Summer 1976

THE DESPISED WEAVERS OF ETHIOPIA

DEXTER LISBON BURLEY

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THE DESPISED WEAVERS OF ETHIOPIA

by

DEXTER BURLEY

A THESIS
Submitted to the University of New Hampshire
In Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate School
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
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Richard Dewey, Professor of Sociology

Stephen Reyna, Assistant Professor of Anthropology

Melvin Bobick, Professor of Sociology

Loren Cobb, Assistant Professor of Sociology

Douglas Wheeler, Professor of History
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<td>18 February 1944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of Birth</td>
<td>Boston, Massachusetts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Education</td>
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ABSTRACT

THE DESPISED WEAVERS OF ADDIS ABABA

by

Dexter L. Burley

The purpose of this thesis is to answer the question: Why are the Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa Ethiopia of a despised social status?

The thesis first discusses some of the ethnographical characteristics of the Dorze and Chencha people living in Gamu Highlands of Gamu Gofa Province in Southern Ethiopia. The thesis also presents material on the Dorze and Chencha people living in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia.

The last two chapters address the question of why the Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa, and their occupation of weaving are both of a despised social status. The author gives specific examples of the discrimination against these urban weavers, and discusses some of the theoretical explanations for this discrimination.

The conclusions reached are that the occupation of weaving in Addis Ababa is a Caste-like social position which is a remnant of the traditional stratification system of the founders of Addis Ababa. One of the attributes of the Caste-like social position of weaving is that it is despised.
INTRODUCTION

The primary concern of this thesis is to explain why the peoples from the Gamu Highland of southern Ethiopia who live in the national capital, Addis Ababa, are of a "despised" social status. These people, who are collectively called "Dorze" by the urban population, are literally spit on, cursed at, and considered lesser men.

The majority of these people who live in Addis Ababa are connected with the craft of weaving. Their principal product is the shamma which is the dress of the Amhara, the dominant ethnic group in Ethiopia. The shamma woven by the Gamu Highland people is in great demand in Addis Ababa, and to a lesser extent in all of Ethiopia. Because of the demand, these people receive an income which is high in relation to the rest of the population of the country. The shamma woven by the Gamu Highland people is a beautiful length of gauze-like white cloth with a heavy border of intricately woven patterns at each end. By any standards it is a skillfully woven and aesthetically beautiful piece of craftsmanship.

Why is it that the creators of such a beautiful product which is in such demand are assigned to one of the lowest social positions in the country? In other social systems occupations are usually given a low status because of an association with a product; for example, a garbage man with garbage, a plumber with sewage, a chimney sweep with soot, etc. In Addis Ababa there are many ethnic groups who are characterized by mundane or low status occupations such as taxi
driver, day laborers, and wood carriers, and yet these ethnic groups are not of "despised" status. In relation to the rest of the urban community there is no immediately obvious reason why the Gamu Highland people are of "despised" social status. It does not seem to be logical that they would be despised because of an association with a product, and in relation to other sub-ordinate ethnic groups there does not seem to be any justification for their despised status on ethnic grounds.

My main concern in this thesis is to show that the despised status of the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa is directly related to their occupation rather than to their ethnic affiliation. Unfortunately, the political and social upheaval occurring in Ethiopia prevented the completion of all aspects of my intended study. Therefore, while my research is not exhaustive, it is the working hypothesis of this thesis that the Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa would not be of a despised social status if they were not weavers. This is not to say that the Gamu Highland people would be of a high social status if they were not weavers, but that their status would not be so low as to be despised, and that their status could be as high as other non-Amhara* ethnic groups. In this thesis I will show that the Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa occupy a Caste-like social position, and that one of the attributes of this social position is that it is despised. I will give examples of how the Gamu Highland people are discriminated against, and how that discrimination is specifically related to their occupation. Further,

* Until the recent revolution those people identified as Amhara were the dominant ethnic group in Ethiopia (See Burley 1972).
I will document how the Gamu Highland people were forced into this Caste-like social position by the social and political system existent at the time they were brought into Addis Ababa as captives of Menelik's army. To the extent that the social stratification system in Addis Ababa today, or at least until the recent revolution, is a reflection of the stratification system of Menelik's city we have an explanation of why the Gamu Highland weavers in Addis Ababa are despised. That is to say, the same dominant group which forced the Gamu Highland people to weave is still dominant and still considers that occupation to be of an extremely low social status. The status of the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa today is to some extent a survivor of the archaic stratification system of Nineteenth Century Addis Ababa.

I first became interested in the paradox of the "Dorze" situation while I was doing research in Ethiopia in 1965. At that time, and like many foreign visitors to Ethiopia, I was struck by the beauty and skill involved in the locally woven cloth. It seemed illogical to me that the people who produced such a beautiful product should be of what Pankhurst calls the "depressed classes of Eastern Africa" (1961:7). In 1968 I was in Ethiopia doing research on the Amhara as a dominant group, and at that time I began to do preliminary research on the despised status of these weavers. This past year, 1975, I returned to Addis Ababa and completed my research on a specific community of weavers in Addis Ababa. I had hoped to do extensive research on all of the weavers in Addis Ababa but the violent political climate existing in Ethiopia made it impossible. The people I studied are the Chencha who are from the Gamu Highlands in the southern province of Gamu-Gofa, and who live in the Sorro Meda area.
of Addis Ababa. There are several Gamu Highland peoples, among them are the Dorze. For reasons I will discuss in detail below, all the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa, including the Chencha, and in fact all weavers, are called "Dorze" by the majority of the urban population.

Participant observation and interviews were the primary data gathering tools I used for the Chencha people in Sorro Meda. I lived as closely as possible with the people in the Sorro Meda community and I conducted over seventy intensive interviews with various individuals in the community. As I mentioned earlier, in the summer of 1975 there were some serious problems in conducting research in Ethiopia. The revolution in the political structure of the country was having an effect not only on my research but also on all academic research in the country as well as on the general temperament of the people. To begin with, it was difficult if not impossible to obtain a research visa from the Provisional Military Government. Consequently, I was in Ethiopia on a tourist visa which in itself made my work in Sorro Meda of dubious legality in the eyes of the government. I was advised by the U.S. Embassy as well as those few remaining members of the academic community to be cautious in the questions I asked as well as in my general visibility outside of the normal tourist activities. The effect of the revolution on my informants was both positive and negative. It was negative to the extent that in times of turmoil and uncertainty people are often more reluctant to talk to a stranger than they would be under normal conditions. Perhaps because of the iron fisted and somewhat mysterious character of the new government (even well informed people were not sure who was in a command position), people in
the Sorro Meda community were very cautious about any mention of the new government. The positive effect of the revolution on my research was that while in the past individuals were reluctant to discuss the dominance of the Amhara or the inequalities of the Haile Sellassie regime, now people would vent all of their hostilities. Some of my Chencha informants said that they would never have spoken with me about the discrimination against them while Haile Sellassie was still in power.

When I had been in Ethiopia in the past I was able to obtain my research assistants from the Haile Sellassie I University or the upper levels of the high schools in Addis Ababa. But after the student demonstrations in 1974 and 1975 the Provisional Military Government closed the University, except for night classes, and the eleventh and twelfth grades of the high schools. The students had been sent out into the country on Zammancha which is a campaign to educate the mass of the Ethiopian people. In any case, I had great trouble finding research assistants. Those I found were concerned for their own safety and I was unable to find any who spoke Dorzinia. Consequently, all of the interviews were conducted in Amharic.

The interviews I conducted were directed and open ended. I began with four short interviews which served as a pilot in which I formulated the interview guide. Beside basic life histories the questions I asked concentrated on the migration patterns, feelings towards the rest of the urban population, and the perception of their own social status. While the interviews were directed, I did not restrict the informant if he or she began to discuss subjects which were not germane to my research. For example, one woman I spoke with
had recently had a child and she went into great length describing the birth process. Another example is the discussion of religion and politics which we often got into. These peripheral discussions served two purposes: first, they established a common ground for mutual trust; and second, they made it possible for me to obtain a rounded picture of the life in Sorro Meda. At first my tape recorder was awkward for both the Chencha and me, but with its constant use it seemed to become simply an appendage of my person.

While I was in Ethiopia there seemed to be a constant turmoil in Addis Ababa. Student demonstrations, arrests and brutal beatings, bridges blown up, shortage of supplies, and a constant movement of heavily armed military personnel were every day occurrences. But once I had become familiar with Sorro Meda, I came to the conclusion that this area of the city was somehow removed from the turmoil in the rest of the city. The daily rhythm of weaving, and of family and community life seemed to be uninterrupted and untouched by a specific riot or gasoline shortage. This feeling of isolation could, of course, be due to my own familiarity with Sorro Meda; on the other hand, I had lived in Aware (another area of Addis Ababa) for over a year and had friends in various parts of the city and yet for me Sorro Meda still had this particular quality of isolation.

When I had been in Ethiopia in the past I was primarily doing research on the Amhara, and of course this time I was primarily researching the Gamu Highland people. I believe that I was able to establish rapport with the Gamu Highland people with much greater ease than with the Amhara. Perhaps, as I suggested earlier, this was due to the political revolution, but on the other hand, the Chencha with
whom I spent the most time struck me as very friendly and open even though I did not know their language and we were communicating in Amharic. Also, it is often said that the Amhara are secretive people. For example, once while riding on a bus with an individual for two days and discussing a broad variety of topics, sharing meals, etc., I asked this particular individual where his parents lived and got a stoney silence in response. This could have been due to a variety of factors but it was not an isolated instance in that I found that among many of the groups I encountered in the northern part of Ethiopia there was a distrust of strangers, and especially those asking what was considered a personal question.

In addition to my actual field research in Sorro Meda I also spent considerable time in various libraries and archives looking for material pertinent to my research on the Gamu Highland people. In Addis Ababa, and under the helpful direction of Dr. Richard Pankhurst, Dr. Marina Attaway, and Dr. Richard Calk, I used the facilities at the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, and the Kennedy Library at the Haile Sellassie I University. Perhaps one of the most significant facilities available at the Kennedy Library is the duplicating machine, one of very few in the country, which allowed me to reproduce everything available on the Gamu Highland people for further study under less constrained conditions outside of Ethiopia. I was also able to obtain interviews with individuals in the Ministry of Education, the Zamancha, Ministry of the Interior, and a few other government officials with whom I had established a relationship in my previous visits to Ethiopia. In Paris I was able to do some research with the help of Dan Sperber at the Bibliotheque Nationale. In Rome I
visited with Professor Lanfranco Ricci, Professor Enrico Cerulli, and Professor Alessandro Triulzi. All of them and especially Professor Triulzi were extremely helpful. I was able to examine their private libraries as well as the extensive material available at Biblioteca Dell Instituto Italiano Per L'Africa. In Germany I spoke with Professor Dr. Eike Haberland and at great length with Professor Dr. Detlev Karsten in Frankfurt and Stuttgart respectively. Perhaps the best collection of material on southern Ethiopia is in the Frobenius Institute in Frankfurt and I was able to utilize a great deal of that material. In Great Britain I spoke at length with Peter Garretson and did research at the Public Records Office, the British Museum, and the School of Oriental and African Studies in London as well as the Cambridge University and Oxford University Libraries.

While my research did not cover every possible country and archive I feel that within reasonable limits I was able to research the most probable sources of information on the Gamu Highland people.

The literature available for research on the Gamu Highland is very limited. To my knowledge there have only been a handful of social scientists who have worked and written on the Gamu Highland people, and of those people perhaps two who have done any research on the Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa. To date I do not know of any published material which deals with the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa nor any mention in any literature of the Sorro Meda community.

The literature on the Gamu Highland people concentrates on the geographical location of the province of Gamu Gofa. The most intensive research done in the Gamu Highland was done by Judith Olmstead in 1973 and 1974. Her Ph.D. thesis was on the Dorze and she has also
written two articles on specific aspects of the Dorze as an ethnic group. Although her research was primarily concerned with women's roles and fertility, she has also presented the most complete picture I found of life in the Gamu Highlands. Dr. Olmstead has also written an article in conjunction with Daniel Sperber called "To Catch a Feast-Giver" in which they discuss the halaka or honorary position held by elder males in the Gamu Highlands. Daniel Sperber has also written several articles on the Dorze in Gamu Gofa. Most notable among them is Paradoxes of Seniority Among the Dorze" in which he discusses the intricacies of status connected with the halaka. Judith Olmstead and Daniel Sperber were to my knowledge the last social science researchers to do any in depth work among the Gamu Highland people in Gamu Gofa.

In 1969 there was an Oxford expedition to the Gamu Highlands. While the expedition was in Ethiopia for a short time they were able to provide some interesting material on the geographical distribution of the various groups in the Gamu Highlands. In his article "The Economy of the Gamu Highlands, Life in a Densely Populated but Isolated Region of Southern Ethiopia" one of the members of the expedition, John Forster, also provided an excellent description of the inter-relations between the various markets in the Gamu Highlands.

Another important group of researchers on the Gamu Highland people is what I call the German School. The director of the Fronbenius Institute in Frankfurt is Eike Hauberland who has been working in Gamu Gofa for many years, and has influenced several other German scholars to work there. Perhaps his two most relevant articles on the Gamu Highland people are "Zum Problem der Jäger und besonderen kaesten
in Nordost-und-Ost-Afrika", and "The Influence of the Christian Ethiopian Empire on Southern Ethiopia". In these and other articles Hauberland provides historical information on the Gamu Highland peoples prior to Menelik's conquest, which will be discussed at greater length below. Straube, Karsten, and Jensen are three other Germans who through their affiliation with the Frobenius Institute have become interested in the Gamu Highlands. Chapter three of Helmut Straube's book, *Westkuschitische Völker Sud Athiopiens*, provides the most detailed information in book form of the ethnographic characteristics of the Gamu Highlands. Straube combined with Jensen's *Altvölker Sud Athiopiens* provide a comprehensive picture of the Gamu Highlands. Detlev Karsten's book, *The Economics of Handicrafts in Traditional Societies: An Investigation in Sidamo and Gamu Gofa Province, Southern Ethiopia*, is the only material written on Gamu Highland people which is entirely focused on their occupations. In chapter E he discusses the techniques, the migration, and trade of weaving among the Sidma, Wolamo, Gamu, Derassa, Amarro, Konso, Gugi, and Borana.

The well known Ethiopianist Enrico Cerulli has also written on the southwest regions of Ethiopia. While his material does not concentrate specifically on the Gamu Highland people his "Peoples of Southwest Ethiopia and its Borderland" and "Note su Alcune Populazioni Sidama dell' Abissinia Meridionale" do provide important information on the history of the area. For all practical purposes there is no reliable information on the history of the Gamu Highland people prior to Menelik's conquest. I was able to find one travel log, *Une Expedition avec Le Negus Menelik* (1896) by J.C. Vanderheyn, which was an account of Menelik's expedition in Gamu Gofa. Unfortunately, this was an account
of geographical and military significance rather than sociological or anthropological. Other travelers to the Gamu Highlands were Bottego in 1896, Wellby in 1897, Azias and Chambard in 1926, Scott in 1948, and R.M.A. Sandhurst in 1964 and 1966.

While there is very little significant literature on the Gamu Highland people there is quite a bit of information on Addis Ababa as an urban center. The Central Statistical Office of the Ethiopian Government has published several volumes of statistics. As in any government publication in Ethiopia official statistics must be used with great caution. But if nothing else these statistics reflect the official policies of the Ethiopian Government. For historical material on Addis Ababa the unpublished Ph.D. dissertation of Peter Garretson is the most complete and well researched source available. In my dissertation I have relied heavily upon the material presented by Garretson in his dissertation as well as personal interviews with him. Richard Pankhurst has also written three articles on the founding of Addis Ababa. While the works of Richard Calk and Harold Marcus are on the reign of Menelik II and not specifically on Addis Ababa, the city and the emperor are historically intertwined. Therefore, I have used both Calk and Marcus as background material.

The most important work on present-day Addis Ababa has been done by the research team led by Asmaram Legesse. Unfortunately, a great deal of the data collected by this research team in 1974 is still unavailable. What information I have been able to secure from Legesse and his assistants indicates that it will provide the most comprehensive picture of the city during Haile Sellassie's reign. In terms of literature on the ethnic communities in Addis Ababa the only significant
material I could find was by Shack and Clapham. The former has done work which relates to the Gurage in Addis Ababa, and the latter has an unpublished paper on "Centralization and Minorities in Modern Ethiopia". Horvath, Esatu, and Comhaire have written on Addis Ababa from the perspective of urbanization. Some specialized aspects of city life in Addis Ababa have been referred to by DeYoung, "An African Emporium, the Addis Markato"; Fellows, "Urbanism, Engineering Trends in Ethiopia"; Giel, "A Follow-up of 1066 Freshmen at HSIU"; Yohannes Haile Sellassie, "Elections of City Council of Addis Ababa"; and Masfen Walda-Maryan, "The Rural-Urban Split in Ethiopia".

In my search for literature on the Gamu Highland people I was struck by the lack of any literature which dealt with this group of people in the context of the urban situation. To me it is remarkable that the people who weave the intricate border of the shamma should be of a despised social status. The situation is a blatant and paradoxical example of social discrimination, and yet there has been no scholarly research done on the discrimination of Gamu Highland People living in Addis Ababa. Further, any work that has been done on the various ethnic groups in Addis Ababa does not make the important distinction between the popular label of "Dorze" and the other weavers who are from the Gamu Highlands. An example of this is the excellent work done by Shack on the Gurage and that of Garretson on Addis Ababa; both of the authors simply refer to the "Dorze" weavers (this is discussed in greater length below).

In this thesis I will discuss some of the general characteristics of the Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa. The majority of this material comes from a survey done by Judith Olmstead in 1973. The data
from this survey has not been used to date. I am in great debt and very thankful to Dr. Olmstead for allowing me to use this material. When I received the data from this survey it had not been coded or analyzed in any way. Once I had the data coded I used the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) program to analyze those portions of the data which I felt were germane to this research. I have condensed this data into five tables (Tables III, IV, V, VI, VII) which appear in Chapter II. The Olmstead data is on the Dorze people living in Addis Ababa, and my research concentrates on the Chencha living in Addis Ababa. Both of these peoples are from the Gamu Highlands, and in Addis Ababa they are both called "Dorze" and to a large extent both peoples are weavers. Dr. Olmstead and I agree that the characteristics of the Dorze and Chencha in Addis Ababa are sufficiently similar that the data on one group is pertinent to the study of the other group. By combining the statistical data on the Dorze in Addis Ababa with the intensive interviews of the Chencha I intend to present a comprehensive picture of the Gamu Highland weavers living in Addis Ababa.

While the concern of this thesis is to answer the question why the "Dorze" are despised, I have also included ethnographical and urban data which I gathered in Addis Ababa. I have included this information: first, because it is important to view these people and the principle question of this thesis within the context which they live; and second, because it is possible that this data will be useful for further research on either these people or the general issue of stratification.

This thesis has four chapters. In the first chapter, Rural Gamu Highland People, I describe the Gamu Highland people as they exist in
the province of Gamu Gofa. In this first chapter I have also briefly outlined the history of the Gamu people in the Highlands. Because my thesis is concerned with the migrants to Addis Ababa, who are mainly Dorze and Chencha, I have tried to limit this chapter to those two groups.

In the second chapter, Urban Gamu Highland People, I describe the setting and history of the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa. Also, I describe the daily life of these weavers in a specific neighborhood of Addis Ababa. I gathered the material for this and subsequent chapters while living with the Gamu Highland weavers in the summer of 1975.

In the third chapter, "The 'Dorze' Despised", I describe the despised status of the Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa. That is to say, I will give specific examples of the discrimination of the Gamu Highland people, under what circumstances they will be discriminated against, and how this discrimination has effected the lives of the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa.

In the fourth chapter I will bring together material from the previous chapters to explain the central questions of this thesis: why are the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa despised. The questions raised in this thesis are related to some of the most basic precepts of sociological research. The social sciences study not only what are the norms in societies, but also why certain societies deviate in some aspect from what is expected. The latter is the case with the Gamu Highland weavers in Addis Ababa. The people who weave an aesthetically beautiful product are literally spit upon by those who buy the product. There is an unexpected incongruity in the logic of appreciating the product and defiling the producers. To my
knowledge, the status of the Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa, and the status of weaving in Ethiopia has not been the focus of any published or unpublished research to date.

Beyond this basic reason for my research on the Gamu Highland weavers in Addis Ababa this thesis provides an example of how the archaic stratification system of one ethnic group can effect the lives of the members of another ethnic group. This thesis also presents data, which while not conclusive, supports the premise that occupation is a primary factor in determining social status. It is my hope that when the political climate in Ethiopia is more conducive to research the questions raised in this thesis will be researched in greater detail.
CHAPTER I

RURAL GAMU HIGHLAND PEOPLE

As the name suggests, the Gamu Highland people are from the Gamu Highlands which are in the Gamu Gofa Province in Southern Ethiopia. In this chapter I will describe the life of some of the Gamu Highland people who live in the rural setting of Gamu Gofa. In Chapter 2 I will describe the life of some of the Gamu Highland people who live in the urban setting of Addis Ababa. With few exceptions all of the Gamu Highland people live in one of these two locations.

Because of the focus of this thesis I have limited my research to those people in the Gamu Highlands and Addis Ababa who are the principle weavers, the Dorze and the Chencha. While other groups in Gamu Gofa and greater Ethiopia do some weaving it is the Dorze and Chencha who are the most renowned and are the core of Ethiopia's weaving population (Karston 1972:105).

The Gamu Highlands

The Rift Valley is the dominant geographical characteristic of Ethiopia. It runs roughly from the northeast to the southwest. It was formed when the center of the Tertiary period lava flow dropped leaving the valley which includes the Red Sea in the north and a chain of lakes which extends as far south as Malawi and Lake Nyasa. The effect of the Rift Valley on the typography of Ethiopia is that in the north-
Map I
Provincial Map of Ethiopia

1. Shoa
2. Welega
3. Gojam
4. Begemdir
5. Welo
6. Tigre
7. Eritrea
8. Harrar
9. Arussi
10. Bale
11. Sidamo
12. Gama Gofa
13. Kafa
14. Illubabor
Map II

Ethiopia showing location of Gamu Gofa Province
Map XII

Physical Features of the Gamu Highlands

(As in Jackson et al., 1969)
west there are high mountains (Semian) and plateaus which drop
sharply into the valley, rise again sharply to a relatively southeast
ridge, and then tapers off to the lowlands and deserts (Danakil) of
Afar and Issas Territory, Somalia, and Keyna. The Gamu Highlands
are the southern part of the northwestern ridge. The ridge at this
point is often narrow (fifteen kilometers) and further south breaks
up into small mountain groups. To the east of the Gamu Highlands are
two lakes, Abay and Ch'amo, which are part of the Rift Valley chain.

The extreme variance of altitude in Ethiopia and proximity to
the equator produces a microecological zoning of vegetation. In
the lowlands, maize and cotton can be grown, and in the highlands,
crops such as wheat and barley are grown.

In Gamu Gofa the lowlands often provide for the highland popu-
lation, but in many highland areas with relatively high population
density there are intensified agricultural systems with terraced land-
scapes, use of fertilizers, and crop rotation (Olmstead:22). The ensete,
or false banana, is one of the staple crops of the Gamu Highlands. The
ensete root is beaten into a milky substance which has a high starch
content.

The Gamu Highlands have become increasingly accessible with the
completion of the Addis Ababa-Arbaminch road.

The traveler reaches Dorze by climbing up from
the lowland surrounding the capital town of
Gamu Gofa, Arbaminch. A clay road utilized
in all but the worst of rainy weather branches
off from the Addis Ababa-Arbaminch road and is
traveled daily by some form of public trans-
portation. The first stop is the Bodo market
place of Dorze, the second and last stop is
Chencha, capital of a subprovince (the Gama
awarja). These two towns are the centers of
import of manufactured goods into the Gamu
Highlands and of export of hides, fiber, and woven cloth. Both a weekly bus from Addis Ababa and privately owned lorries transport these items (Olmstead:23)

The Highlands are similar to other rural areas of Ethiopia. Olmstead reports that the children shout Ferenji to outsiders, one hears the work chants of men and women hoeing in the fields, and additionally there is "the sight of weavers working outdoors and the sound of a thrown shuttle and beater hitting the thread". (ibid:23)

The Local Peoples

The ethnic groups in the Gamu Highlands belong to the Ometo linguistic group. Cerulli treats all of the people in this area as belonging to one ethnic group which he calls the Gamu peoples. Straube, Hauberland, Karsten, Olmstead, and Sperber separate the Gamu peoples according to geographical location within the Highlands, and cultural differences. Jackson, et al., points out that while there is a cultural and linguistic homogeneity among the peoples of the Gamu Highlands this should not obscure the significant differences within the group. Many of the distinctions between the groups in the Gamu Highlands are questionable, and to date there is no accepted criteria for a division into distinct groups. For example, Jackson, et al., say that, "the differential infusion of Amharic stock (Amharic is also a questionable ethnic reference) over the past five hundred years has given rise to significant variations in racial features". The Dorze are predominantly Ethropoid in appearance while their immediate neighbors, the Doko, are more negroid (Jackson, et al., 1969:6). On the other hand, there is no immediate difference in appearance or customs
between the people living in Dorze and those living in Chencha, and yet in conversations I had with Karsten and Olmstead they mentioned that these two groups should be treated as distinct. In the available literature (including that of Olmstead and Karsten) I have not been able to find any specific reference to a difference between the people from Dorze and Chencha, but for the purposes of ethnographic conformity in this thesis I have not referred to the people from Chencha as belonging to the Dorze ethnic group.

The principal weavers in the Gamu Highlands come from Dorze and Chencha. The material wealth gained from weaving allows the people from Chencha and Dorze to buy the status symbols from the urban centers (gold jewelry, dresses of printed cloth, manufactured shoes, etc.), and to hire agricultural labor for their fields. For these reasons the weavers from Dorze and Chencha consider themselves to be superior to the other groups in the Gamu Highlands. While weaving is considered to be a low status occupation in much of Ethiopia it is the primary component of high status in the Gamu Highlands. Other occupations, such as tanners, potters, and smiths, comprise what Jackson, et al., refer to as "despised castes". Olmstead says that the Dorze consider their low status craft specialists to be better than the ordinary citizen of other Gamu ethnic groups (Olmstead 1974:24). She goes on to say that the key to understanding the social structure of the Gamu Highlands is the notion of gome.

Possible infractions of gome number in the hundreds, providing great explanatory flexibility and encoding information about Gamu Highland culture. This information is about cognitive categories as well as structural positions in the society and the content of social roles and all of it localizes danger in specific acts and events (ibid:26)
The *gome* provides social sanctions, both positive and negative, which define and limit the roles and the social stratification system of the Gamu Highlanders. In addition to the *gome* the concept of *baira* and *gedhas*, or senior and junior, is an important element in creating the patterns and limits of Gamu social life. Olmstead says that most any relationship has an element of *baira*, *gedhas* dyad.

Males are *baira* to females, older people to younger, ordinary people to slaves, slaves to potters and tanners, humans to animals, and so on, the whole universe being submitted to this type of classification (ibid:26).

In the Gamu Highlands clans and villages are rank ordered by the *baira gedhas* system. Olmstead does not specifically mention that there is a conflict as to how the various clans are ranked, but one would suspect that there might be some disagreement between the various ethnic groups. She does mention that if there is conflict the male head of the clans (whose position in the patrilineal system is determined by primogeniture), or in this case the *ka'o* of a *dere* (king of a community), negotiate peace with one another. According to Olmstead each ethnic group in the highlands defines itself in relation to a specific *ka'o* and *dere* and, "the Dorze know they are Dorze because they are ritually dependent on the Dorze king" (ibid:28)*

Another important position in the Gamu Highlands is that of *halaka*. This position is largely dependent on the wealth of the individual. Dan Sperber suggests that while the position of *halaka*

*If this is a valid statement one could therefore establish the difference, if any, between the people from Chencha and Dorze. Unfortunately, I have not found any reference to this difference. Also, because the Chencha I spoke with called themselves Dorze there is a real possibility that they have same *ka'o*. 
Map IV

Ethnic groups of the Gamu Highlands

(ibid: 1969)
is in theory open to all who are wealthy enough to give a halaka feast, in fact the position of halaka (like everything else in the Gamu Highlands) is subject to baira gedhas and is therefore dependent on seniority. Sperber gives an interesting example of the problems of the relationships between halaka, ka'o, dere which are complicated by baira.

I witnessed twice a rite that takes place during the second part of the Maskal festival or d'uhe, where all the halakas of Dorze plus those of neighboring deres must carry together a bamboo pole from one place in the market to another. In 1969, one problem: the halaka of Bodho, the district where the market is situated, takes the lower end of the pole, the senior halaka of Dorze takes the upper end, and all the other halakas of Dorze take the upper end, and all the other halakas take their place according to seniority along the pole from the upper to the lower end. In 1970, however, all the halakas want to take the second position on the upper end, present their claims to bairaship and argue violently for more than half a hour, while the inhabitants of Bodho hold the pole and stop them from catching it. At last, for lack for any better solution the bamboo pole is carried thus; at one end of the pole is the halaka of Bodho all by himself, nobody along the pole, all the other halakas glued together at the upper end, behind the senior Dorze halaka, with their hands on each other (Sperber 1974:7).

The Economy

Farming is common in all areas of the Gamu Highlands; but, for the people living in Dorze and Chencha weaving is the primary economic activity. Because of the rugged landscape and poor soil of the Gamu Highlands, farming is difficult. Terraced fields, hill-top pastures, and an occasional hillside forest forms an intricate interrelated agricultural system. The livestock which grazes in the pastures (sheep, goats, cattle, horses, mules) provides manure for the terraced
fields. Because of the altitude of Dorze and Chencha (approximately 9,000 feet) the field crops are limited to barley (*Hordeum sp.*), ensete (*Ensete ventricosum*), potatoes (*Coleus sp.*), horsebeans (*Phaseolus vulgaris*), field peas (*Pisum sativum*), shallots (*Allium ascalonicum*), and the tree cabbage (*Brassica intergrifolia*) (for further information see Olmstead 1974:66 and Jackson, *et al.* 1969:37). Because of the poor soil a balance must be maintained between the amount of manure produced and the crops planted.

Among the Dorze and Chencha people farming is considered to be of low status compared to weaving. Jackson *et al.*, report that many Dorze leave their fields fallow or employ wage laborers to cultivate and harvest. In lieu of wage laborers the Dorze and Chencha women perform agricultural labor. One of the paradoxes of the Dorze and Chencha is that while the agricultural use of the land is relatively unimportant, the ritual association between a man and his land is strong. Olmstead reports that there are many sanctions, or *gome* related to the use and importance of land. For example, a man may not marry, sacrifice, have intercourse with his wife or make a vow except on his own or public land (1974:74).

Although ownership of land is an important aspect of the social status of the Dorze and Chencha people, the cash income from weaving to a large extent determines their position within both the *dere* and the Highlands in general. According to Olmstead over half of the population of the Gamu Highlands, is denied access to weaving. Specific *gome* attached to weaving forbid women, tanners, and potters access to this skill (ibid:81). Olmstead lists four patterns by which a young man may acquire the skills of weaving:
1. A young man is most likely to learn the skill of weaving if someone, father or brother, in the group, which is the minimal unit of sacrifice knows how to weave. Socialization into this skill follows channels of transmission of other economic and social skills.

2. Lacking father or brother, a young man is likely to learn weaving if someone with whom he has a patrician or other kinship tie, such as mother's relative or the created tie of godparent, can weave.

3. Lacking #1 and #2, a young man is likely to learn to weave if he lives in a community (dere) and district (gutha) where there are a number of weavers.

4. Lacking #1, #2, and #3, a young man may learn to weave if he has the personality characteristics necessary to uproot himself from his home and seek an apprenticeship elsewhere, or the initiative to teach himself, or a parent (usually the father) or other close relative with friendship ties with a weaver living in another area. (ibid:81).

In a survey of Dorze weavers in the Gamu Highlands, Olmstead found that 93% of the men learned weaving through kinship ties, and 79% of those from a father or a brother.

The loom used by the Dorze and Chencha is traditional and used throughout Ethiopia (Pankhurst 1968:259). It is a two harness pit-loom. It is hung from a scaffolding of sticks where the handles are pulled with the feet and the simple boat shuttle is thrown by hand (Karsten, 1972:93). (see illustration 1). The harnesses are raised and lowered by means of a leather or rope which are attached to the bare feet of the weaver. In the Gamu Highlands the weavers often set up several of the looms close to each other so that the weavers can chat. As opposed to the cumbersome and expensive looms used in the United States and Europe these looms are very portable, light, and inexpensive. The total cost of one of these looms varies from two to five Ethiopian dollars. Commonly the weaver sets up his
1. loom used by Gamu Highland People
2. spindle
3. shuttle
4. shuttle
5. weaver's knot
6. loom suspended over a pit

(as in Jarnafo 1963:30)
loom in the morning, weaves until about four in the afternoon and then wraps the loom into a compact little bundle and carries it with him.

The most common weaving done by the Dorze and Chencha is what is called a komblete. This will be discussed at length below. Besides the komblete the Dorze and Chencha in the Gamu Highlands also weave the dunguze and buluko. The dunguze is indigenous to the Gamu Highlands. It is a strip of bright alternating stripes used to make men's shorts. The colors are usually red, black, and yellow. I have been told that the dunguze is the traditional dress of the Gamu Highland people, and they learned to weave the komblete only after the migrations of the Amhara in the early nineteenth century. The buluko (sometimes called gabi) is a heavy cloth made from homespun cotton. It is used as a blanket and also a shawl in cold weather. Both the dunguze and buluko are made with weft face weaving: the transverse (weft) threads show, and the lengthwise (warp) threads are not seen (Olmstead 1974:78)

As can be expected the income from weaving varies with the aptitude and diligence of the individual weaver. Below are two tables which give a rough idea of the cost and profit made by weaving in the Gamu Highlands. Because of the rapid rise in the cost of manufactured thread these tables are definitely outdated, but they do give an idea of the relative profits obtained from weaving the various types of cloth.
TABLE 1
COSTS OF KOMBLETE PRODUCTION IN THE GAMU HIGHLANDS
JACKSON ET AL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor Quality</th>
<th></th>
<th>Good Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Per komplete</td>
<td>Per week(x9)</td>
<td>Per komplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory spun cotton</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home spun cotton</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colored threads</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials cost</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling price</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>22.50</td>
<td>8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Return</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Jackson et al: 1969:51)

TABLE 2
WEAVING TIME AND PROFITS OF GAMU HIGHLANDS
OLMSTEAD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of days to make</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of materials, $ Et.</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale price, $ Et.</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>35.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit per day's work $ Et.</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: These are only examples; profits for each type cover a wide range.


(Olmstead 1974:79)
History

According to all available sources the people living in the area of Dorze and Chencha have inhabited the area for many centuries. There are no indigenous written histories of the area so that before Menelik's invasion in 1898 the information is vague on the origin and history of the Gamu Highlands.

Jackson, et al. and Straube mention that the Dorze have a long tradition as mercenaries and raiders. Straube says,

The Dorze are not exclusively farmers, as are the other tribes of the Gamu Highlands. They are and were in historic times first of all warriors and merchants. The men used to hire out as mercenaries in the neighboring Omeo states, which were constantly feuding. With the pacification of Southern Ethiopia by the Amhara, however, war was not longer a source of livelihood. The Dorze then turned to weaving, which has become their main industry (Straube 1962:380).

Olmstead and Sperber, on the other hand, found little evidence of the war-like qualities of the Dorze.

No one is quite sure when weaving was first introduced to the Gamu Highlands, but many writers (Olmstead, Sperber, Straube, Hauberland) have stated that weaving may have been introduced by Northern (presumably Amhara or Amarro) immigrants sometime before 1898. According to Straube the irregular occurrence of weaving, the weavers names, loom terms, language borrowings, the respected position of weavers in relation to the tanners, potters, and blacksmiths, and the limited variety of weaving styles all suggest that weaving is not indigenous to the people from Dorze and Chencha, but is of relatively recent origin and "perhaps goes back to the Amharic influences during the Middle Ages" (ibid: 380).
In 1898 Menelik’s armies incorporated the Gamu Highland into greater Ethiopia. The Highlands were directly controlled by the central government in Addis Ababa by establishing fortified villages or kemtama.

These centers were used to govern the empire—. Communication between posts facilitated the rapid concentration of an army—. Moreover, from these towns and through the example of Shoan colonists, Amhara culture, religion, and language were disseminated. (Marcus 1975: 65)

There were two successive waves of migration and colonization of the Gamu Highlands. Both of these waves were under the direction of the Imperial Government in Addis Ababa for the benefit of the northern peoples of Ethiopia and to the detriment of the indigenous peoples of Gamu Gofa. The first migration was under the direction of Menelik.

The area was incorporated within the Ethiopian Empire by Menelik II during his campaigns of territorial aggrandisement in the 1890's*. At first the country had to be held by force: a number of garrison towns were established, such as Baba, Chencha, and Eso, and Welby, visiting the area in 1899 describes how roads were being built to facilitate speedy troop movements. But gradually the forts gave way to civilian settlements, and rudiments of an administration were established. The Amhara directly alienated considerable areas of land around the towns, and established themselves as feudal landlords over the rest. They still largely control the reins of administration and local government. All education is in Amharic, and there is nothing printed in the local vernacular (Jackson, et al 1969:8).

* Cerulli says more specifically that, “They were subdued by Menelik between 1894 and 1897”. (1956:96)
One of my informants said that his grandfather had all of his land taken by one of Menelik's soldiers. He was then forced to work on this land and was brought to Addis Ababa as a house servant. He was finally imprisoned and beaten for refusing to work for this "Amhara soldier". Sperber also mentions the migration of the northern Amhara into Gamu Gofa:

Il y a trois generations au moins, des Amharea ont immigre vers Goumaide--Techentche--pour y chasser puis pour y expiliter les zones situees en altitude, moins sujets aux miasmes. ----se sont installes et ont de friche et exploite des terres situees un peu moin en altitude (Sperber 1974:7)

The second wave of migration began in the late 1950's and lasted until about 1974. In the late 1950's it was decided by Haile Sellassie's government to build an agricultural community in the fertile areas of Gamu Gofa. The first step was to build a new provincial capital at Arba Minche. This was done by the Italian government (Jackson et al. 1969:8). By 1974 large tracts of land had been taken by the Ethiopian government, and as Jackson mentions the Amhara controlled the local government, schools, etc. A Swiss veterinarian who was in Gamu Gofa in 1974 reports that the indigenous peoples were almost entirely ignored by the federal government: their land was taken away, their livestock was not given the medical treatment which was free to the Amhara, and they had little or no access to the new educational facilities built by the federal government.

Below is an excerpt from one of my interviews. It is typical of the responses I got from the Chencha people when I asked them about the "Amhara" in Gamu Gofa.
Why did you first come to Addis Ababa? 
"I was adopted by a friend of my fathers and brought here to learn weaving".

Why were you adopted by this man? 
"Because my father was dead and all of our land had been taken away".

Who was the man who took the land? 
"Dejazmatch Amer Sellassie Aberber, who was a noble, took all the land, but now the Provisional Government has taken the land back".

Was this man an Amhara? 
"Yes, he was an Amhara, he was administrator of Gamu Gofa"

What did he do with the land? 
"He farmed it".

Did he farm it himself, or did he have someone farm it for him? 
"Of course not, he did not farm it himself, he was a relative of the Emperor. He was killed by the Provisional Government".

Who farmed the land? 
"His servants".

Were they "Dorze"people? 
"They were Amhara, who came from Addis Ababa".

How many "Amhara" were in the area around Chencha? 
"Hundreds of them in my place, servants of Dejazmatch Amer Sellassie Aberber who took the land".

The colonization of the Gamu Highlands by the Amhara had a tremendous effect on the lives of the people from Dorze and Chencha. Before 1898 these people lived solely in the Gamu Highlands. After 1898 the Dorze and Chencha weavers began a cycle of rural urban migration pattern which is still maintained today. This migration pattern began for two reasons. First, the people from the Gamu Highlands were forced to migrate by Menelik's army.

The process of acculturation was spurred also by the forced movement of captives of war from their native province to other parts of Ethiopia. Such migration
not only decreased the possibility of rebellion in the conquered areas, but also speeded the cultural and political assimilation of desperate peoples into the Shoan empire (Marcus 1975:65).

Second, for economic reasons the Dorze and Chencha people wanted to migrate. Clothes made of cloth, and especially the finely woven komblete, were and are an important mark of status and assimilation to the dominant Amhara.

---thus both the people from the North living in the garrison towns and the local people desiring to emulate them wanted to buy cloth. Dorze weavers began to migrate throughout the South and to settle in the new capital of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa (Olmstead 1974: 38).

For these two reasons the Dorze and Chencha people from the Gamu Highlands began a rural to urban migration pattern which is continuous and was the genesis of the Gamu Highland community in Addis Ababa.
Addis Ababa is the capital of the Shoa province and the nation­state of Ethiopia. It became the official capital of Ethiopia around 1890, and since that time it has become the economic, medical educational, and political center of Ethiopia. It is approximately at the geographic center of the country.

For both Menelik II, and Haile Sellassie I Addis Ababa was the show place of their developing country. They both built grand palaces (Gebbi and Jubilee) for themselves and their families. A large portion of the national budget was spent on hospitals, ministry buildings, and schools which were primarily for the benefit of the city residents. If an Ethiopian wanted to rise through the hier­archical ranks of government, or become educated, or receive even minimal medical care Addis Ababa is the most likely place to live.

To a large extent Addis Ababa is also the economic center of Ethiopia. Not only do "all roads lead to Addis Ababa", but also the only railroad, and the majority of the air traffic is centered on the capital city (see Appendix I). Addis Ababa provides the largest market for local and imported goods. The market center of Addis Ababa is the Markado. This is a relatively large area of the city with a seemingly endless series of small shops, open air stalls, and hawkers.
It is the Markado where the majority of the weaving is bought from the Gamu Highland people and sold by the Gurage merchants (for further information on Addis Ababa see Appendix I).

**Sorro Meda**

The Gamu Highland people I studied in Addis Ababa lived in an area called Sorro Meda, which roughly translates as grain field (sorro is a type of grain). As the name suggests, the Gamu Highland weavers I studied live beside a grain field. Sorro Meda is located at the base of Entoto in the extreme northern part of Addis Ababa. It is one of the highest and coldest areas of the city. The population of the community is predominantly people from the Gamu Highlands. Throughout Addis Ababa Sorro Meda is known as the "Dorze" or weaving community.

**History**

Administratively, Sorro Meda is part of Entoto Wereda, and Ras Desta Seffer. The wereda is the larger administrative subdivision and the seffer roughly corresponds to a township or city district. Sorro Meda is really a place name which locates the weaving community within Ras Desta Seffer.

In many cases the divisions between seffer and wereda follows the boundary lines established by the military camps of Menelik's capital (see Appendix I). Many of the people who now live in a particular seffer or wereda are descendents of the original inhabitants of these military camps. These remnant groups are descended from captives, soldiers, household servants, slaves, and retainers brought to the capital by a nobleman or important general in Menelik's army (the two were often synonomous).
Map V

Ethiopia showing the location of Shoa Province and Addis Ababa
Map VI

Addis Ababa

1. Sorro Meda Community
2. Menelik's Palace (Cebbi)
3. Markado area
4. University campus
5. Menelik square
6. Haile Sellassie's Palace (Jubilee)
7. Airport
8. road to Entoto
9. Piazza
Historically, the Sorro Meda community was established after Menelik's conquest of the Gamu Highlands. According to information I obtained from members of the community, the people were brought from the Gamu Highlands and settled in the area of Sorro Meda. Many of the Gamu people were at first required to work in the sorro field while others were pressed into service in the lowest ranks of the nobles' armed forces. One older informant said that his grandfather had been brought to Addis Ababa by Hapta Giyorgis (one of Menelik's generals) as a farm worker. He was given very little food, and when he protested he was put into prison. According to the informant, his grandfather was eventually able to become a soldier in Menelik's army and was later killed in battle.

In his discussion of Addis Ababa during Menelik's time Peter Garretson says that in 1910 the "Dorze" community was quite sizeable with about 3,000 "who were largely living in the northern part of the city" (1974:192) (this is the location of the present Sorro Meda community). He goes on to say that important policy decisions concerning the "Dorze" were made through one of Menelik's generals who had been appointed to be their overlord and spokesman.

The two main spokesman appointed by Menelik from his household were Sahafe Tewaz Gabra Sellase and Fitawrari Habta Giyorgis, but the Dorze generally turned to the latter. Significantly enough, most Dorze lived on land that belonged to one or the other of these two important but non-Dorze figures. (ibid:192).

\[1\]

I spoke with Mr. Garretson in the summer of 1975 about his use of the term Dorze. He said that he was using the term in the generally accepted meaning, that is, including all people from the Gamu Highlands.
Menelik's predecessor, Shale Sellassie, was interested in crafts and had established craft studios at Ankobar. Garretson says that about 50 of the first Gamu Highlanders brought to Addis Ababa after the conquest of Gamu Gofa were sent to Ankobar to be educated in the traditional Shoan method of weaving. The most plausible explanation of why the Gamu Highlands were chosen over other southern peoples to go to Ankobar is that the Gamu people already had some sophistication in weaving. Certainly the traditional weaving of the Gamu Highlanders (dunguze and buluko) (see glossary) is far more intricate than the relatively simple dress of the Amhara.

According to Garretson, in the early part of Menelik's reign the majority of the Gamu Highland people were not weavers. They were soldiers or household servants of Fitawrari Hapta Giyorgis and Sahafe Teezaz Gebra Sellase (ibid: 193). Why then, within a short period of time, did the Gamu Highland people become the principal weavers of the shamma or komblete in Addis Ababa? This question is of course, very important because the initial association of the Gamu Gofa people and weaving shaped the future, the life chances, and status of the Gamu Highland community in Addis Ababa.

The most obvious explanation of why the Gamu Highland people became the principal weavers in Addis Ababa is that, when they were conquered, they already had considerable skill in weaving. As I mentioned in the previous chapter the trousers, dunguze (see glossary) of the Gamu Highlanders have an intricate and artistic design, and require more weaving skill than the Amhara shamma.¹ When the Gamu

¹The entire length of material used to make the dunguze (approximately 52x82 cm) is of a colorful design, whereas only the border of the shamma (approximately 4 cm) has a design. For a further discussion of the differences between these two products see Karsten, The Economics of Handicrafts in Traditional Societies.
Highland people were brought to Addis Ababa, as the spoils of Menelik's southern conquests, they were forced to learn to weave the **shamma** which was the traditional dress of the conquering Amhara. (Garretson 1974:193).

At the turn of the century, Addis Ababa was rapidly growing as an urban center and there was ample opportunity for ambitious and upwardly mobile Shoan Amhara. Because weaving was traditionally a low status occupation among the Amhara, one would expect that, given the opportunity, those Amhara who were weavers would willingly desert their occupation for one of higher status. On the other hand, the need for *shamma*, and those to weave it, increased as the population of Addis Ababa increased. As long as there were skilled "Dorze" slaves to supply the demand for *shamma*, there was no need for Amhara to engage in such an extremely low status occupation.

Another factor which most probably contributed to the initial ethnic exclusiveness of weaving was the rise and fall of popularity of imported cloth. The British Foreign Office report on Trade and Finance (#1978) reported that in 1897 American, English, French, and Indian cotton cloth was the single largest imported product (1897:5). The report of 1897-1900 (#2531) states that cotton goods were the "staple import" of Ethiopia. By 1905-06 the British Foreign Office Report (#3747) states that:

"The ready made *shamma* forms a considerable item among the imports. *Shamma* are of two qualities - bleached and unbleached. The first have a broad red stripe at some distance from the border, and is patronized by the well-to-do; the second is worn by the poorer classes, and is striped in various colors in narrow lines near the edge. Native woven *shammas* are finer."
and more lasting than the imported. Owing to the ease of introducing the cheap imported thread into the web in a native loom, the sale of the imported shamma is decreasing (PRO #3747, 1905-06:5) (emphasis mine).

According to these reports, by 1905 the sale of imported shamma began to decrease, and the demand for the locally woven shamma increased. Not only was the handwoven shamma finer and longer lasting than the imported ones, but once the Ethiopian weavers learned to use cheap imported thread in their hand loom, they were able to underprice the imported shamma.

As I mentioned above, Menelik's army conquered the Gamu Highlands in 1898. According to Marcus, the conquered peoples were brought to Addis Ababa as slaves. Garretson says that at least 50 of the "Dorze" slaves were sent to Ankobar to learn how to weave the shamma. The initial presence of the skilled Gamu Highland weavers in Addis Ababa between 1898 and 1900 coincides with the increasing demand for handwoven shamma mentioned in the British Foreign Office Report.

By 1905 the Gamu Highland people were probably the most skilled weavers in Addis Ababa. They were also the most likely people in the city to supply the increased demand for handwoven shamma. Garretson reports that by 1910 the "Dorze" population in Addis Ababa had grown to 3,000. It is fairly safe to surmise that the increase in the number of Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa was to fulfill the demand for this handwoven shamma.

From my research in the British Public Record Office, the report of Garretson, and an understanding of the social status of weaving among the Shoan Amhara (this is discussed at length in Chapter 4) I conclude that there are three main reasons why the people from the
Gamu Highlands became the principal weavers in Addis Ababa. First, as slaves they were forced to emphasize their skill at weaving and acquire knowledge of Shoan weaving techniques. Second, weaving was and is a low status occupation among the Shoan population of Addis Ababa, and the rapid expansion of Menelik's empire provided many alternative higher status occupations for the Shoan weavers. Third, the decrease then rapid increase in demand for locally woven shamma coincides with the introduction of the Gamu population into Addis Ababa.

Dorze

An interesting question about the development of the weaving community in Addis Ababa is the use of the term "Dorze" to include all peoples from the Gamu Highlands, and as a synonym for weaving. The logical answer is that the first Gamu Highland people brought to Addis Ababa were the Dorze, and when subsequent Gamu people migrated to the city they were attracted to those who spoke the same language and had similar customs. Unfortunately, there is no data to back up this hypothesis. Another possible explanation is that the Dorze were the most skilled weavers and therefore other Gamu people who came to Addis Ababa to weave attached themselves to the Dorze in order to assure a market for their weaving. In any case, within the urban population any Gamu weaver is called a "Dorze". But, interestingly enough, all weavers are not called Dorze. For example, the Amhara weavers I interviewed, considered it an insult to be called a "Dorze" even though their skill as weavers was obviously inferior to that of the "Dorze". All of the Gamu people I interviewed said that they were Dorze from Haizo, Dorze, or Chencha. They called their language
Dorzinia. They said that the Dorze religion was Christianity. They married between towns; Chencha with Haizo, etc. The people I interviewed considered all of the people from the Gamu Highlands in Addis Ababa to be one group: "We are all friends".

My conclusion about the distinction between the various geographical groups from the Gamu Highlands (Haizo-Chencha-Dorze, Dita, etc.) is that for a continuity in ethnographical research on the peoples in the Gamu Highlands, a consistent ethnic distinction is important. But it is equally important to recognize that within the urban situation of Addis Ababa these smaller ethnic distinctions fade and a larger ethnic identity is the most important. Also, in order that there be some consistency in the research of these peoples, I refer to them in this paper as Gamu Highland people. But, once again, it is equally important to recognize that within the urban situation all the Gamu Highland people refer to themselves as "Dorze", and are referred to by the rest of the population in Addis Ababa as "Dorze". Whether the label "Dorze" was initially imposed from within the group or by the urban population is unanswerable, and to a certain extent unimportant. What is important to understand is the difference between the label used for academic research (Gamu Highland people) and the label used by the people in Addis Ababa (Dorze). In terms of my research, one of the most difficult problems was the distinction between these two labels. First, all significant research done in the Gamu Highlands makes ethnic distinctions between the various groups. Second, all published research done in Addis Ababa refers to the Dorze in general no matter what the origin in the Gamu Highlands. Third, until my research in Sorro Meda there was only one significant survey of the
Gamu urban population in which the researcher had any idea of the social and ethnic differences between the groups in the Highlands, or had done research in the Highlands. (This survey was done by Judy Olmstead and is discussed below).

As is true in most urban situations, minor ethnic differentiations which were important in the rural situation are forgotten in the city. The people from the Gamu Highlands in Addis Ababa tend to band together no matter what their premigratory village was in the Highlands. My research in Addis Ababa was concentrated on the population around Sorro Meda where individuals identified themselves as being from the Chencha village in the Gamu Highlands. But, as I mentioned, they also identified themselves as "Dorze". In this paper I have used as background information research which concerns specific Gamu peoples (such as Olmstead's work on the Haizo district people). I feel justified in using these sources because in many cases the research was in fact centered in the Sorro Meda community (Garretson and Zeleka), and the urban amalgamation of the Gamu peoples ensures the validity of the research as an overview of the people. In this paper I will refer to the Dorze in quotation marks ("Dorze") as the popular label for all peoples from the Gamu Highlands living in Addis Ababa. This term, "Dorze" is synonomous with Gamu Highland's people and does not specifically refer to the ethnic group known as Dorze which exists in the Gamu Highlands. The Chencha people in Addis Ababa are referred to and refer to themselves as "Dorze".

Sorro Meda as an urban community

Epstein (1958), Southall (1966), Miner (1967), and Hanna (1971) among others have mentioned that in African cities many migrant groups
seem to display a more rural than urban life style. Hanna and Hanna suggest that social and ethnic continuity with the rural situation is an important means by which Africans in the city adjust and avoid interpersonal stress (1971:66). Kenneth Little cites the Fulbe of Lunsar, the Tonga of Zambia, and the Xhosa of East London (South Africa), among others as examples of ethnic groups who apparently reject urban values and retain the social values of their rural origins (Little 1973:409). Epstein points out that to study most any African ethnic group living in the urban situation without reference to that group's rural culture is to open the door to misunderstanding (Epstein: 1964). Mitchell, on the other hand, says that:

when a research worker observes behavior in town with a background of rural patterns in mind he perceives the two types of change in one context and it is difficult to separate one from the other. Many anthropologists working in towns thus tend to formulate their problems in terms of general theories of social change which are usually inappropriate. The clearest example of this type of approach is in those urban studies which formulate their problems in terms of "detribalization" or "Westernization" or simply "acculturation" in general. (Mitchell, 1966:45).

The establishment of the "Dorze" as weavers in Addis Ababa occurred between 1898 and 1910. In that period the Gamu Highland people established themselves as the most skilled and the most prodigious weavers in Addis Ababa. They also established weaving as having a specific ethnic identity, which because of the nature of the status of the occupation became a relatively closed occupation. The relatively exclusive ethnic identity of the Gamu people with weaving functioned to the benefit of the community to the extent that it afforded them a
constant and increasing source of income. Economically, the "Dorze" fulfilled an important function in the growing empire of Menelik and then Haile Sellassie. Migrants from the Gamu Highlands to Addis Ababa knew that they could go directly to an established community in the city where the people spoke their language and practiced the customs of their highland community. Also, migrants were assured of a relatively high and constant cash income from their weaving in the city.

Both Menelik and Haile Sellassie were aware of the economic importance of this ethnic community of weavers in Sorro Meda. In a proclamation "to ensure that a worker is respected on account of his work", Menelik said.

```
let those who insult the worker on account of his labor cease to do so. Until this time you called those who weaved shamma you called shammene---and insulted on account of his trade---Discrimination is the result of ignorance---But, you by your insults are going to leave my country without people who can make the plough (craftsman): the land (the country) will thus become bare and destitue---Hereafter anyone who insults these people is insulting me---and will be punished by a year imprisonment, (Mahtama Sellassie 1942:432).
```

But in spite of the threat of imprisonment the despised status of the Gamu community was not significantly changed. Consequently, "the Dorze have remained one of the least integrated of the minorities under Amhara control in the capital". (Garretson: 193). That is to say, while the ethnic exclusiveness of weaving has guaranteed a place in the economic community of Addis Ababa, socially the Gamu people have remained a closed and "insulated" minority.
The majority of the Chencha in Sorro Meda do not consider Addis Ababa to be their permanent or final home. Many have farms, houses, fields, livestock, wives, and children in Gamu Gofa (see Table). Most of the older Chencha, and heads of the households, plan to return to Chencha at some time and live there permanently. Some say that they would like to have a halaka feast, and retire to a position of high status and respect. Every Chencha I spoke with said that he or she returns to the Gamu Highlands whenever possible. The usual time to go back is at Maskal (see glossary). When the men return to Chencha they bring gifts for their family and friends. They also wear their most lavish clothes and show them off in the market. Unmarried men take this opportunity to look for a suitable wife. With only occasional exceptions, Chencha men have or intend to marry women from the highlands. A new arrival to the Soro Meda community usually brings letters and news from Chencha. He or she is expected to stay with a relative living in Sorro Meda.

### Table 4

**Land Ownership of Gamu Highland People Living in Addis Ababa**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Houses owned</th>
<th>Addis Ababa</th>
<th>Gamu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>92.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 or more</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Houses rented</th>
<th>Addis Ababa</th>
<th>Gamu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>no data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land owned</th>
<th>Addis Ababa</th>
<th>Gamu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(compiled from data gathered by Olmstead 1974)</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Chencha people consider both Sorro Meda in Addis Ababa and Chencha in Gamu Gofa to be their homes. They often refer to the Gamu Highlands as home, but when they are in the Markado or another part of Addis Ababa they say that they are going home to Sorro Meda. Addis Ababa is seen by the Chencha as a place of work. But unlike the Western concept of suburban or rural home and urban office, the Chencha see the urban situation as impermanent residence for each individual but as a permanent extension of their ethnic community. According to the Chencha, Sorro Meda will always be a weaving community within the city. Individual weavers may come and go, but when a Chencha is in the city he knows that Sorro Meda will always be his refuge. A naive country boy need only ask when he gets off the bus in the Markado where the "Dorze" live and he will be directed to Sorro Meda. Once within the community at the Northern part of the city he will find that people speak his language, know who he and his family are, follow his social customs, and give him food and shelter.

There are many things that are different between the Chencha community in the Gamu Highlands and the Chencha community in Addis Ababa. Lack of electricity, running water, cars, variety in food, availability of imported products are all obvious differences between the rural and urban communities. In relation to this thesis and the social conditions of the Chencha people the most significant difference between the two communities is the social status of the Chencha people. The contrast in the rural situation is that because of their relatively high cash income when these despised weavers return to the Gamu Highlands they enjoy a high social status.
The Chencha people consider the urban community in Sorro Meda to be an extension of the rural community in the Gamu Highlands. The primary difference between the two geographical locations is that in the rural situation they have high status and in the urban situation they have low status. In other words, within the cognitive framework of the Chencha, social status is associated with rural and urban. High status is associated with rural, and low status is associated with urban. Also, to a certain extent the two are mutually dependent. Generally, one cannot earn money to achieve the high status in the country without first being subjected to the urban situation, and also one is usually not willing to endure the low status of the city unless one knows that high status awaits one in the rural situation.

This status association with rural and urban leads to some interesting theoretical points. First, as I said before, if a Chencha is in the Markado or some other part of the city he or she refers to returning "home" to Sorro Meda. Within this fairly tight-knit community a Chencha is not despised because he is a weaver. His social status is equal to that of the other weavers. To the extent that a weaver is not of low status within the Sorro Meda community, there is a more rural situation in Sorro Meda than when he is in some other part of the city. In terms of accepted theories of urbanism this association may be a great jump, but in terms of the feelings of the Chencha it is a very real one. When I asked why was Sorro Meda a "safe" place where they could be proud and hold their head up I was told that it was because it was like Chencha. When they say Chencha they do not just mean their ethnic group, it is also the geographical location---it is the mountains of the Highlands, the farms, etc. This distinction between
the ethnic and the geographical association is entirely academic, but it does point out that at least for the Chencha there is a place within the urban environment, which they consider to be more rural than other places in the city.

When one enters the community of Sorro Meda one quickly becomes aware that this area is different from other communities in the city. In general, the people are not speaking Amharic. The food served in the houses is often different. While the houses are in relatively good condition there does not seem to be as many upper middle class houses and foreigni bet (foreigner's houses). Sorro Meda cannot be called a ghetto, it does not have a wall around it, nor is it any poorer than other neighborhoods. But, the Chencha people in Addis Ababa definitely do live in a relatively isolated community. More than anything the isolation is social. For most of the urban population, Sorro Meda is where the "Dorze" live. Even though it is fairly close to the University, several embassies, and a few palaces of the nobility and royal family, Sorro Meda is not a desirable place for non-"Dorze" to live. Foreigners are discouraged from living there because "the people are thieves" and "the place is dirty" (an entirely erroneous distinction when one is aware of the conditions of the rest of the city). While the isolation of Sorro Meda may maintain a feeling of difference from the rest of the city, it also provides a refuge for the Chencha people. For example, if a weaver goes to the Markado to sell his weaving he usually goes straight to the Gurage traders in the Shamma part of the market, sells his weaving, and returns to Sorro Meda. Only then will he sit down and have a drink and relax even though there are bars and more attractive prostitutes in the Markado. In the
Markado they are afraid that they will be laughed at, beaten-up or robbed; all of which are very real possibilities.

As I mentioned above, all people from the Gamu Highlands who are weavers in Addis Ababa are called "Dorze", even though they may be from Chencha. Also, the reverse is true. The Chencha I spoke with refer to most anyone who speaks Amharic as an Amhara, even though they may be Galla, Tigre, Wallamo, etc. In other words, the perception of the dominant group in Addis Ababa, the Amhara, by the subordinate group, the Gamu Highland people, and the perception of the subordinate group by the dominant group is greatly distorted. While this misperception does not greatly affect the daily lives of the Chencha in Sorro Meda it is an interesting indicator of the social distance of these two groups in Addis Ababa.

The Gamu Highland people come to Addis Ababa because that is where they can command the highest price for their weaving. It is also the place where they encounter a despised status, as opposed to their home in the Gamu Highlands where the high income from weaving gives them high status. The effect of all this is that there is a great deal of migration between the two geographical locations. Young men from the Highlands come into the city to make money and older men who have made their money in Addis Ababa tend to migrate back to the rural Highlands.

It is weaving which engages most of the long distance male migrants. This large scale migration of weavers from the Gamu Highlands to other parts of Ethiopia has been made possible by three factors: the existence of a demand for their cloth, the extension of the rule of law and order throughout much of the Ethiopian nation, and the development of a transportation network--It is in Ethiopia's urban centers that the economic elite of the
nation is concentrated, the people able
to buy the luxury cloth called komblete
with its vivid colored borders.---If living
in the urban area the weaver also has the
opportunity of becoming personally known
to a group of customers who commission
cloth from him, thus eliminating the
middle man altogether. A weaver
resident in the urban area, furthermore,
does not have to absorb the cost of
transporting cotton yarn to the Gamu
Highland. (ibid:94).

The migration pattern of the Chencha in Sorro Meda is highly correlated
with age. The young men and women tend to migrate to the city and
return only for special holidays. The older men and women tend to
migrate to the Highlands and to return to the city only on infrequent
occasions. This is, of course, closely linked to their status in each
location (see Tables 5 and 6).

### Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of Birth &amp; Residence</th>
<th>Addis Ababa</th>
<th>Gamu</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reside</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 3
BIRTH, RESIDENCE, AND OCCUPATION OF GAMU
HIGHLAND HEADS AND MALE NON-HOUSEHOLD HEADS
LIVING IN ADDIS ABABA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male Household Head</th>
<th>Male Non-Household Head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born in Addis Ababa</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reside in Addis Ababa</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born in Addis Ababa</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born in Gamu Highlands &amp; Reside in Gamu Highlands</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>45.%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born in Gamu Highlands &amp; Reside in Addis Ababa</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weavers</td>
<td>72.1%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation Group A</td>
<td>.06%</td>
<td>.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation Group B</td>
<td>.008%</td>
<td>.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weavers and born in Addis Ababa</td>
<td>.01%*</td>
<td>.53%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weavers and Reside in Addis Ababa</td>
<td>63.5%*</td>
<td>35.5%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weavers born &amp; Reside in Addis Ababa</td>
<td>.01%</td>
<td>31.%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weavers born in Gamu Highlands &amp; Reside in Addis Ababa</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*% of total sample (i.e. male & female
1% of total male sample

- occupation Group A -- official, librarian, factory owner.
- occupation Group B -- student, makes pike, drives taxi, shop-owner cook

(compiled from data gathered by Olmstead 1974)
Many of the young men in Soro Meda return to Chencha at Maskal to obtain wives.

On Maskal the young men from Addis Ababa put on their new bright white shamma and stand in a group at one end of the market. Occasionally one will go and speak with a halaka, but most of the time their eyes are on the girls. They look and point at each girl and then discuss their good and bad points. The girls pretend indifference and sometimes call them "city-slickers", but everyone knows what is really going on. The men are looking for a wife, and the women are looking for a husband. (from a personal interview with Detlev Karston 1975).

The young men from Addis Ababa are the most desirable husbands because they are certain to attain high status within the Chencha community. Also, they will often take their wife to the city which in itself is a status symbol. For the young men a girl from the Gamu Highlands is a more desirable wife than a city girl because she knows how to spin the thread for the loom, she knows his language and customs, and they are both of similar social status. A woman of a different ethnic background might consider marrying a "Dorze" weaver to be marrying beneath her status, whereas for a Gamu Highland woman to marry a weaver is a sign of high status.

Weaving in Soro Meda. In the study of Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa done by Judith Olmstead, 36% of the total sample listed weaving as their principal occupation (see Table 7) 62.7% of the male sample and 96% of the male household heads listed weaving as their principal occupation (see Table 8). Only one percent of the adult male sample population worked at jobs unrelated to weaving.
TABLE 4

OCCUPATIONS OF GAMU HIGHLAND PEOPLE LIVING IN ADDIS ABBABA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupations</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weaving &amp; related occupations</td>
<td>36.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-worker</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 8

Male Weaver & Non-weaver associated occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Weaver</th>
<th>Non-weaver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Num</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>of all males</td>
<td>190.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of all weavers</td>
<td>62.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Male Household Head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Householder</th>
<th>Non-weaver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Num</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>117.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>% of MHH</td>
<td>96.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of weavers</td>
<td>63.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The houses of the Chencha in Sorro Meda are relatively small. They contain from seven to fifteen square feet of living space. As is true for most of Addis Ababa, the walls are made of chika (mud & dung) and the roof is of tin. Depending on the size there are one to four men who weave in each house. All of the weavers do not necessarily live in the same house where they weave. Some of the weavers are young men who are apprenticed to the head of the household, while others are relatives of either the household head or his wife.

Often there are several weavers working in the same house. Usually they are related, and fairly often an older household head has brought
a younger relative from the Highlands to teach him weaving, and to share the household expenses. For example, in one of the Chencha households there was a young man (17) and his uncle (43). The younger, Tesfay, had been brought to Addis by the uncle, Germu, on his last trip to Chencha for Maskal (spring festival in September). Tesfay's father had died and, as the older son, Tesfay was responsible for the support of his mother, younger brother, and sister. Consequently, Tesfay sent up to 75% of his earnings home to Chencha. His younger brother was in school and someday hoped to come to Addis Ababa in order to attend the University. For himself, Tesfay said that someday he hoped to join the Bodyguard (the most elite division of the army) as soon as he had saved enough money so that he could go back to school and achieve the level necessary to get into the Bodyguard. While I was talking to Tesfay, Germu kept shaking his head, and his wife (who was spinning thread) often clicked her tongue and also shook her head. When it was Germu's time to speak he said that he also had once wanted to be a soldier, "wear shiny boots, dress in a neat uniform, carry a gun, and serve His Majesty". He had worked hard and learned how to read and write Amharic. But when he went to the army barracks they just laughed at his accent and told him to go back to his weaving. Germu had also tried to join the police force but he met with similar derogatory remarks: they said to him, "How can you fire a shuttle". Germu said that now he was happy as a weaver because he had become an important man among the Chencha and often asked to mediate in quarrels.

In each weaving house in Sorro Meda the looms are set up by the
man after breakfast which is around seven o'clock (one o'clock Ethiopian time)* By this time the women in the house have been up for a couple of hours hauling water from the one spigot which serves the area, and making breakfast of coffee and bread. In Addis Ababa the looms are usually not erected over a pit as in the Highlands. Instead, the weavers usually sit on a bench or chair. Otherwise, the looms are the same as those used in the Highlands (See illustration I). From the time when the weaving begins there is the constant sound of the shuttle being thrown and the combs being moved. The sound is compounded by the numbers of looms in each house, the number of children in the house, visitors, etc.

On the average the Chencha weavers in Addis Ababa pay 20 Ethiopian dollars** for sufficient materials, cotton or cotton thread and imported colored thread, for one komblete (see below for an explanation of types of material woven). They sell the komblete to a middle man (usually a Gurage) in the Markado for 30 to 33 Ethiopian dollars per komblete. The price of materials fluctuates greatly. For example, during the summer of 1975 railroad bridges and highway bridges leading into the city were regularly being blown up by the rebel forces. This meant that the price of the imported thread was doubling and occasionally tripling, and at times the thread was not available at any price. The selling price of the komblete also fluctuates. During the rainy season many of the Gurage traders go out into the provinces to sell

*While the Ethiopian clock is six hours out of phase with ours it is more logical in that the day begins at 1:00 (7:00 A.M. our time), and ends at 12:00 (6:00 P.M. our time).

**approximately 10 U.S. Dollar.
the superior quality shamma woven in Addis Ababa. This means that within the city there are fewer traders and they can ask a lower price from the weavers. Also during the political upheaval in 1975 man Ethiopians were reluctant to spend money on clothes when they were unsure of being able to obtain food and other necessities of life. During normal trading the Chencha said that they could sell a single komblete for up to 70 Ethiopian dollars if it had a wide border (one foot compared to the average three inches), and if the border had an intricate pattern (these are often sold to tourists). In general the average komblete which the Gurage bought for 30 to 33 Ethiopian dollars was in turn sold in the Markado for 60 to 80 dollars.

When we compare the figures in Table 9 with those in tables 1 and 2 there is little doubt why the majority of weavers move to Addis Ababa. Not only do they see the "lights of the city" but they receive a significantly higher income from their weaving. The difference between the selling price of the shamma in Addis Ababa and the Gamu Highlands is considerable. In 1969 the Oxford University Expedition to the Gamu Highlands gave the following economic data:

weavers incomes in the Gamu Highlands appear to vary considerably according to aptitude and application. Most weavers were engaged in producing low quality shamma which sold at $1.50 to $3.00 and yielded them on the average, a net income 20-25% of selling price. Many weavers told us that they made only three or four a week, which would mean an income of about $2.00. However, several weavers assured us that they made nine or ten a week in comfort, giving an income of $4.00-5.00. (1969:51).

Most of the Chencha weavers I spoke with said that they could weave the average komblete in two days, and they usually weave two or
three per week. This would give them a gross income of about twenty to forty Ethiopian dollars a week or forty to eighty dollars per month. One Chencha weaver I spoke with named Alle said that he earned about ninety to one hundred dollars a month, he paid eight dollars a month for the rent of a one room house, food cost about ten dollars a week or forty dollars a month for his whole family (two children and a wife). He also sent about ten dollars a month to his mother and brother in the Gamu Highlands, and up to ten dollars a month on clothes and drinking money.

**TABLE 5**

**ALLE'S BUDGET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Net Income</th>
<th>Monthly total in Ethiopian Dollars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 kompletes per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials (based on Eth. $20. per komplete)</td>
<td>$160.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling price (based on Eth. $40 per komplete)</td>
<td>$240.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net income</td>
<td>$80.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross yearly income</td>
<td>$2,880.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Living Expenses</th>
<th>Total monthly expense in Ethiopian dollars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>$8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and general household expense</td>
<td>$40.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent to Chencha</td>
<td>$10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes &amp; drink</td>
<td>$68.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Adjusted net income in Ethiopian dollars**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2 kompletes per week</th>
<th>3 kompletes per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$80.</td>
<td>$20.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$68.</td>
<td>$68.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$12.</td>
<td>$52.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Alle weaves is the traditional dress of the Amhara—the Kamis and Natala. Both are made of white gauze-like material with an intricate border called tibib. The Kamis is two pieces of material about 70 cm wide and 2.50 meters long. These two lengths of material are made into a dress with the tibib at the bottom. The Natala is also 70 cm wide, and there are two lengths, 200 cm long with a tibib at each end. The Natala, or Gabi for men, is worn as a shawl. The tibib in each complete set of Kamis and Natala are identical, and Alle says that he knows over one hundred different tibib patterns.

Alle pays between $10 and $15 for the colored thread and cotton to make one set of Kamis and Natala. Apparently, because of the increasing number of problems in importing goods to Addis Ababa, the cost of the colored thread has been going up, but the selling price of the completed product has been steady at $18 to $32. The price of the completed set referred to as shamma or komplete is determined by the intricacy of the design, the width of the tibib, and of course, the demand for a particular pattern. The tibib seems to be subject to all of the seemingly irrational laws of fashion which are encountered in most societies. Some years the tibib with birds commands the highest prices (up to $100) other years it is a lion, or diamond. Whichever weaver is the producer of that pattern which is particularly fashionable in a given year makes a high profit until other weavers learn how to produce that particular tibib.

One might assume from this that there is a great deal of competition among weavers. My discussions with the weavers does not bear this out. Alle is extremely proud of his work and aware of who is more or less skilled than he, but he does not feel that he is competing
with the other weavers in the Sorro Meda community for the highest price in the Markado. As Alle said, "I do my work and they do theirs. I learn from some of them, and some of them learn from me. We all are Dorze". The non-Dorze weavers, on the other hand, are simply dismissed as "no-good".

The mean yearly income in Ethiopia is approximately 1,000 Ethiopian dollars. Even if a Chencha weaver makes only two komplete per week he would be making almost two thousand dollars more than the national average; and if he made three komplete per week he would be making four times the national average. The point is that the Chencha weavers can make a relatively high income at their occupation.

Olmstead, Sperber, Karsten, and others have mentioned the demand for locally woven cloth in Ethiopia. In the first chapter I pointed out that even in the time of Menelik there was a demand for the locally woven shamma. Olmstead says:

The national elite with the money to buy fine cloth lives, for the most part, in urban centers. The weavers ability to produce and market his cloth depends upon a number of forces to which he must adapt his strategies. Depending upon his degree of skill, he can vary the types of cloth produced; he can also choose whether to live in an urban center, and receive more of the profits from woven cloth, or to live in the rural area, where he need not pay rent and where food, if purchased, is cheaper (1974:87).

When the Gamu people were brought to Addis Ababa in Menelik's reign they lived within the compounds of Fitawari Hapta Giorgis and Sahafe Teezaz Gebra Sellase. To a large extent they have remained at these same geographical locations in the city. As a neighborhood within the urban setting Sorro Meda is relatively isolated. Because
it is located in the very northern part of the city, Soro Meda is isolated geographically, but more important than the physical isolation of Soro Meda is the social isolation. Several Ethiopianists (Shack, Garretson) have said that the "Dorze" are the most isolated and unassimilated of the ethnic groups in Addis Ababa. When one enters the Chencha community in Soro Meda one is definitely aware of being in a distinct neighborhood. There are no specific physical boundaries as in the classic ghetto, but it is known that this area is "Dorze". Within the area of Soro Meda with which I became familiar Amharic was not spoken except with those unfamiliar with Dorzinia. While the children were brought up to speak both Amharic and Dorzinia, the latter was most often spoken at home and among the children. Whenever possible, Gamu Highland food is served in the houses. The presence of a stranger or someone who was not known to the Gamu Highland people, was recognized by the community. If one were to ask most anyone in Addis Ababa where the "Dorze" lived one would be directed to Soro Meda. To this extent, Soro Meda is a distinct and isolated ethnic community within Addis Ababa. When an individual moves outside of the Soro Meda community he or she blends into the urban population. If they do not have a strong accent (many do), and do not identify themselves as "Dorze" they can be relatively anonymous. Because of their occupational status outside of Soro Meda and their transient status most of the Chencha people I spoke with preferred to remain in the Soro Meda community.
CHAPTER 3

THE GAMU HIGHLAND PEOPLE AS A DESPISED ETHNIC GROUP

In the previous chapter I gave some general historical, demographic and economic characteristics of the Gamu Highland people. I also attempted to place the Sorro Meda community within the context of the urban setting existent in Addis Ababa. In the last chapter I discussed the scarcity of material on the early history of the Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa. Of this material perhaps the most interesting are the import-export records from the British Foreign Office which I discovered and which provide a possible answer to how the Gamu Highland community became the principal weavers in Addis Ababa.

In this chapter I will discuss the primary concern of this thesis: namely, the despised social status of the Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa. I will discuss the occupation, language, religion, and past status of the Gamu people. Within the limitations of the available data I will then look at the social mobility patterns of the Gamu Highland population living in Addis Ababa. Once again, in order to see the Gamu Highland population within the social and economic context of the city I will compare their occupations, language, past status, social mobility, etc., with those of other ethnic groups living in Addis Ababa. In the final part of this chapter I will discuss the "Dorze" within a social stratification context. Specifically, I will
be looking at the concept of a caste-like social status as it applies to these people in Addis Ababa.

As I mentioned above, when one is in Sorro Meda one has a certain feeling of detachment from the rest of the city. Outside of Sorro Meda the Chencha I studied seemed to be apprehensive and suspicious. For example, Alle who was relaxed and talkative with me while in Sorro Meda was uncommunicative and nervous while we were on the bus going to the market. When we were back in Sorro Meda at a tej bet or bar I asked Alle why he was so quiet in the bus and at the Markado. While he was not particularly aware of the change in his behavior outside of Sorro Meda he did say that sometimes when he spoke people realized that he was a "Dorze" and would make fun of him. When I said that people often made fun of my accent, he replied, "Yes, but you are not a "Dorze", when they laugh at you it is not to embarrass you. When they laugh at me it is malicious and I don't like it". At some point in our conversation Alle and I were talking about guene, the wax and gold poetry* of the Amhara. I asked for an example. He told me that once when he was in the Markado selling one of his best and most intricate shamma several of the traders were standing around looking and bargaining over the purchase price. One of the traders who knew Alle looked at him and said, "What does it matter what we pay him, he can never be full". Everyone laughed, and Alle was greatly embarrassed because the "gold" meaning of what the trader said was that Alle was short (he is) and therefore he could never be a "full man". This comment on Alle's

*Sam anna Work* or wax & gold refers to this particular type of poetry where the meaning on the surface is the wax and the true underlying meaning is the gold. For a further explanation see Levine, *The Wax and Gold*, 1965.
manliness is a direct reference to Alle's being a "Dorze" who are considered to be lesser men. While this guene may seem to be an extremely subtle form of harassment, it is a very poignant one to a "Dorze". Even in retelling the situation Alle became very angry and said that one must always be very careful in the city, outside of Sorro Meda, because, "the people are always looking for a chance to take advantage of us".

The Chencha I spoke with did not consider themselves to be inferior to the other peoples in Ethiopia. Realistically, they saw the Amhara as the ruling ethnic group, but in their own eyes the Chencha I spoke with did not believe that the power of the Amhara could be attributed to an inherent superiority of that particular ethnic group. At the time I interviewed the Chencha, the Amhara had lost their political power base, and the Chencha gave this as evidence of the equality of even the most powerful*.

All of the Gamu Highland weavers with whom I spoke with were proud of their proficiency in weaving. On the other hand, they also said that while they lived in Addis Ababa, they must endure the insults of the Amhara, and be "spit upon". The Chencha said that people would literally spit at them. If I were to use the Amharic translation of the social status of the "Dorze" weavers I would call them a "spit-upon" people, but research (Corlett, Parkhurst) on this and other equally low status occupations has used the term "despised". For the sake of continuity, I have done the same. The nomenclature of spit-upon people is not an artifact of social research in Ethiopia, it is a real label

*It was common knowledge that the former pinnacle of superiority and power in Ethiopia, the Emperor, was now humiliated and imprisoned.
used by the population of Addis Ababa. When I asked people in Addis Ababa about the social position of the "Dorze" weavers, the term spit-upon was often mentioned. There are other occupations in Ethiopia, such as potting and tanning, which are of equally low social status, but unlike weaving there is not one ethnic group which today is identified with these low status occupations. The "Dorze" in Addis Ababa are in a unique social position.

**Language**

The Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa speak "Dorzinia". It is sufficiently different from Amharic so that it cannot be understood by an Amharic Speaker. I asked all of my Chencha informants what languages they spoke. All of them speak a little Amharic, even though it is often heavily accented. Often I found that my Amharic was better than that of the Chencha. There is an interesting age division in relation to language: the older Chencha generally know less Amharic then the younger members of the community. The younger Chencha (under 15) are usually not migrants to the city, but have been born there and attend schools where the instruction is in Amharic. Of the population of Judy Olmstead's survey 28.2% were born in Addis Ababa (see Table 6), and 42.2% of the population were between the ages of one and twenty. None of the male household heads, who represent the older section of the population, was born in Addis Ababa (see Table 6). These statistics indicate that as the younger Amharic speaking, city born "Dorze" grow up, there will be less of a language barrier between the Dorze community and the rest of the urban population. All of the Chencha I interviewed said that they wanted their children to learn Dorzinia. They also said that they wanted their children to speak Amharic "like an Amhara".
Many of the Chencha see Amharic as a vehicle, or at least an essential criteria, for escape from their social status. For the Chencha, Amharic is a key for upward mobility. To a certain extent this seems to be a valid point. For even if a Chencha takes up some occupation other than weaving if he or she can speak only Dorzinia they will always be associated with weaving. If a Chencha learned Gallinia, Tagrina, or some language other than Amharic he or she would probably not be associated with the despised status of the weavers, but they still would have many doors in Addis Ababa closed to them.

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, Addis Ababa has more social and economic benefits than any part of the country. One would expect then that the urban "Dorze" would have a good chance of upward mobility if they took advantage of the educational and service organizations in the city. But this is not the case, and language deficiencies are important in their inability to utilize the opportunities. As the official language of the country, Amharic is not only the language of instruction in the schools, but it is also the principal language used in all economic, medical and legal transaction. I was told of several instances where a Chencha was denied service because they could not speak Amharic fluently.

In one instance I was told that some young men were brought to court for refusing to pay their bill at a tej bet (bar and whore house). These young men were Chencha from Sorro Meda. They had run up a small bill at a tej bet in the Markado district of the city. Apparently, the proprietress of the tej bet did not particularly like having these "Dorze" in her establishment. When the young Chencha men asked to settle their bill the proprietress quoted them a figure at least four
times what they had spent. An argument, and finally a brawl, ensued. Several bottles and a large mirror were reported broken (there is some question as to whether the mirror was already broken). One of the waitresses/whores, whose services had been utilized by the young men, claimed that later in the evening she had been molested by all of the young men. The final bill, which included the broken bottles and glass, and damages done to the waitress, was over $500. This amount is well over the amount a weaver could expect to earn in a year. The young men spoke Dorzinia as their primary language. They did speak some Amharic but it was heavily accented, and they often did not understand what was said to them in Amharic. When they were brought to court they requested an interpreter. Their request was denied by the judge. They then refused to speak in Amharic and spoke only in Dorzinia. I was told that the judge said that he would not have any ignorant weavers in his court and sentenced them to 10 years in prison.

In another instance I was told by a woman that her five year old son had been hit by a taxi and broken his leg. The woman said that the bone was sticking out of the skin just below the knee. She took him to Haile Sellassie I hospital which is just down the hill from Sorro Meda. When she arrived at the hospital she was told that the boy could not be treated until she found someone to interpret what was wrong with him, even though it was obvious that he at least had a broken leg. The woman went back to Sorro Meda and found an interpreter. She was then told at the hospital that nothing could be done until she paid Eth $100. The woman said, "They treated me like dung because I was a "Dorze".

In terms of the success or failure of the Chencha in school it
seems that language, again, is important in making it difficult for them to take advantage of the educational opportunities available in Addis Ababa. Classes through the twelfth grade are primarily taught in Amharic. While many Addis Ababa born Chencha children know some Amharic when they enter school it is not their primary language. The school age children I spoke with said that they were ridiculed by students and teachers if they spoke Dorzinia at school. The students said that the "Dorze" are often ridiculed at school as being lazy and stupid. If what the students said to me is true the situation would be similar to the one Christopher Jencks\(^1\) described in U.S. ghetto schools. The Chencha students are led to believe that they are of inferior intelligence and consequently under achieve as a self-fulfilling prophesy. The students from the Gamu Highlands suffer even more than those born in Addis Ababa. In 1968 there were only 793 first to twelfth students in all of Gamu Gofa compared with 25,260 in Shoa (see Appendix I). Again, those schools are taught in Amharic and according to my informants the students were predominantly "Amhara".\(^2\) One informant said that the school closest to his home in the Gamu Highlands was half a days walk. He said that he had never gone to school because of the distance involved and "because it was understood that the school was for the Amhara children". Migrants from the Gamu Highlands have virtually no chance of entering the school system in Addis Ababa. This is because, to a large extent, they have little or no


\(^2\) Presumably these "Amhara" were the children of the colonists sent to Gamu Gofa by Menelik and Haile Sellassie.
knowledge of Amharic. While it is a dismal picture for the Chencha students and there are many obstacles in their paths, it is possible for them to advance in the school system and even complete Haile Sellassie University. Almost 20% of the freshmen entering the University in 1967 were not Amharic or Tigrigna speakers. For example, 11% of the freshmen spoke Gallingra or Guragigna as their primary languages (Langmuir 1967:5).

The Gamu Highland people, both in Gamu Gofa and Addis Ababa, are one of the ethnic groups which is given the least opportunity for an education. But this is not to say that it is impossible for a Gamu Highland person to complete his or her education, only that it is more difficult for a Dorzinia speaker to succeed than an Amharic speaker. The discrimination is not against the "Dorze" per se, although that is a contributing factor, but against non-Amharic speakers. For example, the Galla and Gurage share equally in the linguistic and educational problems which face the Gamu Highland people, but a significant number of Galla and Gurage are able to reach the University. The point is, that while education and language are obstacles for the "Dorze", they are not insurmountable obstacles. And, when compared with the same factors in other ethnic groups, language and education do not warrant the "despised" status of the "Dorze".

An interesting aspect of the language difference of the Chencha people is their perception of the dominant ethnic group in Addis Ababa. All of the Chencha I interviewed named the Amhara as the dominant or most powerful ethnic group in the city. Further the Chencha said that the Amhara controlled the local and national government. I then asked how they, the Chencha, could identify an Amhara; how did they know
someone was an Amhara? Almost all of my informants said that they know an Amhara by his language, Amharic. In other words, to the Chencha an individual is an Amhara, and therefore, a member of the dominant ethnic group, if he or she spoke Amharic. As I mentioned before, many of the Chencha know very little Amharic. Consequently, it is often difficult for a Chencha to discern good Amharic from bad Amharic. This means that to the Chencha, a Galla, Gurage, Affar, etc. who speaks Amharic with some fluency is considered to be Amharic. Therefore, the perception by the Chencha of who is Amhara is greatly distorted. The Chencha I spoke with perceive Addis Ababa as being populated almost entirely by Amhara. In this context the Chencha see themselves as more insignificant numerically and politically in relation to the Amhara population than in fact they are.

I mentioned at the beginning of the chapter that Alle thought that if he spoke in a public bus people would know by his accent that he was a "Dorze", and therefore ridicule him. I believe that this feeling of Alle's is more an indication of the insecurities the Chencha have when outside of the Soro Meda community, rather than a reality. The majority of the population of Addis Ababa cannot distinguish a "Dorze" accent from a Galla, Sidamo, etc. accent. In other words, the various accents of a non-Amhara are as indistinguishable to the Amhara as, for example, the difference between a Portuguese and Spanish accent would be to the average American.

There is little doubt that language poses a barrier to the Chencha people living in Addis Ababa. It restricts their upward mobility and more basically it hinders their access to the medical, educational, and legal advantages available in the city. In this respect, the
Chencha are not unique. There are many other ethnic groups in Addis Ababa that do not consider Amharic to be their primary language. But on the other hand, these ethnic groups are not of despised status and to some extent have been able to assimilate to the dominant Amharic speaking population. Therefore, while language is definitely a contributing factor in the Chencha's restricted access to the resources available in Addis Ababa, language is not the primary cause of the despised status of the "Dorze". This can be established by comparing the Dorzinia speaking people with other non-Amharic speaking peoples in Addis Ababa. The available statistics indicate that Galla, Gurage, Tigrinya, etc. have access to the educational, legal, and medical facilities in Addis Ababa (see Appendix I). For example, in a study of language learning patterns of University students, 44% listed Amharic as a second, third, or fourth language, but none of those 44% listed Dorzinia as his or her first language (Langmuir 1966:4).

Religion

All of the Chencha people I interviewed claimed to be Christian. They said specifically that they belonged to the Ethiopian Church. Both Hauberland and Straube say that Christianity existed in the Gamu Highlands before the conquest by Menelik. They point to the existence of churches and crosses specifically in the area of Chencha and Dorze. In an interview with Hauberland in 1975 he said that "there is absolutely no doubt that Christianity was not brought to the Gamu Highlands by Menelik. It was there already". My interviews confirmed this position. My informants said that they had "always" been Christians. On the other hand, I consulted some priests on the issues of "Dorze" Christianity
and they felt that the "Dorze" had been converted by Menelik's army, It is relatively unimportant to this thesis exactly when the Gamu Highland people became Christian, but the controversy does illustrate an interesting point; namely, the attempt to limit the upward mobility and assimilation of the Gamu Highland people in urban situations. The predominantly Amhara clergy refuse to believe that the Gamu people are or were anything but pagans who were converted to the "true" religion by the grace of the Amhara army. For the priests to admit that Christianity existed in the Gamu Highlands before the conquest of Menelik is to say that the Gamu people were one of the "chosen". Also Menelik's conquest of the southern peoples was to a certain extent justified as a religious mission to convert the southern pagans to Christianity. If the Gamu Highlands were already Christian there would, of course, have been no need to conquer them.

While the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa hold firmly to their belief that they were not converted by the Amhara, they still seem to accept the position of outsiders to the churches in Addis Ababa. None of my informants knew of a priest in the city who was from the Gamu Highlands, or one who was even sympathetic to them. Approximately 80% of the Chencha people I spoke with said that they had been to church within the last month, and yet when I asked them if they understood the service (in Amharic and Geez) 45% said no. I also asked them the hypothetical question, "If God spoke to you what language would he use". While many said that God would not use any language, almost half said that He spoke Amharic.

All of the Chencha I spoke with went to church regularly but none of them felt that any particular church in Addis Ababa was his or hers
or that any particular priest was his or her priest. The Chencha from Soro Meda went to Church in groups of five or six and sat on the edge of the main floor of the church. One has no feeling from the Chencha that they identify or feel a part of the religion service. They are Ethiopian Orthodox so they go to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, but they remain apart from the rest of the congregation. Similar to the segregation of blacks in the early churches in the southern United States, the Chencha sit in a specific and separate part of the Church.

Many of the non-"Dorze" residents of Addis Ababa I spoke with said that the "Dorze" were magical and had the evil eye, and that even though they went to church they only used God for magical purposes. Some people said that the "Dorze" contaminated the church, and they should not be allowed beyond the church yard. I spoke with a couple of priests who said that while the "Dorze" were nominally Christian they could never truly understand the significance of the religion, and that the "Dorze" would probably not go to heaven. When I asked why, one priest said that the "Dorze" were pagan at heart, and that given the chance they would revert to worshiping the snake*

While religion is often a vehicle for assimilation, the Chencha community feels that they are "outsiders" in the Christian churches of Addis Ababa. As such, the church reinforces the low status position of the Chencha weavers. One might see the position of the Chencha in the church as based on their ethnic origin or their supposed pagan heritage,

*To my knowledge the Gamu Highland people never worshiped a snake. The priests reference may be to the supposed religion of Ethiopia prior to Sheba's visit to Solomon,
or that the despised status of the Chencha is based on their position in the church; but, such is not the case. There are several other ethnic groups which were conquered by Menelik during his southern expansion, and they have relatively little trouble in assimilating to the urban population. As an ethnic group the Sidamo or Konso or Galla do not occupy a despised status in Addis Ababa. Many individuals from these groups have not only been able to become assimilated into the population of the city, but also some have attained high status positions in the government, education, trade, etc. For example, in a survey I did of appointments to high level government positions I found names which were identified by experts* as being non-Amhara: in 1948 Shihmed Farah, a Muslim, was appointed as a provincial governor; in 1962 Blata Derressa Amentie, a Galla was appointed a member of the Senate: in 1962 Mohammed Hassan, also a Muslim, was appointed Bejirond (a military title, essentially commander of provincial forces): in 1942 Mulughetta Buli, a Galla, was appointed Commander of the Imperial Body Guard, etc. These, and others, were identified not only as non-Amhara but also as non-Christian. The religion of a subordinate group has often been a barrier to assimilation and upward mobility in a dominant group. But in the case of the Gamu Highland people it is not the determinant of their low status. Precisely because other subordinate groups have been able to attain relatively high status in Addis Ababa, in spite of their present religion or lack of Christian heritage, one would expect the Gamu Highland people to be able to do the same.

*Further details of this survey can be seen in Appendix I.
The peripheral status of the Gamu Highland people in the Ethiopian churches in Addis Ababa is a strong indication of the perception of the "Dorze" by the urban population. The Gamu Highland people are tolerated in the church, but their motives and commitment to Christianity are seen as conniving and temporary.

Past Status

The Gamu Highland people were first brought to Addis Ababa as slaves and captives of Menelik's southern conquests. And, as Oppenheimer says of the formation of the state:

The state, completely in its genesis, essentially and almost completely during the first stages of its existence, is a social institution, forced by a victorious group of men on a defeated group, with the sole purpose of regulation of the dominion of the victorious group over the vanquished and securing itself against revolt from within and attacks from abroad. Teleologically, this domination had no other purpose than the economic exploitation of the vanquished by the victors (Oppenheimer 1914:15).

Menelik's state was still in its formative period when the Gamu Highland people were brought to Addis Ababa. As I have mentioned before their skill of weaving was exploited by the rulers of the city. According to Oppenheimer this exploited vanquished group forms the base for the class distinctions of the fully developed state. The Gamu Highland people certainly fall into this category: they were the exploited, vanquished people, and they are still of the lowest status in the city. And, to a certain extent the descendents of Menelik's army still rule the city and form the upper class and are the ones who call the Gamu Highland people "despised". One of my Chencha informants said that he was often
called shanqualla or slave by the Amhara. When this particular young man went to a store to ask for a job he was told that he could be their shanqualla, but no "Dorze" could expect to be paid.

While past status of the Gamu Highland people determines that to a large extent they still be in the lower class their past status does not necessarily mean that they will be of a despised status. In other words, simply because the Gamu Highland people were vanquished people they were not also despised people. In order to prove this point we need only look at other ethnic groups that were conquered by Menelik's army. The Gurage, some of the Galla, the Sidemaesa, etc., were brought into Menelik's empire either by force or by the threat of force.

Urban social ranking and status differentiation of the various ethnic groups crystallized during the formative period of the capital. Noble provincial governors ---brought to the city and settled their entourages of war prisoners, indentured serfs, and slaves. By 1910, urban social rank and status had crystallized in terms of two closely linked factors: ethnicity and occupation. (Shack 1973:257) (emphasis mine)

By and large most urban labor undertakings of individuals of lower-status ethnic groups, such as the Gurage, (were of low status) and over the years the particular ethnic group as a whole has become identified with certain occupational specializations; for example, the Dorze with weaving, the Wallamo with building construction, ---and the Gurage in market trade and manual labor, (ibid:267).

While the non-Dorze ethnic groups which were brought to Addis Ababa as slaves or captives did, and to some extent still do, occupy a relatively low status in the city they are not of despised status. This spit-on position of the "Dorze" is unique to the specific occupation mentioned
above (weaving, tanning, metal working, etc.). Manual labor, building construction, etc. are of lower status than, for example, a teacher or a taxi driver, but the individuals in these occupations are not publicly discriminated against or humiliated and spit at in public.

Weaving

While the language, religion, and past status of the Gamu Highland people are definite casual factors in their social status they alone do not account for the extreme despised status the Gamu people occupy. Other ethnic groups in Addis Ababa with different languages, religions and past status are not called despised and "spit-upon".

All of the Chencha I spoke with said that they were spit upon because they were weavers and not because of their religion, language, or past status. When outside of Sorro Meda the Chencha go to great lengths to hide their occupation. I was told by some of my best informants that we should not talk about weaving when we were traveling outside of Sorro Meda. In terms of hiding their occupation I observed that all of the weavers I came in contact with had a small suitcase in which they put a completed komblete to take to the Markado which is on the other side of the city. The pattern seemed to be the same with most of the weavers. They would complete the weaving, take off their shamma if they were wearing one (the shamma is often draped around the shoulders in cold weather), put on their best city clothes which were usually cheap manufactured western clothing, and pack the komblete into the small suitcase. They would then take the bus to the Markado where they would go to the shamma section of the market. They would go to a trader (often a Gurage), open the suitcase, and stretch out
the material full length. The trader would quote a price, there would be a bit of bargaining, and if the Chencha did not agree on the price he would carefully pack up his weaving and go on to the next trader. The suitcase seemed to me to be an important part of the pattern, consequently I asked why the suitcase was used and was given the obvious answer that it kept the weaving clean. After further questioning it seemed to me that the suitcase did in fact keep the weaving clean but also it served to hide the komblete which would identify the individual as a weaver. Ironically, carrying the small suitcase provided observers an easy way to identify a weaver on his way to market*.

There are many instances, related to me by the Gamu Highland people, which link their status with their occupation. As I have said, they were often called dirty weavers, women, or less than men. One of my informants told me that when he applied to the army he was told that one "could not shoot with a shuttle". One Chencha boy told me that at school he was kidded by the other students and told to go back to weaving and "sitting to urinate".

The children of the Chencha people provided another link in understanding the feeling about weaving. The younger children who were not in school spent most of their time playing around the men while they were weaving, and helping their mothers with the spinning. A three year old very proudly showed me how she could turn the crank on the spinning apparatus while her mother guided the cotton fibers into the

*In the public transportation I would occasionally go up to an individual with one of these small suitcases and greet them in Dorzinia, only once was I wrong in identifying the individual as a weaver.
strand. At a very early age both boys and girls learn the fairly coordinated movements of pulling and cranking necessary to spin the thread. When I asked these pre-school children what they wanted to do when they grew up, most often they said that they wanted to be weavers and spinners like their mothers and fathers. The older of the pre-school children are also interested in going to school and occasionally being a soldier. This was, of course, the reaction I expected. On the other hand, the children who had been in school for as little as eight months were not at all interested in weaving. None of the school age children I questioned gave weaving as their most desired occupation. As soon as the children of the Chencha left the Sorro Meda community they were socialized to look down on weaving as an occupation. The overwhelming majority of the boys wanted to become soldiers, and the girls wanted to become nurses. The school age children accepted that their parents were weavers because "all Dorze in Addis Ababa are weavers". The students believed that if they stayed in school it would be possible for them to get a job as a soldier, teacher, etc. Those students with whom I talked said that the main reason their parents had trouble is that they were not born in Addis, and did not know Amharic well, and were uneducated. The younger Chencha who were born in Addis Ababa seemed to be more optimistic about their chances of doing something other than weaving. While all of the students know at least the basics of weaving or spinning, their parents often did not require them to work at home as long as they were studying. It was difficult to get the older students to talk about weaving. They were embarrassed that their parents were weavers. On the other hand, when I asked if their fathers were good weavers and if they knew many
patterns they seemed to be proud that the "Dorze" were the best weavers and their fathers knew "hundreds" of patterns.

One of my informants, Germu, said that he was aware that the Provisional Military Government was trying to stop the discrimination against weavers but "they (the Government) have too many troubles in the North and with the butchers* to bother with us. As long as we are weavers they will always kid us underneath even if they do not to our face". He looked forward to returning to his farm in Chencha in a few years.

Many of the Chencha I interviewed were hopeful for a change in status for weaving, but when I asked them if they would continue to weave if it became a respectable position none of them said yes. In my own opinion this is due to disbelief on the part of the Chencha people. Like Germu, they have learned to be pragmatic and they see little hope for a change in the traditional status of weaving. Without revealing the author, I read to several of my informants the proclamation issued by Menelik in which he threatened one year imprisonment for insulting a weaver (discussed above). The Chencha assumed that the proclamation was issued by the Provisional Military Government. They said that never in a hundred years could the government change the status of weaving because "those people who wrote it are never around when we are kicked, and they can't arrest a man for the way he looks at us". Of course, they are right.

*"The north" refers to the trouble with Eritrea and the Affars. "The butchers" refers to the government price freeze on meat. The butchers in Addis Ababa refused to kill and consequently, there was no "legal meat in Addis Ababa until the government removed the price freeze.
One might expect that the Chencha people would not be proud of their work if it was obvious to them that it was their occupation which earned them their despised status. But, quite the contrary is true. All of the weavers I talked to were proud of their skill at the loom and assured me that they, the "Dorze" were the best weavers in all of Ethiopia. They considered their skill to be God-given and exclusive to their ethnic group. There are other weavers in Addis Ababa who belong to ethnic groups other than the Gamu Highland people. The Chencha consider the weaving done by these "non-Dorze" to be considerably inferior to their work. I interviewed some of these "non-Dorze" weavers, and from my limited exposure I agreed with the Chencha's judgement of quality of their weaving. Unlike the Chencha I talked to, the "non-Dorze" weavers (they said that they were Amhara) did not seem to be particularly proud of their weaving. I asked them if they thought that the "Dorze" weaving was better than theirs. They would not give a direct answer but said that the "Dorze" did not know their (Amhara) traditions and were inferior people. I compared the prices the Amhara said that they got for their weaving with the price the Chencha got ($Eth. 18 vs $Eth. 25) and the Chencha commanded the higher prices in the market.

The Amhara weavers I spoke with provided an interesting contrast to the Chencha. As I mentioned they did not seem to be as proud of their weaving, and they got a lower price for their work. Unfortunately, the time restrictions on my research did not allow for the opportunity to conduct extensive interviews with these Amhara weavers (I interviewed only 10 in comparison to over 70 extensive interviews with the Chencha). It is possible that the number of Amhara weavers I interviewed may be
proportionate to the total number of weavers in Addis Ababa, but I cannot be sure. The important social fact that emerged from the "non-Dorze" interviews was that; one, they felt that they also occupied a despised position in Addis Ababa society; and two, that they felt that their position was solely accounted for by their occupation. The Amhara I spoke with said that while they were not of as low a status as the "Dorze", "because we are Amhara", they did feel that they were looked down upon because they were weavers. Most of the Amhara I spoke with were quick to point out that they had a brother, cousin, or other relative who was very respected and had a position in the government, or owned his own taxi, etc.

It would be both interesting and, hopefully, conclusive to use the "non-Dorze" weavers in Addis Ababa as a control group to test my working hypothesis that occupation is the sole determinate of the despised status of the Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa. The lack of information on the weavers in Addis Ababa who are not from the Gamu Highlands is a serious deficiency in my research. As I mentioned above, due to the restrictions of time and the research atmosphere in Addis Ababa in 1975, it was not possible to gather sufficient information on the "non-Dorze" weavers. Personally, I believe that the statements by the Chencha and Amhara informants are a strong indication that weaving was the cause of their status. But, on the other hand, it is both informative and supporting to consider other possible contributions to the status of the Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa.
Weaving as a Caste-Like Stratum. From my observations, the discrimination against the Gamu Highland weavers occurs in all parts of the city except those areas, like Sorro Meda, where there is a community of Gamu Highland people. In a bank, store, or bar an individual who is identified as a weaver is likely to be served last and begrudgingly. "Dorze" are denied access to hospitals, police stations, the army, municipal offices, and schools. A Chencha weaver is subject to the same type of segregation as the blacks in the United States. The difference is that weavers are not physically different from the rest of the urban population in Addis Ababa, so as long as a Chencha is not identified as a weaver he or she is not discriminated against.

Weaving is despised in Addis Ababa, and because "Dorze" is synonymous with weaving, the "Dorze" are despised. In an individual from the Gamu Highlands came to Addis Ababa and was able to obtain a job other than weaving he or she would not be despised. For example, there are several Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa, but not in Sorro Meda, who have assimilated to the Amhara and have jobs as taxi drivers, in government agencies, and are college students (see Table 7). These people are not despised.

In the national setting, which provides alternative identities for individuals, it is possible that a child born of a male who is known as a Dorze or Dita will not choose to activate that status and will not be so perceived by others. This would apply in particular to a child of a marriage of a Dorze man in Addis Ababa to a woman of another ethnic group, say Galla, whose mother has divorced his father, who is raised speaking fluent Amharic and no Dorze, who is educated in the public school system and who passes into the literate elite of the nation (ibid:44).
From the information I gathered I believe that if an individual is a weaver he will be of a despised social position for as long as he continues that profession. To this extent the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa are in a caste-like social stratum. They belong to this social stratum because of their occupation. It is not a pure caste because it is possible for individuals to move out of the stratum by taking up a different occupation. In the pure caste system of India each caste is a mutually exclusive social group, and membership in the caste is both hereditary and fixed for life (Buckley 1969:32). The caste system in India came about when the Aryans conquered the indigenous Dravidian ethnic groups of the Indus Valley. The conquerors became the Brahman or upper class, and exploited the vanquished peoples. The division into castes is the base of the Hindu economic, religious, and social processes. As I mentioned above a similar situation existed in Ethiopia. The Amhara army of Menelik conquered the Gamu Highlands and forced the Gamu Highland people into a despised occupation.

The "Dorze"/Amhara situation is similar to the caste system of the Hindus in that there is a dominant and a subordinate group, each of different ethnic origin; and, as long as a "Dorze" remains a weaver he is a member of a mutually exclusive social group. The two systems are dissimilar in that membership in the weaving or "Dorze" caste is not fixed for life, nor does it pertain to all of the social situations which a Gamu Highland person will encounter in his or her life. Consequently, I designate the social stratum of the Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa as "caste-like". While an individual from the Gamu Highlands is living in Addis Ababa doing weaving he or she is in a social position as rigid as the caste of India. On the other hand,
it is possible and probable that no one Gamu Highland individual will remain in that position all of his or her life; either an individual will take up another occupation or he or she will return to the Gamu Highlands where weaving is not despised.

In the Gamu Highlands weaving is not a despised occupation. In fact, because of the relatively high cash income accrued from weaving, the status of the occupation is relatively high. When I asked the Chencha in Sorro Meda if their Halaka were weavers I was told that all of the Halaka had been weavers at one time. All but a very few of the Chencha I spoke with in Addis Ababa said that they intended to return permanently to the Gamu Highlands. Also, most of the Chencha weavers go back to the country for Maskal (Spring festival). When the weavers in Addis Ababa do return to the Gamu Highlands they are no longer in the caste-like social position of the city, but instead enjoy a relatively high social status. This would suggest that the social position of the Gamu Highland people depends not only on their occupation but also on their geographical location.

If, as my Chencha informants said, weaving is the primary reason for their despised status in Addis Ababa they would need only to take up another occupation in order not to be in this caste-like social position. There is some evidence to support this explanation. The Gamu Highland people I spoke with who were not weavers said that they were not spit on. In fact, some of the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa had been able to assimilate to the urban population, become university students, have relatively high status jobs, etc. This information is by no means conclusive, but it does add strength to the hypothesis that occupation is an important factor in determining
the status of the Gamu Highland people living in the cultural environs of Addis Ababa at this period in history.

From the demographic point of view, the primary effect of the caste-like position of the Gamu Highland people is on their migration pattern. In the first chapter I mentioned that the weavers in the Gamu Highlands consider that they are of high social status compared to those Gamu peoples who do agricultural labor. This is true to the extent that Dorze and Chencha weavers will hire agricultural laborers even if they do not expect to make any profit from their land. By hiring agricultural laborers the weavers maintain their patron position in relation to the other peoples in the Gamu Highlands. Because of this high status most of the weavers in Addis Ababa wish to return to their provincial home. In other words, in the city the weavers have low status and in the country they have high status, therefore many weavers migrate back to the country.

Generally, the Gamu Highland weavers migrate to Addis Ababa as young men. They remain in the city at the house of a relative and eventually move into their own rented house. They return to the Highlands to pick a wife, and perform family rituals (see Chapter 1). When the men have accumulated enough money, or can no longer weave because of failing eyesight (a common complaint among weavers) they will often return to their land in the Gamu Highlands. The rural/urban migration pattern of the Gamu Highland weavers is, then, determined both by age and the rural/urban status differential of weaving.

The majority of the Chencha I interviewed plan to return to the Highlands permanently when they have saved enough money. They said that at home in Chencha they were respected men because they could
afford fine clothes, support a house in the city, and also send money home to their family. Essentially, the economic rewards of weaving have made it possible for the Gamu people in Addis Ababa to achieve high status in the Highlands even though they had had to endure despised status while in the city. The effect this status difference and migration pattern has had on the urban Gamu community is that to a large extent the city is an impermanent residence. The Chencha people I interviewed said that they put up with their life in the city only because they knew that it was temporary. The majority of the Chencha around Sorro Meda considered themselves to be transient, and their residence to be almost an industrial dormatory. True, many wanted to buy land and build a house in Addis Ababa, but the primary purpose of this was to provide an income for their old age in Chencha.

The Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa occupy a caste-like social position. One of the characteristics of this position is that they are spit on and despised. My research has led me to conclude that the primary reason the "Dorze" are in a caste-like social position is the low esteem with which the non-Dorze hold the occupation of weaving. The information which led me to this conclusion is that while other factors which commonly influence social status (education, language, past status, etc.) certainly affects the position of these people, but when seen in relation to other non-Amhara ethnic groups in Addis Ababa, weaving alone places the "Dorze" in their particular social position. Unfortunately, I was not able to gather sufficient information on the non-"Dorze" weavers to be able to state my conclusions as a proven hypothesis. I sincerely hope that in the future it will be possible to gather the information which will make this possible.
CHAPTER 4

SOME THEORETICAL EXPLANATIONS OF THE STATUS 
OF WEAVING

In the last chapter I discussed some of the characteristics of 
the Gamu Highland people living in Addis Ababa. I compared these 
characteristics to those other ethnic groups in the city, and I gave 
examples of how the "Dorze" weavers are discriminated against. I 
concluded that it is primarily the traditional negative attitude of 
the dominant Amhara toward the occupation of weaving which puts the 
"Dorze" into caste-like social position, and one of the attributes of 
this attitude is that it is despised. In this chapter I review some 
of the possible explanations of why weaving is in this social position.

A difficulty in an ethnography of a minority group associated 
with a specific occupation is distinguishing between the social status 
of the minority and the social status of the occupation. Further, it 
is difficult to determine both the extent to which the status of an 
occupation affects the status of a minority, and the extent to which the 
status of a minority affects the status of an occupation.

This difficulty in differentiating the status of a minority and of 
an occupation makes the case of the Gamu Highland weavers of significance 
to the general literature on social stratification and occupations. 
One does not often find a case where the occupation of a minority has 
such a strong influence on the social status of that minority. My
research indicates that when compared to other minorities in Addis Ababa the critical factor which influences the status of the "Dorze" is their occupation. This is not to say that in all instances occupation influences the status of a minority, only that in this particular instance the information I have gathered leads me to believe that weaving has an outstanding effect on the social status of the Gamu Highland people, given the value system of the dominant urban people. While this research is incomplete, and is only a very small contribution to the literature on social stratification and occupation, I am hopeful that with further study it will provide some empirical data for theoretical development.

The only research I am aware of which directly addresses the theoretical issues involved in the status of occupations in Ethiopia is an unpublished paper by John Corlett titled, "Despised Occupational Groups in Ethiopia". He examined one hundred and twelve possible relationships between occupation and host culture in an attempt to find a specific explanation of why there are despised occupations in Ethiopia.

Not one is of particular and explanatory significance, in the sense that not one offers a general explanation for the existence or force of despised occupational groups in Ethiopia as a whole: there seems to be no really significant feature whose presence or absence is related to particular forms of despised groups. Thus, perhaps the most significant conclusion to emerge from the ethnological survey is the lack of any important relationship between type of society and presence or type of artisan group. --- despised occupational groups are present in all kinds of Ethiopian societies --- among members of all linguistic groups, in all parts of the country, among nomadic pastoralists, agriculturalists or segmentary,
or monarchical or equalitarian societies, in societies with developed trading systems or those with minimal levels of subsistence, among Christians, Muslims, or pagans: in societies with few other distinctions of rank or status or in those with highly elaborate, distinctions, etc (emphasis mine) (Corlett 1974: 141).

While Corlett did not find one factor which explains the despised status of all crafts in all societies, he does suggest some theoretical approaches which are particularly valuable in explaining the specific case of the Gamu Highland weavers. One of these approaches is what he calls "craft-characteristics". This explanation states that there are specific activities or characteristics of the craft which are casual factors in the determination of the social status of the individuals involved in the craft. The most obvious of these characteristics is the involvement of manual labor in all craft activities.

Manual labor is involved in many other respected occupations, namely farming, but certainly among the upper classes in Ethiopia manual labor is looked down upon, and therefore should not be dismissed as a basis for discrimination. This is especially true in the case of the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa.

In the northern provinces---the prevailing view that work was dishonorable prevented large scale migration to the capital for the purposes of seeking employment in manual occupations---. The greater part of the free Addis Ababa labor force was therefore recruited from the central and southern provinces and was largely composed of Gallas and Gurages, as well as a certain number of Falashas, or Jews, who in earlier times seemed to be willing to enter professions held in disrepute by other northern Ethiopians. (Pankhurst 1962:53).
I agree with Pankhurst's opinion that work was considered dishonorable by the northern Amhara, but I disagree that the ethnic groups from the southern provinces were willing to take up disreputable occupations. As I have pointed out in the case of the Gamu Highland people, these conquered peoples were usually forced to take up these occupations which involved manual labor.

Manual labor by itself certainly cannot be considered to be a determining factor in the despised status of weaving. There are at least two other craft characteristics of weaving which I believe are important to an understanding of the relationship between the "Dorze" weavers and the other peoples in Addis Ababa. Messing suggests that enforced mobility which is definitely a characteristic of the Gamu Highland weavers is "a rational basis for despising manual labor" occupations (Messing 1962:281). He goes on to say:

The acquisition of labor skills frequently led to enforced migration in the supply of arms of feudal armies on campaign, and these armies had to be on the move lest the produce of the countryside around the camp be consumed entirely by the soldiery (ibid:392).

Corlett says that this situation was characteristic of historic Ethiopia, but not of modern Ethiopia. To some extent I agree. In the past the capitals of Ethiopia did wander at the whim of the Emperor (see Appendix I), and today Addis Ababa is a permanent national capital. On the other hand, this is not to say that there is not enforced mobility in Ethiopia today. In fact, enforced mobility is an important characteristic of not only Ethiopia but most African countries (see Hanna 1921, Mayer, 1962, Epstein, 1962). As I pointed out in Chapter 1 and 2 the Gamu Highland people are forced to migrate to Addis Ababa, not specifically
because the market for weaving is in the city. It is characteristic of the Gamu Highland people to migrate to Addis Ababa, but only as transients. The Gamu Highland people, as noted above, consider the city as a temporary home. And, to a certain degree the urban population considers the "Dorze" to be impermanent residents of "their" city. To the extent that enforced mobility is a factor in status allocation it is as pertinent today as it was when the capitals of Ethiopia were little more than "feudal armies on campaign".

Another "craft-characteristic" of weaving is what Hallpike calls "religious prejudices". In relation to the Konso, Hallpike says that weavers are considered evil: the cotton used in weaving is considered to be an odd crop because it ripens in the difficult hot months and is the color of bone and death (1968:264). It has also been suggested that weaving, as well as other crafts, is considered somewhat magical in that it transforms a living plant into a wearable product which does not rot or decompose like a food plant. If one is not aware of the process of weaving one sees only a somewhat magical transformation from raw cotton to a piece of cloth. Corlett says of this process "the causing of things to pass from the natural world to the social world, crosses important cosmological boundaries" (Corlett 1974:162). The perception of weaving as magic need not be over emphasized; the important social fact is that weavers in Ethiopia are considered by some of the population to be somewhat evil or magical. Several of the Chencha I spoke with said that people thought that they possessed the evil eye, but once again it was in reference to their occupation and not the "Dorze" as an ethnic group.

The "craft-characteristics" approach to the social position of
weaving does not fully account for the extreme status allocated to the weavers in Addis Ababa. Manual labor, forced migration, and the evil eye are characteristics of other individuals and ethnic groups, and yet they are not necessarily of a despised status. On the other hand, the "craft characteristics" perspective does single out some of the activities associated with weaving which are seen as undesirable by some of the urban population.

The other theoretical approach discussed by Corlett which is particularly valuable in the case of the weavers in Addis Ababa is that of liminality or transitional status. van Gennep first discussed liminality in reference to the second of three divisions in a rite of passage (1. rites of separation, 2. rites of transition, 3. rites of incorporation). To a large extent, van Gennep used liminality to explain an individual who passes from one stage of life to another and, "finds himself physically and magico-religiously in a special situation and, for a certain length of time he wavers between two worlds" (van Gennep 1960:11). This micro perspective is the most commonly referred aspect of van Gennep's concept of liminality. While the macro aspects are often overlooked they are in an important contribution to the general theories of social stratification.

In the conclusion to The Rites of Passage, van Gennep discusses the macro aspect of liminality in reference to groups, associations and specific social statues such as caste and professional classes (ibid:189). He gives specific reference to the samavartana of the Brahman, the ihram of the Muslim, and the occupational classes of the Pueblo Indians. Within the content of liminality those social statues which are seen as transitional are seen as separate from other groups.
That is to say, transitional groups are not seen as part of the rest of the population. They are physically and magico-religiously in a special situation.

Corlett sees liminality as an explanation of specific despised occupations as well as a universal explanation of the origins of despised occupations. In the case of the former he gives several examples: the **bouda** or evil eye, which is considered to involve a transgression of boundary between the sacred and profane; artisans, because they do "women's work" cross sexual norms; the Jimma **fuga** who are known as "Wood-people" supposedly vacillate between wild beasts and humans. Corlett states further that liminality is not necessarily involved in transition or movement but is also a property of status situations. That is, once an individual is an artisan, etc., then he or she holds this role permanently. van Gennep says that the transitional individual, group, or social status is,

identified with a territorial passage, such as the movement from one room to another, etc.,...
These events are seldom meant as "symbols", for the semicivilized the passage is actually a territorial passage. In fact, the spacial separation of distinct groups is an aspect of social organization. The children live with women---warriors do not keep company with blacksmiths, and sometimes each professional class has its place of residence. (ibid:192).

As I mentioned above, the social status of the Gamu Highland people is influenced by both their occupation and their physical location. They move physically from the provinces to the city and from a homogeneous social group whose weaving is not despised to a heterogeneous environment where weaving has been traditionally despised. In the city the Gamu Highland weavers live in separate communities, such as Sorro Meda,
Also, to a large extent they see themselves and are seen by the rest of the urban population as temporary or transient residents. To this extent the Gamu Highland weavers are a separate and temporary occupational caste, and are what van Gennep calls transitional or liminal. They are consequently considered to be in a special situation by the society as a whole.

Does liminality, as Corlett suggests, explain the despised status of crafts in Ethiopia? I believe not. While the concept of liminality seems to be effective in describing the labeling process which defines the Gamu Highland weavers as different, liminality does not account for the extreme degrees of difference. That is to say, liminality as discussed by van Gennep does account for the Gamu Highland people being labeled as different, but it does not explain why they are despised. There are certain characteristics associated with weaving such as the evil eye, woman's work, etc., which are also associated with other occupations which are not of a despised social status. For example, sewing and baking is considered to be women's work, but the tailors and bakers in Addis Ababa are not despised: the old women who carry wood in Addis Ababa are often said to have the evil eye, but wood carrying is not a despised occupation. While liminality does not fully explain the extreme status of the Gamu Highland weavers in Addis Ababa, it is a helpful tool for describing an attribute of the Gamu Highland weavers status as "physically and magico-religiously in a special situation for a certain length of time".

In addition to "craft-characteristics" and liminality, Corlett also discusses a "socio-economic" explanation of the despised status of specific occupations in Ethiopia. In the "socio-economic"
explanation, which was first suggested by Herbert Lewis (1970:185) and repeated by Kaplan (1971:22), Lewis says:

the phenomenon of occupational caste in Ethiopia must be looked at as a distinctive division of labor, a system for the production and distribution of goods and services which demand special skills and training (1970:185).

One of the consistent points made in the literature on social stratification is that occupation plays a significant part in determining the socio-economic status of an individual or group. Buckley and Mayer state that in the development of a society an occupation that begins as merely socially differentiated becomes social stratified (1955:5). In other words, over a period of time an occupation which was inherent in a simple division of labor accrues an established social position, a distinction of rank and status, and ascribed traits of inferiority and superiority. As elements of prestige, such as economic gain, become attached to a specific occupation it becomes ranked in relation to the prestige attached to other occupations in the society. The occupation is then stratified and to a certain extent forms the basis of a specific class. Buckley gives the example of the occupation of a priest which in the development of a society becomes a class as the mysteries, the prestige, and rank of being a priest are passed from one generation to another. To a certain extent this theoretical approach does explain why the Gamu Highland weavers in Addis Ababa are despised. The rank and negative prestige of weaving was passed from one generation to another, and formed the basis for a class of weavers. On the other hand, this theory does not explain why weaving was despised originally when the society in Ethiopia was only differentiated rather than stratified.
In a conversation I had with Albert Reiss, author of *Occupations and Social Status*, he said that the rank of an occupation within the stratification system of a specific society often develops as a reflection of the household economy of a king or powerful man. As such the social position and distinctive traits of inferiority or superiority of occupations become a model for the domain under the control of the headman or dominant group. Further, once an occupation is stratified in a society, the social mobility within that society is greatly affected by the possibilities for occupational mobility as well as the extent to which the stratification system of the society is open or closed.

In societies with multi-ethnic backgrounds, specific ethnic groups become associated with specific occupations. In many cases constraints are placed upon certain ethnic groups to the extent that occupational mobility is severely limited. If there are no alternative mobility patterns available, such as education or religion, the system is basically a closed mobility structure.

In societies where a specific ethnic affiliation is closely linked to occupations, the ethnic group is often a minority within the society. To the extent that a specific occupation has a high or low status ascribed to it, the ethnic minority most closely associated with that occupation has a concurrent high or low status. As I mentioned above Reiss says that the rank of a specific occupation is most often determined by the model of the dominant group, and to this extent the dominant group determines the social rank of a specific ethnic minority associated with a specific occupation.
In the case of Addis Ababa the dominant individual would be the emperor and the dominant ethnic group the Amhara. When Addis Ababa was founded by Menelik II even the physical plan was a replica of the physical plan of the emperor's household. Further, the social structure of the capital was strongly influenced by the traditional structure of the Imperial Court (see Appendix I). According to Reiss, if weaving is a low status occupation among the Amhara or the emperor's household then one could expect weaving to be of low status in the society as a whole.

In this chapter I have discussed four main theoretical approaches to the position of weavers in Addis Ababa. I have chosen to discuss these particular theories because each one clarifies a different aspect of that social position. I believe that only by looking at all of these theoretical approaches in conjunction can one gain a better understanding of the establishment and maintenance of the social position of weaving in Addis Ababa.

The "craft-characteristics" approach isolates specific aspects of weaving which are undesirable. Research on Ethiopia, as well as other societies, indicates that manual labor, forced migration, and the association of magic with a particular craft related activity are all characteristics which a dominant group might consider to be undesirable. These characteristics, especially forced migration, when seen in reference to van Gennep's liminality would qualify the weaver in Addis Ababa as a "transitional group". As such the weavers would be labeled as different and separated physically and socially from the rest of the urban population. The concepts of Mayer and Buckley indicate that when distinctions of superiority and inferiority become associated with a
differentiated group or occupation, it becomes stratified. In other words, if the occupation of weaving is seen as different and separate, this difference could be the basis of a class distinction. If this was the case, according to Buckley and Mayer, the weavers would become a social class.

Linking together these three theoretical approaches ("craft-characteristics", liminality, Buckley and Mayer) explains, to a certain extent, the development of the caste-like social position of weavers in Addis Ababa. Still there is the question of why the ranking of this occupation is so low. The last theoretical approach I discussed in this chapter provides at least a cursory answer. The rank of weaving in Addis Ababa is a reflection of the rank of weaving in the household social structure of the emperor and the dominant ethnic group, the Amhara. While Reiss's explanation establishes why weaving became a despised caste-like occupation in Addis Ababa, a more primitive question still remains: why was weaving despised in the emperor's household and among the Amhara? I believe that only by looking at weaving within the context of the social stratification system of the Amhara can this question be answered.
CONCLUSION

In the first chapter of this thesis I give a brief description of the Dorze and Chencha people living in the Gamu Highlands which are in the southern Ethiopian province of Gamu Gofa. For this thesis, the most important point of this first chapter is that weavers in the Gamu Highlands are of relatively high social status. To a certain extent, this status is based on the high cash income accrued from selling their weaving. The principal product of the weavers is the komblete which is the costume of the dominant northern ethnic groups, and the national dress of Ethiopia. The primary market for the komblete is in the national capital, Addis Ababa.

In a country like Ethiopia where transportation has always been a problem, producers generally live near their market. The Gamu Highland weavers are no exception, and the majority of them generally migrate to Addis Ababa for varying lengths of time. In the second chapter I describe the Gamu Highland weavers living in Addis Ababa. Today, the majority of the weavers migrate to the city for economic reasons, but they were first brought to Addis Ababa in the 1890's as captives of Menelik's southern campaign. By 1910 they had become the principal weavers in the city.

In Chapter 2 I give some specific examples of discrimination against the Gamu Highland weavers in Addis Ababa. By comparing some social characteristics of other ethnic groups in the city, I conclude that occupation is an important factor in the social status of the
Gamu Highland people. In this chapter I also discuss the caste-like social position of weavers in Addis Ababa. I have used the term caste-like, rather than caste, to express the relationship between a specific occupation and a social status, as opposed to a pure caste where social status is determined by the individual's heritage. That is to say, in the caste-like social status of weaving it is possible for an individual to change his social position by changing his occupation; whereas in a caste an individual is committed to a specific social position for life.

One of the more interesting characteristics of the caste-like social position of weavers in Addis Ababa is that they are despised. In Chapter 2 I give examples of the discrimination against weavers, and in Chapter 4 I discuss some of the possible theoretical explanations of why the weavers are despised. Perhaps the most satisfactory explanation is that the stratification system of the society is often a reflection of the household hierarchy of a king or of the dominant group. Menelik and Haile Sellassie were Amhara and their city was a reflection of the norms, values, and attitudes of their ethnic group. To this extent, Addis Ababa reflected the stratification system of the Amhara, and that ethnic group's concept of weaving as a despised occupation. In Addis Ababa today the caste-like social position of weaving is a survivor of the archaic stratification system of the Amhara and Addis Ababa of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The question still remains why are these people despised who produce the shamma which is both aesthetically pleasing and inherent in the Amhara tradition. In this concluding chapter I address this question by examining the caste-like social position of weavers within
the culture which labels them as despised. This culture is that of the northern ethnic groups - the Amhara, the Tigre, and their assimilated groups.

Straube discusses the low status of weaving in terms of traditions of the dominant society. He says, "Wholly or partly pastoral societies do not have weavers: woven cloth is perhaps the least essential of the normal craft products" (Straube: 148). Pankhurst refers to the wearing of cloth as exclusively aristocratic. Bruce also mentions that the peasant farmers in the Gondar area wore animal skins while the nobility wore the shamma. Bruce mentions that the artisans in eighteenth century Gondar lived in a separate ghetto-like section of the city. If, as Pankhurst says, the law prohibited the peasants from wearing the products of the artisans, then the artisans were entirely dependent on the nobility for a livelihood. In the eyes of the majority of the population the artisan was in a certain sense the property of the upper class. Certainly the peasant in Amhara society was to some extent subject to his feudal landlord. But, the value of the peasants produce, crops, animals, etc., was not dependent on the whims of the nobility. To this extent, the economic dependence of the artisan was total, whereas it was not total for the peasant farmer and pastoralist. As Buckley and Mayer said of the feudal systems in Europe:

The relationship between lord and vassel was originally personal and contractual providing for the vassel's performance of specialized duties in return for protection and livelihood. The latter usually took the form of a land grant, but—the right to hereditary renewal of the feudal contract (eventually became) an established custom (Buckley, Mayer 1955:35).
Hoben, Levine, and Weisslender affirm that the Amhara peasant was able to obtain some degree of autonomy from his feudal landlord, but the peasant was keenly aware of his lower social position in relation to the landlord. The dominant/subordinate or patron/client relationship is at the core of the Amhara stratificational system. Similar to the Gamu Highlands concept of baira and gedhas (see Chapter 1) all things and relationship are seen in terms of patron and client.

Amhara tradition, society, and government are based on the position of one person in relation to another on a hierarchical scale - that is the status of one person is relative to that of another. From early childhood Amhara boys and girls are taught to assess and to react to status by speech, adjustment of clothing, and demeanor. In his chapter on the nonverbal language of the shamma, Simon Messing describes how Amhara adjust their shamma according to the status of the individual to whom they are speaking. For example, putting part of the shamma over one's head indicates a humble demeanor and would be done when addressing someone of a higher social station, and covering the face with the shamma indicates that one is addressing an individual of a lower social status. Messing, Hoben and Weisslender all indicate that to the Amhara the shamma is an important cognitive instrument in conveying the relation of one person to another on a hierarchical scale.

Weisslender and Levine both point out that the patron/client relationship in Amhara society is ordered in that it is based on a rigid hierarchical structure, and exhaustive to the extent that it permeates all status levels within the system. The Amhara not only see everyone in their own ethnic group on a hierarchical scale, but also all other ethnic groups are ranked. The ownership of land is the most
obvious criterion of status. The Amhara are the major landowners, and are thus of the highest status in Ethiopia as a whole and Addis Ababa specifically. Until the recent revolution, the Amhara nobility were in the highest social status in Ethiopia, and therefore patrons, while the Amhara peasant and non-Amhara were in the client position.*

To a certain extent Addis Ababa is a microcosmic example of the patron/client status hierarchy prevalent in the rest of Ethiopia. Shack and Pankhurst, among others, have pointed out that the social stratification system of Addis Ababa is a reflection of the norms, values, and attitudes of the dominant Amhara. The majority of the land in Addis Ababa was, until the revolution, owned by the Amhara upper class. Non-Amhara rented land from the Amhara, or were attached to the household of an Amhara. Landlords in modern Addis Ababa consider themselves to be in a patron position to their tenants.

Within the structural concept of patron/client it is possible to understand the paradoxical position of the Gamu Highland weavers in Addis Ababa. No matter how beautiful the shamma nor how high is their cash income, the "Dorze" are still seen as "clients" who are "patronized" by their customers. Even within their own cultural concept of stratification the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa are gedhas to the landholding, rent collecting baira Amhara.

Unlike many other crafts the product of the Gamu Highland weavers is principally produced for one ethnic group, the Amhara. The shamma is an important part of the Amhara tradition, and the weavers of the

shamma are dependent on the Amhara. Especially with the increase in imported and locally produced cloth, the population of Addis Ababa need not buy the more expensive handwoven shamma. The Amhara continue to buy the handwoven shamma because it is an important part of their tradition - another aspect of that tradition is that weavers are despised.

Both historically and today the Christian Amhara culture has been surrounded and threatened by hostile peoples. For centuries the Amhara survived by entrenching themselves in the fortress-like north and central highland of Ethiopia.* For this reason an important quality for an Amhara man is to be a good warrior. An Amhara man should be fierce and courageous, and excel in hunting, shooting, horsemanship, and hand-to-hand combat. Many Amhara men feel that to engage in work traditionally assigned to women would weaken their ability to perform as a warrior.** Weaving is considered to be women's work. Men who engage in women's work like weaving, are not considered to be fully male. Consequently, when Alle was said to be "not full" (see Chapter 4) it was a reference to his engaging in the traditionally female occupation of weaving. A man who engages in weaving is ridiculed, mocked, and even despised because in Amhara tradition, a man who does "women's work" is a lesser man than one who is a warrior, farmer, etc. Simoons says specifically that weaving is looked down on because it is considered to be "beneath the dignity of strong men and warriors" (1960:187) To this extent the Gamu Highland Weavers are despised because of the persistence of the

*For a further discussion of this see my B.A. thesis "A Discussion of Selected Aspects of the History and Culture of Ethiopia". 1969 Marlboro College.

**A detailed discussion of the Amhara character can be found in Donald Levines The Wax and the Gold.
values of the warlike and feudal culture of the Amhara.

Because the shamma is primarily a part of Amhara tradition, the weavers of the shamma are, to a certain extent, bound to the traditions of that ethnic group. Two important aspects of that tradition which label weavers as despised are the patron/client relationship, and the female characteristics associated with weaving. The important point is that weaving is traditionally despised among the Amhara. If, as Shack and Pankhurst have suggested, the stratification in Addis Ababa is a reflection of the traditional stratification system of the Amhara, then we have an explanation of why weavers are despised in Addis Ababa.

The concern of this thesis is to explain why the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa are despised. The material I have gathered and my own first hand understanding of the Ethiopian peoples strongly indicates that primary factors in the social status of the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa are their occupation and the traditional ascription of low status to it by the dominant Amhara. My conclusions indicate that there is a need for more study on the association between occupation and the ascription of social status by a dominant group. The research I have done on the Gamu Highland Weavers is useful in indicating areas of study, but there must be more empirical data if a more definite link between occupation and social status is to be established. I hope that the opportunity for this type of research will be available in the future.
POSTSCRIPT

In the future, there is a possibility that the position of the Gamu Highland weavers in Addis Ababa will change. Many experts feel that the Amhara as an ethnic group are no longer in control of Ethiopia.

The Provisional Military Government is in a tenuous position economically, politically, and socially. While the new government claims to represent all of the peoples of Ethiopia, none of the Gamu people I talked with was aware of any representation or any significant change in the lives of the urban community. The weavers market and supplies were dwindling. While I was in Addis Ababa the highway bridges which led into the city were blown up and the railroad was often put out of commission by dissident groups. The consequence is that the price and availability of imported thread are severely affected. Before the revolution the primary market for the shamma was the Amhara upper and middle classes. The governments "redistribution of wealth" has nationalized the economic foundations of the traditional members of these classes (land rent, middle size and larger commercial enterprise, etc.). Also, because of the uncertainty in the country many people I spoke with said that they would rather keep their money until they know what is going to happen. The net result is that the market and profit of weaving is diminishing. In many ways, the present situation resembles that during the time in Menelik's reign when there was little demand for weaving. When economic transformations occur, different ethnic groups can be affected in different ways. Those involved in weaving will not remain unaffected by the current changes.
APPENDIX I

ADDIS ABABA AND THE AMHARA

Addis Ababa was founded by Menelik II around 1890.¹ Originally, Menelik located his capital on Entoto, the mountain which rises behind, and to the north, of the city. While this original position was more defensible than the present location of the capital, at 9,500 feet above sea level it was also cold, barren, and a relatively arduous journey for daily communication with the rest of Menelik's expanding domain. According to legend, on one particularly cold day Menelik's wife, the Empress Taitu, saw the steam rising from the hot springs in the plateau below Entoto, and convinced Menelik to move the capital down to that location. She named the city New Flower (Addis Ababa) to symbolize the creation of a new capital and a flowering of Menelik's power and influence.

The relocation from Entoto to Addis Ababa was not an unprecedented move. With only a few notable exceptions, the emperors of Ethiopia never maintained their capital in a single geographical location. Wherever the emperor pitched his tent was the capital.

"The capitals of Ethiopia were, with few exceptions, in a continual state of motion. Rarely did a capital remain in one place for many years: in fact, it typically moved many times each year.--The number of people residing in the roving capitals

¹There is a certain amount of disagreement about the exact date, but it is generally accepted that the city was founded in 1890 or 1891.
fluctuated considerably throughout the year. During the three-month rainy season the emperor would retire to a favorite spot and the population of the settlement would shrink toward its nadir. But with the cassation of the rains, the capital once again became the focus of the Ethiopian political-military power field.---The capitals in Ethiopia moved about---primarily in response to military considerations. (Horvath 1969:206).

As the traditional "wandering" capitals of Ethiopia were laid out as a military camp, so was Addis Ababa. Menelik established his household on a rise just above the hot springs (now the Filwaha Baths), while his generals, court officials, and nobles located their households and military camps around Menelik.

The capital---presents the appearance of a gigantic camp, and indeed this is actually what it is. The Emperor's enclosure completely covers a small hill situated almost in the center of the camp which it dominates---All around the Gebi (imperial palace) are grouped the enclosures of the principal men of state, officers, and others, the importance of the individual being measured by the size of the enclosure and the number of the smaller huts grouped around it. (Gleichen 1898:156).

Several Ethiopian Historians (Pankhurst:1961, Marcus:1974, Triulzi: 1973) have noted the similarity between the traditional plan of an Ethiopian army camp and that of Addis Ababa.

Each of the compounds surrounding the Gebi contained a fluctuating population of between 500 and 10,000 depending on the rank and military disposition of the noble. The majority of the population were soldiers who were either from the noble's home province or captives from conquered ethnic groups.
While the head of each military camp paid tribute and was ultimately responsible to Menelik, each camp was almost entirely an autonomous unit. That is to say, in the early days of Addis Ababa, there was relatively little interaction between the various military camps. Among other things, different camps often spoke different languages. Also, each camp was to a certain degree a reflection of Meneliks. The noble had his house at the center of a walled compound, and was surrounded by his constituents. Each compound had its own market place, livestock, fields, merchants, and artisans.

As I mentioned above, the population of each compound in Addis Ababa of the 1890's was primarily a composite of retainers from the noble's home province and captives. As such, each compound was often of an ethnic origin different from the others. And, to a certain degree various compounds had varying norms, values, languages, and acquired skills. As the city grew areas which had been associated with a specific ras or dejazmatch (see glossary) became known as the enclave or a specific ethnic group. In terms of population growth and concentration, this had a snowball effect. That is to say, a new arrival from the provinces would gravitate to, and usually settle in, that area of the city where he would find kin or others of a similar cultural background. Certainly, as the population of Addis Ababa continued to grow ethnic populations became diffused into the city as a whole, but to a surprising extent there are still clear concentrations of specific ethnic groups in specific areas of the city.

The skills and occupations acquired in the provinces by the various ethnic groups continued to be practiced in the urban situation. That is to say, that while the occupation of the majority of the male
population of Addis Ababa in the 1890's was that of soldier, each military camp also required a blacksmith, tanner, weaver, etc. Therefore, each man often fulfilled more than one function: he might be both soldier and secretary to the ras; or he might be soldier and weaver; etc. Those ethnic groups which were particularly skilled in one occupation or another tended to continue that occupation in the city and often became known throughout the city for their respective skills.

In the early years of Menelik's reign one of his primary objectives was the conquest and consolidation of the various ethnic groups in and to the south of Shoa. According to Pankhurst (1968) and Marcus (1963), the successful incorporation of these peoples was a cornerstone for Menelik's expanding power. In terms of the nature of this research, the important aspects of Menelik's military campaigns to the south are: one, Menelik and his military entourage brought many captives back to Addis Ababa as slaves; and two, Menelik established fortified towns in the conquered areas, and these towns were supported by the local land and people.

When the captives were brought to Addis Ababa, they lived within the compound of a noble, were his private property, and his legal responsibility. As such, the captives were assigned the manual tasks and lowest status occupations within each compound. Their only appeal for disputes or grievances was to the ras or dejazmatch who was head of the compound.

There are two primary ways in which an individual might take up a specific occupation in the early days of Addis Ababa. First, he had learned specific occupational skills, such as reading and writing, tanning, weaving, etc., in his village and consequently fulfilled the
need for that skill within the urban compound. Second, he was a captive and was assigned an occupation, usually a menial or low-status one, within the compound. Probably, most individuals took up an occupation for a combination of the above reasons. That is to say, if an individual or ethnic group was skilled in an occupation such as blacksmithing, or weaving, and were also captives they were most probably brought back to Addis Ababa by one of Menelik's generals to fulfill a specific need for cloth or iron work within his compound. Over a period of time various compounds within Addis Ababa became known not only as the enclave of specific ethnic groups, but also of specific occupations.

Geographically, economically, medically, educationally, and politically Addis Ababa is the center of Ethiopia. All major roads lead to Addis Ababa. Additionally, the only railroad in the country goes from the capital to Djibouti; and the airport in Addis Ababa handles the largest volume of air traffic.

Addis Ababa is between 6,000 and 8,000 feet above sea level. From the airport on the outskirts of the city to the base of Entoto there is a rise of at least 1,000 feet. The many hills and high altitude is a noticeable characteristic of the city. The average rainfall in Addis Ababa is 100 millimetres. The majority of the rain comes during the "winter" which extends from the end of May until September. While there is usually a bit of sun every day, during the rainy season Addis Ababa is cold (to the extent of an occasional frost) and unpleasant.

While the center of the city is crowded and has quite a few modern buildings other sections of the city provide adequate space for livestock (mostly goats and sheep), poultry, and small gardens. It is
not at all uncommon for traffic in the downtown area to stop in order to allow a herd of sheep to pass.

There is one main market section of the city, called the markado but also each neighborhood also has an open "common" which is used as a local market. The neighborhood markets are usually open every day for the local vendors of vegetables, spices, and dairy products. In addition, each neighborhood market in the city has a specific day when vendors from other parts of the city, including the markado, bring in a larger selection of market goods. The market system in Addis Ababa is an important communication link between different areas of the city. The neighborhood market network provides for economic, political, and social communication between the various areas of the city. For example, it is not uncommon for an individual to travel two miles, or more, across the city to either sell or buy from a particular neighborhood market which is known for one product or another. As I will discuss later, different areas of the city are known as the enclaves of specific ethnic groups and their specialized products.

Daily, but particularly on Saturdays, the markado is the commercial center of the city. In the neighborhood markets the products are most often sold by the producer, but in the markado, the stalls are run by small businessmen and entrepreneurs. Consequently, the prices in the markado are often higher than the rest of the city, but also there is concentration of high quality specialized products. For the majority of the population in Addis Ababa the markado is a special place. One wears one's finest clothes, and especially for the men, it is a place to discuss politics and be away from the social restrictions of the neighborhood.
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<th>Population</th>
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<td>487,350</td>
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<td>731,400</td>
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<td>69</td>
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<td>79</td>
<td>1,539,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>1,647,000</td>
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</table>

(ibid:6)
POPULATION OF ADDIS ABABA

POPULATION IN BILLION

SEPT 1961 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 1980 YEAR
TABLE III

Average Age of In-Migrants at Time of In-Migration

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<th>Females</th>
<th>Both Sexes</th>
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<td>20.8</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 1965 - Sept. 1966</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 1966 - Sept. 1967</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### TABLE IV

**POPULATION BORN IN ETHIOPIA, BY DISTRICT AND BIRTHPLACE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Arada</th>
<th>Bole</th>
<th>Gofarsa</th>
<th>Gulele</th>
<th>Intoto</th>
<th>Xeranio</th>
<th>Lideta</th>
<th>Makale-LOGA</th>
<th>Tekli-tegna</th>
<th>Yeka</th>
<th>Addis Ababa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addis Ababa</td>
<td>20,940</td>
<td>39,300</td>
<td>29,990</td>
<td>28,360</td>
<td>18,280</td>
<td>12,330</td>
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<td>50,850</td>
<td>72,290</td>
<td>11,390</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arussi</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>1,210</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>1,060</td>
<td>1,130</td>
<td>250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bale</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>140</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<td>Begemdir</td>
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<td>540</td>
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<td>650</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>360</td>
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<td>1,750</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>9,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td>3,680</td>
<td>3,950</td>
<td>1,330</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>1,930</td>
<td>8,190</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gomu Gofa</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>3,840</td>
<td>770</td>
<td>8,380</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>16,000</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1,570</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>2,190</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>2,730</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>12,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hararge</td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td>3,170</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>770</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>2,150</td>
<td>2,680</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>12,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illubabor</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>410</td>
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<td>1,150</td>
</tr>
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<td>480</td>
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<td>340</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>1,950</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>6,490</td>
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<td>Shoa</td>
<td>15,930</td>
<td>32,790</td>
<td>22,410</td>
<td>15,190</td>
<td>12,310</td>
<td>10,600</td>
<td>14,140</td>
<td>38,150</td>
<td>54,970</td>
<td>11,350</td>
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<td>Sidamo</td>
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<td>490</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>1,610</td>
<td>1,860</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>7,440</td>
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<td>Tigré</td>
<td>1,420</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>1,110</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>2,930</td>
<td>3,580</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>14,620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>880</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>1,450</td>
<td>1,900</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>7,920</td>
</tr>
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<td>Woliso</td>
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<td>3,370</td>
<td>1,490</td>
<td>1,220</td>
<td>3,380</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>1,510</td>
<td>4,130</td>
<td>4,810</td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td>24,840</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Born</th>
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<tr>
<td>In Eth. Else Than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Eth. incl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portion Born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Addis Ababa (%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE V

ADDIS ABABA, PROPORTION OF THE POPULATION BORN OUTSIDE ADDIS ABABA, BY AGE GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>Both Sexes</td>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>337,350</td>
<td>346,180</td>
<td>683,530</td>
<td>144,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>282,800</td>
<td>293,490</td>
<td>576,290</td>
<td>94,780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>202,510</td>
<td>210,550</td>
<td>413,060</td>
<td>77,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>144,820</td>
<td>139,960</td>
<td>284,780</td>
<td>19,910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>84,780</td>
<td>78,190</td>
<td>162,970</td>
<td>10,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>59,130</td>
<td>53,070</td>
<td>112,200</td>
<td>4,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>10,400</td>
<td>15,850</td>
<td>26,250</td>
<td>1,780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>6,580</td>
<td>6,850</td>
<td>13,430</td>
<td>680</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Statistical Bulletin 68, 1972:79)
### Table VI

**Government General Secondary Schools by Province**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Vocational &amp; Technical</th>
<th>Teacher Training</th>
<th>1968 Vocational Technical</th>
<th>Teacher Training</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addis Ababa</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arussi</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bale</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begimider</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamu Gofa</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gojam</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrar</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illubabor</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaffa</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogaden</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoa</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidamo</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tigre</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellega</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wello</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## TABLE VII

Students in General and Secondary Schools by Province

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>1958</th>
<th>1968</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addis Ababa (city)</td>
<td>14,627</td>
<td>16,398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arussi</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>1,803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bale</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begimider</td>
<td>1,422</td>
<td>2,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td>8,305</td>
<td>9,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamu-Gofa</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gojam</td>
<td>2,176</td>
<td>2,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrar</td>
<td>3,454</td>
<td>4,318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illubabor</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaffa</td>
<td>1,540</td>
<td>1,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogaden</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoa</td>
<td>6,888</td>
<td>8,862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidamo</td>
<td>2,151</td>
<td>2,841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tigre</td>
<td>2,717</td>
<td>3,124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellega</td>
<td>1,780</td>
<td>2,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wello</td>
<td>2,355</td>
<td>3,136</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of houses in Addis Ababa are made of *chika* (a mixture of mud, dung, and straw) with a *koro koro* (corrugated tin) roof. The houses are either clustered together to form a compound or they have a high fence surrounding the house, garden, and out buildings. The houses rent for between Eth$ 5.00 ($2.50 U.S.) a month to Eth$ 1,000 ($500.00 U.S.) a month. The majority of houses do not have running water or plumbing, but they usually do have at least one electric light. Each neighborhood has a water tap in the market place, and water is carried by the women in large pottery jugs to each house.

While cars are a great luxury (200% import duty) the public transportation is relatively extensive. The busses (which until recently were owned by the royal family) cost Eth$ .15 ($0.75 U.S.) and commute to all but the most remote parts of the city. Additionally, there are *ciechentos* (taxis) which carry three passengers in the approximate direction of the first passenger. In spite of the relatively good public transportation, the majority of the population of Addis Ababa moves about the city on foot.

The population of Addis Ababa is approximately one million with a yearly growth of 7%\(^2\) (see Table 1 and 2). Up to 5.6% of the growth rate is accounted for by in-migration. Of the population in Addis Ababa in 1967 only 44% were born there, 33% were born in Shoa (the province in which Addis Ababa is located), 12% were born in the five northern provinces (Eritrea, Begimeder, Tigre Wollo, and Gojam) 9% were born in the other eight provinces, and 2% were born abroad (ibid:24)

\(^2\)All population figures have been taken from: *Ethiopian Central Statistical Office Statistical Bulletin #8:1972*. 

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[124]
Almost one-fourth of the 1967 population consisted of in-migrants since 1961, and it is estimated that some 100 come to Addis Ababa each day, many of them to settle permanently (ibid:24).

The largest age group represented by the in-migrants is 15-24 years. This group constitutes 36% of all the immigrants. The average age of Addis Ababa is 22 as compared to 30 for the rest of the country (see Tables 3 and 4). The majority of the in-migrants are male (Table 5), and are transient.

Between 1937 and 1967 the population of Addis Ababa increased from 90,000 to nearly 650,000 (Esatu 1970:4). Of the total population in Addis Ababa in 1967 only 44.3% were born in the city; 53.7% were born in Ethiopia but outside the city (see Table 6). Of the 44% of the population born in Addis Ababa 70% were children below 15 years old (see Table 7). In other words, only 14% of the adult population in Addis Ababa were born in the capital.

Addis Ababa is the economic and commercial center of Ethiopia. In a large part this is due to the transportation system. There are two additional factors which confirm the capital's economic importance. First, according to Comhaire and Sylvian, the income of the population of Addis Ababa "is derived overwhelmingly from the administrative position of the city, where all sectors of the national economy are controlled" (7). In 1968 there were 22,761 people living in Addis Ababa and employed by the central government (statistical Abstract for Addis Ababa 1967 and 1968:144). While in 1965 there were only 15,803. In other words, the number of employees of the federal government living in Addis Ababa is increasing at an annual rate of 15%. Additionally, the municipal government of Addis Ababa employs over 7,000 people and
in 1966-1967 had an annual budget of 14 million (ibid:7) which accounted for over half of the national budget. Comhaire and Sylvian to on to say that:

Addis Ababa itself has no more than 150 (industrial) undertakings of importance, with an aggregate manpower of 10,000, but there are 16 industrial establishments in the immediate vicinity, with about 5,500 workers, 4,000 of them in a textile mill located at Akaki, southeast of the capital. Further development is taking place in the same direction, along the 100 kilometers rail-and motor-roads. For example, Nazareth has grown from a mere village in the 1930's into a town of 33,000 inhabitants, with an annual bus-passenger traffic of 560,000 between this town and Addis Ababa (ibid:7).

Ethiopia's 71.7% manufacturing establishments are either in Addis Ababa (40.1%) or in Asmara (31.6%) (Esatu 1970:11). In terms of population numbers, in 1966-67 there were 13,681 people employed by one or another of the manufacturing establishments in Addis Ababa. Combining the figures for government and industry, we see that out of a total population of 638,810 (Table 1) in 1966, 43,442 were employed by either the government or by industry.

As in the case of industry and government there is an alarmingly disproportionate number of health facilities in Addis Ababa. In 1967 the capital had 19% of all hospitals, 32.2% of all beds, 9.7% of all clinics, 50.3% of all doctors, and 61.4% of all nurses in the country. (Dirbe:31):

In Addis Ababa there is one hospital for about 40,000 people, as opposed to one for 340,000 in the rest of the country; there is one doctor for roughly 3,500 people as opposed to 128,000 in the rest of the country, there is one nurse for 2,000 people as opposed to one for 123,000 in the rest of the country. These ratios, shocking as they are, do not tell the entire story. There are provinces where there was
only one hospital (Arussi, Bale) and only one nurse (Bale, Gamu Gofa). To this one may add the footnote that the provinces, not the urban areas pay a health tax for the alleged purpose of financing public health facilities in the province where it is collected (Esatu:11) (emphasis mine)

In Ethiopia the distribution of formal education also definitely favors the urban center. Not only does Addis Ababa have more schools than the rest of the country, but it also has schools of a significantly higher quality than rural schools. The Provisional Military Government has taken extraordinary measures to try to change this situation, but there is little doubt that a literate rural population is in the future.

In Addis Ababa there is at least one school within walking distance for every child. Where as in the rest of the country (with the exception of Asmara) the average elementary school serves at least 320 kilometers, and in at least 31 awarjas (see glossary) there is only one school for every 1,500 square kilometers (Teshome 1971:31). Sixty percent of the urban population has a place in a school, but only 3.7% of the rural school age children are enrolled. Further, of the primary school age population, about 92% live in rural areas and only 8% live in urban areas (ibid:31).

Not only does Addis Ababa have proportionately more schools than the rest of the country but it also has the best schools in the country. This is in part due to the large international community and diplomatic corps, which live in the capital. But this on the other hand, does not account for the extent of the discrepancy. For example, in 1968 there were a total 25,260 General and Secondary School students in Shoa Province. While there were 9,947 General and Secondary Schools
in Eritrea (the next highest number) there were only 793 General and Secondary students in Gamu Gofa (the lowest) (see Tables 8 and 9).

The Haile Sellassie I University is also in Addis Ababa. It is the primary institution of higher education in Ethiopia, and as such it is the major source of government officials and the power elite in the country. As Girma says, "in traditional Ethiopia as well as modern Ethiopia, the power elite was and is also the intellectual elite" (Girma 1967:3).

Perhaps because of the significant inequalities between urban and rural primary and secondary education, a very small percentage of the rural population ever reaches the university. In a study done by LaFollette in 1965 he found that 71.7% of his sample of students entering Haile Sellassie I University came from either Addis Ababa, Harrar*, or Asmara (LaFollette 1965:35). In another study done by Tilahun Gamta of the education faculty at HSIU he found that only 42.7% of the students came from provinces other than Shoa and Eritrea, and one of the provinces, Gamu Gofa, had no representatives in the University (Gamta 1971:10) (see Table 10).

An interesting aspect of the enrollment pattern at Haile Sellassie I University is the dominance of two northern ethnic groups, the Amhara and Tigre, in relation to the rest of the country. In a study of language learning patterns of HSIU freshmen, it was shown that 81% of the students considered Amharic or Tigrinya to be their first language (Langmuir 1967:5). Two other language groups listed in the study,

*There is a Agricultural College in Harrar and a couple of Military Colleges outside of the capital, but they account for only a small portion of the college educated Ethiopians.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province of Birth</th>
<th>No. of Respondents from each province</th>
<th>Total in Figure %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arussi</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bale</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begemdir</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamu Gofa</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gojam</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrar</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illubabor</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaffa</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoa</td>
<td>51</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addis Ababa</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tigre</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wollega</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wollo</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>185</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Tilahun, 1971:10)
Galligna and Guragigna, accounted for 11%, and the last category of "other" accounted for only 8% of the population. Presumably Dozainya, the language of the Gamu Highland people would be included in that 8%.

Haile Sellassie I University\(^1\) was also the main source for government employees. Surveys of all college facilities in Ethiopia (see Gama 1971:23, and LaFollette 1965:40) have indicated that as many as 90% of the graduates of the University are employed by the central government.

Gilbert sums up the dominance of the Amhara in the educational system.

Close to 50% of Ethiopia high school graduates continue on to the University. While only about 35% of the population belongs to the Amhara tribe, probably over 50% of the students at Haile Sellassie I University would claim Amhara affiliation.--- Since they (Amhara) occupy a dominant position in Ethiopian society, and since primary school facilities are more developed in the centrally located Amhara territories, this discrepancy is understandable (Gilbert 1967:7).

In terms of my research it is important to note that no matter who is considered to be dominant in the educational system in Ethiopia it is quite clear that at the primary, secondary, high school and college levels the Gamu Highland people, both in the Gamu Highlands and in Addis Ababa, are one of the ethnic groups which are given the least opportunity for an education.

Addis Ababa is the capital of Ethiopia, Shoa province, and Mengesha awarja. The city is not only the seat of the central government but also provides over 90% of the provincial government officials.

\(^1\) The University was closed in 1974 by order of the Provisional Military Government. Informed sources in the capital indicate that it is highly unlikely that the University will open in the near future.
There is little doubt that the government in Addis Ababa controls Ethiopia, and consequently those who control the government in Addis Ababa control the country. The development of a central government and the urbanization of Addis Ababa has been at the expense of the rural population, and for the profit of the urban minority. Further, the profits of the central government in Addis Ababa have been shared by only that small proportion of the urban minority which controls the government.

The development of a modern central government began under Menelik. In 1907-8 he established ministries of justice, war, the interior and public works. In 1911 ministries of posts, telegraph, and foreign affairs were added to the list. Haile Sellassie added industry, education and fine arts, public works and communications (Purham 1969: 90). While the establishment of these ministries was an attempt by Menelik and Haile Sellassie to modernize the medieval governmental organization, the pattern of the traditional Ethiopian court was hard to break. Also, neither Menelik nor Haile Sellassie were inclined to give much authority to the ministries.

Whether the ministers and their subordinates had or had not the ability to make and execute decisions, they certainly had not the power. The ministers spent much of their time waiting about the palace to see the Emperor, a very proper employment of their time according to the old Ethiopian court etiquette, but one which paralyzed the new institutions which had been put in their charge (ibid:90).

Until the revolution in 1974 there was little doubt that the Emperor had control of the central government in Addis Ababa. Haile Sellassie created a modern bureaucratic structure of government which had a rigid hierarchical structure of cabinets, ministries, departments,
files, pay scales, examinations, etc. While the government followed the form of a classical Weberian bureaucracy in its construction in many ways it still operated on the political process of a traditional Ethiopian Court or Military camp. As Markakis has pointed out, as recently as 1973 an individual's success in the government depended on a large part on the relationship to the throne. All of the ministries were appointed by the Emperor, and the success of personnel at the lower levels of the ministry depended on the relation to each appointed minister.

Just as the Emperor serves as the political centre around which the principle satellites revolve, ministers, and other high officials and dignitaries serve as centres for a secondary satellite system. Within its own limited political universe, the secondary system reflects faithfully most of the properties of the primary system (1974:270).

Markakis goes on to say that there was an increasing level of bureaucratization in the central government administration including role specialization, defined jurisdictional areas, and formalized procedure. With the increased bureaucratization in Addis Ababa it has become increasingly difficult for the lower levels of the government, and the society as a whole, to effect any change. Under the traditional political process by which Menelik governed the city and the country each neighborhood, wereda, awarja, and ethnic group could take problems to the noble in whose camp they lived; who in turn had varying degrees of influence with the Emperor. As the city grew, unless one knew someone in one of the ministries, there was little or no access to the political process. The chances that one would know someone in one of the ministries was, to a large extent, determined by one's province of origin, length of residence in the city, and to a certain
degree on one's ethnic background. To clarify this statement we should look back at the educational system.

As I mentioned above, the student population in Ethiopia is skewed towards certain provinces. Shoa and Eritrea alone account for over 60% of the students at Haile Sellassie I University (Tilahun, Langmuir, LaFollette). Additionally, in a discussion of language learning patterns reported by students at Haile Sellassie I University 81% reported Amhara or Tigre as their first language (Langmuir 1967:5). The other languages specifically reported were Gallingna and Gurage, and the category "other" accounted for only 8% of the entering freshmen (ibid:5). Even allowing for possible error, when we consider the number of languages existent in Ethiopia the number of Gamu Highland people, who might be included in the "other" category, would be less than 1%.

In a study done of the source and placement of Haile Sellassie I University students, LaFollette reports the occupations of the fathers of the students entering Haile Sellassie I University. Weaving, which is the primary occupation of the Gamu Highland people in Addis Ababa, is not even mentioned. LaFollette goes on to say that an average of 85% of the graduates of Haile Sellassie I University worked for the government in one capacity or another. That is to say, the University is the primary training ground for the central government, and the chances of a Gamu Highland person being employed by the central government in Addis Ababa is very slim.

It is important to be aware of the possible statistical error and reluctance to claim affiliation with a "despised" occupation such as weaving and a minority group such as the "Dorze". While the
revolution has to some degree reversed the trend to emphasize Amhara-Tigre affiliations, this was not true at the time of the survey done by LaFollette. On the other hand, the combined evidence of geographical discrimination for primary and secondary schools to University to government positions is a strong indicator that the Gamu Highland people faced perhaps insurmountable odds in advancing to a level of influence in the central government of Haile Sellassie.

In traditional Ethiopia, as well as modern Ethiopia, the power elite was and is also the intellectual elite. The Church was the site of intellect, the organization of intellectuals. The state was the seat of power. But, because of the unity of the two, the intelligent and power elite were undistinguishable—the high ranking positions (in the government) are occupied by the older generation Ethiopians who possess most of the wealth of the nation. (Girma 1967:3).

If the educated elite are also the power elite it is fairly obvious that the people from the Gamu Highlands and specifically the Chencha community are not in a position of power.

Who was this power elite who ran Haile Sellassie's government? While the answer to this question is not critical to this paper if I define the Gamu Highland people as a social minority and subordinate group, it is important to have some understanding as to who is dominant and doing the discriminating. Also, in assessing the assimilation of other ethnic and geographical groups into the power elite, one is in a better position to appreciate the relative isolation of the Chencha community in Addis Ababa.

Who was the ruling/power elite in Haile Sellassie's government? According to Christopher Clapham, who has written the most definite work on that government, the power began with the Emperor in the center
and extended in widening circles toward the periphery of the empire. Haile Sellassie appointed high officials who were directly responsible to him. Regionally, the core of the government came from Shoa. Clapham says that 60-70% of the high central government officials and an even larger proportion of provincial governors were of Shoan origin (Clapham 1970:2). Clapham goes on to say that:

The preponderance of Shoans is so great because the present government has grown out of a Shoan Emperor, with his capital in Shoa, where most of the opportunities for education and advancement are also concentrated; the political recruitment process, which emphasizes personal connections, ensures the rest (ibid:3).

If I were to choose one aspect of Haile Sellassie's government that is most characteristic, it would be the emphasis on the personal connections mentioned by Clapham. The patron/client relationship which began at the core, the emperor, and extended to the lowest ranks of the government and society was an immensely important aspect of the political recruitment process of the power elite. The government was to a certain extent, a reflection of the traditional court of Ethiopian Emperors which is based on the position of one person to another on a hierarchical scale. That is to say, the government was a status hierarchy (see Buckley and Mayer 1955:47). Weisslender (1965) and Levine (1965) both point out that the patron/client relationship in Ethiopia, specifically Amhara, society is both ordered in that it is based on a rigid hierarchical structure, and efficient to the extent that it permeates all status levels within the system.

If Weisslender, Levine, and Clapham (to name only a few) are in fact correct in their assessment of the power and government structure under Haile Sellassie, through the patron/client relationship and/or
core to periphery configuration, those individuals appointed by the Emperor were the power elite. But the question still remains. Who were those individuals who comprised the power elite. First, of course, is the royal family. These individuals were given well paying and politically powerful positions in the government. But, there was still little doubt that they were subject to their patron, the Emperor. Second, the members of the traditional aristocracy were, to a large extent, given the choice positions. Through the privileges of education, travel, and greater access to the throne the members of the traditional aristocracy had preferential treatment in both government and society. But, with very few exceptions, the aristocracy was dependent on the Emperor who, unlike Menelik, created a large central standing army and outlawed provincial forces controlled by powerful rases.

In order to get a better idea of who the Emperor appointed to high level government positions, I did a survey of appointments from 1942 to 1972. The sample was taken from the Negarit Gazeta (Chronicle of the Kings) which is the official organ of the Ethiopian monarchy. The Negarit Gazeta contains official court news and a list of all appointments made by the Emperor in a given year. It would be a lengthy process to list all of the appointments made by Haile Sellassie between 1942 and 1972 (over 5,000) and then to determine the ethnic origin of all those appointees. Consequently, I selected a sample of 100. By using the random method, I was assured that each individual appointee had an equal chance of being included in the sample.

To this extent, my sample was an unbiased and reliable sample of appointments made by Haile Sellassie for the thirty years between 1942 and 1972. The sample covered a wide range of political positions, for
example: minister, assistant minister, vice minister, High Court judge, governor, assistant deputy governor, member of the Senate, ambassador, central personnel agency, division commander, commander of Imperial Guard.

In order to determine the ethnic make-up of my sample I submitted the list of one hundred people to a panel of judges. That is, I picked five people who I considered to be experts on Ethiopia and who might have either personally known the individuals in the sample or were aware of the geographical or ethnic origin of the individuals. The judges included three members of the staff of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, one government official, and one member of the faculty of Haile Sellassie I University. I asked these judges to mark the ethnic group beside each name on the sample, and if there was any questions to leave it blank. I also asked the judges to include more than one ethnic group if it was relevant. If there was conflict between judges I took the consensus. The results were as follows:

1. Amhara 38
2. Tigre 17
3. Amhara-Tigre 12
4. Other 20
5. Did not know 13

While there was some of other labeling, mainly Amhara-Galla, the only category I considered numerically significant was the Amhara-Tigre. The dominance of the Amhara and Tigre is obvious. In the administration of the survey I made no attempt to clarify the meaning of the terms Amhara or Tigre, and there is definitely a certain amount of debate as to the exact ethnic composition of those two groups. The debate is perhaps more of the meaning of ethnic group than of who is Amhara
or Tigre. The judges I chose are, I believe, more qualified than I to debate the meaning of Amhara, and consequently I have relied on their expertise in labeling the individuals in the sample.

The important point is not exactly who are those 67% of the sample who were appointed to high level government positions, but that there clearly was a dominant group who were closely associated with a particular ethnic and geographical part of the country. In other words, even allowing for error on the part of the judges, the survey confirms the general opinion that the ethnic groups from the northern part of Ethiopia, Amhara and Tigre, dominated Haile Sellassie's government.

Categories four and five are of the greatest interest for this paper. Even if we assume that all of the "did not know" category was not Amhara these two categories still account for only 33% of the total sample. Yet the general consensus is that "minorities" account for at least 70% of the total population of the country. Who are these minorities. Christopher Clapham says that:

In one sense 'Minorities' could refer to any ethnic group in Ethiopia apart from the Amhara; in another, it might be restricted to those who are neither Amhara, Galla, nor Tigrean (1970:2).

Once again, for my concerns here, the point is not if Galla, Gurage, Tigre are a minority group, but that the people from Gamu Gofa clearly are. Nowhere in the survey did the label Dorze, Haizo, Chencha, Dita, Gamu, etc., appear. While there is a remote possibility that an individual from the Gamu Highlands may have been appointed to high level government position, statistically, there was no representation of the Gamu people in Haile Sellassie's government.
Appendix II

Statistical Tables on Gamu Gofa

TABLE 1*

TOTAL POPULATION OF GAMU GOFA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Rural areas</td>
<td>304,600</td>
<td>278,700</td>
<td>583,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Geleb and Hamer</td>
<td>13,100</td>
<td>12,200</td>
<td>25,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bako Awarja</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Surveyed Towns</td>
<td>6,310</td>
<td>6,860</td>
<td>13,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Other Towns</td>
<td>4,250</td>
<td>4,130</td>
<td>8,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Total</td>
<td>328,260</td>
<td>301,890</td>
<td>630,150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 2*

POPULATION OF GAMU GOFA BY AWARJAS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awarja</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gardula</td>
<td>90,300</td>
<td>79,600</td>
<td>169,900</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamu</td>
<td>134,800</td>
<td>128,400</td>
<td>263,200</td>
<td>45.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gofa</td>
<td>79,500</td>
<td>70,700</td>
<td>150,200</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>304,600</td>
<td>278,700</td>
<td>583,300</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 3*
**LITERACY BY AWARJA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Literate Males</th>
<th>Literate Females</th>
<th>Read Only Males</th>
<th>Read Only Females</th>
<th>Total Males</th>
<th>Total Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awarja</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>3,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardula</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55,300</td>
<td>48,200</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>103,500</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Literate Males</th>
<th>Literate Females</th>
<th>Read Only Males</th>
<th>Read Only Females</th>
<th>Total Males</th>
<th>Total Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awarja</td>
<td>3,800</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>4,300</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardula</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48,700</td>
<td>44,000</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>92,700</td>
<td>90,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 4*
**PERCENTAGE OF HOLDINGS BY TENURE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Owned</th>
<th>Rented</th>
<th>Partly Owned and Partly Rented</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>No. of Holdings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gardula</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamu</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gofa</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 5*

**HOUSEHOLDS BY LAND TENURE AND NUMBER OF PARCELS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure Group</th>
<th>% of household</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own Land</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent Land</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partly own and partly rent</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Land</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of household with number of parcels</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6+</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own Land</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent Land</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partly own and partly rent</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Land</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 6*

**NUMBER OF PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE OF RESIDENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awarji</th>
<th>Resident Owner %</th>
<th>Tenant %</th>
<th>Part Owner and Part Tenant %</th>
<th>Non-agriculturalist %</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gardula</td>
<td>20,700</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>12,100</td>
<td>3,4,800</td>
<td>38,600</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamu</td>
<td>28,800</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>16,700</td>
<td>3,12,800</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gofa</td>
<td>10,600</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20,900</td>
<td>4,5,500</td>
<td>38,400</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60,100</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>40,700</td>
<td>4,3,23,100</td>
<td>137,000</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 7*

**HOLDINGS BY TENURE AND TYPE OF LAND OWNERSHIP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Ownership</th>
<th>Resident Owner</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Tenant</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Part Owner and Tenant Part</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>57,100</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>44,000</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>104,800</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4,100</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint (communal)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not State</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4,400</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>60,100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>49,700</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4,100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>113,900</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### TABLE 8*

**NUMBER OF OWNED HOLDINGS BY ORIGIN OF OWNERSHIP OF LAND**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awarja</th>
<th>Purchase</th>
<th>Inheritance</th>
<th>Service Compensation</th>
<th>Combination</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gardula</td>
<td>2,200</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18,800</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamu</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28,500</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gofa</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11,300</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>58,600</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Stated</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21,700</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>30,500</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>64,200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 9*

**NUMBER OF OWNER HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE OF RIGHTS TO LAND**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Awarja Bequeath</th>
<th>Mortgaged %</th>
<th>Mortgaged now</th>
<th>Total Owned Holdings</th>
<th>% that can be Bequeathed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gardula</td>
<td>21,000 34</td>
<td>20,900 35</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>21,700</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamu</td>
<td>29,200 47</td>
<td>27,500 45</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>30,500</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gofa</td>
<td>11,900 19</td>
<td>11,900 20</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>62,100 100</strong></td>
<td><strong>60,300 100</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td><strong>64,200</strong></td>
<td><strong>97</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% that can be Mortgaged:
- 96
- 90
- 99
- 94

% that was mortgaged at the time:
- --
- --
- --
- --

### TABLE 10**

**RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION BY SUB-PROVINCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sidamo province</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arero</td>
<td>2,045,490</td>
<td>90,976</td>
<td>2,135,466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borana</td>
<td>57,900</td>
<td>8,547</td>
<td>66,474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derassa</td>
<td>487,200</td>
<td>19,567</td>
<td>506,767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jemjem</td>
<td>285,100</td>
<td>8,392</td>
<td>293,492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidama</td>
<td>646,050</td>
<td>36,872</td>
<td>682,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolamo</td>
<td>521,640</td>
<td>10,842</td>
<td>532,482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamu Gofa Province</td>
<td>433,100</td>
<td>11,599</td>
<td>444,699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gemu</td>
<td>263,200</td>
<td>6,586</td>
<td>269,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardula</td>
<td>169,900</td>
<td>5,013</td>
<td>174,913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,478,590</strong></td>
<td><strong>102,575</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,581,165</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* survey of Gamu Gofa Province Central Statistical Office, Ethiopia
** Karsten 1972:27.
APPENDIX 3

A BRIEF HISTORY OF WEAVING IN ETHIOPIA

Weaving is an ancient craft in Ethiopia. Simoons says that cloth was imported to Ethiopia as early as the first century A.D. "but it is not known when the practice of weaving cloth was first introduced to the land". (1960:186). The earliest reference I could find to the Shamma was in James Bruce, Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile 1768-1773. He says of Shalaka Woldo, "he had a cotton cloth thrown around his shoulders in many different forms, occasionally as his fancy suggested to him" (1790:533) and of King Fasil, "his mantle, or thin cotton cloak, was wrapt up so that nothing but his eyes could be seen" (ibid:1066); and of a messenger from the king to Ras Mickael, "who by his dress, having his upper garment twisted around his waist in a particular manner showed that he was a carrier of a special message from the king". (for a further description of the significance of the way the shamma is worn see Hoben:1972). While it is possible that the cloth Bruce referred to was imported to Gondar, it is unlikely in light of the conflicts and isolation in that period of Ethiopian history.

In 1809 Viscount Valentia says that:

the value of goods imported at Massowah is estimated at four hundred thousand dollars per annum, exclusive of raw cotton, which is purchased by the Abyssinians for their dresses, although the plant grows in their own country, from an ignorance of the way of cleaning it. (1809:267)
Pankhurst lists references to weaving in Jerome Lubo, Charles Jacques Poncet, and Manoel de Almeida, all of whom were seventeenth century travelers to Ethiopia (Pankhurst 1961:8). Simoons says that:

Present day distribution within the country and available historical evidence suggest that the Semite diffused the plow and various winnowing implements within Ethiopia as well as the practice of weaving cloth. The latter skill, however, was known in quite early times in the Sudan at Meroe, and (it) may actually have been introduced to Ethiopia in pre-Semitic times (Simoons 1960:14).

Simoons goes on to say that weaving is looked down on because it is considered to be "beneath the dignity of strong men and warriors" (ibid:187). Cerulli and Pankhurst both discuss the low status of weaving in both ancient and modern Ethiopia. They say that the "depressed classes" which are associated with a specific occupation are a common phenomenon in the Horn of Africa. Pankhurst says that these "depressed classes" gave the division of labor a cultural and religious base; "the name of an ethnic or other group being indeed often employed to designate its occupation" (emphasis mine) (Pankhurst 1961:21). He goes on to say that the "depressed class" was often a different tribe which was considered inferior and lived apart from the surrounding ethnic group. Pankhurst names weaving specifically as the occupation associated with one of the "depressed classes" in Ethiopia.

Biasutti suggested in 1905 that the depressed or 'pariah' groups were remnants of the "primitive races, the Negrillos and Bushman" which were subjected and exploited by the Hamitic and Samitic northern invaders. Jensen (1959) agrees with Biasutti and says that artisans in
general belong to a "Negroid Culture-layer" which is characterized by ensete cultivation. Cerulli (1922) and Hauberland (1962) disagree with this theory of the origin of the despised classes in Ethiopia. They say that there is no evidence which points to common ethnic, racial, linguistic, or cultural features among the artisan groups in Ethiopia. Hauberland says:

All over East Africa the position of the special castes is important among the peoples who have a divine kingship and it becomes more important with the importance of the monarchy. Where this is missing there also are no special castes...
The institution of the special castes is probably an element which was brought by a younger, sociologically differentiated culture layer into the black continent, and was there transferred onto culture-historically older populations (1962:153).

In Chapters 1 and 2 I discussed the history of the Gamu Highland people. In the first Chapter I mentioned that there is some debate as to when and from where the Gamu Highland people learned weaving. From the material I have researched I tend to agree with Hauberland that the Dorze learned weaving from the peoples of the North, and then the Dorze introduced the craft to the rest of the Gamu Highlands. In the Chapter 2 I presented some historical material which explains why the Gamu Highland people became the principle weavers in Addis Ababa. According to the records available at the British Public Records Office, the Gamu Highland weavers were brought into Addis Ababa at just the time when there was an increasing demand for the handwoven shamma. Form 1910 until the present the "Dorze" have become known for their talent for weaving, and their name has become synonymous with the weaving profession.


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Jensen, E. Altvolker Sud - Athiopiens. (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer),


Mann, H.S. "Land Tenure in Chore (Shoa)" in Monographs in Ethiopian Land Tenure #2. (Addis Ababa: The Institute of Ethiopian Studies and the Faculty of Law, Haile Sellassie I University), 1965.


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-------. "The City Fifty Years Ago" Ethiopian Observer, "Notes on the Demographic (sic) History of Ethiopian Towns and Villages".


GLOSSARY

awarja: provincial distinction similar to subprovince
baira: senior position
buluko: heavy weight shamma, with a weft of handspun cotton
dejazmatch: court distinction, similar to Duke, translates as commander of the gate
dere: a Gamu Highland Village
dunguze: handwoven pants indigenous to Gamu Highlands
fitawarari: court distinction, translates as commander of the vanguard
forengi: foreigner
gabi: medium weight shamma
gedhas: junior position
gome: taboo
halak'a: honorary position of the Gamu Highlands, also a feast given by a new halak'a
ka'o: a king in the Gamu Highlands
komblete: the several lengths of material used to make the national dress
maskal: spring festival
quene: a form of poetry
ras: court distinction, similar to Lord, translates as commander of army
seffer: township
shamma: national dress of Ethiopia, sometimes just the shawl
tej bet: bar and often a house of prostitution
tekla gizat: province
wereda: county