

Ethiopian Village Studies

(Designed and edited by Philippa Bevan and Alula Pankhurst)

Aze Debo'a

Kembata

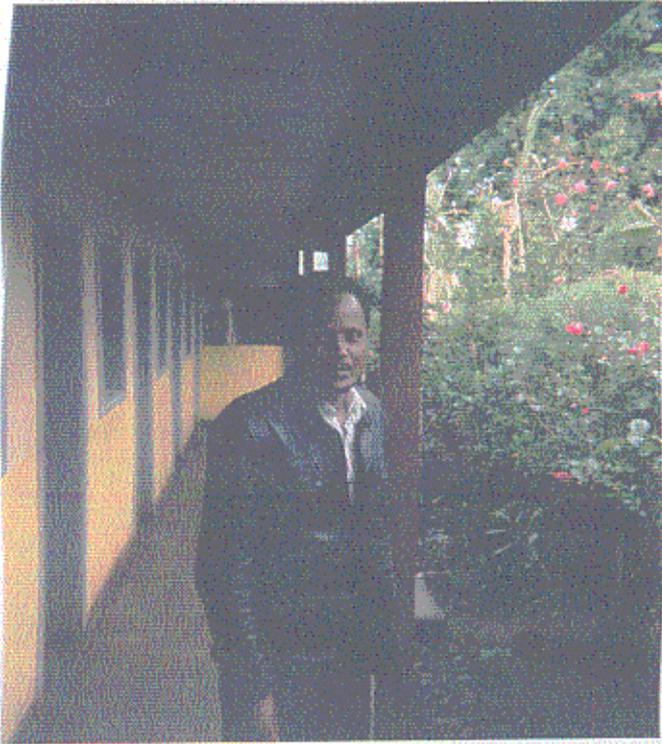
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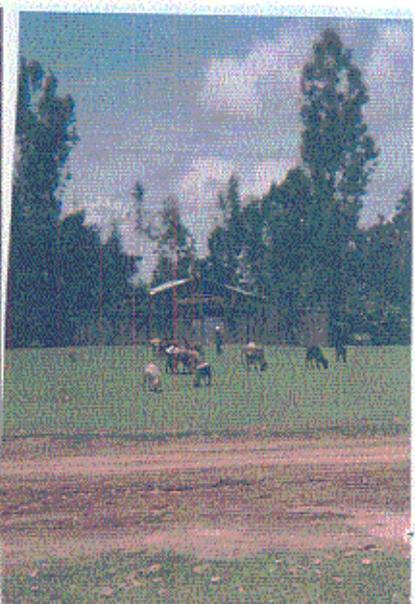
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(Field managers: Bereket Kebede and Shukri Ahmed)

June 1996

One of a series of 15 studies edited and produced jointly by the Department of Sociology, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia and the Centre for the Study of African Economies, Oxford, UK and financed by the UK Overseas Development Administration





Forward

All the reports in this series have been constructed from a number of sources:

- A background paper on aspects of the local culture in which the Peasant Association is located, based mainly on secondary sources;
- Some rapid assessment material collected in the PA by site managers and enumerators whose chief business was administering 3 rounds of a household economic survey which covered a whole year of economic activity;
- A field visit to the site by an anthropologist who took a draft village profile for correction and supplementation. In a few cases the profiles were not ready before the field visit was done, but the same questions were followed up;
- A questionnaire completed by the enumerators at the end of the survey;
- A community economic survey administered by the site managers.

A large number of people has been involved in the construction of these profiles. Most important are the people in the villages who answered questions, raised issues we had not thought of, and provided hospitality for our fieldworkers. The site managers, enumerators, and anthropologists played a vital role, but are too numerous to mention by name here; the names of some are on the title pages of the profiles. Etalem Melaku-Tjirongo and Joanne Moores constructed the majority of the first drafts of the profiles. Sandra Fullerton Joireman provided important assistance in the preparation of the final drafts. Backup in terms of translating, editing, word processing, mapmaking and general support were provided by Tina Barnard, Ziggy Bevan, Girma Getahun, Haile Redai, Sarah Smith, and Ruth Tadesse. Our economist colleagues at Oxford (Shukri Ahmed, Stefan Dercon, and Pramila Krishnan) and Addis Ababa (particularly Bereket Kebede, Getinet Astatke, and Mekonnen Tadesse) provided ideas and conversation from economics which stimulated our thought processes. The administration in the Economics Department at Addis Ababa University was extremely supportive.

Profiles are available for the following villages:

<i>Tigray:</i>	Geblen	<i>Gojjam:</i>	Yetmen
	Harresaw	<i>North Shewa:</i>	Debre Birhan environs
<i>Wollo:</i>	Shumsheha		Dinki
<i>Arssi:</i>	Korodegaga	<i>Gurage:</i>	Imdibir Haya Gasha
<i>South Shewa:</i>	Sirbana Godeti	<i>Wolayitta:</i>	Gara Godo
	Turufe Kecheme	<i>Kembata:</i>	Aze Debo'a
<i>Gamo:</i>	Do'oma	<i>Gedeo:</i>	Adado
<i>Harerghe:</i>	Adele Keke		

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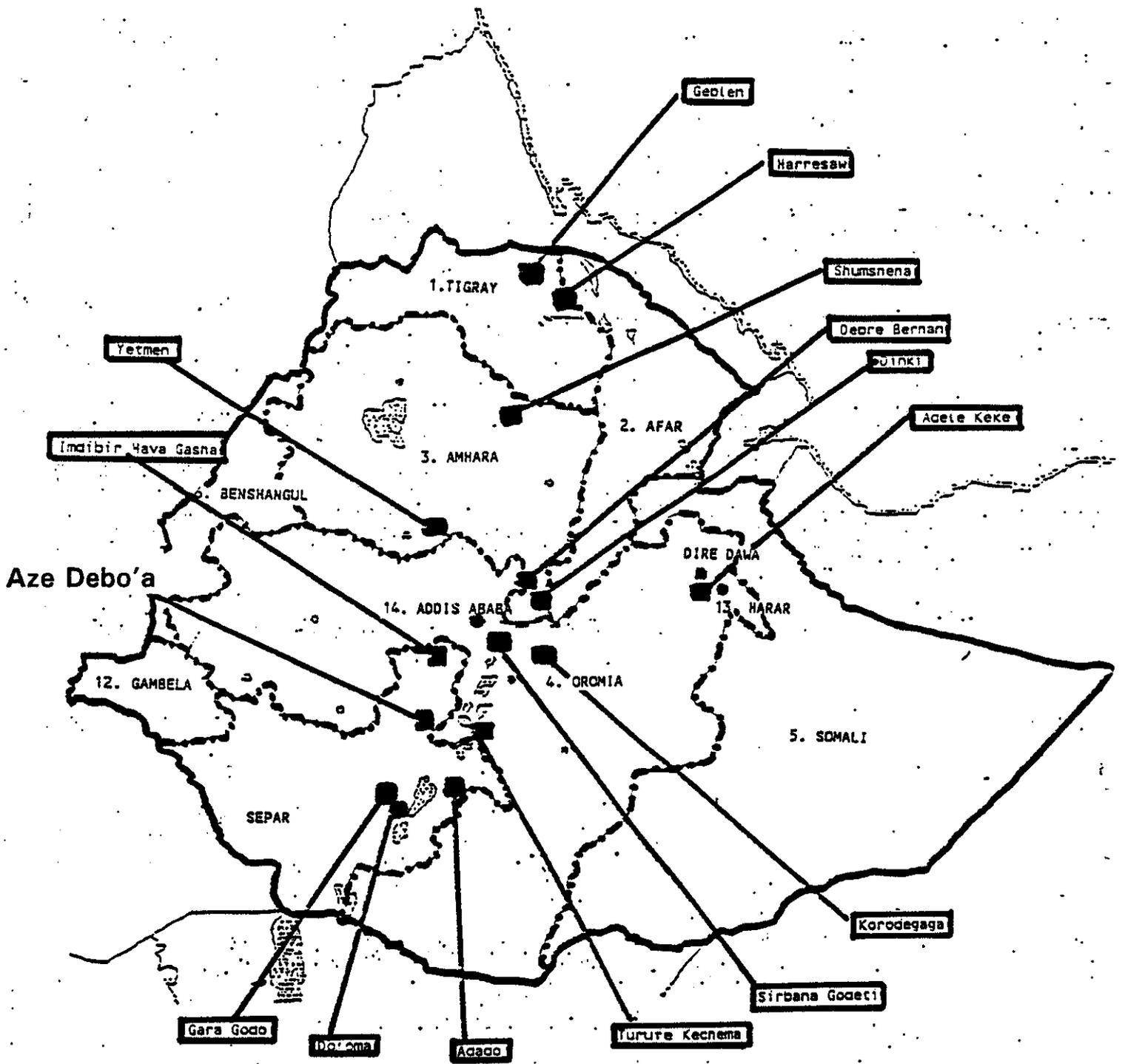
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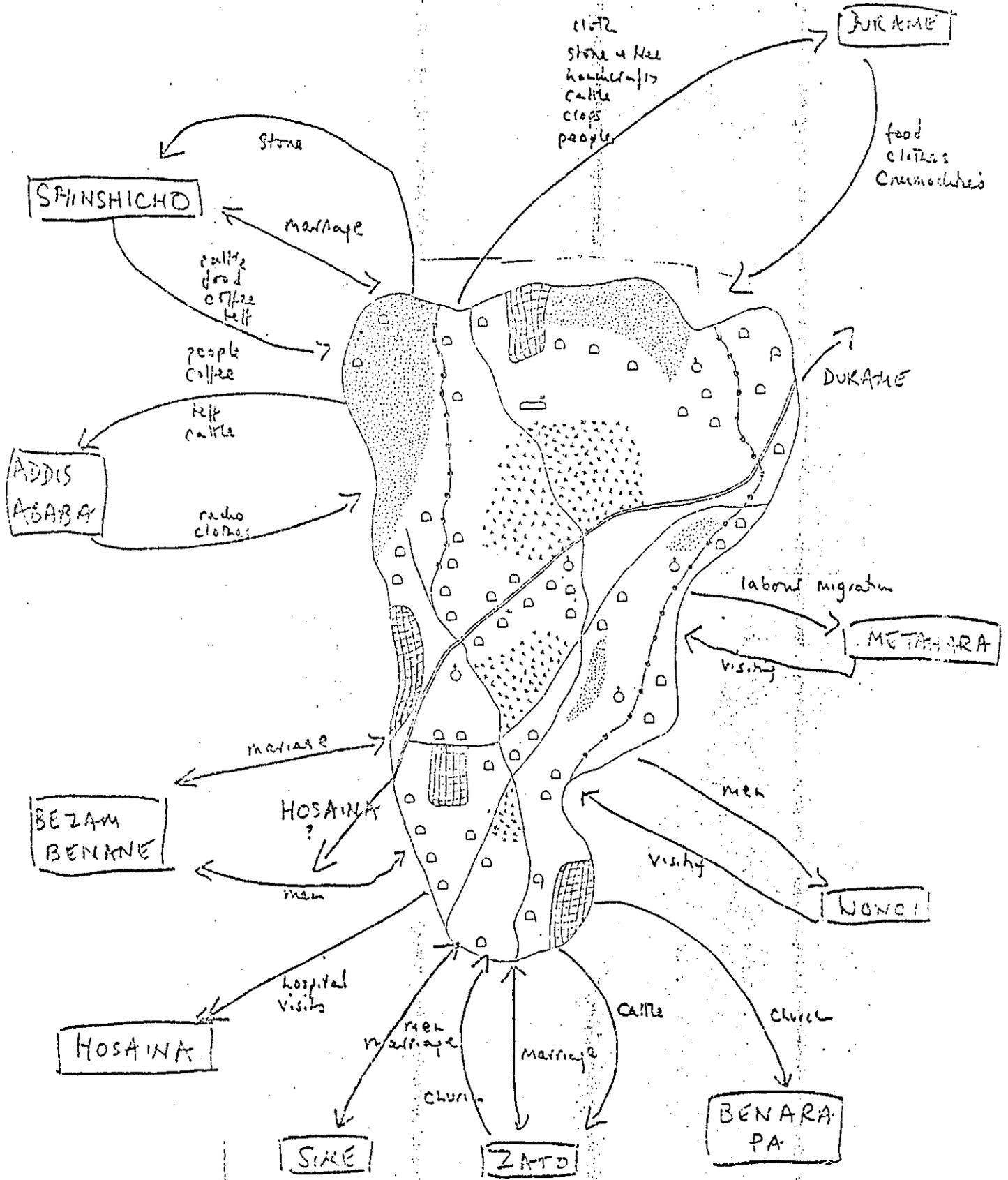
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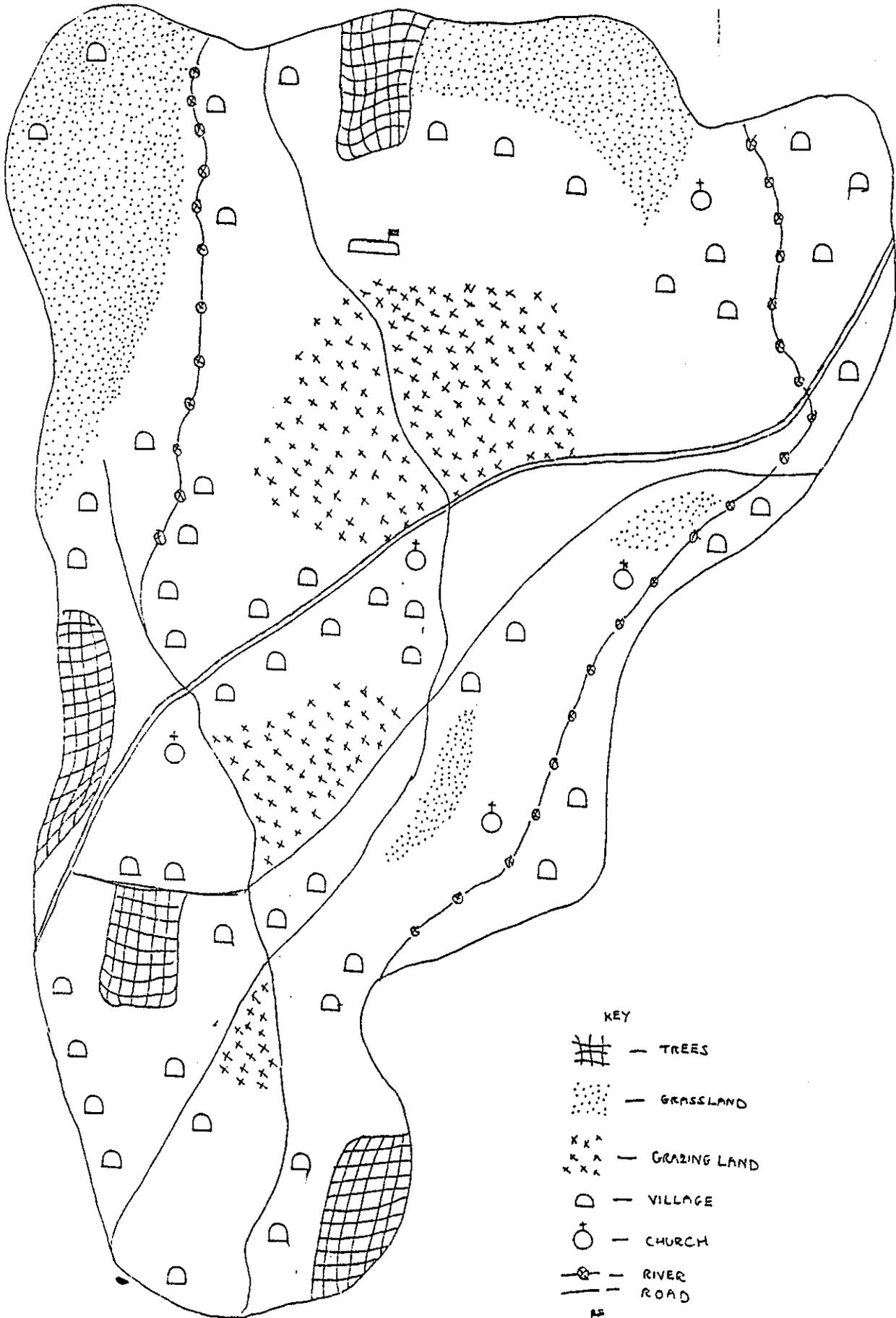
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AZE DESOAI
Kawulu





- KEY
-  - TREES
 -  - GRASSLAND
 -  - GRAZING LAND
 -  - VILLAGE
 -  - CHURCH
 -  - RIVER
ROAD
 -  - SCHOOL

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1. Locating the Site in Time and Space

Geographical Location and Population

Aze Debo'a is one of the 37 Peasant Associations (PAs) in Kedida Gamela *Woreda* in the Kembata, Alaba and Timbaro zone. The administrative capital is Durame. The altitude of the *woreda* ranges from 1700 to 3028 m above sea level and 30% of soil is reddish, 50% brown, 14% grey and 6% clay. The extent of degradation has been classified as high.

Aze Debo'a is a PA located 4 km from Durame and about 359kms south west of Addis Ababa. Kembata is one of the most densely populated areas of the country. In 1983 the population density was estimated to be 300 people per square km. The total population of Aze Debo'a including the landless (according to information from MoA) is estimated to be 6443 with males numbering 2478 and women 3965. Though the PA office do not have an exact record of the total population they reported that the number of females is much higher than the number of males. Among the reasons mentioned are the war during the *Derg's* time and migration, which is more common among men than women. The total number of households in the PA is 843 and 60 of these are female-headed. The main language spoken on the site is Kembategna, but most people also speak Amharic.

Politically Aze Debo'a is part of the Kembata, Alaba and Tambaro zone which is composed of three somewhat related and yet different ethnic groups. The zone is administered under the Southern Ethiopia Regional Government.

There are two stories about the ethnic makeup of the PA. The earlier reported that the main ethnic group living in the site is Kembata followed by Amhara. Around 60 of the households in Aze Debo'a are Amharas. A later report claims that the PA is occupied only by members of the Kembata ethnic group. We do not know if one of these reports is wrong, or whether maybe the Amharas left between reports. There are no reports of ethnic conflict in the PA itself. But people who were dislocated because of ethnic conflicts from Arssi, Illubabor, Gojam and Keffa; and government employees who lost their jobs (in Haraghe, Bale and Arssi) because of their inability to speak the regional languages have come back to Aze Debo'a PA.

Intermarriage between Kembata and Amharas is common. Holidays observed include the majority of the inhabitants. Protestant Christians celebrate only the national holidays (such as Christmas, Easter, Epiphany, etc.) but the Orthodox Christians celebrate St. Gabriel, St Michael, Abo, St Mary and Kidane Meheret.

Climate

The rainy season is between January and September (see calendar in the Appendix). The average rainfall of Aze Debo'a varies from 1200 to 1350 mm, with the maximum rainfall from June to September and the minimum rainfall from December to January. Temperature varies from a high of 26 degree C to a low of 18 degree C. The coldest it gets is in June. During the rainy season problems of soil erosion and floods are caused by the rain. During the rainy season people also suffer from a shortage of firewood. The PA is not cut off from the town during the rainy season, nor are there any problems due to heat.

Infrastructure

The main asphalt road from Addis Ababa to Wolayitta passes 12 kms from Durame and 19 kms from Aze Debo'a. The PA office is about 4kms south of Durame (zonal city) and the PA ends at about 7kms from this city.

Production

The production system is based mainly on traditional ways of farming and there is a severe scarcity of land. As a result of this the area suffers from a crop deficit. However, people try as much as possible to produce enough food for the family by optimal usage of the scarce land available. Kedida Gamela *Woreda* as a whole and Aze Debo'a PA grow *tef*, barley, wheat, *dagussa* (finger millet), maize,

sorghum, horsebeans, haricot beans, field peas, *enset*, coffee, oranges, bananas, avocados, sugar cane and *chat* among permanent crops. They also grow vegetable crops such as cabbage, onion, potato, pepper and others. At the PA level coffee is the main cash crop, followed by *tef*. However, at the *woreda* level chili pepper may be the most important cash crop.

A groups of informants described changes in crops grown in the area since 1925. Before 1925 people grew *tef*, cow peas, beans, maize and sugarcane. In 1925 a few people grew coffee and *enset* and 1 person planted trees. Sweet potatoes were introduced in about 1925. New wheat was introduced by the Italians. By 1944 many people were planting trees. Avocado were introduced in 1985. No-one grows cowpeas any more because of aphids.

Social Structure

Relationships Among Social Variables in Kembata

	kin	neigh- bours	friends	traditional authorities	local gov- ernment	private enterprises	NGOs	churche s
access to labour	*	VI	I	*	*	*	*	*
access to land	VI	UI	SI	I	VI	*	*	*
access to credit	I	I	VI	UI	*	*	*	*
access to information	I	VI	VI	I	I	*	*	I
access to trade	I	I	VI	UI	*	*	*	*
access to employment	I	*	I	UI	VI	I	I	I
social security	VI	VI	VI	VI	VI	*	*	VI

Key: I=important; VI= very important; UI= unimportant
SI=slightly important ; *= the relationship could not be decided

Source: *Ato Seyoum and Ato Philipos* in conversation with Data Dea

Kembata is a society composed of several exogamous patrilineal clans each of which has a distinct clan name. They are predominantly sedentary agriculturists, cultivating *enset* and some grains, permanent crops and vegetables. Because of *enset* cultivation, which is carried out in close proximity to the residence, closely clustered villages predominate through out the area.

Each clan comprises an independent structural unit. Some of the clans trace descent or some blood relationship with neighbouring ethnic groups such as Oromo, Wolayitta, Hadiya, Dawaro, Gurage, Amhara and others. Nonetheless, this does not have any significance in creating different feelings of identity or conflicts among them. The community is tied together by the domination of the *Oyeta* clan (the ruling clan) over the entire system. The *Oyeta* migrated from Gondar sometime during the reign of Emperor Fasil and joined the original seven clans on the slope of Mount Ambaricho. Kembatas trace seventeen generations to Fasil in order to legitimise their position within modern Ethiopia and justify their rights as members of the royal clan.

In the community there has not been any ethnic conflict, though there has been some conflict (though minor) with neighbouring ethnic groups. Though there has not been serious ethnic conflict in the

area the Kembatas are seriously affected by ethnic conflicts in other parts of the countries. As a result of such conflicts numerous Kembatas have come back from Illubabor and Gojjam settlements and other parts of the country. Most of these people are now landless. Though a few obtained some land from the PA or from their relatives they are making a living by small-scale trade, shared ploughing, and off-farm activities such as carpentry. Some migrated to other places to look for jobs. In general, they lead a miserable life and many are dependent on relatives and on other people.

History

Kembata has a tradition of state organization over a long period of time. It was administered by local kings before Menelik II's conquest and in the immediate pre-Menelik period Kembata had a local constitution which was headed by the last Kembata king (*Woma*) Dilbato Dagoye. He had a traditional constitutional advisor called *Ashena*. The kingship in Kembata used to run in the family and the whole pattern and system was disturbed after the conquest of Menelik II.

The Kembata were defeated in 1892 and the Amhara superstructure was imposed over the tribal organization. This meant the end of kingship and the beginning of a new political and socio-economic era, characterized above all by the *gabbar* system. The inhabitants were allotted as bondsmen of the state (*gabbar*) to military colonialists (*neftenya* = gun bearer) from the north and were obliged to pay taxes in kind and perform *corvee*-like services.

However Singer (1980) argued that all this did not penetrate into the Kembata life as deeply as has been reported. Very little of the Kembata way of life was disturbed by the Amhara. The Amhara were looking for land and the Kembata had very little to offer. Therefore the Amhara did not settle there as they did in other places and did not have much contact with the indigenous population. Even with the move towards centralized rule in the nineteenth century many of the component clans in the overall Kembata political system still maintained their own identity, language and traditional beliefs. However, in the process of modernization the Kembatas lost some of their indigenous religious beliefs. For instance, some functions of the *Maganacho*, as a stabilising force in the settling of disputes, was lost due to missionary religion and modern education. Some norms and customs are disappearing and some have already died. This is even more true of the religion. Since all Kembata have become Christian in the 20th century, their old religion can now be only fragmentarily reconstructed.

Among the major events which affected the site during the *Derg* regime were the land reform, resettlement, the literacy campaign, and military service (war), to mention the major ones. As a result of the land reform a number of people who were tenants, and some who owned disproportionately little land, were allotted land. At the same time some lost all or part of their land. This affected the social relationships among people in such a way that there has been reciprocal hostility between the people who lost land and those who received it.

The literacy campaign in particular and education policy in general are one of the most appreciated activities of the *Derg* in the area. People feel that the *Derg* did its best in this respect and that it liberated many people from illiteracy and laid strong foundations for education. In 1975, the *Derg* started national service. They took the children who could assist their elders on the farms to the war front. Military service was the worst aspect of the *Derg's* activities in the area. People were forced to fight unwillingly. This seriously affected the area by taking away the most able members of the society from production to destruction (war). People hate the *Derg* for its war-like behaviour more than anything else. In 1985, as part of the *Derg's* resettlement policy, people were taken to Illubabor and Gojjam, some willingly and some by force. These people lost their previous base and they later lost the land on which they settled. Some also lost their whole family. In general it added to the problems of the area. However, there are some interviewees who argued that it was meant to help the people, but it turned out to be a failure.

People also highly abhor the *Derg* for its harsh tax policy, which discouraged the farmers from producing more, because producing more meant being susceptible to more tax.

Almost all of these things changed after the transfer of power from the *Derg* to the Transitional Government. War and military recruitment stopped; resettlement ceased. Most government policies have changed. Some are still in the process of change, but their effect has not yet been felt clearly. Since the end of the *Derg* the regional power structure has also changed. For instance PA officials have lost

power in relation to the community elders. During the *Derg* traditional institutions were all weakened and PA officials had almost absolute power in relation to elders. However, now the elders have become very influential backed by a cultural revival. *Reda*, the committee of elders for the Kembata, is active and very strong.

Some major hardships were reported to have occurred during the last 10 years. The first one was the 1985 famine when people suffered a lot. During this famine people had to sell their cattle to purchase food. Some people had to beg. Some even died of hunger, though nobody could tell the exact number.

In 1988 heavy rain destroyed many houses and farm crops. Two people died, three houses collapsed, and the rain destroyed the farm fields of about 70 households. In 1993 similar floods completely destroyed the crops of about 50 households. This affected about 466 households, though no deaths were reported. In 1994 another flood affected the farms of about 50 households. Because of the terrain flooding is a frequent hardship that people suffer repeatedly.

In 1994 famine once again seriously affected the area and many people died of hunger and famine-related problems. A lot of people sold most of their cattle to buy food. The PA officials estimated that many people sold about 50% of their cattle. In 1994 army worm also affected the area.

2. Seasonal Activities and Events

The following calendars can be found in the Appendix: crop activities (men and women); off-farm activities (men and women); migration; credit needs (men and women); livestock sales and diseases; water and fuel availability; rain; festivals; labour (men, women, girls, boys); consumption and hungry season; diseases; and pests.

Key features include migration to sugar factories Awasa State Farm in October, to Awasa for weeding maize in May and June, and other migration at different times; a hungry season when there is only *enset* between January and May; a need for credit on the part of men between February and September, and by women between June and September; and more time spent water collecting in December and January and June.

3. The Farm Economy

Crops

The total land area of Kedida Gamela *Woreda* is divided into 7% highland (*Dega*) and 93% *Weyna Dega* (sub-tropical climate). From the *woreda* population, about 25% live in the highlands and the remaining 75% are settled in the *Weyna Dega* areas. Perennial crops grown by the PA include coffee (33 ha), *enset* (211 ha), banana (3 ha), sugar cane (2 ha), orange (2 ha), avocado (0.5 ha), hops (1 ha) and *chat* (3 ha).

Other crops grown include maize (24 ha), sorghum (6 ha), *tef* (173 ha), barley (58 ha), wheat (130 ha), finger millet (*dagusa* 6 ha), beans (16 ha), peas (9 ha), haricot beans (2 ha), linseed (0.5 ha), potatoes (5 ha), sweet potato (22 ha), garlic (5 ha), and taro (*godere*) (1 ha). Soil generally needs fertilizer. It is a deficit production area and most people buy additional food for consumption.

The farming activities for both men and women are depicted in the Appendix.

Inter-cropping is common in the area as it helps farmers produce more on their land. For instance maize is intercropped with beans, peas with beans, sorghum with maize, maize with haricot beans, and so on.

There are two production seasons, *belg* and *meher*. People feel that on the average this year's harvest is fairly good; however, they do not consider it very good, but only average. When compared to last year's harvest, this year's is lower in output. (Later, it was reported that 1994 was a famine year). People reported that there was a good harvest last year because there was regular rainfall and good weather conditions in general. Thus, 1993 was considered good year for the community.

For a male household head there are a number of farm management decisions. The first one is what to plant. This is a key issue because there is scarcity of land and people need to plan carefully to get the

maximum out of minimum land. What comes next is whether to use fertilizer or not. These days it has become a norm to use fertilizer but it has become expensive. When to plough depends on the crop calendar, how much to sell depends on how much surplus is obtained and where to sell is not problematic since market places are limited. In general, according to the above informants, these decisions are made by a male household head but often he consults his wife and is influenced by her ideas and suggestions.

Women have started to participate in those agricultural activities such as harvesting, threshing, weeding, etc, that were supposed to be men's tasks. The traditional tasks of women include coffee picking, *enset* scraping, cooking, and the marketing of milk products (after processing the milk), food items, and *enset* products. Men market coffee, cereals, and livestock.

Farmers sell eucalyptus trees, hops (*gesho*), *chat*, *kocho* (from the *enset* plant) and coffee beans for additional income. Maize, wheat and other crops are sold at times to cover minor expenses.

Various crop diseases affect the area. The major problem as reported by farmers is frost. As indicated by the *woreda* MoA crop diseases in the area include rust, smut, bacterial wilt, and insect pests such as bean aphids, pea aphids, ladybirds, and others.

Livestock

The common livestock in the area include cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, horses, mules and poultry. Cattle are reared for oxen to plough, for milk and butter, for dung, meat and for cash, and also as status symbols. Goats, sheep and poultry are for sale (as a source of cash) and meat. Horses are for riding. Mules are used for riding and transporting loads. Both horses and mules symbolize high status. Donkeys are for carrying loads. Except for the decrease in the number of livestock holdings per household no major change in livestock holdings was reported to have occurred in recent years. The livestock in Kedida Gamela and Aze Debo'a was reported by the *Woreda* MoA as :

Major livestock diseases in the area include anthrax, black-leg, pneumonia, mastitis, internal parasites and external parasites (*Woreda* MoA Office). No epizootics were reported to have attacked livestock in the PA. When the mentioned livestock diseases attack some cattle individually, there have been veterinary services and also traditional treatments. At times vaccination has also been provided by MoA agents. The PA has access to cross-bred livestock from the *Mekane Yesus* church.

	Kadida Gamela <i>Woreda</i>	Aze Debo'a PA
Cattle	79100	2900
Sheep	11000	500
Goats	8000	150
Donkeys	6700	30
Horses	900	5
Mules	950	15
Poultry	48200	2000

As a cultural practice *Kembata* in general keep livestock in their houses i.e. livestock and people live in one house. Sometimes in tin-roofed houses livestock have their own room. The reasons for this practice of keeping of cattle in the same house are that the number of livestock kept by one household head are few (3-4 on the average) and people give extraordinary care to these. The practice of mixed

farming where both crop farming and livestock rearing are managed by the same man might have also contributed to this. People did not report any time in the past 10 years when livestock were particularly profitable for any reason.

Farmers sell eggs, butter and cheese but not milk for additional income.

Land

The total land size of Aze Debo'a is 1012 ha with grazing land amounting to 92 ha, forest 130 ha, other uses including roads, dwellings, river, school, unused land, etc., to 77 ha and agricultural land amounting to 713 ha. During the early times, the largest land holding was about 4 *gasha* (160 ha) and the average size of holding was 4 *timad* (about 1 ha). Before the revolution, around 70% of the local population were estimated to be tenants. The land reform proclamation was implemented in 1975. Land size is small with an average size of holding being 0.83 ha and a minimum holding of 1 *timad* (about 0.25 ha) per household.

Before 1974 people used to obtain land through inheritance and/or purchase. With the seizure of power by the *Derg* in 1974 purchasing was officially prohibited; land was to be allocated by PA officials. This took place around 1978. Once this was put in practice the rule of inheritance was not disrupted. Concomitantly, until recently the PA officials used to allocate plots of land from public grazing land or forest areas to the landless. Even recently the PA officials allocated some plots of land to those who were displaced by ethnic conflict in various parts of the country.

Since 1968, land tax has increased. When the *Derg* came to power it was said that the rate per year would be 4 *birr*. But then it was raised to 7 *birr*, then to 20 *birr*. It later reached its peak of 150 to 200 *birr* per year which was a very large amount to be provided by a poor farmer. Before the *Derg*, tax was paid depending on the size of the land and the maximum payment for about 40 hectares (1*gasha*) of land was 30 *birr*. The minimum payment ranged from 4 to 6 *birr*.

The most obvious change in land holdings is the size of holdings which is decreasing at an unprecedented rate. People's holdings have become so small that some farmers have less than ¼ of a hectare. If the current trend continues it is very shocking to imagine what would happen after a few years. There are a lot of landless people in the PA. According to the PA officials, (though they do not have written statistics), there are about 230 households who are landless. Among these about 200 have managed to find a host family or somebody to depend on for some time. However, about 30 are absolutely landless. These landless people include: ex-soldiers, people from the Gojjam and Illubabor settlements, and those people who came back from various parts of the country as a result of ethnic conflict. As discussed above these people lead miserable lives.

Sons who want to marry have to plough their own land and have some produce, have to trade and have their own money, or engage in any work to get money to make preparations for marriage. Thus, physical preparation of learning to work and earn their own money and psychological preparation of readiness to take responsibility are expected of those who want to marry.

As for the price of an average holding of land, it is difficult to calculate in terms of money since land is not sold. However, some people estimated that 4 *timad* (roughly 1 hectare) is worth about 4000 *birr*. This seems a rather high price. People also reported that there is a practice of contracting (renting) land. The rent is commonly 100 *birr* for one *timad* (¼ ha) for one year. Sharecropping is also practised.

There are some women who own land in the PA. About 60 women in the PA were reported to head households. All these legally own land. Women own plots of land when (i) husbands die and children are too young, (ii) women are divorced and live on their fathers' land by getting some share, and (iii) when their fathers do not have male children.

The villagization programme was discouraged in the area since many farmers depended on permanent crops. There has not been any change since the new government's takeover.

Disputes over land are common. When such disputes arise they are resolved in three ways.

- a) Elders : the elders of the community play significant roles in resolving any conflict. The process begins when either of the conflicting parties appeals to the elders. Then the elders of a village assemble and discuss the issue. It is not usual to refuse the decision of elders. However, if anybody refuses to conform to the decision of elders, the elders became witnesses in the PA office or court

against the one who refused to abide by their decision and this significantly influences the decision of the PA or government courts.

- b) PA leadership: despite the pressure by elders to resolve disputes "peacefully", some disputes over land reach PA offices. The PA officials investigate the case and pass their own judgement.
- c) Government Court: a few cases, though not frequently, reach *woreda* courts or even higher. Often this is the result of an appeal after the decision of PA officials. Once a case reaches government courts at the *woreda* level strict legal procedures are followed.

This procedure of settlement of disputes over land applies to settlement of other disputes except for murder. In the case of murder the case goes directly to the government court.

Labour

At household level there are various major as well as minor tasks. The table below indicates who does what.

Task	Men	Women	Boys	Girls
Food Production	x		x	
Food Processing		x		x
Fetching water		x		x
Collecting fire wood	x		x	
Working on the farm (Ploughing, weeding, harvesting)	x		x	
Taking care of children	x	x	x	x
Taking care of cattle		x	x	x
Cleaning the house		x		x

Wage labour is not common in the area. This is because of the large family size and small farm size. When it is practised, it is the rich who employ the poor. A hired person is one who does not have enough land and people facing problems in general. Thus it designates low status. Though it is not despised outright, people do not appreciate working for somebody in their neighbourhood. They prefer to go somewhere else. There are various forms of labour sharing and exchange in the area.

- a) *Dawa* - this is like *debo*. It involves about 20 or more people. It is based on neighbourhood and mutual understanding. To get *dawa* performed, a farmer who has some work to be done asks his neighbours to join his *dawa*. He is supposed to prepare a good feast with a lot of things to eat and drink. Unless requested he is not obliged to work for the people who worked for him. Thus, reciprocity is not obligatory in this practice. This is disappearing now partly because people do not want to go to the trouble of preparing food and drink, (often people can not afford the expenses), and partly because people feel that there is a tendency of individualization in this generation which is in every body's heart (mind) which erodes the philosophy of cooperation.
- b) *Irfina kacho* - this is different from *dawa* in that a farmer who has something to be done gives the responsibility of gathering people to his son-in-law or any other close relative. What the former is supposed to do is simply prepare food and drink for people who will be working for him. The man

who takes the responsibility for gathering people, convinces 30-60 people and makes them work for the man who requested him to do so. Like *dawa* the man who receives an *irfina kacho* work group is not obliged to reciprocate unless asked. This is also weakening these days for reasons similar to those which weakened *dawa*.

- c) *Gezima* - this work group is composed of 6-10 persons. Reciprocity is a necessity here unlike *dawa* and *irfina kacho*. From 6-10 people form a work group and work for one member each day. The next day is reserved for another member until all the members receive similar work in turn. This practice still exists to some extent.
- d) *Bora wata* - this is pairing of oxen. Two farmers having an ox each, pair their oxen and plough turn by turn, until either or both of them terminate the oral contract. This is still strongly practised.
- e) *Kabita* - this is a sort of shared-ploughing where people pool resources. For instance one who has oxen works with one who has land, or one buys seed and fertilizer carries out shared ploughing with one who has land. Or one with labour may work on somebody's land. They share the produce equally. The frequency of this is increasing now because all the incoming landless have to plough somebody else's land for sharing.
- f) *Koda* - this refers only to sharing of a milking cow. What happens in *koda* arrangements is that two people own a cow. One of them rears the cow. When the cow starts giving milk the days are counted. The total number of months for which the cow is presumed to give milk is estimated. This is divided equally in two. During the first session the cow stays with the one who took care of it previously. Then the shareholder rears the cow for his turn to obtain the milk during the second session.

Except for *irfina kacho* which is based on kinship or lineage, all other arrangements are based on neighbourhood, mutual understanding and trust. People talk of changes in all these practices of cooperative labour sharing and exchanges. One farmer stated his observation that there is a general tendency for people towards more individualism in labour exchange in particular and in social life in general so that people prefer to eat, drink, trade, work etc individually rather than in groups, unlike previous generations which were highly group-oriented.

Interlinkages

There are a number of arrangements which link two or more people for common interest. These are addressed by general terms *bekencha*, *dorakencha* or *kebie* which have a more or less similar meaning. These *kebie* or *bekencha* or *dorakencha* refer to the general practice of exchange. Here the exchange is not simply giving and taking something. Rather it is pooling resources and investing and working together. For instance two people may contribute some amount of money each and trade together. In Kembata culture as people often plough together they also trade together. Somebody may have money but may not have time or skill, or labour to trade. On the contrary another may have the skill and time but no money. In this case the two match their respective resources and trade for a share of the profit. All these can be based on neighbourhood, mutual understanding and trust, kinship, or lineage, which may not be mutually exclusive.

Technology

In the late 1910's, the only agricultural tools used were plough and hoe. The farming technology is still rather traditional though some modern tools are being introduced. The main traditional implements are hoe and plough. Some changes introduced into this traditional system include sowing in rows and using fertilizers. Likewise storage methods are also traditional. Traditional *gotera* (storage bins) are made of wood, and there are also mini-stores in homes like big pots. The crops are transported from fields to stores by men, donkeys and mules. Extraordinary care is taken not to lose any portion of the crop

because it is valuable. As a result a very insignificant amount/proportion is lost between the field and storage.

As for transportation of fuel and wood, the same means of transport (men, donkey and mules) are used. Often the fuel for *kuraz* (kerosene) is not carried in bulk but is transported in small amounts (1 litre) by hand in small bottles. Wood is sometimes transported from the PA to the town by cars. For use usually men carry it. However, if the distance is great from home it is carried by donkey or mules. Carts are not common in the PA.

Concerning the technology women use for food processing, traditionally they use pottery artifacts which are slow-cooking. However, now there is a tendency to use iron saucepans and other aluminium implements. One woman commented that using iron cooking utensils saves time, energy and wood. Women also learned to build ovens which makes the cooking much easier than the traditional *midija*. Moreover, traditionally they used to grind grain manually using stones specially made for this. Now the introduction of mills has helped women considerably in grinding flour.

There is an all weather road that links Aze Debo'a with the outside world, the nearest towns, etc.

Innovations

The six most important innovations (according to one member of the society) include the introductions of: avocado, mango, banana, chickpeas, sweet potato, planting to conserve soil and new ways of ploughing, especially on *dagetama* (slopes).

1. Avocado:

The avocado is considered a body builder and a crop that motivates people. There was no avocado plant in the area before. It was introduced about 12 years ago since people thought it gives protein to the body. A farmer in the PA started it and is successful. All the farmers copied it and is presently found around all peasant's house. It also has a good market. Avocado is considered as a medicine.

2. Mango:

A woman who lives in Abonsa (located 9 km from Aze Debo'a) brought it to introduce it to her relatives in the village two years ago. It has not yet given fruit. Only one relative has planted it. The rest of the community are watching to see the success.

3. Banana:

This is a banana called *Wendo* banana as it was brought from Wendo Genet 6 years ago. It is a high yielder, preferred by consumers and easily marketable. It was first introduced by people who came from Wendo Genet, Sidamo and was copied by about 10 farmers who are always ready to do such things. The larger number of farmers did not copy it since they could not afford to buy the seedlings.

4. Sweet potato:

This is a new early maturing variety of sweet potato introduced by the MoA (agricultural extension) in 1985. It is very successful as it is ready for consumption in two and a half months. This innovation was copied by the few people who were lucky to be there when the MoA people came to distribute the new seedlings.

5. Planting to conserve soil:

This technology was started because of heavy rainfall experienced specially by those farmers who live on the hilly parts of the PA. This has been very successful in reducing high soil erosion and has been copied by 200 people, that is nearly all the people who reside in the hilly parts.

6. New ways of ploughing on hilly farms:

This innovation is being used by people whose farms are hilly in order to minimize soil erosion. It was introduced by the MoA in 1985 in order to prevent soil erosion. This was copied by about 100

farmers farming on the hilly areas.

The introduction of iron cooking utensils to reduce labour for women was a major change in women's labour which makes cooking much easier, faster and conserves fuel. Another interesting innovation by women is the use of ovens. There are a number of people who are always willing to experiment with new things. To mention a few:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Ato</i> Solomon Haile | 6. <i>W/o</i> Amarech Sodango |
| 2. <i>Ato</i> Yohannes Wakano | 7. <i>Ato</i> Hayile Bergiye |
| 3. <i>Ato</i> Yoel Kabato | 8. <i>Ato</i> Petros Jaffe |
| 4. <i>W/o</i> Ermo Kalebo | 9. <i>Ato</i> Tesfaye Madebo |
| 5. <i>W/o</i> Beke | 10. <i>W/o</i> Abebech Haile |

Common Property Resources

The common property resources in the area are water, community grazing land, forestry for firewood and construction and roads. People have almost equal access to these. There are no rules as such which regulate the management of these resources. At times the PA leaders issue some regulations but often these are not lasting. People commonly use resources according to their traditional rules. The amount of public grazing lands and forests are ever decreasing. The major reason for this was allocation of a portion of these lands to the landless people by PA officials. Concerning theft, there are reported problems of theft and even banditry at times. But these are aimed at privately owned property rather than common resources.

Environment

Erosion and floods which wash off the fertile top soil and even damage crops are common in the area. At some 3-4 kms to the north of the PA office there is a hilly area and a fieldworker observed people practice farming on the hilly area to prevent erosion (which was described under *Innovations*). However, around the PA office which is flat people seem desperate that they can do very little to protect this field from the floods which come from the hill and are powerful. In order to protect the land from minor erosion people practice loose traditional terraces. They also plant some trees and grass around the farm field.

Forests have been plundered. In particular, trees in the publicly owned lands have been almost completely destroyed because they were nobody's responsibility. However, there are a significant number of privately owned trees in the area. Soil fertility in the earliest days (1925) was good. Respondents suggested that in 1984 soil fertility changed because of changes in climatic conditions. Soil fertility was reported to be greatly decreasing and as a result production per plot is declining. The reasons stated include soil erosion, weather change, repeated utilization of the same land without fallowing, and the increase in the price of fertilizer. Farmers try their best to enhance the fertility of the soil by the application of dung and fertilizer, crop rotation, leaving crop residues on the field and to some extent timely and proper ploughing and hoeing. One respondent also said that while commercial fertilizers and manure were used to counter the decline in soil fertility, fertility is declining now since the plots are used to fertilizers.

There was a shortage of fertilizer during the *Derg* period however, there is an ample stock of fertilizers currently. During the previous time credit for the purchase of fertilizer was extended and the price was lower (96 *birr* per 50 kg). Distribution was also done through the Service Cooperative which is disbanded. Distribution is, presently, done by the MoA and an Amalgamated Company supplies fertilizer to the farmers. The price has gone up to 150 *birr* for 50 kgs; and, until recently, no formal credit was extended. These factors made the use of fertilizers unaffordable.

4. Off-farm Income Activities

Within the Community

People try as far as possible to supplement their farm income by other means. Small-scale trade is the first to be mentioned. People trade coffee, clothes and beverages such as local *areki*, *tella*, *borde*. Only women sell beverages. One observer said that little brewing is done at present, since most people do not drink now for religious reasons. Some people sell firewood. Others engage in carpentry and hairdressing. Women play a significant role in supplementing the family income. They are free to some extent to spend the money they earn in any way they like. However, they also have to consult their husbands on matters of bigger expenses, even though it is their money.

Occupational Structure

There are various occupations in the area which include among the traditional ploughing on the farm, trading, pottery, tanning, carpentry, supplying stone for construction (masonry), traditional handicrafts like *tilf* and *jiba* (traditional carpets), brewing, baking *injera*, and basketmaking. Modern occupations include trading, teaching, driving, building, health service work, and agricultural extension.

Migration

Nearly 50% of the households of Aze Debo'a have members who temporarily migrate to far off areas. Migration to other areas for various purposes is one of the most common phenomena in the area. People constantly move to various parts of the country to trade and/or to search for jobs. Commonly out-migration takes place at the end of September. Usually migrants return after a year. There are various deviations from this. Places like Harar, Wonji, Wolkite, Negele, Shashamene, and Wondo are potential areas of migration.

Migrants go to Metahara and Wongi sugar factories often as daily labourers to cut sugarcane. This takes place at any time in the year. They can earn 6 *birr* a day and have a very good chance of employment between October and June. They go to Siraro State Farm in Arssi and Kedi Shamena State Farm as day labourers. The migration to Wolkite takes place in September and April to plant and harvest maize for private farmers. They migrate to Alaba Kulito to harvest or plant peppers for private farmers. This also takes place in April, March, December, January and July. The length of stay in any of the places depends on the kind of job migrants secure, satisfaction they get and their individual conditions at home. Based on these people may come back within a few months or they may stay for more than a year. This migration applies only to those who are not better educated and who do not have money to trade. Otherwise there are a number of people who have modern professional jobs and there are a lot of people who are car owners, or trade from Addis Ababa, Dire Dawa and other places.

Recent reports from the site suggest that the regionalization policy has affected migratory activities in the PA. A respondent suggested that it has become the cause for displacement of peasants and skilled and unskilled labour from all parts of the country (such as Shashemene, Metekle, Illubabor). Many people who used to go to work in different regions now no longer do so; the chances of moving from your own zone for a job are very low. However according to one respondent many people still migrate to the Metahor and Wongi sugar plantations to look for work.

5. Reproductive Activity

House Management:

As stated by the household heads the main tasks involved in house management are coordinating agricultural work, giving proper instruction ("job descriptions") to family members and supervising their execution, taking care and protecting the family, and controlling the family resources. These are the responsibilities of the household head.

Then, each member has to perform certain tasks. For instance, a wife has to wake up between 6 to 6:30. Then

Prepare breakfast	roughly 1-2 hrs
Cut grass	½ hr
Milk the cow (if any)	20 minutes
Clean the house	5-10 minutes
Prepare lunch	2½ hrs
Carry dung outside	½ hr
Cut grass again	½ hr
Collect dinner	1-2 hrs
Go to market	1-2 hrs
Prepare dinner	2 hrs
Wash children	20-30 minutes
Milk the cow	20-30 minutes

This is a rough list of major activities of women. In any case a wife will be busy from 14-18 hours a day starting from 6 or 6:30 in the morning to 12 midnight.

The husband usually wakes up between 7-8. Then he gives instructions to all concerned family members. He starts working on the farm usually after breakfast (sometimes they start earlier) He may stop at about 4-5 in the evening. As compared to women, men spend fewer hours working. However, one woman noted a change saying that these days husbands have become understanding and cooperative and share much of the wife's workload. Hence the workload of women seems to have decreased. Children have to be busy in helping the father on the farm and the mother with house activities, collecting wood, fetching water and cleaning the house and some other tasks.

Fuel and Lighting:

The community's main source of lighting is the *kuraz* which uses kerosene. Firewood from privately owned trees and some manure (not dung cakes) are used for cooking.

Water

Water is abundant in the PA. There are two all weather rivers i.e. Dembe which is 15 minutes walking distance from the centre of the PA and relatively clean; and Markos which is 18 minutes walking distance. The River Korowa dries up during the *belg* season (January to April) while it has a good flow during the *kiremt* season. It is located only 5 minutes walking distance. The village is also served for its water needs by the streams of Chanicho (15 minutes walk), Lebesie (Bunte Lega) (10 minutes walking distance), and Yegaso (15 minutes walking distance). There are also piped water points. One was provided by the Kalehiwot church in 1989. Another was provided by the Catholic church in 1991. With or without piped water people do not spend hours fetching water. However, the pipe is important as a source of clean water. See also the calendar at the end of the profile.

Sanitation

According to the PA leaders people are increasingly becoming accustomed to latrine usage. Though they do not have exact figures, the PA leaders estimated that about 30 percent of the total population have latrines. However, other people the fieldworker interviewed during the field work estimated the number of people with latrines to be higher than the PA leaders' estimate. People reported that latrines were introduced to the PA in 1975 by the "Development Through Cooperation Campaign" agents.

Fertility

Kembata women have an average of eight children with a maximum of 14. Male children are highly desired especially as security for parents in their old age and for labour. This preference is related to the fact that male children carry the lineage further and stay in the family. Female children stay in their father's lineage but their offspring become that of their husband and therefore, they are lost to the father's lineage.

The fieldworker was told by a number of people, including the health officers, that women are giving birth to more children now than previously. People were resistant to family planning earlier on because of religious influences. However, some people believe that it seems that the attitude now is changing because of the efforts of the family planning office, the effects of famine, the land problem, and other practical problems. Both men and women seem convinced that family planning is necessary and some husbands complained that the women do not practice the advice they receive from family planning. However, there are a number of women from the PA who use family planning, although this does not mean that family planning services have been disseminated to the desired degree. Nonetheless, there is an improvement.

Though infertile women are not numerous, there are a few women who are believed to be infertile. When this happens the marriage may end in divorce. However, the majority remain married without children. It is believed that only women can be infertile (sterile) and not men. Infertility in men is not known or understood. There is no traditional or modern treatment for infertility other than religious prayer.

Childbirth and Child Care

Pregnant women are cared for as much as possible. However, according to some women the care is not sufficient. Both during pregnancy and at times of childbirth they have to perform certain household tasks. They fetch water, and engage in even heavier work. However, this refers to poor women who are burdened with loads of poor life. There is considerable difference between the rich and poor in maternal care. A rich man's wife interviewed responded that for the first six months during pregnancy they do not do any heavy work to for fear of miscarriage. They believed that they will face an abortion if they do any heavy work until the fetus is six months old. After that also the rich are given much care. This care comes first and foremost from their husbands.

The duration of rest after childbirth and the time to resume work depends again on economic status. It was reported by a woman that a rich man's wife may not resume work for about two months after childbirth. However, the poor may resume work within 15 days. Between the two extremes there are many possibilities. Culturally, it is looked down upon if a woman resumes work too soon. The husband is despised if he does not give expected care to his wife during the period after childbirth. This is the cultural rule to pressurize husbands to care for their wives during pregnancy and after childbirth. But he cannot help it if he cannot afford to lose her labour and there are a significant number of women who are poorly treated as a result of economic hardships.

In Kembata culture having a child is appreciated and having a male child is more valued than having a female child. This is shown first in how the birth is announced i.e. how the child is received by the women who attend the birth. The women announce the birth of a child by *Ililta* (a sound of thanksgiving and expressing happiness). The news is announced not by words but by the *ililta* of the women who attend the birth. The men learn about the sex of the baby simply by counting the *ililta*. If it is male, women shout *elilili* eight times, and if it is a female only four times.

This magic of eight and four is repeated in the preparation of the bed for the woman who gave birth. If it is a male child the mother's bed is made of 8 pieces of *enset* and if it is a female it is made of only 4 pieces. Why it is 8 and 4 and why it is half for girls or double for boys is not well explained. People said that this is what they inherited from their forefathers. One person joked that only the forefathers can answer the question.

Socialization

Local experts are those who perform their duties very well. They include those who consult with the MoA and know how to conserve soil; those who have good relations with the church; and those who know what to do during emergencies. Working hard qualifies them as experts because experience enables them to know a lot of things.

Qualities desirable in men (according to men respondents) are intelligence, cleverness at administration, being a hard worker, generally being educated and natural cleverness even without going to school. Children are not born with these qualities, rather it is practice which makes them clever. Children will learn these qualities if fed well. If they get good, they can develop all these good qualities. The traits considered undesirable in males include theft and drinking alcoholic drinks. If they start drinking while children they cannot think well. The most desirable quality in men, according to women interviewed, is good leadership.

The desirable qualities for women are neatness, being able to make good crafts, being a good cook, etc. These qualities are learned from families and neighbours. Girls are taught these qualities by first showing them and then asking them to practise. Undesirable traits in woman include not obeying their parents, not obeying the husband and parents, committing adultery, etc. A successful farmer's wife is one who is economical and not extravagant and agrees with what he says. A particular skill includes getting permission from her husband for whatever she wants to do. She also develops the habit of serving coffee to her husband at night and helps on the farm.

The technical skill that is respected most is knowing how to farm well. Being a potter (man) or a carpenter are not respected in the society according to the women interviewed. The most respected social skill is being a good bargainer. A successful farmer is one who has money, wealth, oxen, a bigger plot to use his money and labour, and works hard. The skill a successful farmer has is ploughing, and planting at the right time helps him to become successful.

The local conception of intelligence is expressed in terms of personality traits such as hard work, physical strength, bargaining skill, mediation ability and sincerity. A man who works hard is labelled intelligent. A man who wins in anything like fighting is highly appreciated. A man who is a good mediator in resolving disputes is highly respected as intelligent. Likewise, one who can bargain or negotiate is also considered to be intelligent. Subjectively different people consider different traits to qualify people as intelligent based on their personal belief or attitude towards the specific traits. Hard work, negotiation, mediation, and strength are considered for men; hard work, good house management, economic, cooking skill, taking care of husband and children, and good social relationships are considered for women; and obeying the rules of parents and these days school results are considered for children in evaluating their intelligence.

Education

Aze Debo'a Government Primary School: numbers of pupils and teachers

		<i>grade 1</i>	<i>grade 2</i>	<i>grade 3</i>	<i>grade 4</i>	<i>grade 5</i>	<i>grade 6</i>	<i>Total</i>
pupils		94	57	76	47	68	49	391
teachers	7	11	13	17	11	14	33	
classes		4	2	2	2	2	2	14

source: field interview

There are shortages of chalk, pens and desks. They are building more classrooms. There is a school within 1.5 kms of the site run by the Mekane Yesus Church.

Mekane Yesus School: numbers of pupils and teachers

	<i>grade 1</i>	<i>grade 2</i>	<i>grade 3</i>	<i>grade 4</i>	<i>grade 5</i>	<i>grade 6</i>	<i>grade 7</i>	<i>grade 8</i>	<i>Total</i>
pupils	100	74	73	60	114	67	122	115	725
teachers	7	7	7	9	9	9	9	16	
classes	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	12

Source: field interview

The school has no shortages of anything. It operates two shifts. Grades 1-1 are free; grade 3 costs 2 *birr*; grade 4 costs 3 *birr*; grade 5 costs 4 *birr*; and grade 6 costs 5 *birr*. A pupil pays 10 - 15 *birr* for pencils, stationery, etc and 1 *birr* for book rent. Students from poor families are exempt.

According to local informants there are 387 students from the PA going to primary school at present. They go to Durame town for their junior secondary and secondary education, a distance of about 4.5 km. The school has 1522 pupils in grades 7-12. A total of 52 students went to Junior Secondary school in Durame last year of which 17 were girls. Subjects covered include: Amharic, English, Mathematics, Science, Agriculture, Home Economics, Sport, Art, Kembata (language) and Music.

Education has been part of Kembata culture for long time. Thus parents used to send most of their children to school. However, these days some parents can only send some children to school and keep others at home for various reasons. In such cases, among the criteria used by parents to decide which children should go to school are: age, physical strength and the school performance of children. Age and physical strength are often considered to go together so that older children specially those who are approaching the age of marriage (girls in particular) are not given priority in schooling. Likewise, physically strong male children who can assist parents in work are preferred at home while those who do not have physical strength to help parents (younger children) are given priority in schooling. Better performing children in school results are given priority than those performing below average.

About 25% of the school-going age group in the community are at primary school and another 25% of the community is attending secondary school. It is very important to be able to read, write and do sums in Kembata. Even old men like to get a chance to learn how to read and write. There is a proverb, "education is our factory" to show the importance of education in the community.

According to a group of women, about 50% of the girls are at primary school. But after completing their primary education, most of them will not go to secondary school. They said about 33% of the girls in this community are attending junior secondary school. Very few of them go to secondary school. Education at primary school is directed towards work. After completion they become idle. At church school they learn God's words, and they try to follow good manners, such as respecting elderly people, and parents. They learn to stop bad habits. Elementary education is helpful to become a better farmer. Particularly, the education from the church school helps a lot.

There are a lot of high school leavers in the PA. At the moment they assist their parents in farming. Some have left the area to search for jobs. A few also trade. Those few who attended college are all employed except one student who graduated college this year. He is spending his vacation with his parents.

Training

There are some people who have participated in some kinds of training. Among these are a birth attendant, a health attendant, and a "veterinarian". The traditional birth attendant participated in a 3 months birth attendance training. She is now giving the service. Two men participated in a six month training in health service. One of them is applying his skill to some extent. The other stopped for lack of budget. One man (now the PA chairman) attended a six month training course in veterinary services. But he is not giving any service for lack of a budget.

Health

In Kembata, as in any other area in Ethiopia, it is common to see sick people first trying some traditional treatments before going to the clinic. For headache, influenza, stomachache, and a few other diseases people treat themselves at home, unless the disease gets serious. Among the treatments are garlic, lemon, salt, herbs and so on. A health centre (Yetena Kela) is planned for the community but now people get service from a government health centre in Durame and a private health clinic in Durame, 4.5km distance from the PA. Transport costs 2 *birr* and the initial consulting fee at the government clinic is 0.50 *birr*. The clinic has no doctor or nurse and is open 29 hours a week. It has an irregular supply of antibiotics and a regular supply of malaria drugs and polio and measles vaccines. A course of antibiotics costs 6 *birr* and a course of malaria treatment costs 0.5 *birr*. There is a minimum supply of sterile needles and bandages, sterilizing equipment, and cooling storage without backup. There is a pharmacy in Durame.

The nearest hospital is located in Hosaina, 70 km from Aze Debo'a. Transport costs 10 *birr*. The hospital in Hosaina was built with contributions made by the people of Kembata and Hadiya. However, after the new demarcation, Kembata and Hadiya is divided into Kembata and Hadiya with different capitals. Hosaina has become the capital of Hadiya and Durame the capital of Kembata. The people of Kembata (Aze Debo'a included) complain about lack of access to the health facility they put up together. (This hospital was named after Mengistu Haile Mariam and subsequently changed its name to Kembata and Hadiya hospital. It is now known as Hadiya hospital.) There is no hospital in the Kembata region.

A group of men ranked diseases as problems as follows: cancer, ascaris, kidney problems, amoeba, gastritis, typhoid, malaria (yellow fever), asthma (breathing problems), headache, tapeworm, eye sight problem, teeth diseases and *kurtimat*..

A group of women ranked diseases as problems as follows: cancer; kidney problems; cold disease (pneumonia?); ascaris; malaria; amoeba and headache.

For children the diseases ranked by a group of women as diseases include: amoeba; ascaris; teeth problems and the common cold.

A calendar in the Appendix gives information on when the groups said these diseases are most prevalent.

Two groups were asked about the seriousness and causes of diseases.

Cancer: The women's group said cancer was mainly caused by heavy work loads and not eating enough food. Eating eggs, butter, and going to clinics and getting the necessary medicines are the main treatments. If the disease is not cured, about 15% will go to the hospital.

The men's group said cancer is caused by lack of keeping the surroundings clean; throwing rubbish all over the place and urinating everywhere. They try to prevent the disease by burning rubbish and keeping themselves warm. If they get the disease, they will go to the Catholic clinic (Wota clinic). If they don't get better a few (about 7%) will go to the traditional healer and others try to go to the hospital.

Kidney problems: The women's group said the causes of kidney problems are hard work and wind. It is prevented from getting worse by not drinking alcohol. Most of the people go to the hospital for treatment and about 25% go to the clinic.

According to the men's group, the cause of kidney disease is working hard on the farm without taking a break. The disease can be prevented by decreasing the amount of work a hard working farmer undertakes. They go to the clinic in Durame for treatment. About 20% of the times they visit a hospital.

Cold disease (pneumonia): The women's group said the disease results from not caring for one's body early in the morning and late at night. The disease can be prevented by avoiding exposure to cold wind. They visit a health clinic and also go for traditional medicines when they get ill.

Ascaris: The men's group said lack of cleanliness and children eating soil and sugar cane are causes of

ascaris. This can be prevented by cleaning the surrounding and looking after what the children eat. When they get ill, they will go to the surrounding clinic and get medicine.

According to the women, the causes of ascaris is eating contaminated *enset (kocho)*, eating food that is not ripe enough and eating delicious food. To prevent this disease, the causes must be avoided. They mostly go to a health clinic and to the hospital and few (about 20%) get traditional medicine.

Ascaris is common in children since they eat a lot of sugar cane. The best way to prevent it is by not eating sugar cane. Once they got it, about 20% will visit traditional practitioners and 80% visit the clinic.

Amoeba: According to the men's group amoeba is caused from eating contaminated food and drinking dirty water. The disease could be prevented by keeping clean. They visit "Wota" clinic and also go to the hospital.

The women's group grouped amoeba as a major children' disease caused mainly from lack of cleanliness and too much work. Prevention is done by cleaning the house and its surroundings.

Malaria: The women's group said the cause of malaria is lack of clean water. The disease can be prevented by not coming in contact with those who are already infected. People who get the disease visit the clinic.

Gastritis: According to the men's group, the causes of the gastritis are worrying a lot, irritation, getting upset very easily and hunger. This can be prevented by minimising the habit of getting upset, eating necessary food and at the right time and trying to decrease hunger. If they get it, the treatment will be not eating sour food and avoiding drinking coffee. If it gets worse, they visit the traditional practitioner's health clinic or hospital.

Teeth Disease: The major cause of the disease (in children) is lack of cleanliness. The disease can be prevented by cleaning teeth. Once they get sick, they go to the clinic for treatment.

Common Cold: The cause of the common cold is wind and dirty things. It is common in children. It can be prevented by keeping the surrounding clean. When the children get it, they get traditional medicine(about 30%) and/or visit the clinic and get some "syrups". Drinking a lot of tea will also help.

6. Consumption

Food and Other Day-to-Day Goods

A calendar in the Appendix gives details of food consumption by season and when the major festivals occur. Under normal circumstance people eat a variety of crops like potato, *tef*, barley, maize, products of *enset*, wheat, and others. But in emergency situations such as drought and famine *kocho*, *enset* and *kolo* (roasted cereal) predominate in the diet.

Two serious famines occurred in the last 10 years. These were in 1985 and 1994. In these years there was prolonged drought as a result of which the supply of crops in the market decreased and the price of crops become inflated and in general people suffered a lot. Though there is no exact figure, people died of hunger and related causes in both years.

Saving and Investment

Saving and investment are closely tied in the area. Men and women practise it in a number of ways. The typical traditional women's practice is what is called in *Kembatigna wijo* (butter *equb*). What they do in *wijo* is that from 4-10 women from a certain village join together, collect a certain amount of butter

(about 1 kg) weekly and give it to one member each week. This continues until everybody has received a share. They sell this butter and buy goats, sheep or even cattle so that the butter saved in the form of *equb* ends up in being invested in something bigger in the form of livestock.

When men get any money from crop or livestock sales, they invest it immediately in livestock as a major way of saving. They invest it immediately for fear that they may lose or spend the money on something else. Men, women or children at times practice local banking. They buy a small box with a hole to put money in but with no opening to take out unless the "bank" is broken. They put any amount of money they get at any time. Finally, they collect the saved money by breaking the box. They also buy coffee, grain and other produce when prices are low, keep it for some time and sell it later on for high price.

There are also *equb* which are money counterparts of women's *wijo*. In *equb* any number of people join a group, collect some amount of money weekly or monthly, and give it to one member at a time. This continues until everybody receives his own share. Government employees such as teachers also practice this form of credit.

Some rich men go to the Commercial Bank at Durame for saving. However, this is very rare.

Housing

House construction is one of the basic activities in the area since everybody who forms a family has to build a house. Often people's houses match their economic status. There are two types: traditional Kembata houses which are covered by grass and modern tin-roofed houses. All the thatched houses are of two rooms with a radius between 2.5 and 6 metres and even more sometimes. The tin roofs are related to wealth. The largest house in the PA is a rich man's home with six rooms. The houses of the wealthy are bigger. The proportion of tin-roofed houses in the PA is estimated to be about 10% of the total population.

The cost of building a new house depends on the quality of the house to be built. For instance, according to some informants, ordinary grass thatched houses can cost between 500 and 1000 *birr*. High quality grass thatched houses may cost about 3000 to 5000 *birr*. Tin-roofed houses of the best quality may cost up to 10,000 *birr*. A well constructed traditional house can last between 25-35 years. Tin-roofed ones last longer.

Household Assets

One may divide household assets into two categories: equipment including farm implements and livestock. Equipment found in the house of a wealthy man are: table, chair, clay pots, cups, glasses, an axe, tape recorder, wooden bed, metal bed, knife, sieve, ladder, hoes, a plough, tray, box, cupboard, forks, bottles, *kuna*, *wonicho*, *misar*, *zabia*, *erbo*, *mesob*, traditional carpet, mortar and pestle, mat, *jebena*, sickle, stool, griddle, and others.

A list of assets in a poor man's house include: a stool, clay pot, clay *dist*, *mesob*, cup, *jebena*, pot, glass, *sefed*, *kuna*, axe, *wonicho*, *erbo*, mortar and pestle, sickle, wooden bed, mat, hoe, griddle and a few other things.

There are two basic differences between the assets of the two economic "classes".

- i) while there are more imported, factory or machine produced (luxury) items in the wealthy house, the items in the poor man's house are predominantly indigenous handmade tools.
- ii) Even when the same kinds of tools or assets exist in both classes of people they are more numerous in a wealthy house while there is only a minimum number in a poor man's house.

Local Services

There is no shop in the PA. The nearest shop is at Durame which is about 4 kms from the PA office and 7 kms from the other end of the PA. The shop in Durame is a typical town shop with stocks of food, clothing and luxurious items. To mention a few: clothes, shoes of various types, soap, pens, sugar, oil,

umbrellas, pencil, sweets, cigarettes, and all the other items one finds in shops in towns

There is no drug store in the PA. The nearest drug store is at Durame. As for agricultural services there is one extension agent for three PAs who is theoretically supposed to visit each PA twice a week. But, the farmers said this year the extension agent visits sometimes once a week and at other times once in a fortnight. When he visits in practice he cannot visit everybody; therefore he visit only some farmers.

To the question whether there are *kalicha* in the PA one informant said that a *kalicha* showed up in the PA, but that he has left the area. Another said there is one *kalicha* who is very old now. People also reported that there are *kalicha* in the nearby PAs.

There are a number of traditional doctors called *wogेशa* for bone-setting who also treat other mishaps. There are traditional birth attendants in the PA, one of which has participated in 3-months training course. There are traditional practitioners who prepare herbal medicines for the treatment of various diseases. People also talk of the existence of rainmakers in a neighbouring PA.

7. Local Institutions and Organizations

Households

The Kembata term for a household is *minimana* which means family. As indicated in the profile, first and foremost, the household in Kembata is based on living in one house. Next to that, it is based on blood relationships and sharing the family budget. A farmer explained that if his son is married and has built a house but remains economically dependent on the father and shares the family's budget, the son is considered as a member of a household. In the household, celebrating great feasts together and working (farming) together also have some bearing. Eating together is one of the essentials of Kembata households. All household members eat at the same time but from different plates. Often a husband eats with the oldest child and the wife eats with the younger children. Sometimes, husband, wife and the oldest child eat together. Sometimes an adopted child may also become a member of the household. People often adopt abandoned or orphaned children as well as those from destitute families.

Farm management decisions such as when and how to plant, whether to fertilize, etc. are made by a male household head, often after consulting his wife. The traditional division of labour between husband, wife and children is as follows: men generally perform food production and investment on equipment and fertilizer. Women do food processing and share activities like school fees for children, clothing, health expenditure, investment in household furniture with the male head of the household, and share with children fetching water. Firewood collection is done by children.

Family income is generally controlled by the man but women and children have certain degrees of freedom to control the money of anything they earn.

Marriage

Marriages are rarely arranged in Kembata. and people choose whom to marry. The youngest suitable age for girls is around 18 years although there is no specific age for men as it depends on the young man's economic status. Marriage is a complex practice in Kembata. It takes place in three possible ways: ceremonial marriage (*bolocha*), elopement (*herancha*) and abduction (*midu*). There are three ceremonies related to marriage. The exchange of bridewealth, "dowry" and gifts are distributed in all these three ceremonies. The three ceremonies are *kota*, *bolacha* and *elita tadu*:

Kota is the first stage which is equivalent to betrothal. At this time the focus is the would-be wife. The would-be husband is required to present gifts to the prospective wife and part of the bridewealth to her parents. He gives some clothes to the bride, and a *buluko* (traditional blanket) and honey to her parents. The proposed marriage is officially accepted to be carried out at a convenient time later.

Bolocha is the actual wedding ceremony. On this day a feast is prepared in the houses of both sets of parents. The bridegroom with his company goes to the house of the bride's father and fetches the bride. On this day the bride's parents and relatives present a considerable conjugal fund including household utensils such as sieves, pottery products, bed sheets, bed covers, boxes, blankets, cattle etc.

This is an ideal time for the girl to receive as much property as possible from her parents' wealth in the name of dowry (in the loose sense of the word).

Elita tudu is the final ceremony where the two families mix. Here the groom has to present a *gabi* and overcoat to the bride's father, a dress to the bride's mother, sheep, butter and a big loaf of bread to both parents; and 50 to 100 *birr* to her relatives. In return he receives clothes.

The cost of feasts related to marriage is estimated differently by different people. It depends on the economic status of the people involved. The rough estimation is that it ranges between 3000-7000 *birr*. What needs to be noted here is that the expenditure of the bride's family is higher than that of the groom. However, according to my informants last year *Kokata Care* (an indigenous development association) took the measure of cutting these expenses to the minimum, because they found it so devastating to the society's economy. What happened was that the *Kokata Care* (an association financed by the Kembatas to develop their area), in collaboration with Kembata elders decided to cut more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of these expenses and keep the ceremony fairly reasonable. Now people seem to be happy to have been exempted from these inflated costs in a socially approved way.

The social implication of the feasts is that the ceremonies designate an official declaration of the marriage and change of the status of the couple. Also it has some implications for the status of the parents as the quality of the feasts displays the status of parents. While the feast serves as a good forum for social interaction, it also confers respect and status upon the providers.

There are some rituals performed at marriage which have implications for the wedlock. On the day of the ceremony the bride and groom are especially dressed, especially respected, and behave only in a certain calculated ways. These all produce a lasting impression on the newly wed for the rest of their lives and serve as a rite of passage to adulthood.

Polygyny is practised in Kembata largely by Orthodox Christians and traditional believers. Now, due to the spread of missionaries this practice is greatly weakened. However, there are still a few men who have more than one wife.

The newly-weds can start living by themselves if they have enough money and materials. However, if not, they may live with their relatives or parents. The same process is repeated for later marriages. Widows live in their own home. All her relatives and her in-laws help her with the cultivation of the plot. She can also give the land for share-cropping.

Divorce

Marriages are extraordinarily stable and divorce is rare. This is probably because of the influence of the widespread missionary religion in the area which considers divorce as breaking the rule of the Bible. It is only allowed on special grounds. Since the people are exogamous, divorce is allowed if traces of a blood relationships are discovered and on grounds of sterility and, formerly, if a woman bore only girls. This was related to the fact in these cases if there were no sons to take social responsibility for the parents.

The major wealth is under the control of the husband. He might give money and other necessary materials to his wife. But, usually he is with his children controlling all the wealth. Only the child who at the time is breastfed will go with the mother.

Inheritance

In Kembata, land and property are not owned communally on a clan or lineage basis. People have full rights over their property and can leave whatever they have to their children. As is the case with farm land farm equipment is also owned by the male. Since houses are also constructed by the male (with the wife's assistance) they belong to the male. There is no special rule of inheritance in the community. It all happens through negotiations and agreements in the presence of the elder members of the society. If divorce does occur, the land, the house, livestock, the children except for very young ones and almost all major assets are taken by the husband.

In Kembata culture farmlands belong to male household heads and females do not farm alone. If a deceased household head does not have male children to take over the land, women inherit the land and decide who should plough it. But they do not plough by themselves. The father decides what his children

should inherit. Under normal circumstances he apportions his property to his children during the last days his life. He decides especially on matters pertaining to land, livestock and the house.

- i) Concerning land:- he allocates plots of land to each of his male children. The oldest son is given additional pieces of land and all other junior sons do not complain and obtain only equal shares. Daughters do not have any right to inherit land because they do not live with their natal family since Kembata is patrilocal society.
- ii) Concerning livestock:- The father also dispenses his livestock to all of his children. Unlike land, female children also receive their share of livestock.
- iii) Concerning the house:- the house of the father is inherited by the eldest son. However, he receives the house only when both the father and the mother have died.

Illegitimate children are entitled to inherit their father's property. The amount and kind of the property they inherit is decided by the father.

Kinship, Clans and Lineages

The Kembata kinship system is segmented at the clan level. Each clan has an internal structure that is maintained independently. Thus for each clan organization, there is a full set of authority figures who deal with the political, legal and social affairs of the members.

In Kembata kinship has both social and economic importance. For instance, it is culturally taboo to marry any of the father's or mother's kin. An individual is obliged to maintain relationships with both father's and mother's kin. He has to invite kinsmen during all important social events like weddings, funerals, etc. Economically also people are reciprocally supposed to help each other during times of crisis or joy. When people fail to live up to the expectations it is the sign of the weakening of kinship relationships.

Clans also play a significant role in the social organization of Kembata society. Recently clans have started to be corporate groups. They entail all the obligations and privileges of kinship. People reported that some time ago lineage was more important than clans. But now in principle lineages are linked together in clans, though the actual operation of socially important activities is performed at the lineage level. This is because the clan members are dispersed throughout Kembata at various lineages and it is practically difficult to gather them all. However, theoretically people now talk in terms of clans rather than lineages. The distinction between lineages and clans is now blurred. The operation is lineage and the name is clan. People have *idir* in the name of clans but it does not include all the members of the clan.

In any case lineages/clans entail economic and social obligations. For instance, people who belong to the same lineage/clan have to help each other when in need, they can not marry each other, and they have to fight when there is a physical quarrel between the lineage/clan member and somebody else. In general cooperation and mutual assistance among clan members is carried out at two levels. For more serious and bigger cases it is done in groups. For minor events it is individualized.

Age Grading, Life Cycle Changes and Rites of Passage

There is no social institution based on age grading in Kembata. However, there was one socially highly important rite of passage for both men and women. This was circumcision. In previous times circumcision of both boys and girls was highly important and it used to symbolize the passage from boyhood to manhood and from an immature baby to a girl who is ready to marry and hold responsibility.

The circumcision for boys was described. A fairly big ceremony is prepared and all the relatives and friends of the parents are invited to participate. The boy must be 18 or more. According to the living cost of the day (some 20-30 years ago) 300-500 *birr* was a rough estimation of expenses. All boys were circumcised in the same season. This happened in July every year and the newly circumcised

were released for *meskel* which is celebrated on the 27th of September. When the newly circumcised were released, they were supposed to meet in a fight-like match with their batch in other villages. The year's batch were divided into villages and fought against their counterparts of another village. This was the place to show their strength and passage to manhood.

This rite of passage for girls was not as elaborate as for boys. When they reached 15 and above they were circumcised. During this process the girls shaved their hair and went through various beautification processes. Like boys' circumcision that of all girls took place at the same month. This was August and they were released in October. After this they were officially ready for marriage. The expenditure on the ceremony was less for girls than for boys.

This circumcision as a rite of passage has been greatly affected and now its initiatory function and value are totally lost. These days both boys and girls are circumcised very early (before they are 10) which is too early for any attempt at initiation. People's beliefs and attitudes also seem to have changed so that they do not regard circumcision as designating anything special. Earlier, circumcision designated the first move in the stages of life cycle. Then comes the stage of marriage. The status of boy and girl, changes man and woman after marriage. A further status change to parenthood comes with the birth of children. After the birth of children the parents are accepted as full men and women and are given social responsibilities. The circumcision and marriage of one's children also have some implications for status as the individual progress towards wisdom and old age.

As is true elsewhere a person's life cycle is concluded with death. In Kembata culture there are elaborate practices associated with death and mourning. "Originally", funeral ceremonies were meant only for mourning. The practice slightly differs for men, women and children. If a man dies his body is kept for three days until the burial ceremony which is performed after all the relatives and friends were told and arrive. It is less than three days for women and even less for children. Then expenses were minimum since there was no worry about things to eat because people understood that it was an unplanned ceremony.

However, later on this ceremony turned into a stage for displaying one's status and wealth. Some people started to keep the dead body for five to seven days to find time for large scale preparations and wait for all relatives to come from far off places. The traditional *kocho*, *nifro* and *kollo* changed to *injera*, *tella*, and other more quality dishes. Then finally it became luxurious, costly and destructive. Eventually in the *Kokata Care* (the same meeting which decided about marriage) a resolution was passed concerning funeral ceremonies and some other cultural practices. In this resolution the funeral ceremony had to go back to its original form and both the feast and the ceremony had to be kept to a fairly reasonable level in accordance with the current economic status of the people.

Women in Southern Ethiopia obtain increased status with increasing age. The importance of mothers increases when children marry. Then their status increases with the status career and the growing importance of their sons. Finally they reach the status of "mothers of all men" and are also present in councils where women are excluded. Thus women undergo a gradual masculinization, leaving their shy behaviour from youth and gaining increased self assurance with age. Elderly women often function as counsellors in society and are respected by husbands and sons. Their status is often equated with that of elderly men, and above that of young men and sons.

If the son has money and/or wealth, he is expected to help his parents. Parents can ask anything they want from their child. They are respected well.

Friendship Contracts

Friendship is highly valued in the area. Two people with no trace of blood relationship can agree in cultural ways to help each other in every important life activity. However, unlike in Gurage Society, there is no institutional form of ritual bond in Kembata concerning friendship. Apart from the belief in God and the need to abide by the cultural code of conduct requiring people to be genuine and loyal to a friend who reciprocates, there are no supernatural sanctions in friendship contracts.

Citizenship

Those who have some exposure to education or town life have some concept of citizenship. They have

strong feelings of Ethiopianness. However, they are not clear about what rights and duties this entails. The peasants feel that it is their duty to obey the laws and rules of the government, and pay taxes; and they feel that it is the duty of the government to maintain law and order and run the administration. Beyond this there is no deep conceptualization of citizenship. People also seem to have strong feelings concerning their identity as Kembata. However, this is not too parochial to the extent of considering themselves as citizens of only Kembata. They feel like citizens of Ethiopia who are Kembata by ethnic origin. Moreover, they treat non-Kembata not as non-citizens. When the fieldworker asked them how they treat non-citizens, they said that no one is a non-citizen in their area. (This does not include non-Ethiopians).

Markets

There is no wholesale grain marketing facility around the area. Since the area has a grain deficit no bulk movement of grain occurs. Marketing is undertaken only on a small scale. There was a service cooperative which was disbanded but is now acting as a conduit for loans for fertilizer.

Traders speculate by buying during harvest time and selling later. Some people also buy small amounts of grain from the area to sell at a higher price in other areas. This has decreased the supply of grain around the area and increased the price.

There are two big weekly markets in the area (on Saturdays and Tuesdays) which are located in Durame. People also use minor markets (*kochi*) and other markets in far off places. In the market there are conventionally agreed upon weights and measures. For major crops in large quantities like coffee, maize, and *tef* people use kilogrammes. For retailing there are cups and glasses for measuring. There are also many items which are transacted on the basis of estimation. The big markets in Durame are policed by the "city council" and at times it is worth complaining to them. However, people are not satisfied with the ways market-related issues are handled. Among the complaints mentioned are general reluctance to give prompt responses and bureaucratic hardships created by the officials.

Credit and Social Security

The majority of the peasants borrow money during *Meskel* for celebration. People borrow or sell what they have to finance marriages.

Kembata traditionally ensure themselves against crisis in the form of neighbourhood, communal and voluntary organizations. The neighbours contribute money and give it to the person who runs into a crisis. If the person is a member of the *idir*, he may get almost 33% of his damaged goods in cash. A person who runs into crisis would also be given money and other necessary materials such as *enset* for food by the relatives.

Kembata society also recognizes and appreciates to a great extent the ideas of neighbourhood and voluntary organization. In order that the cultivation of the soil, the building of houses, and social obligations such as funerals should be performed as efficiently as possible a highly institutionalized system of cooperation within the parish communities (*sera*) was created. The term *sera* refers, on the one hand to the institutions themselves, and on the other, to the code of laws and modes of behaviour which is associated with these institutions. Though membership is not obligatory, it appears to be indispensable in view of the economic benefits it offers and the social sanctions which the neighbours can apply.

In addition, there are voluntary associations such as *idir*, *mehber* and *equb* which are known and operate in many areas of Kembata. There are a number of *idir*, *equb* and *mehber* in the area. The three have three different purposes. *Idir* is for insurance against crisis and for reciprocal cooperation for large-scale activities like house building and burial. *Equb* is an organization for credit and investment. *Mehber* is a form of entertainment. Thus people who belong to the same *idir* may or may not belong to the same *mehber* and *equb*. It depends on their preference.

Idir seems more often an obligation than a preference since everybody has to have some system of insurance. In the PA there are three types of *idir*: village *idir*, religious *idir* and clan *idir*. There are 27 *idir* in the PA based on clan. Neither the PA leaders nor anybody else knows the exact number of village- and religion-based *idir* in the PA. Likewise nobody knows the exact number of *mehber* and

equb in the PA. *Idir* are specially useful for house building and for funerals where cooperative work is required both economically and in terms of manpower requirements. *Idir* with 30 to 40 members are the most common local organizations in Aze Debo'a. Contributions for the *idir* are only made at the time of distress.

Among the three organizations *equb* is often differentiated by wealth. Since it is a weekly or monthly contribution of some amount of money given to one member at a particular time, members decide on the amount of money to be contributed based on their income. For instance, a businessmen's group may contribute 100 *birr* or more per week, teachers or other employee's 50-100 *birr* per month, small-scale traders 2-5 *birr* per week. Thus *equb* is essentially based on income. *Mehber* seems to be based on religion and it is common among the Orthodox Christians.

People also borrow money from local money lenders. There are about four known money lenders in the PA and one person reported that the interest rate is very high i.e. 10% per month. If a person lends 100 *birr* he expects 110 *birr* at the end of the month. Another said moneylenders lend between 50 and 200 *birr* and charge 20% interest for a period of 6 months. A borrower requires guarantors, who are obliged to repay the lender if the borrower defaults. People also borrow money from friends and relatives since it is one of the essentials of the culture to help people even by lending them money. A friend or relative will lend up to 100 *birr* for 2 months with no interest.

The Commercial Bank of Ethiopia has given loans to buy fertilizer through the Service Cooperative. The latest loan was given in August 1994. 45% of farmers took loans of between 71.70 and 143.35 *birr*. The loan was taken for 6 months at an interest rate of 14%pa. Only those who owned land and were members of the SC were eligible. No collateral was required.

Community Decision-making

Originally the Kembata had local political institutions. Now the local political decisions are made mainly by the PA leaders. The elders of the community also have a significant role in decision-making. But elders and PA leaders are not the same people. Elders are chosen according to their long-term credentials such as their experience, previous success as mediators, fair judgements, their wisdom, age, and concern for the people. The decisions include ways of controlling the natural resources of the area, and also some other important decisions that affect the daily lives of the society. Disputes are considered by the PA leaders. There is also *Fird Shengo* where people file complaints of whatever is done to them. The PA and the elders have nothing to do with murderers and thieves. The *Woreda* Juridical body has the power to investigate and give judgement. However, if the thieves or murderers admit their guilt, the elders may present excuses for the sin that they committed to the *Woreda's* judicial bodies.

Local Organizations

Social interactions among community members are fairly amicable. Irrespective of the elderly's feeling that the current generation is increasingly becoming individually oriented, there are a lot of group activities and there is a lot of social interaction in a fairly orderly way. There are micro-groups and circles for cooperation and working together, based on occupation (farmers' groups, merchants' groups, teachers' groups); on clan (the Oyeta group, the Juma group etc.); on village residence and so on. However, in the political context there is also a feeling of unity at the pan-Kembata level.

Redistributive Activities

People reported that there are a lot of festivals with elaborate feasting in the area. However, the feasts do not involve sacrifice in the anthropological sense of the word. Usually people slaughter some animals but only to celebrate the festivals and, as reported, no beliefs are related to the sacrifice. For instance, *Meskel*, which is celebrated for about one week starting on September 27, Christmas (January 7), and Easter (usually in April) are major festivals which involve slaughtering of animals and elaborate celebration. Traditional preparations begin weeks in advance. During the actual celebration people eat,

drink, and dance; friends and relatives (invited or taking the initiative) visit each other. These feasts are not meant for redistribution. No tendency to help the poor is exhibited because both the rich as well as the poor celebrate the festivals, though the quality of the feast may differ. People reported that there is no institutionalized form of redistributive mechanism which has socio-political significance in their culture.

8. Beliefs and Values

Land

People are not buried on the land they farm because there are separate burial sites in the PA. As people reported the burial places of ancestors are not important for ritual or any other purpose now. They also reported that land is highly valued and sometimes regarded as sacred, though not in the absolute sense of the word. Because of reliance on land as a means of earning a living on the one hand, and its scarcity on the other, people highly value land and handle it with extraordinary care. Private ownership of land is highly internalized because the majority of the people are those who inherited land from their fathers and from grand- and great-grand-fathers. Metaphorically, some peasants talk of land as their personal bank which should be absolutely privately owned.

Religion

The major religions in the PA now are Orthodox, Protestant and Catholic Christianity. There are various sects of Protestantism. There are no Moslems in the PA. None of the traditional religions are alive at present. Practically they all have died out. However, there are some traditional "beliefs". For instance when somebody is setting out on a journey, if he bumps his left foot, he believes that he will encounter failure whereas if it his right foot he believes that heralds success.

Moreover, when people walk to market if they face somebody going to fetch water they believe that a full or empty pot foretells the market situation. Somebody who is going to buy something prefers to come across a woman who carries a pot filled with water because that foreshadows a cheap price at the market. However, somebody who goes to sell something prefers an empty pot because that foreshadows scarcity of things in the market which will result in high prices at the market. Some people also believe that while going somewhere it is better to come across men than women. The reason is not explained.

Pilgrimages are not common in the area. But people often travel to Awasa, Addis Ababa or even further to participate in religious conferences. Often the costs are covered by their respective churches. This does not mean that there are no individuals who go at their own expense. The expenses depend on the place they are going to and the status of the individual.

In general people commented that the spread of Christianity has played a significant role in weakening traditional religions and bringing about a lot of changes in the culture in general. Respondents reported that the main effect of religion is in changing behaviour. The children are now very nice. They listen to what their parents and elders tell them. Another important effect of religion on people is related to marriage. In earlier times, one man could get married to three wives whether he was poor or rich. But nowadays, because of the teachings of the church, there is a little or no polygyny.

Explanation of Misfortune and Illnesses

Reportedly people do not believe in sorcery, witchcraft, and spirits. They do not worship ancestors. However, some people suggested that there was the practice of belief in sorcery, witchcraft, spirits and worshipping ancestors before the spread of Christianity. However, now, because of the belief in God, people have abandoned all of these. Some say that sorcery and witchcraft are practised in towns. This leads to the assessment of their attitude towards these things. Their response was "After all these are beliefs. If one believes they do work. If one believes only in God and refuses to give attention to them, they do not have any power." Moreover, people believe that beliefs other than Christianity are master-

minded by the devil. Hence the avoidance.

Community Values

Concerning cultural beliefs, practices and rituals which are on the verge of extinction, still existing and new introductions, the fieldworker interviewed peasants as well as some educated Kembatas working in the Ministry of Culture. As they reported:

- a) Religious sphere - all traditional religions have already died out and they have been substituted by imported religions which have spread considerably.
- b) Change in marriage practices. Some practices related to marriage are changing. Previously arranged marriages were practised. However, currently it is the would-be partners who decide their fate with nominal approval of the parents. Also changes are reported in the amount and kind of bridewealth, and gifts. Considerable change is also reported to have happened in the rituals observed in marriage ceremonies.
- c) Funerals- funeral ceremonies are also a reflection of religion. Traditional ways of mourning have given way to more modern recommended ways of mourning.
- d) Indigenous Games and Sports - a considerable change was also reported in traditional games and leisure activities. For instance *gifate* (a kind of traditional game) was a practice during *Meskel* celebrations in Kembata. However, now it is disappearing. Others like *tigil*, *gebeta* and *qugis* have been weakened. "Modern" games such as football, volleyball, and others have replaced the indigenous ones.
- e) Circumcision - a major change was reported in the initiatory role of circumcision as discussed earlier.

Beliefs related to all these practices are highly affected. Practically no ritual is reported to be operational now. Only modern ways of performing new religions are practised. People are moving more and more towards new practices and abandoning traditional beliefs and practices. This is explained by the spread of modern education, religion, relationships with other ethnic groups and modernization in general.

Concerning the issue of people's willingness to answer the questions in the household survey at the beginning they were suspicious and gave only cautious answers. After a process of rapport and explanation of objectives of the study they gave "good" answers. The questions they did not like to answer were those about the amount of money and cattle they have, how much they borrow and lend and the like. They pointed out that they think that in general the study (including the economic survey) might be to give aid or build some factories or industries in their area in the future or somehow to help them.

Political Beliefs and Attitudes

In fact it was quite difficult to find out the effect of the regionalization policy of the transitional government on the relationship between national political, legal, social and cultural policies and local ones. This is because it is too big an issue which may merit independent research which has to be treated with great care. Anyway some ideas were found from the interview with local people and discussion with native elites who are college graduates and who hold some offices.

From these it was found that the local judges have been performing fairly well. Also there seems to be satisfaction with cultural issues like enriching one's language and culture. In this sense people seem highly motivated to develop their area in all aspects. Politically there is more consciousness and concern for local identity. On the other hand there were some people who were worried that macro-national feelings and concerns are being eroded in favour of micro-nationality. In spite of these preliminary statements perhaps it is too early at this stage to come up with solid concrete conclusions.

Modern political organizations in the area are the Kembata People's Democratic Organization and

the Kembata Peoples' Congress. Their basic difference is on the issue of land, unity of the country and self determination up to secession.

9. The Community

Politics

According to informants no sign of political dissent was exhibited in the area in the last 10 years.

Social Conflict

There are seemingly no deep-rooted conflicts between groups in the community. It seems more or less that the community is functioning well. There are different religious groups in the PA. However, there does not seem to be strong conflict among them (as reported), though there are minor competitions and conflicts between the followers of different sects. However, this has never been serious to the extent of resulting in violence. Nonetheless, it has a significant impact on social interaction so that people usually prefer to interact with members of their sect rather than with others.

There are various clans (about 27 in the PA). Again as reported there is no basic contradiction among them. There are no other ethnic groups in the PA which could cause conflict. Nonetheless, all this does not mean that there are no minor conflicts and disputes in the community which emerge from different causes during social interaction. For instance people quarrel over boundaries of their land, issues of money, as a result of alcohol, abduction of women, theft, murder and many other matters. When such disputes occur there are culturally accustomed ways of settling them. The settlement of disputes was described earlier.

There are no apparent conflicts based on gender in the area. However, there are political factions. The two best known are the Kembata People's Congress and the Kembata People's Democratic Organization whose basic differences were described earlier.

Poverty and Wealth

Aze Debo'a PA is average in terms of wealth when compared to the other villages in the area. The wealthiest people in the community are those who have two *timad* oxen, many and quality cattle, sheep and goats, coffee, other trees and *enset*. The major sources of their wealth is working hard. It is through this hard work that they accumulated wealth.

The poorest households are those with a small plot of infertile land, demobilised soldiers, formerly resettled residents, those with few animals and those who do not work hard. People with a larger plot of land are richer. The younger ones are relatively richer since they are more active.

Some respondents believed that it is easy for a child from a poor household to get rich by working hard, by trading starting with little money and working day and night.

There is a feeling that inequality within the community is decreasing since the amount of land owned by households is being levelled down as a result of the increase in population size.

There are distinctions between the rich and the poor in dressing, house quality, farm fields and so on. When an attempt was made to understand people's conceptualization of the reciprocal effect of the existence of the rich and the poor on each other people responded that the rich are perceived as rich because there are poor and vice versa. However, they stressed that this does not mean that some are poor because there are rich and some are rich by impoverishing the poor. In their local conception a rich man is rich because he worked hard, he has good knowledge about how to do things, because he is lucky, he was blessed by his parents and so on. On the other hand, the poor are poor because they do not work hard, they are not lucky, have poor knowledge. However, one farmer commented that the rich sometimes exploit the poor which further pushes them to the extremes.

In a wealth-ranking 2 respondents divided the community into 4 categories and 1 into 3. Households included in the economic survey were allocated to the different groups. The wealthy group, which was small (8 households out of the 75 in the survey), cultivated more land, engaged in business activities, had children engaged on non-agricultural activities who sent them remittances, and owned more

livestock. The poorer cultivated less land, less fertile land or had no land. Some are dependent on others for gifts and help. They owned no livestock or very few.

Social Mobility

An old middle-class man and his elder richer brother described the movement of wealth across generations and people's movement between poverty and wealth in their lifetimes. As they put it, there are a number of wealthy people who were children of wealthy parents. Likewise there are a number of poor farmers whose parents were poor. On the other hand there are a considerable number of rich people who were the children of poor parents and vice versa. Thus, it is common to see people maintaining their parents' status or improving or losing their parents' status. The reasons mentioned were working hard or not, blessing or cursing of the parents, good luck or chastisement, and other factors. In general, people were inclined to conclude that more people change their wealth and poverty status across generations than maintain it.

Many people move between wealth and poverty several times in their lifetimes. A rich man illustrated this from his own personal life experiences, since so far in his lifetime he has moved four times between wealth and poverty. There is a Kembata saying that: "people become seven times rich and seven times poor." The children of a poor farmer traditionally may become upwardly mobile through hard work (farm, trade etc.). These days education and involvement in politics play a significant role. Parents usually subsidize the households of their children if the former are in a better position than the latter.

The 3 respondents in the wealth-ranking agreed that people moved slowly down if they moved out of the wealthiest category. Typical reasons included loss from business activity, harvest failure, and loss of livestock (for different reasons). Two respondents thought people moved up from the poorest category slowly, while the second thought it could be done quickly. The main way to do it was by starting a business or other non-agricultural activities, or by having a good harvest, especially of coffee. People become wealthier by saving, engaging in off-farm activities and business, cultivating their land very well, having good management skills, getting access to enough land. They become poorer as the result of bad harvests, the death or illness of an important member of the household, the death of livestock, or the absence of land or oxen.

Status

The most respected in the community are those who have good manners and respect others. Respected social skills include neutrality, always telling the truth and participation in the development of the community. The Kembata pay more attention to inherited status than achieved status (Seyoum). In Kembata for superiority and legitimacy of political status, personal achievement is given less weight than it deserves and blood is culturally dominant. But those coming from good genealogy often have other respected assets. Wealth, education, political position, occupation and personal achievement are considered important for achieving status, often in this order. Gender and military prowess are given least regard. Wealth is displayed by the quality of house and the compound, clothing, diet, feasts and so on.

Social Stratification

In Kembata society the disparity between the rich and the poor was not so great. As a result, the modern concept of social class differentiation has not been the basis of ranking. There were hierarchically-ordered hereditary and semi-hereditary traditional offices in Kembata societies. Among the several ways of getting status and prestige was ownership of land and relative size of one's *warsa* holding. The most important and widely known social distinction and a well defined ascribed status differentiation which existed in Kembata society and whose relics have not disappeared until now, is the one between *womanoe* and non-*womanoe*. The non-*womanoe* include the former slaves, the peasantry, the *agiza*, and various low caste occupational groups whereas the former refers to the "free" and independent Kembata

who can trace their descent to one or the other of the exogamous clans.

Agiza as distinct from the low-caste occupational groups did not have any occupational specialization. The Kembata society recognizes 3 low caste occupational groups: the smith (*Tumano*), tanners (*Awado*) and potters (*Fuga*). Even though these artisans are vital components of the society who produce the substantial amount of the material culture, they are highly oppressed and segregated from the rest of the society.

There is also hereditary occupational specialization and a change of parents' occupation results in serious and unbearable social stigma and ostracism. These social distinctions are also observed between the *Kontama*, the *Agiza* and the *Fuga*. In general, the distinction between the three groups is that the military colonialist from the North were at the upper stratum, the caste group at the bottom and the broad stratum of cultivators who most probably belonged to the Omotic speaking people were in the middle. Kembata pay more attention to inherited status than achieved status.

To see the degree to which wealth, status and power are currently related, let us first look at the basis of accumulating wealth, attracting status and wielding power. Wealth can be accumulated through good farming, trading, holding political position, and so on. Status can be gained from wealth, political position (temporary, people stressed), education, personal attributes, occupation, clan, family status.

In former times (during the time of Haile Selassie I) wealth used to play a significant role in wielding power. However, now wealth has nothing to do with power. Status also does not contribute to obtaining power. Perhaps the most important criteria to gain power now are political loyalty and personal attributes like education and experience.

The relationship between status and wealth, and power are only one way i.e. wealth and status are not useful to gain power, but once a person is in the seat of power, he is most likely to accumulate wealth, and the very fact that he has power lifts his status.

There is a relationship between wealth and status. i.e wealthy people are respected but not necessary all respected people are wealthy.

Religious position does not have clear implications for status. However, a very few people in leadership positions are respected and gain significant amounts of money. People in the PA feel that members of the current political leadership group are becoming a superior "class". As a matter of cultural practice anybody of higher class is treated in a special way. For instance greeting them with humility and politeness, inviting them to coffee in one's house, giving them a good seat anywhere and fulfilling anything they ask and so on.

A number of respondents who were asked who were the local elites listed those engaged in some kind of business activity in addition to farming; the elders; elected members of the local *reda*; those who have large landholdings who are far-sighted and whose educated children are now in good positions; those involved in religious organizations such as *Mekane-Yesus* and *Kahle Hiwot* etc. This is mainly attributed to their link with foreign governments.

Reda members have the right to develop community culture and to give solutions to different problems created in the community. They are well accepted by the community. They make decisions such as minimising ceremonial expenditure and give solutions to different types of problem. There are *reda* members in every PA and when difficult problems occur anywhere in the *woreda* they meet and produce solutions.

A number of respondents suggested that the rich in the PA, compared with other Peasant Associations in other regions, are backward mainly due to land shortage and increasing population. The elites live in harmony with the politicians by making sure they can benefit in every direction. There is no competition, intervention or jealousy among themselves. Everybody minds his own business. There is no conflict between elites.

10. Relationships with Other Communities and the Wider Society

Clans and Tribes

As indicated earlier there are a lot of clans and lineages in the PA. These days the clan has a role to play

in the life of the community. First of all its value as a framework for social gatherings has increased significantly. Now every clan has an *idir* in its name which functions as a means of solidarity, cooperation and social security among the members. Moreover, it is an essential of Kembata culture that blood-related relatives both at clan and lineage level share all important life events like childbirth, house-building, circumcision, marriage, death, and others.

Villages, Towns and Regions

There are 37 peasant associations in Kedida Gamela Woreda. Aze Debo'a is one of these *kebele*.

Kembata is neighbouring with Hadiya, Wolayitta, Gurage, Alaba and Tembaro. There is a lot of communication with these people based on friendship, clan, marriage, commerce (market exchange) and so on. The relationship based on clan is specially interesting in this context. People reported that there are more than 100 clans in all Kembata. There are about 27 clans in Aze Debo'a PA. Among these 27 some trace their origin to the mentioned neighbouring or even distant ethnic groups. For instance there are clan names like Galla from Oromo, Wolamo (Wolancho) from Wolayitta, Damota perhaps around Mount Damota in Wolayitta, Dawaro perhaps from Dawaro, and Amhara. More could probably be found in the rest of the PAs. Some of these are said to have some relatives in the areas of these ethnic groups. In general, whether based on clan, marriage, commerce or anything else there are a lot of interactions with neighbouring ethnic groups.

Relationships with Wider Ethiopia

Some people, especially the elders, stated that they fought some wars with the Hadiyas, Wolayitta, and other ethnic groups. But now there is no feeling of enmity among them. Though not frequent, some conflicts arise with Hadiyas but these are not serious and are settled promptly. On the whole the relationship with what might earlier be called "traditional enemies" is now very good.

The Kembata take pride in Ethiopianness. In spite of the current tendency to stress local (ethnic) identity, the Kembata consider themselves Ethiopian and they have a positive attitude towards Ethiopia. However, this does not mean that they do not have complaints about some injustices. For instance, a farmer stressed that his father was rich but he became poor because of burdens imposed by the *neftenya* (soldier-settlers). What is interesting here is that while feeling strong Ethiopianness, the Kembata are highly concerned for their ethnic identity so that a considerable effort is made to develop their culture, language and the area in general.

Effects of Government Policies

Not enough time has yet elapsed to clearly see the effects of government policies and this is so big a topic that it deserves an independent thorough investigation. Nonetheless, a few points can be established from general observation, interviews with farmers and discussion with professional college graduate Kembatas who hold offices at the zonal capital Durame.

Concerning the effects of devaluation the experts commented that it was good that it resulted in the increased price of coffee, which is produced in the area to some extent. It also resulted in increased prices for grains. However, the area is crop deficit so that people have to purchase grain at high prices. Theoretically, increased prices encourage producers. However, in this area, according to their report, surplus producers are very few. More important than this is the increased price of agricultural inputs and consumables. The price of fertilizer rose considerably, pesticides and agricultural tools became expensive, the cost of transport and price of clothes increased. In general, the experts tended to conclude that the overall effect of devaluation for the area as experienced so far is negative. However, this is only a tentative conclusion. Likewise, the farmers have felt the inflation since the value of money has decreased considerably and the cost of living has increased.

Ending marketing boards especially abolishing the one which used to force the farmers to sell their produce at low prices is reported to be beneficial to the farmers. Now the farmers who sell their produce are free to sell it for any negotiable market price.

Concerning political policies, especially regionalization, in view of the dense population of the area, people are worried that something unplanned may happen if the population density continues to grow at the present rate and if the regionalization hinders people's movement to other parts of the country.

According to some informants people think that regionalization is not acceptable at all. They assume that the government deliberately introduced the idea to cover the case of Eritrea which is not good for the country. Problematic consequences include the fact that people can no longer move from region to region; unemployed people, especially those who have completed high school, cannot work in other regions; many households from the agricultural sector are displaced in various parts of the country; social interaction is affected by the concept of freedom of nation and nationalities.

Other informants think that people think that regionalization is good because the regional problem will be solved within each region and the centralized bureaucracy will no longer be powerful. In particular they do not have to go so far on administrative business.

With regard to the Constitution some respondents argued that the acceptance of it was very minimal. Another said people's views varied, that is some are supporters of Congress Party and some are of the KPDO. No teaching about the Constitution was given and only one party's view (the KPDO's) was presented. Another informant said that the people (apart from the educated ones) do not have any idea about the Constitution. Another said that the people have a relatively good understanding of the Constitution since they participated in a number of meetings called by the Peasant Association and different political parties. Those who have the idea think it is very important. The people "do not know anything about the meaning of democracy".

Another respondent said that there was a meeting at PA level to develop the Constitution. People suggested some important points in favour and against aspects of the Constitution. The people also selected members of the General Assembly which approved the Constitution at the national level so people do know about it. Theoretically people think that there is democracy but practically there is not. So they know everyone can select one party which he likes in theory, but this is impossible in practice because the State (*enadig*) influence them to select the *Enadig* party. So people know more about democracy but practically it has not yet been applied.

Another respondent suggested that people do not understand the idea of democracy very well but nevertheless politicians introduced the idea to make it easier for them to do things. Basically what is known as democracy - a free forum - is meant for developed countries not for our region or for our country.

Another respondent said that the community is very much concerned about the construction of the Constitution, but their main concern was the upcoming election and whether to vote for the KPDO or for the Congress. Since everyone is tired of war, they are all ready to vote for the KPDO, which is the party supported by the government and which is going to win anyway. Even though they are very concerned about the establishment of the government, they will compromise in order to maintain peace, and every religious group is praying for it.

According to one respondent whether or not people participated in the election they thought there was no point. Some believe the constitution and the election have enabled them to achieve peace and democracy. The community think democracy is a tool to do whatever they desire. Some use it for teasing. However they were not deprived of their democratic rights. Another respondent suggested that due to lack of knowledge the society is facing a difficulty in understanding the meaning and use of democracy. Another said people were supporting democracy because it is enabling them to decide for themselves.

Tax collection is a complicated practice in the area. The directives come from the Ministry of Finance Office. The Ministry of Finance at zonal and *woreda* levels have national tax scales which are based on the incomes of individuals. Accordingly, the minimum a farmer should pay is 20 *birr* per year i.e. 10 *birr* for land use and 10 *birr* as income tax for anybody whose annual income is less than 600 *birr*. For the income group above 600 *birr* annually the national scale is elaborate and goes from 10-89% of the income to be paid as tax.

This scale is provided to the PA leaders, and interpretation, estimation of the income of the farmers and actual collection are left to the PA leaders. Technical aid is offered by MoA and Ministry of Finance agents. The PA leaders estimate the would-be annual income of a farmer when the crops are in the fields, but not yet harvested. What they actually do is roughly categorize the people into two or three

income groups and collect the tax accordingly. When deciding a farmer's annual income his crops, off-farm income, quality of house and his general condition are taken into account.

As compared to the *Derg's* time, now people feel that 20 *birr* tax per year is not unfair. However, they are suspicious or uncertain about the rate lasting long. This fear has emanated from their experience with the *Derg*, which was also extraordinarily fair at the beginning (the tax was only 4 *birr*) and extraordinarily harsh at the end (tax increased up to 200 *birr*). On the other hand, some people feel that even the 20 *birr* tax being paid now is relatively unfair, because it considers them equally with farmers in other parts of the country where people own large plots of land.

To be exempted from tax the poor simply refuse to pay it, telling to the PA leaders that they do not have any money. The PA officials try to convince higher officials at *woreda*, zone and even higher levels. People comment that this system worked poorly in terms of getting some people classified as a poor and exempt from tax.

On matters of tax collection or anything else, leaders of government institutions have never come into conflict with the traditional leaders of the community because (i) the former are too powerful to be questioned; (ii) there has been no experience of working together; (iii) for the last hundred years it has been a common experience that government officials decide on any matter by themselves rather than consult elders.

A number of respondents were asked if the community was better or worse off than in 1991. Responses suggest they are better off in some ways but not in others. It was suggested that the following factors made the community worse off: returnees from the war front; displacement of resettled people; displacement from different regions; increase in population; intensified shortage of farmland; low credit facilities and access to inputs; clan conflicts which cause overpopulation in the community; a continuing increase in the numbers of those finishing school and remaining unemployed; destruction of crops from natural causes including pests, flooding and shortage of rain. All these factors mean that the number of people who are dying due to starvation and poverty is increasing.

Factors which have improved the lot of the community include increased peace and stability; the free marketing policy which has paved the way for the buying and selling of goods; the end of AMC controlled prices for grain and coffee; the end of unfair contributions and taxes; the end of military service;

One respondent suggested that there were contradictions between theory and practice. So according to current economic policies people are free to invest their capital everywhere in the country but practically investors can only invest in the place where he was born and where his clan is found. Another respondent said that at present the local community think the policies are good but these policies may affect people in adverse ways. For example, the regionalization policy will produce bad social conditions within the community, since people no longer have the right to work in different places as they wish. Due to this there might be a civil war based on the shortage of land. Another respondent suggested that the community had not yet made up its mind whether the policies were good or bad and yet another that politically the community supports whoever is in power.

Government Activities in the Community

Government has been involved in the provision of the following services:

- In 1956 the elementary school was constructed;
- In 1962 the main road which links Durame with Hosaina was constructed;
- In 1964 food aid was provided; and agricultural extension services started;
- In 1965 the pumped water supply was provided;
- In 1968 bridges on the rivers Markos and Dembe were constructed; and forestry projects were started;
- In 1969 service cooperatives were established;
- In 1970 food for work programme started;
- In 1971 literacy programme was started;

There is a cash-for-work programme organised by the MoA which has run since 1982 up to now. The

Ministry of Agriculture is also undertaking an afforestation programme and some terracing work. MoA also provides an agricultural extension programme.

There was a Producers' Cooperative which reached the *malba* stage, but it was disbanded in 1985 or 1986 because some members did not join the cooperative voluntarily and the *enset* and coffee plants which need close attention were far from the homestead. This created a problem which resulted in the disbanding of the cooperative. There was no problem of land re-distribution as they all went back to their previous land.

In general, the group ranked the following government activities in order of importance as: construction of roads, construction of bridges and provision of educational services.

NGO Activities in the Community

The only local NGO operating in Aze Debo'a seems to be the Kale-Hiwot church. In 1975, the church provided irrigation and veterinary services; in 1977, it provided food-for-work; in 1978, it provided food aid and water; and in 1979, it collaborated with the government in the construction of bridges over the Markos and Dembe rivers.

Future Provision to the Community

One group would like the government to do the following for them:

- 1) Provide a health clinic;
- 2) Open a mill for the community;
- 3) Make available irrigation water for the production of different crops;
- 4) Create employment opportunities to make money to get medical treatment .

The group would like the NGOs to participate in the following activities:

Provision of oxen and ploughs; fertilizer; credit to purchase fertilizer; provision of food and employment opportunities for the children.

Proposing future provisions to another group in the community stimulated a discussion on the major problems of the community. The major problems cited and hence to be solved somehow were:

1. Infrastructure: people feel that the area has been marginalized in infrastructure in that the people do not have a hospital, roads, factories or industries and the like.
2. Education: Some of the education costs have to be covered by parents who cannot afford them, as a result of which a significant number of students discontinue their education. Some also complained that there are not enough schools.
3. Agriculture: in view of the severe scarcity of land, agriculture in the area needs to be mechanized. To overcome the hardships resulting from recurrent rainfall shortage, people proposed that irrigation is one possibility, as there are abundant water resources.
4. Job opportunities: the jobs in the area cannot absorb all the surplus labour, as a result of which there are a lot of people looking for alternative job opportunities.

Therefore, the people urge both the government as well as NGOs to help with these handicaps by providing agricultural tools and oxen and off-farm employment provision (by building a factory); investing in the region; encouraging intensive agriculture by providing irrigation; making fertilizer and improved seeds available at reasonable cost; and providing credit facilities.

Primary schools are stinking and this is affecting both teachers and students

With regard to land there was a suggestion that people should be resettled on excess farmland under

the protection of the government. Some have larger holdings than others. Those who have small holdings wish land to be redistributed but the better off are not willing. "There is a great shortage of land in this community. This problem is widely known in the Southern Ethiopian Administrative Region. This is because it is densely populated. At this time the problem is going to be high due to many people migrating from different administrative regions leaving the previous living area by the present political situation which causes regionalism. This condition will lead the people to dangerous conflict in the future. There is no access to solve this kind of problem without making other ways which will support the need of the people."

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Appendix

The anthropological fieldwork was conducted between the 15th of August and the 6th of September 1994. During the fieldwork every endeavour was made to dig deep in to the social system and to get as much information as possible. To this end, a number of peasants were interviewed on the basis of three classes of people: rich, medium and poor and included both men and women. In an attempt to understand the changes that have taken place older people were also given special focus. In addition to peasants, educated people were interviewed to fill in some gaps and also to understand their views. Some government offices were also consulted. These include Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) *woreda* and zonal offices, Ministry of Health (*Woreda* Office), Ministry of Culture and Sports (Zonal Office), Administration Office (both *woreda* and zone), Ministry of Finance (Zonal Office), Ministry of Planning (Zonal Office).

GLOSSARY

<i>Areke:</i>	A distilled spirit.
<i>Ato:</i>	A title of respect for a man; Mr.
<i>Belg:</i>	A short rainy season usually occurring during February/March/April. The harvest from this season takes place in July and August.
<i>Birr:</i>	The currency of Ethiopia (9 birr= approximately £1).
<i>Borde:</i>	Non-alcoholic beer.
<i>Chat:</i>	A bushy plant which has leaves which are mildly narcotic. The leaves are chewed.
<i>Dagetama:</i>	Steep land; sloping upwards.
<i>Debo:</i>	A communal labour group in which labour is exchanged for food and drink.
<i>Dist:</i>	Clay pot.
<i>Enset:</i>	Also known as false banana. The roots and the inside of the trunk and branches are eaten often after being stored in the ground to allow for fermentation.
<i>Erbo:</i>	A sharecropping arrangement where the tenant covers the seed and labour costs and gets 3/4 of the harvest.
<i>Fird Shengo:</i>	A local court.
<i>Gabi:</i>	A shawl-like garment made of a double layer of white cotton.
<i>Idir:</i>	A burial society.
<i>Injera:</i>	Ethiopian flat bread.

<i>Jebena:</i>	Clay kettle for making coffee.
<i>Kalicha:</i>	Witch or witch doctor.
<i>Kiremt:</i>	The main rainy season; <i>meher</i> .
<i>Kocho:</i>	Emergency food derived from <i>enset</i> .
<i>Kuna:</i>	A measure for grain.
<i>Meher:</i>	The main rainy season - in most places from June to mid-September. Crops sown during this period are harvested from October to December.
<i>Mesob:</i>	Large basket off which food is eaten.
<i>Midija:</i>	A traditional oven
<i>Nifro:</i>	Boiled cereal grains.
<i>Tef:</i>	A millet-like cereal.
<i>Tella:</i>	Home-made beer.
<i>Warsa:</i>	A woman's brother-in-law.
<i>Woreda:</i>	An administrative division.
<i>Zabia:</i>	Handle.

Aze Debo'a

							Crops						
		(September)											
		Mesqerem	T'eqemt	Hedar	Tahsas	T'er	Yakatit	Magabit	Miyazya	Genbot	Sane	Hamle	Nahase
coffee			soil preparation			planting		soil prep	planting	soil prep	harvesting		
			weeding					weeding		weeding			
			planting							planting			weeding
wheat					harvesting				soil prep		planting		weeding
					processing								
teff					harvesting					soil prep		planting	weeding
					processing								
barley				harvesting					soil preparation			planting	weeding
				processing									
enset			weeding	soil prep	harvesting								
					processing								
					planting								
potato		weeding	harvesting			soil prep	weeding	harvesting					soil prep
						planting							planting
sweet potato		soil prep	planting					harvesting					
chat		harvesting any time									soil prep	planting	
gesho			harvesting								planting		
guderie		weeding	soil preparation			planting		weeding			weeding		
					harvesting								
sugarcane		no specific time for anything											

Aze Debo'a

Labour	Mesqerem	T'eqemt	Hedar	Tahsas	T'er	Yakatit	Magabit	Miyazya	Genbot	Sane	Hamle	Nahase
Men												
a working day												
		planting		processing								
		harvesting	processing	planting	soil prep					harvesting		planting
	soil prep aration		processing	soil prep	harvesting		soil prep	harvesting		soil prep	harvesting	soil prep
		soil prep	harvesting	soil prep	harvesting	weeding		planting	weeding		harvesting	
	weeding		soil prep aration	harvesting	planting	processing		soil preparation		planting		weeding
							harvesting					
Women				livestock								
			livestock	house work	live stock	housework					housework	
	brewing	water fetching	house work	processing enset								
	water fetching		harvesting		house work	wood and water fetching		harvesting sweet potato	housework		processing enset	
	housework											
		childcare			childcare			childcare			childcare	

Aze Debo'a

Water													
Water supply name	Description						Time to walk (in minutes)						
Korowa	It is a river called Korowa. It dries during the Belg season while during Kiremt it carries enough water						5						
Dembe	It is a river which gives water during both Belg and Meher seasons It is clean compared with Korowa						15						
Chanicho	It is a stream which gives water to the surrounding people all through the year. It has its own pump that was made by Kale Hiwot church						15						
Lebesie of Bunte Lega	It is a stream it's water being made available to the people since 1985EC by the Catholic church						10						
Yegaso stream	It is a stream which gives service all the year						15						
Markos River	It is a river which gives water all the year						18						
		Mesqerem	T'eqemt	Hedar	Tahsas	T'er	Yakatit	Magabit	Miyazya	Genbot	Sane	Hamle	Nahase
Korowa	plenty					none		plenty					
Dembe													
Chanicho													
Lebesie													
Yegaso													
Markos													

Adele Keke

Crop History		Ethiopian Calendar																																				
Crops	1918	1920	1922	1924	1926	1928	1930	1932	1934	1936	1938	1940	1942	1944	1946	1948	1950	1952	1954	1956	1958	1960	1962	1964	1966	1968	1970	1972	1974	1976	1978	1980	1982	1984	1986	1988	1990	Now
coffee	few people	[shaded bar]																										almost all										
enset	few people	[shaded bar]																										almost all										
trees	one person	[shaded bar]												[shaded bar]																								
avocado		[shaded bar]												[shaded bar]																								
tef		[shaded bar]																																				
new wheat		[shaded bar]												Italians bought it	[shaded bar]																							
cow peas		[shaded bar]												[shaded bar]																abandoned some time because of aphids								
beans		[shaded bar]																																				
maize		[shaded bar]																																				
sugarcane		[shaded bar]																																				
sweet potato		[shaded bar]												introduced in about 1916	[shaded bar]																							