, Warra Qobboo, Warra Raayyaa and Warra Yajjuu (Gidada, 1984).

The Maccaa, Gimbichuu and Ada'aa tribes of Oromo expanded to the resourceful areas of Gibee River. Walal Mountain became the center of their ritual for the Maccaa Oromo who expanded into West Wallaggaa in Oromia region. These are the land South of Mormor (Blue Nile) River, the present days of Horro-Guduruu Wallaggaa, East Wallaggaa, West Wallaggaa, Qeellam Wallaggaa, West Shawa, Iluu Abbaa Booraa, the Five Gibee States including Limmu-Ennaariyaa, Jimmaa, Gomma, Gummaa and Geeraa), Kafa, and North of the Mormor River, the Gojjam administrative area of Waanbaraa (Trimingham, 1952, Cerulli, 1922; Gimbar, 2010).

## THE SEPARATION OF MACCAA AND TUULAMAA

Tuulamaa and Maccaa were brothers born from Booranaa. Booranaa had two wives, Siree and Akkitoo. Siree gave birth Tuulamaa (*hangafaa*) and Akkitoo gave birth Maccaa, the second son of Booranaa next to Tuulamaa. The Booranaa pairs were Maccaa and Tuulamaa; Middle Booranaa and Southern Booranaa. From the pairs Maccaa and Tuulamaa were the two strong fighters and major sub-confederacies. But, later, Maccaa and Tuulamaa separated from each other after the long stay together at *Odaa Nabee* (Ejjetaa, 1995; Alemu, 2015). According to the writer of '*Maccaa Genealogy*' as in Nagaso, the cause of the separation between Maccaa and Tuulamaa their sons and cattle. At the eve of their final separation, one of the Maccaa herdsmen speared the son of Tuulamaa. Thus, Maccaa and Tuulamaa fought each other (Nagaso, 1984). Maccaa was defeated and forced to move from *Odaa Nabee* into Southwest. Nya'aa Doroo became the strong leader of Maccaa as *Abbaa Culullee* for Tuulamaa. The Maccaa settled at Bisil, in west Shawa. The enmity of the two again grew worsen and the leaders of the two opened a war against each other. As a result, Tuulamaa was defeated and retreated to east from west Shawa (Mohammed, 1990). *Bokkuu* (scepter) was the second stated reason for the separation of Maccaa from Tuulamaa.

"...before they left their own *bokkuu* was with the [Maccaa]. The Gombichuu and others sent ambassadors to [Maccaa] to request them to return the *bokkuu*. The Maccaa refused.

Then Gombichuu and others made raids against the Mata; but before the Gombichuu retrieved the *bokkuu*, the [Maccaa] escaped and went further from the attack of the Gombichuu. The Gombichuu, Ada'aa and other Tulama groups already settled in Shawa held a meeting to decide about the new *bokkuu*. The old men said "cut an olive tree, make of its wood a *bokkuu*, and honor it." So it was settled in that way, and from then on ward, the [Maccaa] became hereditary enemies of the Tulama" (Mohammed, 1990).

Another third reason was the population pressure and shortage of land for the herdsmen of the two brothers. Hence, they decided to expand as far as southwest. Traditionally, the elder son of Oromo had the right to settle nearer to his father. Hence, the distance that the Oromo sons had from their fathers' home reflects their *hangaftummaa* (seniority) and how the *eegoo* (junior) expanded far away from *Odaa Nabee* to *Odaa Bisil* in west Shawa. Thus, Maccaa and Tuulamaa peacefully separated from each other after they said themselves farewell at *Odaa Nabee* (Wandimu and Boni, 2015). Besides to these all three above traditions, Ejjetaa (1995), elucidated that it was after the conflict of the Oromo people with Christian highland kingdom, Maccaa and Tuulamaa like the sons of Baarentuu returned to their home, joined with their relatives, and expanded to their current territories (Ejjetaa, 1995).

In line with this, Lambert Bartels stated that, "...the eldest son always remained on his father's land; the other sons went in search of new land for themselves. Later, the sons of these eldest sons, in their turn, followed their relatives who went before them and joined them in the new country". Apart from these all above, the Maccaa Oromo's land distribution among their relatives was also coincided with the concept of *Waaqaa* (God) and bull. They believed that the *Waaqaa* gives everything for them including land and cows. As if men were the heads of clans and families, bull was the leader in crawl which gave an instruction for all other cows of the same crawl. The Maccaa Oromo who herd the cattle followed their bull, and assumed the land where their bull stopped was the land given to them by *Waaqaa* (Marlo, 2005). In any way, in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Maccaa Oromo occupied land between the Mormor River in the north, the *Dabbus* River and Walal Mountain in the west, and the Gojeb River in the south (Tesema, 2007; Nagara, 2010; Nagaso, 1984).

## THE FORMATION OF AFREE AND SADACHAA

The Jaawwii, Liiban, Galaan, Jibaat, Hoboo, Aboo, Dahayee, Daallee, Tumme, Laaloo, Abballan and Gundee were the twelve sons of Maccaa Oromo. They settled in the more fertile and salubrious highlands, rich in minerals, dense forest, and natural resources. Both the *Sadachaa* and *Afree* joined at *Bisil* and inaugurated there the new center of *Gadaa* system in 1580s after they abandoned the central *Caffee* (assembly) at *Odaa Nabee* in eastern Shawa (Triulzi, 1994). They lived for five generations at *Tutee Bisil*. The separation of Maccaa and Tuulamaa completed with the formation of *Afree* and *Sadachaa* sub-confederacies of Maccaa. The *Afree* confederacy consists of Horroo, Guduruu, Calliyaa and Liiban. After they crossed Gudar and Mugar Rivers during the Roobalee *Gadaa* (1570-1578), *Afree* groups expanded into the land south of Mormor River (Hassen, 1990). The *Sadachaa* sub-confederacy of the Maccaa Oromo consists of Akaakoo, Oboo and Subaa and expanded into Southwest as far as Gibee region. They crossed Gudar and Mugar Rivers during the Birmajjii *Gadaa* (1578-1586) (Mohammed, 1990).

The expansion of the *Afree* (Horroo, Guduruu, Liiban and Calliyaa) and *Sadachaa* (Akaakoo, Oboo and Subaa) and confederacies of Maccaa Oromo had its own techniques. In the process of their expansion, first they gathered the information about the area to which they planned to expand. This was accomplished by their *simbirtuu* or *ilaaltuu* (literally called reconnoiter). With the positive response from their *simbirtuu*, Maccaa Oromo started their process of expansion into that area (Fekede, 2017; Mohammed, 1990; Tasema, 1986, Tujuba, 1994). Among the twelve Maccaa sons, Jaawwii was the eldest and occupied the present day of Horro-Guduruu, East Wallaggaa, and Part of North of Abay (Mormor) Rivers as far as Waanbaraa. Liiban also expanded in to West and Southwest Shawa up to Walisoo. The rest Maccaa occupied parts of Wallaggaa from Leeqaa to Walal Mountain (Qeellam) and the area of the Gibee River (Gimbaa, 2010; Tasama, 19986). Among the sons of Maccaa, *Sadan* Liiban (Amayyaa, Walisoo and

Kuttaayee) born from three mothers namely Biddiiqxuu, Shambubbee and Sirriiqxuu respectively. Horroo, Amuruu, Jimmaa, Jiddaa, Eebantuu, Liiban, Limmuu, Gudayyaa and Iluu were the nine sons of Jaawwii. The Seven Guduruu were Maloolee, Looyyaa, Ammillee, Illaamuu, Lukkuu, Sirbaa and Handaraasa; *Torban* Daallee or Daadhii (the Seven Daallee) were the Oboo, Sayyoo, Sibuu, Tummee, Limmuu, Noonnoo, and Daannoo; and the Akaakoo, Jimmaa, *Sadachaa*, and Badii were *Afran* Jiddaa (Alamayo et al., 2006; Gimbaar, 2010; Melkamu 2012).

According to the North Eastern Wallaggaa Maccaa Oromo tradition in Triulzi, (1975), the Oromo of the Mormor River preserved in their oral tradition. Even, the districts named after the name of the *daggal saaqii* (opener of the forest or the first Oromo who settled on the area). Though there was no evidence that tell us the exact year when the Maccaa Oromo occupied the present day of Horroo-Guduru Wallaggaa from south Mormor territories possibly traced back to the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Melkamu, 2018); Triulzi, 1975; Wandimu and Boni, 2015). After their occupation of in north, northwest and southwest, Maccaa sons partitioned the land among their sons. Those who first settled on the land became *daggal saaqii* (first settler) or *Abbaa qabiyyee* (father of tenure). They had full right over their territories. After exercising full power on this area and later, they became chiefs of their own clans. The land name of Horroo named after the man whose name called Horroo expanded and occupied the area. Horroo begot 14 sons. These were called Kudha Afran Horroo (the fourteen Horroo Sons) settled between Finca'a and Angar River (Triulzi, 1975).

## CONCLUSION

Booranaa and Baarentuu were the two Oromoo confederacies. Maccaa and Tuulamaa, Kontomaa and Daarimuu, and Sabboo and Goonaa were the pairs which belongs to Booranaa Oromoo. Among the pairs Maccaa and Tuulama were the strong warriors. Maccaa and Tuulamaa lived together until Maccaa formed *Afree* and *Sadachaa* Maccaa sub-confederacies and the inauguration of Odaa Bisil in the turn of 16<sup>th</sup> century. After, some stay, Maccaa sons forced by population pressure and cattle and again expanded into the present day four Wallaggaa zones centered with Naqamtee, Gimpii, Dambi Doolloo and Shaambuu; West Shawa, Walisoo, Iluu Abbaa Booraa and Jimma Abbaa Jifaar in the south of Mormor River and Waanbaraa in the north Mormor River.

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