

Ethiopian Village Studies II

(Designed and edited by Philippa Bevan, Alula Pankhurst and Tom Lavers)

Dinki

Ankober Wereda

North Shewa Zone

Amhara Region

researched by

Damtew Yirgu and Tsega Melesse (2005)

and

Setargaw Kenaw and Solomon Tegegne (1996)

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One of a series of six studies edited and produced by the Ethiopia Wellbeing in Developing Countries Research Programme, based at the University of Bath, UK, and financed by the Economics and Social Research Council, UK. The four rural Village Studies II are updates of four of the 15 Village Studies I published in 1996 (Dinki, Korodegaga, Turufe Kecheme and Yetmen). The two Urban Studies I cover new sites in Addis Ababa and Shashemene.

Foreword

The reports in this series are outputs from the Wellbeing in Developing Countries (WeD) research programme organised and coordinated by the University of Bath, UK and financed by the Economic and Social Research Council, UK, between 2002 and 2007. Ethiopia is one of the four countries selected for the research.¹ The aim of the programme is to develop a conceptual and methodological framework for studying the social and cultural construction of wellbeing in developing country contexts, and thereby investigate linkages between quality of life, power and poverty in order to contribute to improving policy and practice.

WeD Ethiopia selected twenty rural and two urban sites for its WIDE² research. Community profiles for fifteen of the rural sites had been produced in 1995 and 1996 (WIDE1)³ and five new sites were added in 2003, when further community level research was undertaken in the twenty sites (WIDE2), involving exploratory protocol-guided research during one month in July and August 2003 by teams composed of one female and one male researcher in each site.

Six sites were selected for the DEEP⁴ research, including four of the rural sites and both urban sites.⁵ In-depth fieldwork was carried out between July 2004 and November 2005 by teams composed of one female and one male researcher spending about three weeks of each month in their respective sites. The four rural sites were chosen from the two largest regions: Oromia and Amhara. In each region one of the selected sites was more remote (Korodegaga in Oromia and Dinki in Amhara), and the other closer to market and state influences (Turufe Kecheme in Oromia and Yetmen in Amhara). The urban sites, Kolfe in the capital city, Addis Ababa, and Arada in Kebele 08/09 of Shashemene, a business city in the south, were selected on the basis of the research team's interests in market areas, community-based organisations and urban-rural linkages. One of the rural sites, Turufe Kecheme, is close to Shashemene town.

Profiles are available for the following six sites:

Rural sites:

Dinki, Ankober *Wereda*, North Shewa Zone, Amhara Region

Korodegaga, Dodota-Sire *Wereda*, Arssi Zone, Oromia Region

Turufe Kecheme, Shashemene *Wereda*, East Shewa Zone, Oromia Region

Yetmen, Enemay *Wereda*, East Gojjam Zone, Amhara Region

Urban sites:

Arada, Kebele 08/09, Shashemene, East Shewa Zone, Oromia Region.

Kolfe, Kebele 10/11, Kolfe-Keranyo Kifle *Ketema*, Addis Ababa City Administration.

The (DEEP) research involved a Resource and Needs Survey with 250 households followed by in-depth process research involving monthly community and household diaries with households differentiated by gender, wealth and size, life histories of children, adults and old people, and modules exploring thematic research topics including community institutions, elites and destitution, poverty dynamics, migration, intergeneration relations, collective action, and a quality of life survey. A research database has been produced including data at individual, household and community levels which is being used to produce a book and research papers.

¹ The other three countries are Bangladesh, Peru and Thailand.

² Wellbeing and Illbeing Dynamics in Ethiopia.

³ The 15 Village Studies were produced by the Centre for the Study of African Economies, Oxford, UK and the Department of Sociology, Addis Ababa University and financed by the UK Overseas Development Administration and can be obtained from the web-site (www.csae.ox.ac.uk)

⁴ In-Depth Exploration of Ethiopian Poverty.

⁵ Likewise the other countries in the WeD project selected a similar number of urban and rural sites.

The rural village studies were produced starting with the 1996 community profiles, which were constructed from a background paper based on secondary sources, rapid assessment material collected by site managers and enumerators involved in the three rounds of a household economic survey (the ERHS⁶), a field visit during one month by an anthropology student, a questionnaire completed by the enumerators at the end of the household survey and a community economic survey administered by the site managers.

The 1996 profiles were updated, and revised with a focus on the major research interests and approaches of the WeD programme. The new versions are largely the product of insights from the researchers who carried out intensive fieldwork in the sites over 16 months from mid 2004 to late 2005.

Many people participated in the construction of the profiles, the most important being the people in the villages who answered questions, raised issues we had not thought of and provided hospitality to our fieldworkers. The site managers, enumerators, and anthropologists involved in 1995 played a vital role. First drafts of the 1996 profiles were constructed by Etalem Melaku-Tjirongo and Joanne Moores, and backup in terms of translating, editing, word processing and map-making and was provided by Tina Barnard, Ziggy Bevan, Girma Getahun, Haile Redai, Sarah Smith, and Ruth Tadesse. Economist colleagues at Oxford (Shukri Ahmed, Stefan Dercon and Pramila Krishnan) and Addis Ababa (particularly Bereket Kebede, Getinet Astatke, and Mekonnen Tadesse) were influential in shaping our ideas, and the administration in the Economics Department at Addis Ababa University was extremely supportive.

The 2004-2006 research design benefited from the inter-disciplinary discussions and debates of the WeD research group in Bath, including anthropologists, economists, psychologists, and sociologists, and the research teams from Bangladesh, Thailand and Peru. A number of the core Bath team provided intellectual stimulus, advice and support, and several members collaborated in various aspects of the research design and/or visited Ethiopia including Allister McGregor, the director of the project, Ian Gough, Sarah White, Suzy Skevington, Bereket Kebede, Laura Camfield, Susan Johnson, Julie Newton, Andy McKay, Catherine Dom, Virginia Williamson, and Anne Yates. Logistical support was provided by Becky Lockley, Jane French, Diana Duckling, Emer Brangan, Teresa King, Mark Ellison and Jun Zhang.

The project benefited from discussions and collaborations with John Hoddinott, from the International Food Policy Research Institute, Marleen Dekker from the Free University in Amsterdam, Luc Christiaensen and Caterina Ruggeri-Laderch from the World Bank, Pramila Krishnan from Cambridge University, Stefan Dercon from Oxford University, Charles Schaefer from Valparaiso University, Nuala O'Brien and Kevin Kelly from Development Cooperation Ireland, Simon Winetraube from the British Council and Claudia Fumo and Laure Beaufilets from the UK Department for International Development. A local NGO, PADET, and the Learning Centre provided office space for the project.

In Ethiopia the main members involved in the research design and management were Feleke Tadele, Yisak Tafere, Bethlehem Tekola, Solomon Tesfay, Ashebir Desalegn, and Theodros Wolde Giorgis. Members of Addis Ababa University Department of Sociology who took part in the project at various stages included Ayalew Gebre, Melese Getu, Derese Getachew and Asrat Ayalew (the last two of whom went for graduate studies to Bath). The project benefited from support from the Economics Department of Addis Ababa University particularly in carrying out the Resource and Needs Survey. The project also benefited from advice from a network of advisors from various disciplines who are too numerous to mention.

⁶ The Ethiopian Rural Household Survey involves a panel survey carried out by the Economics Department of Addis Ababa University in collaboration with the Oxford Centre for the Study of African Economies in 1994 and the International Food Policy Institute in 2004.

The following researchers took part in the 2004-2006 research in the six sites, although most of the drafting of the rural profiles was carried out by one female and one male researcher, generally those who spent longest in the site or were the last researchers involved, whose names are on the front of the profiles and are italicised in the list below. The urban profiles involved more researchers, with greater input from the field coordinator and editors.

Arada: Abebech Belayneh, Abraham Asha, Bethlehem Tekola, Demissie Gudisa, Habtamu Demille, Mahder Tesfu and Rahwa Mussie

Dinki: *Damtew Yirgu*, Kiros Berhanu and *Tsega Melesse*

Kolfe: Bethlehem Tekola, Demiye Tefalet, Eyob Mhreteab Rahwa Mussie, Tigist Tefera and Yisak Tafere

Korodegaga: *Aster Shibeshi*, Tsega Melesse and *Workneh Abebe*;

Turufe Kecheme: *Bizuayehu Ayele*, Demissie Gudisa, Tsega Melesse and *Yohannes Gezahegn*

Yetmen: *Agazi Tiemelisan*, Asham Asazenew, Hiwot Atfraw, *Kiros Berhanu*, Leleena Aklilu and Lewoyehu Ayele

Most of the editing, standardisations, formatting, improvement of the maps, photographs, seasonal calendars etc was carried out by Tom Lavers.

Further information about the Wed-Ethiopia project can be obtained from the web-site: www.wed-ethiopia.org. The Bath University WeD website www.welldev.org.uk provides overall information about the project worldwide.

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Contents

1. <i>Locating the Site in Time and Place</i>	7
Geography and Population.....	7
Climate and Weather.....	7
Farm Production.....	8
Infrastructure.....	9
Social Structure.....	9
History	10
2. <i>Seasonal Activities and Calendars</i>	12
3. <i>The Farm Economy</i>	13
Crops	13
Livestock.....	14
Land	14
Farm Labour.....	15
Interlinkages.....	19
Farming Technology	20
Farming Innovations	20
Common Property Resources	21
Environment.....	21
4. <i>Off-farm Activities</i>	22
Communal Work.....	22
Household Off-farm Activities	22
Occupational Structure	23
Migration	24
Rural-Urban Linkages.....	24
5. <i>Reproductive Activity</i>	24
Housing	24
Domestic Technology	25
Household management.....	25
Fertility.....	25
Childbirth and Childcare.....	26
Socialisation.....	27
Education	28
Training.....	30
Health.....	30
6. <i>Consumption</i>	33
Food	33
Saving, Investment and Credit.....	33
Household Assets.....	34
Local Services.....	34
7. <i>Local Institutions and Organisations</i>	34
Households.....	34
Marriage.....	35

Divorce.....	36
Inheritance	36
Kinship.....	36
Ethnicity, Clans and Lineages	37
Life Cycle Changes and Rites of Passage.....	37
Friends and Neighbours	37
Markets	38
Social Security	38
Redistributive Mechanisms.....	38
Local Organisation.....	38
Disputes and Resolutions.....	39
Local Government Organisation.....	40
<i>8. Social Inequality, Conflict and Politics</i>	<i>41</i>
Poverty and wealth.....	41
Economic Mobility	42
Status.....	42
Social Stratification.....	42
Social Conflict and Politics.....	43
<i>9. Beliefs and Values.....</i>	<i>44</i>
Land	44
Religion.....	44
Explanations of Misfortune and Illness	45
Community Values	45
Political Beliefs and Attitudes	46
<i>10. Relationships with Other Communities and the Wider Society.....</i>	<i>46</i>
Ethnic Groups and Clans	46
Relations with Other Communities.....	46
Relationships with Wider Ethiopia	47
Effects of Government Policies	47
Government Development Activities in the Community	47
NGO Activities in the Community	48
The Future.....	49
Bibliography	50
Glossary	50
Acronyms.....	52
<i>Appendix A: Ethiopian calendar.....</i>	<i>53</i>
<i>Appendix B: Seasonal Calendars</i>	<i>54</i>

1. Locating the Site in Time and Place

Geography and Population

Dinki is situated in Ankober *wereda* in northeastern Shewa in the Amhara Region. It is 43 km from Debre Berhan and about 2 hours walk (8km) from Aliyu Amba - a very small town 17 km from Ankober. There are five villages surrounding the area: Aygebir, Addis Alem, Chibiteina Gendamiha, Lallo, and Merereina in descending order of size. Aliyu Amba is the nearest town and is 8-10 km away. There is no government organisation in the town. In the latest reorganisation of the local administrative units, Dinki was reduced from *kebele*⁷ to *gott* (sub-unit of *kebele*). It is now one of the 5 *gott* of Hagereslam *Kebele*. Dinki is further divided into three sub-sections known as *mengistawi budin* that correspond to the three main hamlets, Gema, smaller Dinki, and Alela Hager. There are 169 households in larger Dinki, 38 of which are female-headed (23%).

In terms of settlement pattern, the Amhara Christian sub-group pre-dominantly occupies the western, northern, and slightly north-eastern edges of Dinki, beyond which lies the main Amhara population area, where the sub-group descended from and resettled since the Imperial time. The middle, southern and southeastern part is settled by the majority Argoba / Muslim sub-community, beyond which is settled by the core Argoba population up to the border of Afar.

Dinki lies in between two perennial rivers, Wombero in the east and Dinki in the west. The altitude near the Dinki River is 1400m and this increases as one crosses the *kebele*. In terms of land size, Dinki is smaller than neighbouring *kebeles*. The zone is *kolla* (lowland) and the site is hilly; the River Dinki runs down the gorges of the village. Dinki is drought-prone and used to be one of the poorer villages in the area. It has been improving recently due to an increase in the use of irrigation and the production of cash crops

There are 15 landless households all of which are female-headed although there may be more not registered with the *kebele*. In 1995 one informant said there are 57 households not registered with the *kebele* and 23 households which are landless. An informant said there are 30 male-headed and 15 women-headed households which are landless.

According to most people Dinki is a good place to live, although some say that environmental change has made Dinki *bereha* (desert). Even so most people do not want to migrate and are trying all means to overcome the problem.

Climate and Weather

Since it is found in the lowland region of North Shewa the climate can be classified as *kolla*. It has two rainy seasons, *meher* and *belg*, the former being the long rainy season, which lasts from June to September, and the latter the short rainy season from January to April. According to many informants the main season is the *meher*. The *belg* rainy season is not all that dependable since the area is vulnerable to drought. The *belg* rain has been characterised by fluctuation in time and intensity: it used to come early and stop at the middle of the season or come in time and pause in the middle and come again late in the season. In 2005 there was rain in *Miyazia*⁸, so most of the farmers sowed *tef*. However after a week it stopped and the sowed *tef* dried up and the farmers used it for grazing.

⁷ The term *kebele* during the Derg period referred to the lowest administrative unit and was translated as "Peasants Association". On average three former *kebele* were regrouped into one unit under the EPRDF. The new larger *kebele mestedader* with salaried leadership is translated as "*kebele* administration". Since these studies relate to both periods for simplicity we have used the term *kebele* to refer to the study community.

⁸ Details of the Ethiopia calendar can be found in Appendix A.

In Dinki the length of the *meher* rainy season has become shortened to not more than a month and half. The rainy season used to start early and usually stopped in early *Meskerem* commonly causing crop failure. The case of 2005 was unusual as it started early (*Ginbot*) but soon stopped (*Hamle*) until it started again in the middle of *Nehase*. In general, the rainy season was not only shorter but distribution/intensity of rainfall was lower than usual.

As most people of Dinki said since 2002 it is better to say Dinki is a drought area. The irregularity and shortage of rain affects the dwellers.

Farm Production

The economy of Northern Shewa is based on subsistence agriculture:

The economy of Northern Shewa is almost entirely agricultural. Industries, including cottage industries are largely absent. This situation is reflected within agriculture itself. Due to the absence of supporting industries, the level of material technology is low and the market link is little developed. (Ege, 1990:6)

Most of the localities of Northern Shewa are known for grain-pulses cultivation. Fruit and vegetables are grown only sporadically mostly as sources of cash income. Due to the higher land productivity of fruit and vegetables Ege has suggested that these crops provide a potential for the economic development of the area.

The production of onions using irrigation (commonly twice a year) has become an important farm activity for many people along the river-sides. Onions and bananas have become major cash crops. From the household diaries we can see that some individuals were able to obtain 400-5,000 *birr* from sale of onions (in one harvest period), and some others used irrigation to obtain 20-80 *birr* / month from the sale of bananas.

In recent years, especially since 2002, the rain has failed even in July and August. Irregularity of rainfall has affected the production of fruit. In relation with the shortage of rainfall, the pests and weeds become a problem for the farmer.

Tef is grown primarily for sale (by richer people) and for mixing with sorghum to make staple food (*injera*), whereas sorghum, especially the short variety *cherekit*, is grown almost by all farmers as the main / staple food grain (for *injera*). The long variety of sorghum (*mashila*) is planted in April and harvested in November, whereas the short variety, *cherekit*, is planted in *Hamle* and harvested after 3-4 months. Farmers also grow maize, soya beans, chickpeas, sunflower, sesame, cotton, and *nug*. The vegetables and fruits grown include papaya, banana, sugar cane, *tirengo*, tomato, potato, and onion. Cash crops grown under irrigation by the river include coffee and *chat*.

The use of irrigation has been adopted recently, but the canals were as old as the first water mill built in the area (1944). The same channel made to supply water for the water mills has been used for irrigation. Intensive use of irrigation started following the establishment of a seedling station by Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The nursery, then run by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), has been growing and distributing coffee and fruit (avocado, papaya, lemons). The seedlings using irrigation.

The soils of the region are cambisols. Although these soils are reddish clays, and loamy sands, in the main, which have natural fertility, they are shallow and stony with rock outcrops. The area is a food deficit area. The general quality of the soil is *lem-tef* (semi-fertile).

The *belg* crop has been failed since 2002 and drought in the area is a serious problem. Nowadays (since 2002) even the *meher* harvest has failed. Many people indicated that there was a drought which caused serious shortage of food in 2002 that forced the people to depend on food aid. In relation to pests, because of the shortage of rain the pests breed and destroy the sowed plant, especially sorghum, which is affected more by the pests which the people call *Tenziza* beetle or “Till” worm.

Infrastructure

There are no markets in Dinki. The biggest market is in Aliyu Amba and is held on Monday and Thursday. This is the nearest grain and livestock market. There is a Service Cooperative (SC) near the town of Aliyu Amba, though not in Dinki. Inhabitants of Dinki have not had any services from this SC in recent years. There are also important markets on Sundays at Chibite and Dulecha on Fridays.

There is a dry-weather road built by the LWF food for work programme. The feeder road passes from the Aliyu Amba – Dulech all-weather road through Dinki to Hara Amba.

Beledi spring was piped in 1992 by the LWF, though currently the people of Dinki fetch water from the river as there is no pipe or spring at the site.

Social Structure

In Dinki there are only two ethnic groups, the Argoba who are Muslim and the Amhara who are Christian. Almost all people, irrespective of ethnicity, were voluntary settlers to the area. However, the Argoba were believed to be senior settlers so that many of them had their own land, even a few of them were landlords with tenants. On the other hand, all the Amhara came and settled as tenants of Argoba Melkegna, or of patriot leaders (Dejazmach / Fitawrari).

The Amhara sub-group maintains strong networks, with cultural, religious, kinship and marriage linkages with other Amhara village communities. The Argoba population constitutes a numerical majority sub-group. Both Argoba and Amhara have spoken Amharic. Some Argoba who have lived at the border of Afar speak Argoba. However, in the Dinki site no one can speak Argoba. So, all social and other transactions are carried out in Amharic. There has been competition for political power in the *kebele* administration, since the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) came to power. The most important posts have been given to Argoba / Muslims and the Amhara feel that they have been purposely marginalised by the EPRDF.

During the *Derg* and imperial times, the Amhara ethnic group were dominant, powerful and respected. The Amhara undermined the Argoba. However after the coming of the EPRDF, the Argoba obtained equal rights to the Amhara. As a result of past inequity, they want revenge on the Amhara. The Argoba have become involved in the *kebele* as leaders, and have tried to undermine the Amhara. The Argoba have their own language although only some of the elders speak it. Ethnic difficulties have been emerging.

There was no reported collective behaviour related to inter-group conflict. There were expressed / observable attitudes indicating tensions, usually related to resource sharing (land /irrigation) and local political power in the *kebele*.

Before the coming of the EPRDF, the Argoba had lived peacefully with the Amhara. However, now they have changed. As some Amhara from Dinki reported:

“[The] Argoba become spoiled especially after the coming of EPRDF. They tried to undermine

the Christians and their religion so they have developed conflict in any case”

Some estimate the population as composed of three quarters Muslim and the rest Orthodox Christian, whereas others question this suggesting that the Muslim numerical superiority is not very great. There are some religious tensions, because the Muslims are advised to be conservative and to convert their Christian neighbours. This has created tension and a gap in the social life among Christians and Muslims. Most people talked most young Muslims have gone for Islamic education. The religious teacher in Afar is helped by somebody from outside the country and has sent teacher to the area to give religious education for the people.

There are some cases of intermarriage between religions, causing one of the partners to change religion. The majority of conversions in the site were from Christian to Muslim, many of these were formerly Christian women married to Muslim husbands. But after the women converted they were not treated as well by their husband as those who were born Muslim. They are viewed as a Christian convert, who is looked down on and not given money for clothes. There are some cases in which Muslims have converted to Christianity.

History

The story says that the whole of present Dinki area was once covered with thick forest in which different kinds of wild animals lived. Even many older people reported this from their childhood. Only very few individuals lived in this forested area until many people began gradually coming from other areas, especially after the Italian occupation was over. The *gult* and tenancy landholding system was imposed / introduced in the area as the forest and arable land was allotted to distinguished individuals in reward for their patriotic deeds against the enemy. Most of the forest and farmland belonged to about 2-3 *Dejzmach / Fitawrari* and a few Argoba landlords (*melkegna*). The remainder of the population came as tenants, in particular, all the Amhara were said to be tenant settlers, who moved down from highland villages. Unlike the Amhara, the Argoba people came from relatively far away areas (Haramba – Qobo, Cheno, Berehet, Afar)

There was resettlement programme in 2004 for Dinki people; which was conducted by the government, with more than 20 people (according to one re-settler and who had returned) from Dinki being resettled in Metema Amhara region. However, most of them have returned because of the difficult conditions of the destination area. These people who have returned have problems as they do not have anything.

The settlement pattern of Dinki people is of the Christian (Amhara) in upper Dinki, with the lower part inhabited by Argoba. Even though the Amhara came later, they are successful at farming. When the Amhara come from the highlands, the Muslims were not interested in farming. So the Christians could get land as share-croppers or they could buy and become permanent dwellers.

In 1995 one respondent reported that the economic status of Dinki and the surrounding *kebele* is now such that they cannot sustain subsistence due to under-production. He explained under-production as the negative consequence of "food aid" and "food for work" programmes. These programmes seem to have played a role in making the people non-creative. However, the food aid and food-for-work programmes ceased, apparently many years ago, and under-production in 2005 is commonly explained by crop failure due to pests and lack of rain. Indeed, some local people argue that food-for-work enabled many people to mobilise their family and work hard and build their assets.

There is an intensive use of irrigation and competition between the seedling station, water-mill owners, and cash-crop producing farmers. It was reported that during the previous dry season there were, for the first time, disputes between up-stream and down-stream use, between mill owners and crop producers over irrigation water distribution. The dispute was resolved through discussion in which they agreed to

use water in turn, each having access once per week.

The Amhara obtained land from others by renting and sharecropping (*megazo*). When the land registration authority came, there were conflicts with those using the land claiming rights, but those paying the tax asserting their rights. There are people who have up to 13 *timad*⁹ or 3-4 hectares of land, for which they are taxed 70 *birr*.

There are more than 20 people with access to irrigated land. However even these people are very few when compared to the population of the area the river and it might not be considered to give great use. But the people of Dinki benefit from the irrigated land as they can work as daily labourers. However, the river does not have enough water for all people to use it for irrigation. Its level falls when the dry season comes.

In 1996, donors gave 3 kg of wheat per person per day. This survey was done during crop harvesting/threshing time; but even then some farmers were asking for "food aid". Besides nature, this respondent believes the people are responsible for the collapse of their agriculture production.

In 1996, the main crops were reported as Sorghum, *tef*, maize, soya bean, chickpeas, sunflower, sesame, cotton, and *noug* have been grown in the area for a long time. The vegetables and fruits grown include papaya (introduced in 1985), banana (40 years ago), sugar cane; *tirengo*; tomato (20 years ago); potato (20 years ago); onion (introduced earlier); and other plants such as coffee, *chat* and *gesho*. Since 1996, Avocado and mango have been introduced for the people to plant by the Development Agent (DA). Onions have become the main cash crop for farmers who have access to irrigated land. There has also been the introduction of improved seeds which have been distributed to farmers.

In 1944 the first water mill was built;

In 1958 there was a famine called *dubalech* and in 1954 another one called *shenkute*.

In 1978 a group of rebels rose up led by Captain Shewaferaw. At that time in collaboration with residents he fought against the *Derg* regime policy.

The area was affected by famine in both 1985 and 1994.

In 1991 the soldiers of Mengistu's army fleeing from their enemy crossed through this region. While passing they took money, sheep, goats, sugar cane, etc.

There was no villagisation and no producers' cooperative in the area. More than 50 young men were conscripted and only 10 have returned. No assistance has been provided to these returnees. There was no repression or political violence during the time of the *Derg* and the site was not affected by the war apart from some looting by the soldiers of Mengistu's army when they fled.

There were crop failures in 1977 and 1986. In 1996, it was reported that people had suffered considerable hardship in the previous ten years, some of which had resulted in loss of human life, livestock and crop failure.

About 3-5 people went to Humera through the government resettlement programme in 1993/4. However, many of these were said to have returned after sometime, usually complaining of unbearable heat and malaria. Conscription was conducted in 2005 for the national reserve army (a quota of three young adults was given to the *gott*).

As discussed above there was a resettlement programme in 2004. The destination area was Metema in Amhara region.

According to most of the people, they have suffered drought since 2002. In 2002 there was a food aid

⁹ 1 *timad* = ¼ hectare

programme but after then there has been no help even when the drought continued. However, there has been no loss of human life due to famine. There has been conflict between the Afar and other people there was great tension especially in 2005 after the election.

In 1996, it was reported that two unknown Muslim fundamentalists had come to the site and tried to persuade the Muslims not to cooperate with the Christians in any social activity or joint service. But at the time this was rejected by the Muslims themselves. However, the recent inter-religious situation has changed. The Muslims of Dinki have since accepted these unknown Muslim fundamentalists and they have tried to undermine the Christians and enforce Islam. The Muslims have tried to insult the Christians.

2. Seasonal Activities and Calendars

The calendars can be found in Appendix B.

The land is such that it requires a lot of ploughing. For *tef* and sorghum ploughing begins in November and continues until the end of February (*tef*) and March (sorghum). Sorghum is planted in May but is not harvested until the following November. There is more ploughing in April and May, for *tef* which is planted in July and harvested the following October.

Tef is eaten between November and May and sorghum between December and April. Maize is eaten between November and July. Banana and sugarcane are eaten all year. The hungry season occurs in July, August and September. Women say they need credit between April and November.

In September they all weed and no other work overlaps. During their slack period, they construct terraces by themselves. Terraces were constructed previously through a food for work programme which has stopped now for a reason they do not know.

They believe that the dry season is a period of much illness, especially ones caused by bad or angry spirits. The months most prone to malaria are April, June, September and October, but the peasants cannot get medical treatment. They treat the disease in a traditional way. In these months, the farmers that suffer from this disease cannot carry out their work easily. However there is normally no loss of human life.

There is no planted pipe or any source of pure water access for the people. They use water from the river for both domestic use and for washing. When one person washes upstream, another will fetch water downstream and this has a great impact on the health of people. However, the people do not mind or take care of themselves.

Some people migrate to Afar, especially the young Muslims, who migrate for Islamic religious study. They normally spend more than a year in Afar. A few other Muslims migrate to Nazret (town in Oromia) and Arssi to visit their relatives or to visit their religious friends. Christians migrate to Debre Birhan (zone town of Northern Shewa) and to Addis Ababa either for work or to visit.

Most of the Argoba practice weaving at one time or another as a supportive means of subsistence. Some Amhara informants also reported that they practiced weaving during the 1985 famine period and have since abandoned it. There is no distinct group of craft workers. There is only one blacksmith farmer in the *gott*. Within the community there is one traditional midwife who helps the women of Dinki when they give birth. The people of Dinki treat their health problems mostly by practicing ritual celebrations or visiting a spiritual position person.

There are many festivals for Christian and some festivals for Muslim. Both celebrate festivals separately

because Christians cannot eat Muslim meat and vice versa. Christians have four great annual festivals and Muslims have only three festivals. However both also have at least three ritual celebrations which every household should celebrate. Besides, the common Islamic festivals, the Argoba celebrate the memorial day of Dinki Aye, a cult spirit, by performing the ritual at their sacred grave. Many Muslims from other areas attend, every year in February / March. Christians and Muslims perform together the ritual of *Eshet Wora* (festival of maize /sorghum maturation) takes place at the above mentioned grave, every year in *Tikimt*. They also perform together the ritual of first plough that involves the sacrifice of animals and ritual slaughtering of a sheep and festivals such as *Adbar* (which celebrated monthly at the beginning of the month to bless the whole of the month), *Balagara* (yearly celebration for about three days in each household), *Fechasa* (which is celebration of a personal spirit inherited from mother to daughter) and *Borenticha* (which is a ritual involving animal sacrifice practised for the health of the household).

3. The Farm Economy

Crops

Most of the areas in Northern Shewa are known for their cereal and pulses production. Oil seeds like sesame and sunflower are also cultivated. Fruits and vegetables exist only sporadically but, like neighbouring *kebele* such as Addis Alem and Chebete and Gendawuha, Dinki is known for growing various fruit, the main ones being banana, papaya and *tirengo*. Sugarcane is also widely cultivated interspersed with these fruits. Vegetables like potatoes, sweet potatoes and onions are grown and pepper is cultivated by some farmers. The area is a food deficit area. Crops for making the *wot* sauce are very scarce. Although farmers grow chickpeas they have to buy beans from highlanders.

Intercropping is common practice with cotton, sesame and sunflower grown with sorghum or the latter two with *tef*. Since Dinki is in the lowlands there are cereals which cannot grow. Plants which can grow in Dinki are *tef*, sorghum and corn for *injera*, and chickpeas for *kolo* (mostly for popcorn). In the highland area, beans and peas are produced, and these are important for *wet*, so people in Dinki buy them and the highlanders buy fruit and vegetables from the lowlanders.

Farmers sell approximately a quarter of their output on average. The sale from cash crops is partly used to cover expenses on things which are not available in Dinki and the surrounding *kebele*. The vegetables and fruits are primarily grown for the market and less for consumption within the household. Farmers who have plots of land adjacent to the irrigation channelled from Dinki River cultivate cash crops such as coffee and *chat*. Farmers can obtain coffee seedlings, and more recently fruit seedlings too, from the seedling station of the MoA located in Dinki. According to the person in charge the station has about 33,420 coffee seedlings. Farmers are allowed to take as many coffee seedlings as they want - mostly they take between 100 and 200.

Gesho is also grown and a very few farmers sell it. Some farmers grow cotton which they refer to as *yeferenj tit*, i.e. a new species of cotton imported sometime in the past. According to informants indigenous cotton has been almost totally replaced by the higher-yielding imported cotton. There are some people who earn money from trees.

Anyone is able to cut down trees for wood and for charcoal which has led to an alarming level of deforestation.

Fertilisers and other modern inputs, such as weed killers and pesticides, are used by cash crop producers, growing onions and *tef*. Richer people also use them for maize and sorghum production. In the past the inputs were obtained from the MoA on credit or bought from traders. Weed killers and pesticides are now available from private shops.

Livestock

Cattle are the main livestock reared in Northern Shewa because of their vital importance in farming activity, especially ploughing. Peasants mainly keep cattle not because they expect benefits such as milk, meat or hides. Rather they keep cattle in order to secure the replacement of the oxen. Sheep and goats are kept by almost all peasants. But these small livestock contribute very little to the farm economy. Peasants do not benefit much from them because of the high mortality rate. The main livestock kept in Dinki are oxen, cows, sheep, goats and mules. However, animal husbandry is currently not widely practised in Dinki. Given the hilly topography there is a lack of grazing land and to cope with this problem, the farmers have started to keep *Geleba* (the left over material after the cereal has been separated).

Muslims have recently started to keep camels. The Amhara Christians do not keep camels as the consumption of camel milk and meat is a serious cultural and religious taboo. Two informants bought camels for the first time a year ago. Both of them earned very good money from cash crops and decided to invest it in camels.

In view of the vulnerability of the site to drought and famine, the use of livestock is limited to farm activities and household consumption. Income from the sale of animal products is earned in the area. The major livestock diseases are rinderpest (*abagorba*; *abasenga*), leeches (*alikt*), and a disease called *kutena* which is transmitted while grazing. Sheep get *kulkult*, goats get "leprosy", and mules get *kantir* and trypanosomiasis.

According to local tradition milk is never sold (our cow will become dried up if we sell); only butter and eggs are sold. Livestock graze on communal land and farmers also practice grazing and cut-and-carry (haymaking) on their private plots.

Land

Before the revolution there were between 15 and 20 landlords, 70 tenants and approximately 25 landless farmers. The fertile land was given to government appointees. One landowner owned more than 60 *timad* (15 hectares). After the revolution, land was allocated to every tenant and to the landless according to family size. Each individual was given not less than 5 *timad*. Land was distributed for married people, young adults and female-headed households who did not have land in 1987. And it was given to individuals who were introduced to the village lately from land which was owned cooperatively. There was no villagisation in the site and there was no resettlement from other areas. Since then, 19 years have passed and the young people who did not get land at that time (because they were less than eighteen years old) are now grown up with families and children. They have lived either as sharecropper or some by the help of their parent or they bought land from people who are unable to pay tax and sell their land for specific time period under as contract.

Land measuring / registration was conducted in 2005. As part of this process, every household comes to the *wereda* experts and describe where his land is in front of witnesses. Everyone is called to one area to wrote down the location of the land. They are told that they will be given a piece of paper later.

Out of 132 households 30 of them are headed by "dependent" farmers (*tigegna* as *kebele* leaders call them). Among the 30 dependent households some have small plots of land not subjected to tax, while others are totally landless. There are some people who are landless, the majority or whom are women. They cope either by doing daily labour or by begging from farmers. The male-headed households can cope with the problem of landlessness by sharecropping or by buying land.

On divorce, Christian women can get their share of land but due to religious rules, this is uncommon for Muslim women.

Previously there were non-taxable garden plots of land which was not taxed, known as *yedukuman mer't* - the land of the weak. The holding was not subject to taxation since it is considered to be far below the average landholding. This was changed by the EPRDF, as all landless people who were previously entitled to have non-taxable garden plots were required to pay 20 *birr* tax for it since 1999. People unable to pay taxes and levies are dispossessed of their land.

Women have access to land if they are living on their own without husbands, and they can in theory claim land on divorce. However most female-headed households have faced the problem of a lack of male labour. To overcome this problem, they give their lands for share or for sharecropping.

Some farmers complain that the size of land allocated to them is too small. One can discern differences in size of land allocated to different households, mainly dependent on the quality of the farmland and its location. Land rental for cash, of which there was very little in 1996, has become one of the most common practices in recent years, especially as regards to irrigated land.

One index of problems with access to land (scarcity or unfair allocation) relates to disputes. The following case can be taken as an example:

A landless young married man in his early twenties, according to the account given to the anthropologist by his aunt, became an orphan in his early childhood and was living with his grandparents. While he was in his teens his grandfather died leaving a very weak widow behind. As the latter was not able to support herself, part of her plot was given to a person (who was then landless) so he could plough for her in return. The conflict arose when the old lady died two months later. Immediately after her death the one who had been using part of her plot added the plot of the deceased to his own landholdings. He later sold the whole plot in a backdoor deal, moved to another *kebele* and bought another plot for himself. It was at this moment that the grandson of the deceased claimed the land for himself. He alleged that the whole business was unfair because the land belonged to him. The landless young man (who had been supporting his new household by working on the land of a relative on terms of contract known as *megazo* (the plot of land is offered to a farmer to work it and the produce is shared equally)) appealed to the local *kebele* court, arguing that the land must pass to him, on condition that he could repay the same amount of money to the buyer. The dispute is not yet resolved.

There were a few cases disputed in courts as some people tried to reclaim the land they once abandoned and which was subsequently given to other farmers. They tried to regain the land from current owners but they lost the cases in court. Land shortage is still a problem for farmers. There are several causes, one is population increase and the other is the hilly nature of the area.

Farm Labour

In Dinki, and in most other local *kebele*, there are some indications that labour, like land, is scarce. One indication comes from the reply to the question whether agricultural activity is labour intensive. Most informants answered in the affirmative. One obvious reason they give is related to the nature of the land which does not give good yields unless it is ploughed more than once. It also needs manuring. Generally, activities ranging from ploughing to harvesting draw heavily on the labour power of the household and that of other households.

Since farming activities need a lot of labour, this forces all members of the household to take part in order to produce the required yield. But there is labour division for one household. Most children herd livestock while the adults do farming. But there are cases, when, in the absence of children in the household, the adult keeps the livestock or the livestock are kept in the house. In some circumstances women herd animals while the husbands ploughs. In Muslim households women do not participate in farming, whilst in Christian households, women may take part in some activities such as weeding and harvesting. Amhara women commonly participate in farming activities, including as daily labourers on the nursery fields and other people's farms. Both Amhara and Argoba males work as daily labourers, especially in planting, weeding and digging up of onions.

If a female-headed household does not have an adult son, the shortage of male labour is overcome either by giving land for sharecropping or by employing a farmer from the surrounding area for one or two days per week. Mostly females give their land for sharecropping. In this case, they get only half of their farm product and this is a major reason why most female-headed households become poor.

Both young and adult males participate in digging and carrying manure to the fields. However, Christian women were not observed participating, rather they are engaged in food preparation for the work party. Animal manure is collected inside the household fence. So, it should be spread from that place to farmland which may be far from the village. Everybody participates, children or adult, but it is not labour exchange as *debo* but it is helping each other among neighbours.

On a workday, Christian men plough and cut the grain during harvesting time. Christian women spin, wash clothes and fetch wood, in addition to domestic work. However on "not working days", they did the following activities in addition to fencing, herding and ploughing

1. Visiting ill patients and going to visit relatives of deceased persons
2. Watering plants and cleaning farmland
3. During harvesting, collecting the cut grains, threshing and collecting food for the livestock
4. Women do domestic work which needs more time

Muslims in Dinki go to the river or wash in other places five times per day. For one *segdet* they spend 30-40 minutes. So they might spend 3-4 hours per day and stay in their house on Wednesday and Friday.

For Muslims, Friday is a feast day each week and Wednesday is kept as a feasting day related to traditional beliefs. In these days of each week they prepare a coffee ceremony at least three times. The males celebrate by chewing *chat*.

Muslim women do not have the right to have land even if they count as a household member during distribution of land. This is because of the Islamic law in marriage. However Christian women have the right to divide the land or household property on divorce, whereas if a Muslim women is divorced and does not remarry, she must lead her life without having land. Therefore Christian women can have land and lead a better life as a divorcee or widow.

That labour is scarce is also apparent from indirect sources. For instance, the attitude towards education. The anthropologist learned a lot regarding the scarcity of labour from a discussion on duration with *Ato Mohammed Said*, in 1996, while he was picking cotton from his field. According to him (apparently in his fifties) people (including himself) in Dinki and other places are disappointed by local authorities because they are "taking away" their children from farm activities and sending them to school. "Basically" he said, "I am not against educating children. What we say is the authorities must not take away all of the children belonging to one household. It would have been nicer if one child is taken away from a family which has more than one child. But it is not the case." *Ato Mohammed* even went to the extent of saying that land is not a problem for his people. A small plot could give a great deal of produce if labour is used intensively. He also contended that the problem is not limited to his locality. "It is" he

said authoritatively, "a nation-wide problem. Agricultural activity has been deteriorating all over the country because of this one-sided attention given to schooling. Many people are fleeing from the countryside. Since those who are educated are becoming too many, they cannot even get jobs. There must be a legal code for this situation. Agriculture is withering away. The authorities and the school teachers tell us "Your children must not be ignorant like you (they must get education)."

Ato Mohammed continued his speech with sarcasm. "But is it not from us, the ignorant, that educated people are born? We say "animal" but is it not from animals (i.e. cattle) that we get all these things (wealth?) ... Half of us should plough. While farming is a good occupation to earn our living everyone is writing. ... That is why people are going against each other." Meanwhile he pointed out repeatedly he is by no means against education. He stressed that compulsory education for children is draining labour away from agricultural activity that needs it very badly.

Many of the Muslim informants clearly indicated that they prefer sending their children to religious school than the formal one. Muslims see this not only in terms of labour scarcity but also value preference. The Amhara (many of them) view education for their children as good, although they agree that most people send none or one / two children to school due to shortage of labour.

Everybody wants to have educated children, the difficulty is that since there is no school nearby, their children spend all of their time at school and travelling to and from school, if they send their children. If children do not help in farming activities, how are they going to learn? They might face food shortages that is why they parent cannot send their children.

As in many parts of Ethiopia the use of agricultural labour involves division in terms of age and sex. People in Dinki, and many other *kebele* in Ankober, are differentiated into two religious groups, Muslim and Orthodox Christian, and the nature of the division of labour varies between the groups. For instance, women from Orthodox Christian households participate in agricultural activities such as weeding and threshing, while Muslim women do not participate in any agricultural activity. This also seems to apply to the division of labour in terms of age. Most Muslim informants noted that children from Muslim families are not supposed to participate in agricultural activities. They say "Children are not for work, they should be sent to Quranic school". However, this appears to remain at the level of rhetoric. When asked where they find children, for instance, for cattle herding, they replied that they could hire children from Christian families. The next question the anthropologist posed was "What would be the source of child labour for a poor Muslim household?" and they answered that a poor household may use its own children. And they claimed that children from poor Muslim households could be hired by relatively richer households. It seems that the religious distinction wanes when it comes to practice.

In a study of Endode it was found that:

Children were given duties from around the age of 5 to 7. Little girls would help with fetching water, taking care of the crops and so forth. As they got older they would be given more responsibility in cooking and preparing the food. The two latter activities are considered purely female responsibilities. Wives were responsible for processing the products, such as cleaning of the grains and taking them to the mill.

Little boys helped mostly with taking care of the smaller animals, as with lambs and goats. As they grew older they would be given the responsibility for the bigger animals such as cows and oxen. However, when a boy reaches his teens and is physically stronger, he will start to plough. (Dahl-Jorgensen, 1990:119)

However, among small children the gender division in distribution of duties is not pronounced. Boys can fetch water and girls tend animals.

The main activities performed by men are land preparation, planting, weeding, harvesting and threshing. Women are responsible for childcare, cooking, wood collection, water fetching, beer brewing, spinning and yarn making.

Women who have a husband do not do agricultural activities whatever their status. But Islamic female-headed households can do agricultural activities because they feel that everything is her own. However there is some change in this case. Some women, whatever their status, have participated in agricultural work. But they undermine by the Muslim women who didn't predicated.

Other than using labour from one's own household there are different ways of pooling labour with other households. One way is to hire the labour of "dependent" households. But this is rare since most households cannot afford to hire labour. Payment may be in cash or kind. A household short of labour may manage to obtain it by offering a plot on a contractual basis (see below under Interlinkages).

The main type of reciprocal labour exchange is *giso* or *wenfel*: (for ox ploughing, digging, threshing, manuring, weeding or harvesting) this includes supplies of food and drink and is paid back. It is usually organised on the basis of neighbourhood. When a *giso* is organised by a Christian household two types of drinks are prepared for participants: *tella* (local beer) for Christian participants and *keribo* (an unfermented drink with no alcohol mostly prepared in Muslim households) for Muslim participants. If the organiser is a Muslim household it offers only *keribo* which can be enjoyed by both Muslims and Christians. This shows the extent to which people cooperate and tolerate each other's faith. In some local *kebele giso* is also organised for manuring plots. As Ato Birhanu Tesfaye, a surveyor for the Gene Bank, substantiated, some farmers are known to accumulate manure in pits especially prepared for the purpose for a time of 3 to 5 years. *Giso* are then organised in order to spread the manure on the field. Most *giso* is organised for activities such as threshing and harvesting. They may also be organised for constructing houses and fences.

Households use casual labour for wages in kind and in cash. Men and women both do weeding and harvesting (for 4 *birr* a *timad* regardless of sex). Men can earn 5 *birr* a *timad* ploughing. 5 *birr* is the minimum daily rate for harvesting / weeding

Christians mainly do not work on Sundays and there are days like the 1st May and every 12th, 19th, 21st, and 29th when people do not work. On average they do not work about 14 days in each month (a total of 168 days a year). Muslims work all the year except their usual holidays.

Most residents of Dinki do not have time for rest and recreation. However, both Christians and Muslims wait for their holidays eagerly because they are happy on these days. They prepare good food and they wear new clothes if possible. They visit each other and invite their neighbours or friends.

Men work at weeding, harvesting, ploughing, threshing, and planting. Women work at threshing, harvesting, land preparation, planting and weeding.

For cattle herding a household never employs outside labour. A child from each household participates in one compound as a group. Households do herding turn by turn.

There are people who employ boys as herders, usually agreeing to pay money for the service on a yearly basis 200-300 *birr* per year. Children from the household have kept the livestock not turn but one of the child herd goats the other one livestock. And it there is no children in the household. The wife should herd when her husband plough if not he might herd.

Fencing is done in the form of *gisso*.

Interlinkages

In Northern Shewa since the Land Reform, land has been distributed according to the rights established by the law. Elsewhere in Northern Shewa, Aspen identified three kinds of land distribution other than the rights stipulated by the land reform: *tegazh*, *guluma*, and *mekenajo*. "*Megazo meret* is," he writes, "land owned by a person different from the one who cultivates it, and in strict legal terms only persons who are unable to cultivate their land due to health, sex (females), and/or age could enter such arrangements after the land reform" (Aspen, 1993). *Tegazh* are therefore those who cultivate the land (and not the owners) on certain arrangements.

Guluma is traditional access to land, especially when land is handed over to one's boy so that he could save the produce for his future marriage. *Guluma* is used for both one's sons and farm workers (servants) with the difference that the servant uses the land to produce for himself as a salary whereas it is the son's right / expectation from his parents. It is a traditional way of preparing young adults for economically viable household formation. *Guluma* in relation to sons is thus one form of parental assistance to children, an inter-generational transmission of resource.

Mekenajo is a form of agreement that enables a person who has got only one ox to borrow another from another person so that he can plough his land.

Ribbi is an arrangement for lending one's own animals to someone else to rear.

In addition to these Dahl-Jorgensen provides us with "gender-specific labour exchange":

A household lacking in an able-bodied male, yet having 2-3 female adults, may help a household with an opposite gender composition during ploughing and harvesting. Ploughing is a typical adult male job, while females help out with harvesting (Dahl-Jorgensen, 1990:117-18).

In Dinki, females never do ploughing but if a woman helps another farmer by weeding he ploughs her land. That means labour for weeding is considered equal to labour for ploughing

Dahl-Jorgensen further noted that this agreement is usually conducted between neighbours, friends or kin that share mutual confidence. It is also pointed out that the agreement is dyadic, i.e. it usually involves not more than two households" (*ibid*:118).

In Genet, there is a similar work arrangement that involves only two households, i.e. *wenfel*. In Genet, the term is also used to designate the element that is known as *debo* in other areas of Northern Shewa: While *wenfel* is "anything from just lending a hand to a neighbour for a short time and without involving food and drinks," *debo* represents "only full-scale working parties...." (Aspen 1993:59).

In Dinki a household short of labour may manage to obtain it by offering a plot on a contractual basis. In Dinki the usual practice is offering a portion of a given holding on the basis of *megazo*. According to this agreement the one who is given and works on the land shares the produce equally with the original owner. The landowner pays the cost of the seed and fertiliser and the seed cost will be taken from the final product. The landowner decides whether it should be a long-term or *ad hoc* arrangement. Some traders and shopkeepers living in Aliyu Amba are said to have plots of land in Dinki as well as coffee plants. Unlike agreements between farmers living in Dinki, agreements between a person who owns a farm while living in town and a farmer who provides his labour are concluded in such a way that the landowner pays half the price of the yield in cash.

Farming Technology

Farmers in Dinki use the traditional ploughing technology as in many parts of Ethiopia which involves two oxen dragging a plough. Some farmers in Dinki were trained in how to make a plough for use with one ox, and practised ploughing with one ox for a time. Those who were selected for the application of the programme were each given 400 *birr* to buy an ox by way of encouraging the new technique, but the whole attempt soon failed. One reason behind the failure could be the difficulty which people have in coming to terms with new techniques.

But another problem pinpointed by an informant seems to be the real difficulty. According to this informant the experience of single ploughing is new to an ox which has been used to being harnessed in ploughing with another ox. In particular, ploughing with one ox on a slope is impossible because the ox cannot maintain his balance. Given the hilly nature of the Dinki topography this would be a significant problem. And even if the land were flat, training an ox to plough by itself would be taxing in terms of labour expended and time spent in doing so. In view of the life situation of most Ethiopian peasants the attempt might be seen as a luxury which they could not afford.

Some farmers with plots of land near the Dinki River use irrigation for some crops. Some farmers especially from Addis Alem have planted different crops and fruits, like papaya, bananas, green peppers, tomatoes, and onions. Fertilisers and pesticides are used though there is a shift to use of manure instead, this is both as a result of the increase in price of these inputs and due to the shortening of the rainy season in Dinki, as the use of fertiliser requires that there must be enough rainfall

In 2005, the agricultural development centre had planned to resettle the people in the upper part of Dinki to the lower part of the area to make way for an afforestation programme. This is for conservation of the area from degradation and to avoid excessive cultivation of slopes. However, this was not accepted by the residents. The people were ready to resist as some had built houses on top of the hills 50 years before and the proposal was dropped before the May 2005 elections since it was seen to be unpopular.

Water harvesting has worked in other locations but has not happened in Dinki and, in practice, there has been no governmental activity after the election. The plan for water harvesting was rejected by the people due to fears that it would spread malaria.

Farming Innovations

The following innovations have been introduced in the community: papaya (1985); banana (40 years ago); coffee; *chat*; sugar cane; *tirengo*; tomato; potato; onion; *gesho*; and different vegetables. The following six innovations are those that the community thought were most useful in 1996.

1. *Papaya* is grown under irrigation on fertile land. It was introduced in 1985. The people were told that papaya has got vitamins, prevents disease and is a source of income. It was proposed by the LWF and the farmers were trained on how to grow it in development centres. It was very successful and was copied by people who have access to irrigation. People who did not have access to irrigation did not copy because the land terrain was very much up and down. The long run effects seem to be good enough that the plants are green and effective.

2. *Bananas* are grown under irrigation on fertile sandy soil. It was introduced about 40 years ago as it was considered as a source of income. The people do not remember who first introduced it or grew it first. Many people grow it now. It is only those people who do not have access to irrigation water who did not copy. The long run effect is good as their sons did well in their performance.

3. *Tomatoes* are also grown under irrigation on relatively sandy soil. They were introduced about 20

years ago. Tomatoes are believed to be useful for the prevention of diseases and as a source of income. Nobody could remember who proposed it and planted it first; but it is included in daily meals. It is grown by people who have access to irrigation. The long run effects are good.

4. *Potatoes* are also grown under irrigation on relatively sandy soil. Like tomatoes, it is not known who proposed or started growing potatoes. People who have access to irrigation water are growing it. The long term effects are good enough.

5. *Carrots*: People were shown how to cultivate carrots at the development centre.

6. *Other vegetables*: Farmers were shown how to cultivate other different kinds of vegetable at the development centre.

Since 1996, onions have become the most important cash crop, and is planted by anyone who has irrigated land. It gives good yield and in 2004 there was also distribution of improved onion seeds. In addition, banana and papaya are important sources of cash, and avocados and mangos are also grown in the agricultural centre of Dinki

Common Property Resources

There is communal grazing land on the way towards Gema. However, it has become narrower as adjacent people have expanded their land into it. People complain but nothing is done about it. The village has nurseries for coffee plants and it also grows and distributes various fruit plant seedlings, elephant grass that is used both as animal feed and to prevent erosion.

Water is obtained from rivers and springs. There is a steady supply in May and June, otherwise the supply is plentiful. There is also a water supply from the spring of Dinki which is plentiful at *Bega* and supplies water for plants.

Environment

According to the land use plan of the MoA, land is divided into three types:

- 1) intensively cultivated land, 70% of which is used for the production of annual crops;
- 2) moderately cultivated bush land, 30-50% employed for the production of the annual crops, and 20% for grazing and browsing; and
- 3) open grassland, most of it used as grazing land.

The main problem in the area is soil erosion as the slope of the land is very great. This is combated through terracing which was previously carried out by the LWF.

There were attempts to make terraces on hillsides through work campaigns and to reserve protected forest areas. But people strongly opposed the idea of forest reserves, arguing that it will aggravate the already existing shortage of grazing land.

There is also a great problem with deforestation in the area; the forest is decreasing all the time. There has been a LWF attempt at afforestation but this has not been successful.

Proposals to move houses off the hillsides and prevent livestock from grazing on the slopes to be afforested were resisted as people did not want to be moved and did not have enough grazing land. The proposals were shelved prior to the May 2005 elections.

Although commercial fertilisers have been used in Northern Shewa it has been observed that the amount is insignificant in comparison to other regions in the former Administrative Region. In Dinki peasants use pesticides on crops but fertiliser only on irrigated cash crops, notably onions.

As regards the amount of fertilisers consumed per year in 1996 by individual households in three *kebele* (Armanya, Asfachew and Wez Meder), the average was estimated at 1 or 2 bags (a bag is 50kg). This is considered to be a low amount. The main reason is not attributed to the shortage of fertilisers.

It is mainly because the peasants themselves are either unwilling or not capable of buying larger amounts of fertilisers that they tend to buy only one bag per household (Mulugeta, 1990:96)

Despite its practical importance for irrigation, Dinki River has been destructive due to erosion increasingly widening its bed by washing away farmlands all along the bank. The worst devastation occurred recently in 2003 when a large tract of farmland with all seasonal / perennial crops was completely washed away.

The river now (especially since 2003) is becoming broader during the rainy season. This is not mean that not beneficial for irrigation. It is important for irrigation access for the surrounding people. Its destructiveness is seasonal. However the river is the communal wealth of the surrounding area, it serves for washing clothes, it is source of water for Dinki and for domestic activity, and it is also source of water for the mill motor.

4. Off-farm Activities

Communal Work

The community work (government initiated) organised by external agents were; road maintenance, construction of the health post, local farmer training centres, schools, residential houses, fencing of the seedling station, and terracing. There was also an attempt to organise water harvesting but this was rejected by the local people.

Community work organised by local organisations (self-initiated) include: participation in general ceremonies through *iddir*, for which women prepare and serve food for feasts; men fetching wood / water; digging of graves; carrying and burying the dead; participation in wedding parties for which women prepare food and sing / dance; cooperation in house building (roof making) and dung-spreading (men dealing with the actual work and women in food preparation for the feast); women also come together and prepare ritual foods during neighbourhood level ceremonies (*adbar*).

There has been no food for work in the site since 2003. As for cash for work, there are people who have done daily labour. Mainly the people who have irrigated land employ daily labourers. The neighbourhood women organise to prepare for a community event or to cook food for a burial ceremony or for the people who work as *giso* or for *mahiber* of one household or for *kristana* (for baptism).

Household Off-farm Activities

Weaving is done by people who came from Argoba and by some Amhara Christians. Argoba women are commonly engaged in spinning of cotton as input for their husbands' weaving of *shemma* or for the market in the form of coiled threads. In 1996, weaving was the second most important economic activity in the area, but most of the people have said that weaving has become unprofitable so most weavers have

diverted to farming

Christian women, boys and girls fetch wood, however, Muslim women and girls are involved only in the fetching of water and Muslim boys are involved in both fetching water and wood.

A few people are engaged in blacksmithing, especially to produce ploughs and other farming tools. They do not constitute a distinct segment; a person may start blacksmithing whatever his family background. There are one or three people who have done blacksmithing and they provide tools for the surrounding farmers. However, it is not well thought of to engage in blacksmith skills. Being a blacksmith is not appreciated by other people if their family are not blacksmiths.

There are no traders or shops in the village and any involvement in trade takes in Chibite and Aliyu Amba

Spinning yarn making and brewing are main activities for women of Dinki next to domestic and other related work. Both Muslim and Christian women carry out these roles. However, nowadays, Christian women are shifting their attention to do field work, since spinning requires more time and is unprofitable, in addition it is very tiring work. Muslim women do not spend the money that they earn for household use, rather the money which get from the sale of their spinning is their own wealth and they use it for their personal items. For example, they have bought soap, perfume and clothes.

Another set of off-farm activities relates to the treatment of health problems. In Dinki there are individuals known as *wogessa* who treat bone fractures, joint dislocation, and the dislocation and swelling of muscles. There are also people who know how to treat headaches, eye and ear problems, and have snake medicine (*Yeebab medhanit*).

In Dinki, since there is no church at the site and it is difficult to worship without a church, there is no priest or religious leader. But there are priests in the neighbouring villages such as Lallo (about 4-5km away), Addis Alem and Chibite who have served the Dinki people.

There are about 10 Muslim religious leaders. The absence of church at the site is the main reason for the absence of a priest, although Muslims also do not have a mosque in the site. But since Muslims can worship in any house, they have religious leaders.

Occupational Structure

Farming is the common economic occupation, although there is a Muslim sub-group which is involved in weaving to support household income. People from both ethnic groups are also involved in *kebele* and party political activities. Educated Muslims are involved in teaching the *Quran*, healing spirit related illness, and performing funeral rituals. Elders from both groups participate in dispute resolution, either informally or as members of the semi-formal *kebele* elders council.

In relation to education, there are a few Christian women who can write and read. Nowadays, every adult wants to be able to write and read or to learn if they can get the opportunity of education for beginners, as happened during the *Derg* period.

Women who can write and read have a responsibility and right to mobilise the rest of the women. They could be chairwoman, scarcity for their gender association during *Derg* period. As one woman called Mwatoa Eshetu reported, as she was a chairwoman for Dinki *kebele* during the *Derg* period.

The students who have learnt the *Quran* cannot write or read Amharic but only Arabic. So, they do not benefit in their day-to-day life from their education. However they might need it to know about their

religious rules.

In Dinki dispute cases are resolved mostly informally, and sometimes formally. Since formal resolution is costly the people do not prefer it and also it is recent option. Elders will come together and resolve a dispute if it has taken place in the area. Magicians or spiritual people also have great roles and this is accepted by many people. In addition elite men/women, religious men and knowledgeable adults have resolved disputes as well.

Migration

Migration does not seem to be known in Dinki as a regular source of income. People from other areas come and for daily labour, however, Dinki people do not migrate to anywhere for work. Some people go to Nazret (Oromia), Arssi and Awash to visit their relatives, friends or their religious father. However, in 1996, it was reported that in very bad times people will migrate for temporary employment. In 1988/89 they migrated to Mesobit and Gedeba, to Gachene in Ankober *Wereda* and also to other places. A few women also migrate, mostly for marriage

Rural-Urban Linkages

There are more than 10 people who own land in Dinki and live in towns. They give the land for *magazo*. For example, one of household diary respondents has built a house in Chibite where his children go to school. Otherwise those who go to school in Aliyu Amba live with their relatives.

People of Dinki take cereals, fruit, vegetables, honey, butter, eggs, spun cotton, and woven cloth for sale in the market, and they buy personal and food items. Personal items include soap, pyjamas, scarves, clothes and spices, and food items include salt, sugar and oil.

5. Reproductive Activity

Housing

Most houses in Dinki are built of wood plastered with mud and have thatched roofs. In 1994, around 9% of houses had tin roofs, though this proportion has increased in the past 10 years. It is reported that the decline in grass availability and comparative price has made tin-roof houses increasingly preferable. However, it remains that mainly rich households have roofs made of tin.

Informants in Dinki explain that there are no houses built of stone, not so much because of lack of resources, as due to the vulnerability of stone-built houses which can become breeding places for snakes and other reptiles, given the hot weather of the place. Tin-roofed houses are also regarded as of no value due to the weather, but since it is an honour to have a tin-roofed house, people still want them, even if they are not suited to the lowland area.

The largest houses have two rooms. The average cost in 1996 to build a house was estimated to be 1,500 *birr* for a house which may last up to ten years.

Women and children collect firewood for cooking purposes from nearby forests and woodlands. Firewood is also used for lighting in addition to the main source which is kerosene lamps. Heating houses is not necessary due to the hot climate. Firewood is used the whole year except after the harvest when they use wood mixed with sorghum stalks. It takes a long time to collect firewood in this area. Most households get their wood from communal woods available in the village.

There is no electricity service. Kerosene is brought from Aliyu Amba.

The main source of water is the river called Dinki and also springs in the different parts of the village. In 1996, the Beledi spring had been piped and as a result the people did not have to walk long distances to collect water. In 2005, Dinki River is the main source of water only for people on and near the bank (on the Western side). River Wombero on the East is the source for people and animals on the other side of the village. There is no shortage of water for Dinki. However to get pure water in Dinki is impossible; one fetches water downstream when someone has washed his body or clothes upstream. That is way most of the people have suffered with typhoid fever and other related diseases.

Like other areas of rural Ethiopia building toilets is unthinkable in the foreseeable future. However, specific sanitary activities are reported to have taken place. According to two medical personnel working at Aliyu Amba clinic in 1996, there were attempts to organise people in Dinki and other malaria-prone areas to clear swamps of mosquitoes during the infestation period, however, this has not been the case in the last few years up to 2005.

There were government attempts to force residents to build toilets at household level. The *Kebele* announced that anyone without a toilet would be fined and someone would come to check. As a result, some people dug a hole just to show but have now filled it up again.

Domestic Technology

Women no longer make flour by stones but they use the mill for everything. Most, though not all, of the households use kerosene for lighting. There are some people who use fuel saving stoves. This was introduced four years ago by agricultural officials but the users are not many.

Household management

Household management is exclusively carried out by women. Among the Muslims of the area all external household supplies are procured by the man, and the woman is in charge of cooking and other household activities. The responsibility for the health of the family rests with the man. Among Christians the supply of food items from outside is assured by women. Both men and women cooperate in safeguarding the health of the family.

In one household, the Christian wife has the right to control the income and she is responsible for the household expenditure. She also has the responsibility to save and use the product economically. If a household becomes poor, people say that it is because of the extravagance of the wife or the poor management of the wife. Christian women can sell and buy the necessary consumption goods for household. Some knowledgeable women advise their husbands as to what type of crop they should sow on one farm and which one for the other.

However, most Muslim wives do not have the right to control any income or expenditure of the household. Muslim women should cook food, wash clothes and carry her children. As one women said, "We Muslim women are not treated as a wife by our husband, it is better to say we have lead life as a servant."

Fertility

The division of labour within the household affects the number of children a given household may have.

There is a need for more children as sources of labour. Children are a burden only until the age of 5 or 6. In Endode differences in preference between men and women were expressed:

..women stated that their husbands usually wanted male children, while they themselves preferred female children. The reason for this preference, according to the women themselves, was because they would receive more help from their children. The men, on the other hand, did not share this argument and said instead that the gender of the child was unimportant to them. The family, as we have noted, could hire a boy to help the man with duties such as taking care of the animals and ploughing. The women, however, did not have this possibility, but were very much dependent on their own children's labour and especially on a teenage daughter. (Dahl-Jorgensen, 1990:120)

The number of children a given family has is affected by traditional attitudes towards fertility. It is believed that God is the one who gives children and whether one has more depends on his will. Although there is a demand for more births women realise the difficulty of close births. Close births affect farming activity and the wellbeing of the mothers. Some cultural taboos also contribute to better spacing. It is a taboo to have sexual intercourse during menstruation, after birth up to 40 days (which is up to baptism in case of boys), and at times when people want to attend church services the following day (i.e., to be clean when they go to church), although this seems to apply mainly to priests.

In 1996, abortion was said to be practised when there was an unwanted pregnancy. It was reported that women drink juice from a plant called *Mekan-endod* (*Phytolacca Dodecandra*) and *qulqwal* (*Euphorbia Candelabrum*) during the first month of pregnancy. The fruit of *Zarch'e-embway* (*Solanum Marginatum*) and prolonged breast-feeding are used to prevent conception. However in 2005, it was claimed that abortion is not practised deliberately unless there is health problem. Abortion is not advisable even when the woman becomes pregnant without marriage.

Some women in Dinki use birth control method or a tablet which is given from Aliyu Amba medical personnel. However, most women do not use birth control even though they know that having more children leads to poverty. Recently husbands and wives quarrel due to HIV/AIDS, as the wife may suspect that her husband might have passed the disease to her.

Childbirth and Childcare

It is taboo to have children without having a legal husband. Women who become pregnant outside marriage are undermined by others. They are insulted by the others who feel shame if women have become pregnant out of marriage.

There is no treatment for pregnant women but Christian women do not do field work after five months of pregnancy. As Muslims do not go to the field, they do domestic work until they give birth, but after they give birth, they are treated and eat meat for about forty days (the baptism of a male child).

The husband prepares a special bed when the wife gives birth. She sleeps separately from her husband and the new born child is treated by his/her mother and fed breast milk. When the child is one year old, they start to eat *injera*. In rich households, they are fed with milk, butter and eggs. However poor households feed *injera* and sometimes egg.

Both husbands and wives want male children. However, after they give birth, men very much like girls and women like their sons. One respondent said that all parents say they have greater love for their son than their daughter. Parents provide better food and clothes for their son.

Babies born disabled do not get any treatment because their parents believe that "if a child became

disabled before his/her birth he/she couldn't recover whatever they sought".

When pregnant women are ready to give birth, a cock and hen are bought and the *Fintako* ritual is carried out in the presence of the ritual leader who throws parts of the sacrificed food to the spirits. Women gather around her and say, "Mary please save our sister or daughter". After the child birth they swallow butter and porridge is prepared for the people who have gathered to beg mercy to birth for the pregnant woman.

Socialisation

The local experts are contact farmers trained, by agricultural extension officers from the MoA and the LWF, about different agricultural practices.

The following are qualities desirable in men according to a group of women: has good behaviour; hardworking; obedient; strong; being independent and not relying on others; and being kind enough to help people. People are born with such qualities, but some skills can be learnt from the surroundings. Non-school education which children acquire from their parents and the community is gender specific. Boys are taught by their father and are supposed to take on his manners. Girls are taught mainly house management by their mothers. Moral lessons are given informally. Children are told to respect their elders; they are punished if they intervene while grown-ups discuss among each other, etc. Moral education is further reinforced by making children eat from a different plate from the one shared by their parents; and the food served to children usually includes leftovers from their parents.

Socialisation is usually done by children looking at what an older person is doing, what a parent is doing and also by getting advice. Girls' training starts with household activities. They start doing it from early childhood.

The criteria for being a successful farmer, from the experience of the researcher, is that the farmer can be effective in his farming activities, and he can provide a proper feeding for his household all year round. Christian men honour/respect their household, especially their wife, and if the husband and wife spend their life together, they have great respect. However, this is not true for Muslim men because Islam allows for men to have more than one wife.

To be a good woman, she should be able to do domestic work (she should prepare good food) and spin cotton and make yarn. Both Muslim and Christian women should be hard workers and keep their children healthy. Both Muslim and Christian women should be peaceful with their husband and with others.

A successful farmer is hard working, humble, and has a good farm area and good farm implements. There is a distinction between a good farmer and a good man. A good farmer is not necessarily a good person. A man can be a hard worker but he might not necessarily have good qualities. A successful farmer's wife is one who prepares food and assists in the farm work. She should be a good hostess when there is a traditional labour arrangement.

The most important social skills according to the women's group are the following: not being intrusive, never going back on promises, being capable of keeping secrets.

The particular skills a successful farmer's wife should have are spinning and yarn making. This helps to save on money for clothing. Weaving and blacksmithing are not respected skills, especially blacksmithing, which is shameful. There are a few Muslim women that weave.

Qualities that are not desirable in men include, aggressiveness, theft, drunkenness, and not being good at

arguing. The qualities that are not desirable in women are prostitution, not being able to cook well and not managing other household activities. No one will ask a woman for marriage if she does not have the above qualities even if she is the most beautiful.

The men said it is important to be able to write, read and do sums in the community. There is a formal primary school and a Quranic school in this area. At elementary school, they learn language and mathematics. In the Quranic school, they learn about Islam in Arabic. The nearest church school is found in a nearby village called Lallo in the upper part of Dinki. It has been there for about four years. The church is called St. George and is 4-5km away. The people of Dinki have spiritual service in this church.

The women's group said it is not important to be able to read, write and do sums because a woman who knows those things will walk away from her husband. She will always think about the social responsibilities out of her home.

Schooling does not contribute to being a better farmer or a better farmer's wife. Once a person starts going to school, he will not be a better farmer.

Quranic schooling makes it easier to earn off-farm income. If a person has attended a Quranic school he becomes an excellent bargainer because he does not drink. Attending the formal school does not make it easier to earn off-farm income.

In 1996, the group said that less than 1% of the boys in the area went to a formal school since the school was far. No girl known to the community was at primary or secondary school. However, about 25% of the Muslim children attended Quranic school. However, there are a few women who had educational opportunities during the *Derg* period. They can write and read and they were involved in mobilising the women. Some were chairwomen and security during *Derg* period.

Since 1996, a new school has opened at the nearby village called Addis Alem (20-30 minutes). At this school both girls and boys attend their primary education. There are not less than 20 girls from Dinki attending school at Addis Alem. The school has two classrooms, another room as a store and two female teachers (in 2005). The school is up to grade three but the students can join at grade five in other schools after they have finished their third year of education.

There is a shortage of classrooms; grade one and two learn in one room by sitting back to back. There are no chairs and tables for the students, although the students do not complain because they do not know that students could have chairs and tables.

Education

Traditional religious education is practised in Dinki. Quranic lessons are given for children in small mosques known as *kelewa*. Since there is no church in Dinki there is no biblical education. There is no formal school in the village. In 1996, the nearest primary school (grades 1-6) was at Chibite which is about two hours walk away (approx 6km). There are two primary schools in nearby villages outside Dinki *gott*; both of them are in the same kebele (Hager Selam). The nearest school (grades 1-4) is at Addis Alem about 30-40 minutes on the way to Aliyu Amba. The other primary school (grades 1-6) is at Chibite where the kebele offices are located (about 2 hrs). There is one religious school in Dinki – Gema that offers Quranic lessons for beginners, and one higher-level school in neighbouring Addis Alem. The principal Quranic teacher at Gema is a woman (Emet Mehamed) with her son as an assistant. There are also people who used to teach their children and those of immediate neighbours in their compounds. One secondary school has been under construction, currently in the final phase, in Ankober.

In 1996, most of the schools were located far from some of the villages. Some children had to walk a

long way to reach school. As *Ato* Kidane Bersuma, the administrator of the school, pointed out, parents worried a lot about sending their children to school not only because of the distance but also because of the various dangers their children might encounter in going to and from school. For instance they worried that their small children might be attacked by wild beasts, especially snakes. Another problem was created by the extension of the school calendar to July, which is the month the rainy season commences (a nationwide policy of the EPRDF). Many children from this area were forced to quit school since they could not cross the rivers which fill up and become dangerous.

Now there are primary schools nearby, but the problem of danger and the difficulty of attending school in the rainy season remains. Even so, there are many children who attend school at Addis Alem and Chibite (from grade 1-6) but no student has continued secondary school. Many children were sent to attend government school but since their parent did not appreciate this modern school, pupils drop out, especially Muslim children who are not interested to learn formal education unlike Christian children.

Even if there is the opportunity to go to school, certain socio-cultural needs that households demand from children are further constraints. Due to the duties children are expected to meet, they are not encouraged to go to school. Even those who have already started to go to school may be forced to quit due to the pressure exerted by farming activities. Most of them would also stop going to school because of the social role they are supposed to play in their own households.

There are relatively many boys and girls going to the two formal schools since the local government started forcing parents with the threat of a penalty to send all their children to school. There is no gender difference in sending children for primary school. However, when the girl reaches thirteen and above, she is forced to dropout because parents fear abduction or rape. There is also no difference in the wealth of families that send children, but the households who have more children send one or two of whom they select by chance or interest of their children. As to religious factors, Muslims want to send their children to Quranic school more than modern school and this is a great factor for children's attendance in formal education.

3) In 1996, there was an increasing difficulty to get jobs after schooling, and this was a disincentive to attend education. However in 2005, it was reported that there is no one who is having such problems after he/she has finished education, and the reasons for not attending school are no more than religious ones and the problem of labour force.

As the anthropologist in 1996 gathered from different sources people in Dinki (and most of the *kebele* in Ankober, including Aliyu Amba) were equally reticent about both religious and modern education. While discussing the problem of "snatching" children for modern schools, the informant *Ato* Mohammed Said stressed that he, as well as his fellow villagers, would have preferred to send their children to religious rather than modern schools since the former provide spiritual guidance which is much more important than the worldly teaching of the latter. However, due to the high demand for labour people could not even afford to send their children to religious schools. *Ato* Mohammed said "The new [modern] education snatched our children for science whom we even are reluctant to expose to spiritual lessons". A young farmer who had been listening to the discussion said that the location of schools by itself (the nearest was at least two hours' walk from Dinki) was discouraging. He said that if a school was built nearby parents would be happy to send their children to school since part of the time spent on going to and from school could be spent on other activities. But the old man objected strongly to this: "Whether the school is far or near, all the same it doesn't make any difference to me. Even if it were located at the backyard of my house, it is valueless." Referring to the fate of the young person himself he said, "You have attended school in Aliyu Amba. But you were forced to come back and engage yourself in farming activities because you couldn't make use of your education."

There seems to be a wider gap between Amhara and Argoba parents concerning their views toward formal education. Almost all Christian informants expressed their high regard of education in relation to

children's future, whereas most of the Muslims considered formal education to be alien to their ways of socialisation. They believe it rather spoils children's behaviour (they used to call formal schools "Amhara" or "Christian education"). In general, Muslims prefer sending their children to Quranic schools rather than to formal schools. Some of them even revealed that they sent at least one of their children only because they were forced to by the government.

Even if children from Dinki get the opportunity to finish their elementary education and pursue their education up to grade 8 in Aliyu Amba, Debre Berhan (60 km from Aliyu Amba) is the only town where they can attend high school. However, this will change with the construction of the high school at Ankober, which is almost finished.

Nonetheless, when we look at the attrition rate of students in elementary schools it signals that the problem is much more serious than the absence of further education. The size of classes at Chibite ena Gendawuha *kebele* is a case in point: the size of classes diminishes in ascending order. In 1996, out of 150 students only 2 were in grade 6. Most students did not get beyond 4th grade. In Chibite ena Gendawuha *kebele* there was only one student, the son of a wealthy family, who managed to complete his high school education in Debre Birhan. As *Ato* Kidane noted, most people in the *kebele* referred to this boy as a living example of the futility of education since he was a farmer.

The attrition rate was even higher when it came to female students. In the first place, due to traditional beliefs and customs, girls are nurtured and socialised in order to assume the status of a good wife. They therefore got the opportunity to go to school very rarely. However, even those who started, were often withdrawn early since their parents feared they could be raped or kidnapped. There was a case in Chibite: a fifth-grade student was kidnapped by her classmate. There was then an attempt by the school administrator to bring the case to court in order to stop such cases in the future. But, paradoxically, the father of the girl counteracted, pleading that there is no need to take the boy to court since the case was resolved by elders.

Furthermore it is also observed that teachers find themselves in a very difficult situation because most students temporarily withdraw during harvest time. When these students return they can be burdens on the teachers since they have to catch up with the others who have been attending regularly. This problem is shared by many schools in rural Ethiopia and the Ministry of Education could respond by designing different calendars for schools in rural areas.

In addition, students are forced to stay away from their school on the market days to look after the house and smaller children when their parents are at market. Previously, the market was on Sunday, however, now the market day has changed to Thursday and Monday, which are school days, so the number of students has decreased on these days.

Training

Militia are sent for training usually for a couple of weeks to Ankober. Political seminars and orientation sessions are held for the *Kebele* leadership in Aliyu Amba and Ankober at different times, such as before and after the May 2005 elections.

Health

There is no health facility in the village. The nearest government clinic is 10km away at Aliyu Amba. There is no doctor at the clinic and no nurse. It opens 40 hours a week. It has an irregular supply of antibiotics and malaria drugs; polio and measles vaccines are in regular supply. A course of antibiotics in 1996 cost 214 *birr* and malaria drugs were 3 *birr*. The building is poorly maintained and there is no

equipment to sterilise needles. There is a cooling storage without backup but a minimum supply of bandages and compresses is not available. In 1996, the most frequent illnesses seen at the clinic, in order of frequency are malaria, diarrhoea, TB, malnutrition, and childbirth problems. There is no hospital nearby; the nearest one is 66km away. The nearest pharmacy is in Debre Birhan which is 70 km away and in 1996, it cost 15 *birr* to get to.

A new health post has been built and is about to open at Chibite. Private drug shops have also been started in Aliyu Amba by a woman who was working in the clinic until she was fired recently due to alleged misappropriation of funds.

Spirit healers (especially for Muslims) are important providers of traditional treatments against illness locally categorised as bad spirit related diseases. The same people or others also serve as herbalists curing illnesses related to wounds and skin diseases. Almost all people prefer going to healers for any felt misplacing / breakage in body parts.

Women in and around Dinki have died because of childbirth problems since there is no clinic with professionals. Even at Aliyu Amba clinic, the maternal mortality rate is high and the surrounding women give birth with the help of one traditional midwife.

Dinki is one of the malaria-prone areas around Aliyu Amba. Malaria can force people to stay in bed for 2 to 3 months and has a negative impact on farmer's work. Malaria can be treated with traditional medicine but cannot be cured. According to Aliyu Amba clinic, which is in charge of about 20 *kebele*, malaria occurs almost throughout the year, but the peak time starts from the last week of September and lasts to the end of November. According to the superintendent of the clinic each year the clinic takes precautionary measures before the peak time. For example, they urge *kebele* leaders to mobilise people to clear the swampy areas. When a great number of people are affected by the disease the clinic sends its staff to the sites to offer medicine in the form of tablets, injections, syrup (especially for children) and painkillers. The clinic also collects blood samples and sends them to a laboratory located at Lemi, Merabete *wereda*, to identify the type of malaria affecting the people. There have been no reported deaths from malaria this year. The clinic also administers vaccinations to mothers and children. While the anthropologist was in Dinki one of the medical personnel from the clinic was vaccinating women in the administration office of the *kebele*. The months in which malaria is a problem are mostly harvesting or cultivating months and so males who spend the day outside are affected more than females.

There is regular vaccination service for pregnant women and children of up to one and half years old at the Dinki site.

In 1994, a group of men ranked diseases as problems in the following order: malaria; typhoid fever; *Mogn Bagegn* (lit. "is found a fool"); headache; fever; waterborne disease; joint pain; trachoma; flu; false measles and measles; elephantiasis; haemorrhoids.

In 1994, a group of women ranked diseases as problems as follows: malaria; typhoid; *Mogn Bagegn*; measles; mumps; and fever (headache, feeling scared, etc).

The groups were asked to describe causes, preventive measures and treatment for the diseases they had named and these are now summarised.

Malaria: Both a group of men and women asked say malaria is caused by a mosquito bite. It could be prevented by spraying DDT which is not applicable nowadays because of unknown reasons. The women try to prevent it by chewing raw garlic. Malaria is treated by drinking butter and honey or taking Chloroquine tablets if it does not get better.

Typhoid fever: According to the men typhoid fever goes side by side with malaria. However, the

women's group said it is caused by famine and drought. Nothing is done to prevent it in the community. Once they get the illness they visit the health clinic for an injection. However, when it reaches an epidemic level, a group of medical personnel will be sent by the Ministry of Health. There is no traditional treatment for typhoid fever.

Mogn Bagegn: The cause is not known to the community. It comes suddenly and is only recognised when someone is ill. This disease is treated (100%) only by traditional healers. They eat garlic and lemon to prevent. They treat this illness by cutting a vein using a razor blade.

Headache: is caused by the sweltering sun and can be prevented by putting on a hat or covering the head with cloth. Treatment is mostly by putting fresh butter on the head. A few people also take tablets.

Fever: is also caused by the sweltering sun. The best way to prevent it is to stay at home when the sun's heat is very strong. This is treated normally by taking a cold shower. A few get medical treatment. Fever in children is caused when the mother gives birth, the child accidentally will be caught by the disease. It can not be prevented. The child is healed by traditional methods.

Waterborne diseases: are caused by aquatic insects. There is no prevention known. But once sick, drinking tobacco leaves is the first treatment, then visiting the health clinic if it does not get better.

Joint pain: occurs during cold weather. They do not have a way to prevent this illness. It is treated by sitting outside when it is sunny.

Trachoma: is caused by sun stroke and dust. No prevention mechanism is known to the community. Using eye ointment from the clinic is the way to treat it.

Flu: is caused by bad smells and sweat. This can be prevented by taking showers regularly. It is treated traditionally by using a herb.

False measles and measles: are contagious diseases whose causes and prevention mechanisms are not known. Pop corn (*kolo*) and *noug* are used for treating it.

Elephantiasis: The cause and prevention of this disease are not known. The person suffering from this illness gets treatment by visiting the nearest hospital on a regular monthly basis.

Haemorrhoids: The cause, prevention and treatment of this illness are not known to the community till now.

Mumps: The cause and prevention of this disease is not known. According to the women, it disappears after 5 days swelling. Those ill are advised not to take butter and water.

Although there were no reported cases of patients with symptoms of AIDS in 1996, the anthropologist found people's awareness of the disease to be encouraging. This was reflected in some people's reply that they use condoms; they said this without the slightest sign of a blush on their faces. However by 2005 a few people have lost their lives as a result of HIV/AIDS. For example, Ayelech Tesema told me that her 27-year-old son had died of HIV/AIDS. There are also people who are suspected of being HIV/AIDS patients.

6. Consumption

Food

The household is the basic consumption unit. In times when there is no drought or famine the staple food for most households is *injera* (prepared from sorghum) and sauce (prepared from beans and chickpeas). Sometimes people also use banana, pepper, or sugar mixed with pepper as a substitute for sauce.

In times of war, drought or famine, wild foods are eaten. During the war between Italy and Ethiopia in the late 30s and early 40s plants known locally as *wof zerer*, *fencheko*, *alma* and *antaria* were consumed. These same plants and wild fruits such as *enkoy*, *sholla*, and *kulkwal* were consumed during the 1984 famine.

Although each household offers the same kind of food to all its members, all members do not eat from the same dish. In Muslim households husbands may eat alone while wives may share their food with their children.

Local measurement units are as follows:

1 <i>kil</i>	= 8 litres
1 <i>gan</i>	= 100 litres
1 <i>ensira</i>	= 25 litres
4 <i>timad</i>	= 1 ha.
1 <i>gasha</i>	= 40 ha.
1 <i>dikuman</i>	= ¼ <i>timad</i>

The local measurement that used for sale or buy goods are changed depending on the time for the availability of cereal

1 <i>Kuna</i> =	10 kilo	} These are used at harvesting time
1 <i>merti</i> =	900 gram	
1 <i>Afaleleshgnin</i> =	800 gram	
1 <i>Kuchbele</i> =	600 gram	} These are used during the rainy season when the cereal becomes expensive
1 <i>Tateki/plastic</i> =	500 gram	

For liquid 1 beer = ¼ of litre

For cotton and onions, they use kg though they called it *wekket*

1 battery on the balance = 3 *wakket*, 1 battery = 1 kilo

Saving, Investment and Credit

There are no saving associations in Dinki, but there are two (known) household heads who were members of an urban saving association in Alyu Amba. Investment in livestock and assets have been common forms of saving for all sorts of people. People who have good sources of income used to save by investing in livestock, especially camels and in cash crop production, especially onions.

In the past, people borrowed from their relatives and from their family, but now some people have taken credit from the government credit association at Ankober.

Household Assets

Very rich people have: good land with some irrigated land; two or more pairs of oxen and cows; donkeys and many camels for transportation; many other livestock such as goats and bulls; weapons and mules for transportation; enough products to feed his household a year and more; a tape recorder; a modern bed; and gold earrings or necklaces.

Rich people are expected to have: good farmland with some irrigated land; two pairs of oxen and cows and other livestock; at least one donkey and some camels; a tin-roofed house and/or enough product to feed his/her household by one harvesting season; and a tape recorder.

Middle-wealth people are expected to have: good farm land; one pair oxen and at least one cow; and a good house, though it may not have a tin roof.

A poor person is expected to have: one or no livestock; and a house and farmland

Local Services

There is large market at Aliyu Amba its market days are on Thursday and Monday. There are also markets at Chibite (one hour journey and a small market) and there is also one in Gachene. In Dinki, however, there is no market, shop, pharmacies or veterinary services.

7. Local Institutions and Organisations

Households

The household is the basic unit and this reflects the Amhara social organisation at an atomistic level. The household, a self-sufficient and subsistence-based unit, may include individuals (mostly dependents and servants) other than those normally part of a nuclear family. It is also characterised by a division of labour based on sex and status. Donald Levine pointed out that the Amhara household is more of " a unit of political economy" than a family (Levine, 1975)

As is the case with other communities in Northern Ethiopia in Dinki the household is the basic socio-economic unit at the site. Membership in a household depends on its developmental stage. A newly married couple could be the only members of a household. Such a household has little labour power compared to its consumption needs and the same situation may reappear when the couple grows old. When children are born they become part of the household. The household may also include other dependents of one sort or another.

Having more children is either good or bad depending on the manager of the household, however, respondents said that having more children is not the problem of the people, but a lack of land and the difficulty of the rain conditions. If there was enough land and rain, it would be good to have many children for access to labour. There are households who could be rich by the labour of their children. So to remove poverty it is important to have enough labour, capital, land and rain.

An additional category of non-nuclear household members are children of one of the spouses from earlier marriages. Adoption is not very common in the area. The term for both an adopted child and the child of one of the spouses is the same, known as *ya-injera lij* (literally *ya injera* child, *injera* being the main meal and commonly used metaphor of food in general, or in its widest sense of basis of living) (Aspen, 1993:17).

Marriage

Marriage is similarly arranged among both Christians and Muslims. Since marriage is thought to be the union between families, the family of the would-be groom would send its proposal via certain selected elderly men to the other family. When a son wants to get married, the girl's parents will be asked to give their daughter by his parents, and every expense is put on the shoulders of his parents. When a girl is married, a dowry is given from the bride's family. Goats, garments and some grain will also be given to the bride's family. Every relative will give something depending on what they can afford. The girl does not have the right to discuss her marriage, unlike the boy. The dowry is also different among Muslim and Christian. Muslim boys' parents spend more than the Christians during the wedding. However Christians should give ox and land for their sons for his further livelihood. In Muslim society, girls do not bring anything except household property to their new home, however, Christian girls bring either a cow or ox for her livelihood.

Certain preconditions must be fulfilled for the proposal to be accepted by the father of the girl. The would-be groom must secure, at a minimum, a plot of land, an ox and a plough. Parents give their son farm implements, build him a house, or buy him clothes for the wedding. For their daughter parents give oxen or money and they get dowry from the bride's family. Other kin are not expected to give or receive presents.

One respondent reported the following dowry aspired to now:

For Christians from the groom: 1 *gabi*, a pair of shoes, 1 dress, 1 umbrella, and 1 ox. In return the bride's family give the groom's family 1 calf.

For Muslims from the groom: 4 dresses, 4 towels, 4 lingerie, 2 pairs of shoes, 4 head-dresses, and 5 bottles of perfume.

In general dowries consist of livestock and wooden boxes. The amount of cash given can vary from 200 to 500 *birr*.

If the proposal is accepted an appropriate day will be fixed for a contract of engagement (*fitimtim*). On this day the girl will be given a set of gifts usually consisting of a garment or two, a pair of shoes and a scarf. This is also an occasion for fixing the wedding date. In Dinki, as in most other places, it is customary for the wedding ceremony to take place at the girl's house, partly supplied by her husband. This includes payment of 200 to 400 *birr*.

At the time of the wedding the groom goes to the house accompanied by his best men and some other colleagues. It is at this juncture that Muslim and Christian weddings are differentiated. If the bride and groom are Muslims the groom must stay several nights at the bride's house, while in the case of Christians the groom would not stay the night at her place. One month or two months after the wedding a small feast known as *millash* is prepared by the parents of the groom. In Christian families the parents of the groom prepare a party and invite the couple for more than three days. This is especially for the feast of Easter, Epiphany and *Meskel*.

In 1996, one informant said that polygamy is not practised; even the Muslims do not practise it because they are poor. He also said that bride wealth is paid according to wealth. Poor people may only give a skirt; richer ones will give garments and other necessary things. It is the same for Christians and Muslims. In 2005, however, there are polygamous marriages in Dinki among the Muslim community. A few men have two wives. Most respondents said that since it is allowed for Muslim men to have many wives, it is not wrong to do it. However Christian men do not do such things publicly, although some might have other hidden friends.

Divorce

In the case of divorce there is a clear difference between Christians and Muslims. Christian women can divorce their husband if they do not want to live with them. However, Muslim women do not have such a right. If her husband does not want to divorce, she cannot get the divorce document. If she leaves the house without having this paper, she cannot remarry.

If a Christian couple divorce, the bride wealth and the dowry will be divided equally or the division will be proportionate to what they contributed. If Christian women divorce their husband, she can divide her property and her children equally with her husband. In the past, if a Muslim couple divorced, the woman would take her clothes and 30 *birr* only. In 2005, it was reported that Muslim women can get from 200-500 *birr* when they divorce. In the case of death of a partner, the widow is expected to wait until the one-year ceremony, after which she can remarry (Christian). In the case of Muslims, the widow can remarry a month after the funeral ceremony. It is because of sorrow that Christian women cannot remarry sooner. She would not want to remarry and forget her husband, but there is no rule to stop her remarrying. However, Muslim women do not want to remember their husband and they prefer to get married soon.

Inheritance

Inheritance depends on whether the father died before the will was written or not. If he died before, his wealth will be divided in such a way that the females get half the share of a male among the Muslims. If he has a will the property will be distributed according to his wishes among Christians.

When a husband dies, a quarter of his wealth will be used for the funeral arrangements and the subsequent ceremonies like 40th day, 80th day, a year, etc. The rest will be given for the wife and the children. In a Christian household, the share a child gets depends on his/her closeness to the parent. The closest gets more, depending on the will.

In the case of Muslims, girls are entitled to inherit only 1/3 that of their brothers, and wives who have children have access only to 1/8, whereas those who do not have any children get access to 1/4 when their husbands die.

In Christian families, all children both female and male can divide their parents' property equally if both wife and husband died without any statement to divide the land. Priests are called to hear the parents' will and to ensure that the division is carried out according to their preferences.

Kinship

Among both the Argoba and Amhara sub-groups, people trace their descents through the lines of their parents. However, informants from both groups revealed that kinship ties are more strongly maintained among the Argoba than the Amhara sub-group. The Amhara kinship ties and values have weakened since the revolution of 1974. Some informants indicated that post-revolution, generations have been gradually neglecting to trace kin relations beyond uncles and aunts, let alone to the 7th generation. *Ato Bekele* said, "Nowadays, marriage between blood kin does no longer appear as serious a taboo as in the past old days".

They usually attribute such institutional decline to the rebellious and defiant nature of the younger generation against customs, following the socialist ideological domination. It was culturally necessary for the Amhara to trace kinship ties, in both lines, up to the 7th generation, without any intra-marriage.

This was not only as the culture and religion require, but it was also a precondition for having access to *rist* land within descent groups up to the given generational limit. This culturally and religiously defined upper limit was, therefore, not only the maximum generational limit for avoiding intra-marriage (incest), but it was at the same time the maximal genealogical requirement for claiming access to land.

The need for presenting genealogical proof to connections to kinship in claiming the right to own *rist* land from kin became dysfunctional following the abolition of *rist* land tenure (nationalisation of land). Apparently, this contributed to changes in kinship obligations and hence to the weakening of related interactions.

However, ambilineal kinship ties are maintained at least among near kin. Besides, god parentage and religious brother / sisterhood are commonly formed fictive kinship ties among the Amhara population. People understand the concept of adoptions as *Madego*, although they say there was not any such cases practiced in their community.

Christians make kinship relations by giving their children for somebody as a godchild, and through inter-marriage. They may also organise religious associations with a person with whom they want to be friends.

For Muslims, kinship relations involve descent and marriage. However, a Muslim family can marry a close relative, and marrying a cousin is seen as desirable as a way of keeping property in the family whereas it is considered a very bad thing for Christians to marry an aunt's or an uncle's daughter/son.

Ethnicity, Clans and Lineages

Clan based social grouping does not exist as an organising principle of the community. Rather, religion as an outstanding feature of group identity and relationships, appears to be the governing principle for social groupings. Both the Amhara and Argoba sub-groups, being Amharic speakers, have their view of 'self' and 'others' commonly expressed in terms of religious, rather than ethnic, features. Inter-group power relationships are usually evaluated against a Muslim – Christian relationship.

Life Cycle Changes and Rites of Passage

Both Christians and Muslims used to fire guns in celebration of the moment of birth of a child. This rite of passage also involves a *Genfo* (porridge) ceremony i.e. the preparation of porridge feast. Circumcision is another rite of passage a person needs to pass through. Christians perform the rite on the 7th day after birth, whereas Muslims can be circumcised on the 8th day or any time during their young life.

For Christians, *kiristina Menesat* (being christened) is a religiously defined rite of passage through which one of the most important identities (religious status) is acquired. It is at the same time an important ritual through which fictive kinship (god parentage) is created as a social resource for future survival.

Friends and Neighbours

There is no obligation for the relationship between neighbours and friends. However since one is important to the other, they want to be cooperative and friends. Friends invite each other for different feasts and neighbours also invite each other when feasts come.

Citizenship

People of Dinki do not consider citizenship or being Ethiopian. They love everybody wherever he/she came from.

Markets

There are also Sunday markets (the nearest) at Chibite where one of the primary schools and the *kebele* office is located, and at Aliyu Amba. People buy mostly coffee, salt, sugar, oil, clothes, shoes, manufactured goods and other personal items. There are no fixed prices for items, especially the items which come from the farm, since the sellers do not get together to fix their prices. There is no market at the village of Dinki.

Social Security

All the people in the village are under obligation to help in the case of crisis. People also assist and get assistance from other villages, friends and relatives. When an oxen dies, the price of the oxen will be levied on the people and everyone contributes. If a house is burnt down, people help by bringing different items to construct the house, such as wood, grass, etc. The role of *iddir* and *equb* are discussed below under *Local Organisations*.

Redistributive Mechanisms

During Ramadan Muslims offer a feast for dead parents, they invite all neighbours and friends each evening.

Local Organisation

In rural Ethiopia, both voluntary and involuntary forms of associations play a significant role in maintaining the social organisation of the peasantry. A typical example of involuntary associations is the age-grade system of *gada* among the Oromo. Among the Amhara we find only voluntary forms of association. In northern Shewa types of association can be grouped into the following: religious, economic, political and labour associations:

Religious associations:

Mahiber and *Senbete* are religious associations founded by a group of people who belong to the same church. There are two types of *mahiber* in Dinki: one associated with the names of particular saints. The saint's day is celebrated every month with a feast. Each member is responsible for the feast (food and *tella*) in his or her turn. Guests who are not members are invited from the neighbourhood. People from neighbouring *kebele* can belong to the *mahiber*. The other type is known as *senbete* and is prepared by each member in turn in the compound of the church. There are no religious associations among Muslims similar to the Christian *mahiber*.

There are a few women who participate in associations dedicated to the Virgin Mary. These women are devout and come from conservative Christian family backgrounds. They organise the feast in turn on the 21st day of each month dedicated to St Mary. Most of the members are not in the site. The women of the St Mary association meet each other monthly at the feast of one of the members. During the hunger months in August and September the member whose turn falls receives a payment of two *birr* from each member to cover the expenses of the feast. Likewise the male St George *mahiber* members contribute

three birr during the hunger season and in addition bring two *injera* to the houses of the persons whose turns fall during these months.

Kurban is a ceremony which is held to commemorate the death of a close relative. The 40th day, the first and the seventh anniversary are the major ones. It is a religious obligation for everyone concerned regardless of the economic position. The size of the feast depends on economic position. For the rich, preparing a big feast is a way of displaying one's wealth while for the poor it is economically demanding.

Iddir is a sort of religious burial association which is established in order to share the burdens of individual households when close relatives die. Members contribute regularly in order to cover the expenses of funeral ceremonies, and the food and drinks needed. *Iddir* are also used to collect money for members during moments of heavy loss, like the death of cattle or the loss of a house due to fire. *Iddir* (for both Christians and Muslims) is a prominent association in Northern Shewa, as is the case in most parts of Ethiopia. Usually each parish in Northern Shewa has one *iddir*. In Dinki there is one *iddir* which involves followers of both Christian and Muslim religions. In addition to the monthly contribution of 50 cents to 1 *birr*, members also contribute labour and food at the time of the death of a member or a close relative of a member. In case of failure to fulfil one's obligations there is a fine. People who are not members of *iddir* also help each other in times of crisis.

Economic Associations:

Equb is a major economic institution that primarily serves to save cash, although there were *equb* reported in 1996, these no longer exist in 2005. It is a formalised association with a secretary and a judge and usually a board of three persons. Each member has to find a guarantor of the *equb* member to ensure that the member does not fail in his duties after he or she has received a lot. Sometimes people join *equb* to buy something that they could not afford from their own pocket. These include clothing, food, household equipment, livestock, to pay tax, etc. In Dinki informants guessed that there could be some *equb* associations each consisting of 30 to 40 members who contribute 2 to 5 *birr* weekly; each member collects a maximum of 300 *birr*. There are *equb* for clothing (*shemi-gabi*). About a quarter of Dinki residents are members.

Labour agreements:

No man works alone. All activities are done in *gisso* (works the same way as *debo*).

Gisso is one of the work arrangements temporarily arranged to share the agricultural work in the field. The activities include ploughing, manure spreading, threshing. Members of the *debo* are required to work on the other members plot when requested. Food and drinks are offered on the day of the *debo* so that the participants could work the whole day. The most important factor in the participation is neighbourhood. Partnership is also based on kinship relationships.

Wenfel is anything from just lending a hand to a neighbour for a short time. It does not involve food and drinks.

In 1996, some local organisations were ranked according to usefulness to the community in the following order:

1. Nursery (1987)
2. Development agents (1980)
3. *Kebele* (1975)

Disputes and Resolutions

Community problems are first considered by elders who will settle them if they can. Elders pass the

problem to the *kebele* if they cannot solve it. When the *kebele* cannot settle it they pass it to the *wereda* council.

There are two categories of elders dealing with dispute resolution, the informal mediators who try to resolve disputes at neighbourhood / community level, as they are called up on by concerned parties (disputants or their relatives) or by their own initiative; and the semi-formal mediators in the *kebele* elders' council. The latter category deals only with disputes that are brought to the *kebele* social courts.

Without any choice, marriage and divorce committed by elders. Divorce is especially given attention by the elders.

The council of elders is an institution where people appeal when they are involved in conflict with their neighbours. Certain individuals respected for their experience and wisdom play a significant role in conflict resolution. The moral authority they assume helps them solve a number of problems. In this respect a council of elders has much more acceptance than a local justice department sponsored by the *kebele*.

Since formal justice is costly in terms of time and money, people do not choose these formal means of dispute resolution. However, elders do not expect much money when they resolve disputes. They give a greater attention for disputes between husband and wife and serious disputes which lead to bloodshed.

The role of spirit possession cults in conflict resolution is not something to be underestimated in this area. Spirit possession in Northern Shewa is closely intertwined with the elements of the wider cultural fabric of the study. If one of the disputants wants the spirit possession cult to be involved in dispute resolution, the other one will become worried because they believe that if the one who made a mistake or began the dispute will be punished by this spirit and if he is not willing to ask forgiveness he or his children will die.

Local Government Organisation

The executive body is known as a cabinet, with the chairman as the only salaried personnel in the *kebele* leadership. The five cabinet members, the *Ganta meri* / militia commander and the three social court members are the main active people in the leadership. There were women leaders in the community during the *Derg* period, but now no women are leaders.

The *kebele* administrative unit, Hagerselam *kebele* consists of five *gott*, whereas Dinki is divided into three *Mengistawi budin* (hamlet level), Gema, smaller Dinki and Alelahager. This *mengistawi budin* is further divided into *cells* of 6-7 households.

In the recent reorganisation, the former 86 *kebele* of Ankober *wereda* were reduced into *gott* and recombined to form new larger *kebele*. Thus, the number of *kebele* was reduced from 86 to the current 20 *kebele* in the *wereda*. Dinki, the former *kebele*, is now a *gott* within the new larger *kebele* created in the last reorganisation. The current *kebele* was reorganised as Hegerselam by combining five formerly independent *kebele* as its sub-sections (*gott*); namely. Dinki, Addis Alem, Aygebir, Sar Amba, and Chibite-Gendawuha. There is also a structure known as *Neus Kebele* (sub-*kebele*) in which two or more *gott* form a common leadership that deals with common problems. Each *gott* is further divided into *Mengistawi budin* and then into *Bujle* (recently changed to *Hiwas* or cells). A *Mengistawi budin* is run by seven elected people (one head, one secretary and five members), whereas *Hiwas* may be formed by 6-10 neighbours depending on spatial proximity. There are about 20 local militia at the *kebele*.

Land tax and all other types of government imposed taxes and contributions are collected by the *kebele* leadership using the social courts and the militia to force people who do not cooperate. All household heads who have land, acquired through distribution or inheritance, pay taxes. The minimum tax rate is 20

birr paid on *Dikuman* land (garden plot), which was free of tax during the *Derg*, whereas 65 *birr* was indicated as the maximum land tax being paid on the largest landholdings (12 *Timad*).

The community's participation in the 2005 election was highly influenced by ethnic religious groupings. The majority of the Amhara voted for the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) for the parliament at both Federal and regional levels, whereas almost all Argoba voted at the Federal level for the recently formed Argoba People's Democratic Movement (APDM) rather than the earlier EPRDF-sponsored Argoba National Democratic Organisation (ANDO). For the regional council the EPRDF won in Dinki due mainly to Argoba support, although it cost to the CUD at a *wereda* level.

Until 2005 there was no savings and credit facilities available. Recently the Amhara Savings and Credit Association (affiliated to the ruling party) has been providing credit of up to 1000 *birr* at very high interest rates to farmers in the area.

The basis for Dinki as an administrative unit is simply territorial: there are no separate quarters for distinct social groups. As the settlement pattern shows, people live interspersed, but despite this, the settlement arrangement is based on religious affinity; in the upper part of Dinki, there are Christian dwellers, however, when we go down into the lower part of Dinki we find Muslim residences.

Kebele officials announce to the people when they want them to gather or when there is group work to do, such as water harvesting and reforestation. Four years ago, there were food aid and food for work programmes, but now there is no such food aid or food for work programme.

The *wereda* uses the *kebele* structure to implement policies and projects. The local government tried to build primary schools, health posts, roads and water harvesting, mainly through forced community mobilisation in which members were forced to contribute free labour and money for local development. The surrounding people constructed roads and other communal things working in groups and without payment. However, nowadays there are no NGO or other governmental activities.

There has not been any reported use of food for work since the LWF carried out the construction of a road into the village, however, the local government used food aid for a similar purpose by setting contribution of labour as precondition of access. All food aid recipients were required first to participate in locally organised work campaigns, especially in water harvesting and road maintenance in order to get the humanitarian aid to which they were entitled. Any adult that could do work could participate in the food for work programme.

8. Social Inequality, Conflict and Politics

Poverty and wealth

The village is poorer than surrounding villages. There are few relatively wealth people, many of whom became rich through increasing cash crop production. In Dinki, the richer people became rich because they could rent land for a year or more from the poor who could not pay tax. The poor became very poor because they sold their land for a year causing problems for the next year. However, for most households the problem is a lack of rain, in particular the successive failure of the *belg* rainfall and *belg* harvest. The above factors make the area among the poorest of all. "You always observe problems in the households. They always depend on someone's shoulder".

In 1996, during a wealth-ranking of the community households included in the economic survey, two sets of respondents allocated all households to group 3 (out of 3) - the poor. One set of respondents allocated every household but one to group 3. The lone household was put in group 2 on the grounds that he "can manage himself at problem periods". When asked what it was about the households that caused

the respondents to put them in the poor category some of the answers were as follows: sickness, too many children, has nothing, cannot help others, gives land for fixed rent, no productive materials, too old, death of livestock, no oxen, only a cow, landless, no supply of inputs, no man in the household, too young, unlucky, etc. The Dinki community has been described as aid-dependent which is likely to have affected the responses. It is clear that there are wealth differences among people in Dinki. In Dinki, most of the community members are poor and some are wealthy. There are great wealth differences among poor and middle, and middle and rich households. The poor may not have land labour and other material resources at all, or they might have some and the middle-wealth households may have some livestock - at least one cow and an ox or two, land and better access of labour. However the richer households may have a good house, more than ten camels, at least one donkey, more than two pairs of cows and oxen with other livestock such as goats, sheep, enough labour, and at least one male and female servant.

Economic Mobility

Asked how frequently households move down from category 1 to category 2 or below 1, a group of respondents in 1996 said that no households do so since there are no rich people. In this area they say someone is wealthy if he has the capacity to sustain his family through problematic periods and can help other households. There was no chance of upward mobility because the area was drought-prone. The only way to get wealthier in the area was to get introduced to the town and get involved in trade. However, there are people who were able to move up using irrigation for cash crop production. Some people are getting wealthy because they have irrigated land, allowing them to produce fruit, onions and vegetables. They sell their cash crop produce earning them money for their consumption goods bought from the market, so they could save their remaining farming product for household food consumption. One respondent employed sometimes a maximum of 30 people, and his earnings have allowed him to buy a house in Chibite, send children 3 to school, and he is thinking of building a house in Aliyu Amba.

The main reason for the people of Dinki to be poor is because of the drought in the area. The main rainy season (*meher*) has become shorter than before and irregular, and the *belg* season has failed. The second reason for their poverty is the shortage of land. When the children become adults and get married, the parents should give some of their land to their child and this leads to reducing land size and the community to poverty

Status

The most respected people in the community are those who wish good for the people, who give advice to people, who find solutions for disputes and so on. The most respected also work hard. Religion and gender are very important bases for differential status among the Argoba sub-community. Whereas wealth, leadership and other personal achievements seem more important for the Christian sub-group, although they are shared values to heterogeneous community at large. People who have the power to move the masses are more respected, as well as older people, knowledgeable people and hard workers female/male. Knowledgeable and dispute resolving elders are respected more than anybody else.

Social Stratification

During the *Derg* and imperial periods, the educated people were powerful; they could be decision makers and wealthy because of the benefits they got from their power. Especially during the imperial period, powerful people were mostly the Amhara, and they were also wealthy. However, after the coming of the EPRDF, powerful people may or may not be wealthy or may not be respected. Nowadays, the farmer who can feed his household properly all year round are more respected than the powerful and those who have social respect.

Social Conflict and Politics

I came across one Muslim who complained that the Amhara people, as migrant settlers, were the cause of the serious shortage of land they faced. Christians who had land disputes with Muslims expressed their grievances against the Argoba group, because they believed their litigants claimed the land knowing that the *kebele* leadership is controlled by their people (Muslims), and the government favours Muslims against Christians. There has been no reported case of social conflict. Rather, such conflicts were being revealed at individual level, following inter-personal disputes between Muslims and Christians. Such disputants used to generalise personal grievances.

Both ideologically and practically the two ethnic groups, the Argoba and the Amhara, have been allies against the Afar. Although the Afar are Muslims, the Argoba, who are also Muslims, have never sided with them. The alliance between Argoba and Amhara against the neighbouring Afar has been repeatedly witnessed in many armed conflicts. Most of these conflicts have taken place in market places such as Dulecha, Zuti, and Senbete' where people from all ethnic groups participate. However, it has been several months since such a conflict occurred. Informants indicated that due to the intervention of local officials and elders a temporary peace seems to have been attained at this time.

The Afar continued stealing cattle, usually at nights, from the many Argoba and Amhara people living near the border of the Afar villages. There were many Argoba and Amhara people who evacuated their houses due to repeated harassment and killings committed by Afar against others. The murders have been committed at the market or at other times at the street. So, nowadays the people of Dinki and the neighbouring villages are worried about the situation. Although there have not been attacks on Dinki itself, ten camels were stolen from one household in a neighbouring community in 2005. Since governmental action was reduced after the May 2005 elections, the problem has now become serious.

Nonetheless, as is the case in many parts of northern Ethiopia, blood feuds (*dem meqabat*) are still a reality between individual families. Kin groups cooperate much more significantly in this respect than in economic matters. This is reinforced by values attached to vengeance. A person who has not been able to avenge the death of a kinsman is subjected to much ridicule during funeral occasions and is even labelled *dem techi* (blood drinker).

Blood feuds are mostly handled by elders. Most feuds would be considered for settlement at a time when the number of victims from the feuding parties are considered to be proportional. The usual way of resolving such a conflict is banning the movement of members of the contending families from participating in public occasions like weddings, funeral ceremonies, and market places. The saying "an eye hates blood" (*dem ayn yitelal*) reflects that a temporary sanction prevents the feud from relapsing.

The other traditional known method of conflict resolution is paying *kasa* (compensation) to the family of the deceased. But this method is rarely used since people believe it to be cowardly. An individual who has accepted compensation would be ridiculed as "a person who has benefited by selling his brother's blood".

Realising the proliferation and severity of the problem from time to time, there was once an attempt (but in vain) by the government to stop such conflicts once and for all. A committee known as the "Blood Drying Committee" (*yedem adraki komite'*) was organised from *wereda* down to *kebele* level. This campaign, however, did not last for long.

Both Muslims and Christians consider the national government as primarily Tigrayan rulers. Many Amhara informants used to describe the EPRDF as anti-Amhara and oppressors. Muslims also share the view that the existing government has been oppressive in its administrative intolerance. However, they

appreciate and give credit to it for its positive role in promoting their religion. However, the Amhara believe that they have been purposely marginalised from the *kebele* administration by the government in favour of Muslims. They accuse the EPRDF of inciting Muslims against Christians as historical enemies, whose forefathers forced Muslims to change their religion. The Argoba have raised the possibility of separating from the Amhara region and joining either Afar or to have their own zone. However, many of the Amhara believe it is better to be as it is, although some believe that they would have more autonomy under the Afar Region.

Before 2005, at the previous two elections, no women knew its importance and what it meant. However, in the 2005 election, everybody, including women, were conscious and they knew to whom they wanted to give their votes. Since there was negotiation by the party and the people were listening on the radio when the opposition party argued, both men and women were informed about how and whom they should elect. After the election, people were eager to hear who had won the election with the expectation of the opposition party's victory. They heard the ruling party declare itself the winner but they did not believe it, and they started to listen to the Voice of America and German Amharic radio services, so they know that the election result faced problems. The ruling government could not accept failure that creates tension and difficulty among people. After people were killed in Addis Ababa they were particularly worried about what will happen next and feared unrest.

In general, government use of forced community mobilisation in policy implementation has been very unpopular among all sections of the community, especially enforced free labour contribution, for example in water harvesting and two days free labour for community development work. This is considered the worst form of government intervention.

9. Beliefs and Values

Land

Among the religious beliefs associated with land is the one entertained by most Christians who want to be buried in the burial grounds of a church located in or around their area of origin. According to informants this is not the case with Muslims who could be buried wherever there is a burial place for Muslims. There are a few sacred places, among which is a burial place for Muslims near Dinki which is revered by both Muslims and Christians. People living at the site do not even dare to collect firewood from it.

Most people believe that land should be privatised. The reason for this is that if it were privatised, farmers feel as though they have land of their own, which could help them throughout their life. So, they could treat, plant and take care of it. If it is not privately owned, they take care of the land for other farmers. In relation to land distribution, if the land was privatised, the parent may transfer to their children and if there are people who have no children, but who have land, this should be distributed by the control of government after the death of the land-holder.

Religion

The local religions are Islam and Orthodox Christianity. The majority of people (about 75%) in Dinki are Muslims, like other places around Aliyu Amba. All Argobas are Muslims. There are a few cases of inter-marriage between Muslims and Orthodox Christians which are arranged on the basis of the conversion of one of the partners to the faith of the other. Due to the predominance of Islam at the site most conversions are from Christian to Muslim.

Mostly women are converted to Islam, meaning that most of the time the Muslim men try to increase the

followers of Islam by marrying Christian women, even they know they do not want to marry converted women. After they have converted the women to Islam, they are divorced because their aim is to increase the number of Islamic followers, not to have a wife. Some people who converted to Islam have converted to Christianity again.

Now there are unknown fundamentalists who help the Muslim community financially to learn Islamic law and for Muslims to convert the Christians. These fundamentalists are outsiders and they invest more money to convert the Christians. However, neither the Christian elders or the church have take any measure in response.

Muslim people in Dinki are sensitive towards what is going on in the rest of the Islamic world. They are concerned more about the Iraqi and Afghan peoples. They respect Saddam Hussein and Bin Laden, and believe that Western people are the enemies of Muslims. They are also well informed about Palestine.

There are various forms of interaction between Christian and Muslim. People from both religions participate in *iddir* and *equb* together. Both Muslims and Christians are also known to visit annually a pilgrimage site in Herr-Amba, about seven hours walk from Dinki. There are certain commonly celebrated holidays including the Ethiopian New Year and Good Friday, though the different religions celebrate the festivals separately.

They are strict in their respective fasting times. Christians do not work Saturdays and Sundays, St Michael's (on the 12th of every month); St Gabriel (on the 19th); St Mary (on the 21st); St George (on the 23rd); and Bale Wolde (on the 29th) days of each month.

In Dinki and other sites around people also practice traditional beliefs like spirit possession cults and *adbar* (a guardian spirit mostly represented by a tree). People also practice certain group rituals around *adbar*. Spirit possession cults are an important part of the cultural fabric of Northern Shewa and play a considerable role in conflict resolution. People accuse their enemies and use these people for dispute resolution. People are afraid if somebody accuses someone by the spirit possession person. Other beliefs include *Balagara* (a annually celebrated ritual of personal spirits inherited from deceased father to son or mother to daughter), *Borenticha* (which is practiced for the health of the household and livestock annually during the month of *Ginbot*) and *Fechasa* (which is inherited from parents and celebrated three times a year in *Tikimt*, *Tir* and *Hamle*, with the celebration in *Tikimt* being the most important).

Explanations of Misfortune and Illness

Local explanations for illness include *mich*, or are attributed to bad spirits. There are no witch finders, but there are traditional healers who use local medicines to heal the sick. It is only God who makes rain.

Dinki people mostly use traditional medicine or they treat the sick one by preparing *Fintako*, a traditional ritual in which food is throw for the spirits. But they also believe that good health is from God. When there is a shortage of rain, the Christians gather at the church and say “*Egzioo Mharene Kirstos*” (The savvier God save us from such problem). Muslims also gather around the grave, they also say something and pray heartily with great noise.

Community Values

During *Derg* period people were not allowed to participate in religious celebrations because the *Derg* government believed such celebrations prevented the people from working as well. After the fail of *Derg*, the community continued the practices because the community does not believe that religious practices interfere with their work.

The impact of Arabs has had a great impact on the community, especially the Christians, as some have converted to Islam, and the rest complain that this is not good. According to some informants, the Muslim community has been given money from outside to convert the Christians, and so the relationship between them has deteriorated. This happened after the coming of the EPRDF, and because the EPRDF government gave power to the Muslims.

Political Beliefs and Attitudes

People among both sub-groups openly give much credit to the *Derg* regime for liberating them from the chains of tenancy. They consider the *Derg* as their heroic liberators, apparently because almost all of them lived as tenants until they were entitled to own the land they tilled for the landlords. They also believe that the *Derg* genuinely enabled them to elect their *kebele* leaders freely, compared with the EPRDF, whose cadres were said to have been interfering, enabling their supporters to hold key *kebele* posts through election manipulation.

Now, the people of Dinki and the surrounding areas have become active, and most of the community member complained that the government could not accept farmers' knowledge. The government only imposes its own knowledge, but that is not effective so the government should discuss issues with the people.

Everyone in Dinki was happy when they heard that the government could change by the election in 2005, without fighting. After the election they believe that it was false and many of them say that. "we were wondering the possibility of changing government by card but now we understand as it was a game".

In the 2005 election, most women were conscious for whom they should give their votes and they knew what democracy meant. However, most of the Christians and some of the Muslims in Dinki were not happy because of the election result. They were expecting the opposition party might win power but that was not so. In relation to this, they have lost belief in the government. In addition, the government stopped all activity after the election and people have lived their own way.

10. Relationships with Other Communities and the Wider Society

Ethnic Groups and Clans

The Amhara have strong links of family, church and gravesites in the neighbouring communities on the higher ground notably Lalo to the north, and Aygebir to the east. The Argoba have links with the neighbouring lowland areas, notably their religious sites and religious school in Addis Alem, and Gachene where the Argoba special wereda is located within Afar Region.

Relations with Other Communities

People in the site, as members of the community and sub-groups, maintain multifarious relations with other communities, both rural and urban. The Amhara maintain special relations with neighbouring larger Christian communities they migrated from, in terms of kinship, marriage and religious services. Members of the Muslim sub-group also maintain strong relations with the neighbouring Muslim

communities in terms of sharing sacred sites, kinship and inter-marriage.

Most Dinki people have strong relations with Alyu Amba, Ankober, Afar and some people outside region three in Oromia. Their interaction or relationship is the base of marriage, market and other religious activities.

Relationships with Wider Ethiopia

Both Christians and Muslims consider the Afar (who are Muslims) as traditional enemies. They also consider the Oromo as historical enemies for committing genocide against their people during the Italian occupation. According to the story, the area was overrun with an Oromo militia force led by a Muslim leader who was supported by the Italians. First, the leader called the local population to a 'peaceful' public meeting at Haramba, and then ordered his militia to start massacring those who gathered. They killed most of them using axes, swords, knives and spears. Then militia moved into the villages and continued killing people found in their houses or as they were fleeing.

Both Muslims and Christians agree that the militia killed people indiscriminately, irrespective of age, sex, religion or ethnicity. However, Christians believe that some Muslims (Argoba) collaborated with the invading "Galla"¹⁰ militia by killing Christians (In the list of historical events, this incidence is maintained as an important reference in calculating time and reminding of the prejudice against the other ethnic groups. During interviews, informants commonly used to tell their current ages in reference to this event, saying they were born x years before or after the time of the *Gala* (*Yegalla gize*).

Some people have family in Addis Ababa, Nazret or Awash. They may have visited them, but most people do not have knowledge about being Ethiopian.

Effects of Government Policies

In 1996, an observer said that the goods in the market were too expensive for the community to buy, given its low income. He said people were not happy about regionalisation or the Constitution. They said the Constitution had been imposed on them from above and they were not consulted during its drafting.

In 2005, people are still not happy about the constitution and by government policy. However, most people have now become clear about democracy, and they believe that democracy is not implanted in Ethiopia, especially after election. They believe the government become undemocratic and so democracy is becoming a weapon to impose on people. They added that if somebody does not care for his/her clan or ethnic group, then s/he is a good friend for the government and can become powerful even if uneducated.

As to wealth status, the community has become poorer than before. According to the informant there are no rich people nowadays as there were before. For this people have different reasons, however, the main reason is that the bad policies of the government has been unable to manage the increase of population and the shortage of rain.

Government Development Activities in the Community

In 1974 Imperial Haile Selassie was overthrown;

¹⁰ The term *galla* rather than Oromo does not have the derogatory connotations associated with the term elsewhere.

In 1975 Land reform was declared;
 In 1979 Illiteracy campaign;
 In 1980 Development agents began working in the area.
 In 1984 National military service started;
 In 1981 A school was established;
 In 1977 Political cadres were assigned;
 In 1992 The MoA took over nurseries from the LWF where people work as daily labourers
 In 1994 Extension agents taught farmers to use fertilisers, herbicides and other inputs.
 In 1995 The first election for both parliament and regional government was held
 In 1998 The second primary school was established at Zego
 In 2000 The second election for both parliament and regional government was held
 In 2001 Primary school built by Access opened at Addis Alem near by village of Dinki
 In 2001 There was food aid program for about a year
 In 2002 six people were sent to resettlement
 In 2003 the water harvesting program began,
 In 2004 there was drought, pests and high fertiliser prices.
 In 2005 The first health post was completed and opened at Chibite
 In 2005 A farmers training centre construction started at Chibite
 In 2005 Wireless telephone services started at Zego and Chibite.
 In 2005 The third parliament and regional election took place in May.

In 1996, a group from the community ranked the three most useful of these as:

1. Illiteracy campaign
2. Ministry of Education
3. MoA

NGO Activities in the Community

There are about thirteen non-governmental organisations working in the 15 *wereda* of Northern Shewa. The rehabilitation and development activities launched by these NGOs were initiated after the famine. They all came as relief organisations during the famine and then transformed into "integrated rural development programmes", conservation, agricultural package activities, etc. Nine out of the thirteen organisations work with governmental organisations such as the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Education, etc.

The NGOs include:

- Action International Contre La Faim
- The Baptist General Conference Mission
- The Baptist Mission of Ethiopia
- Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief
- Ethiopian Evangelical Church, Mekane Yesus, Addis Ababa Synod
- The Lutheran World Federation
- Medicins du Monde
- Redd Barna - Ethiopia
- Save the Children (USA)
- UNICEF
- World Vision International

These NGOs were involved in the following activities:

	%
Water development	16
Afforestation	14
Health	11
Infrastructural development	9
Rural credit	9
Agricultural production	7
Animal husbandry	7
Soil conservation	7
Nutrition	5
Social services	5
Training	5
Crafts/cottage industry	4
Education	1

There has been considerable NGO activity in Dinki, particularly between 1988 and 1991:

In 1985 ILCA introduced itself : it provided some oxen

In 1987 The LWF paved the way to introduce itself: it helped the people to build the road into the village through food for work.

In 1994 the missionary group Mekane Yesus started to give aid to the society in the last drought

In 1994 the arrival of a second group of people to study the society

In 1996, some members of the community ranked these activities in order of usefulness as:

1. ILCA
2. LWF
3. Mekane Yesus

After 2001 there has been no aid, neither food for work or other. People strongly believe in the great importance of food for work for such drought prone area. They complain that it was not good to drop the programme.

The Future

People of Dinki do not expect the future will be better but they think it will be worse. They say that since the people have become bad, God will not allow them to go unpunished. According to their belief nobody can remove poverty except God.

As other river in Dinki is also seasonal, it cannot provide enough water for the people. In the driest month, the river is small so it could not provide water for all the irrigated land. In the future it will be difficult to get enough water from the river. This is because of the shortened rain season and the seasonality of the river water.

For the future people of Dinki the problem of food will remain, unless the government tries to solve their problem. From the researcher's observations, the area is not productive, in addition the hilly and valley parts are not available for agricultural activities. According to the informants the future will be problematic if the lack of attention of the government and continues.

There are different requests that the people have of the government; that they should provide food aid, create work opportunities or other means of income generation. The other thing that people seek from the government is respect for the people and being democratic, unlike the current situation. They hoped

for a change in government policy, but for the future they want to change the ruling government. If this is so, they believe that the future will be hopeful for the youngsters and for adults because the main problem for people, after shortage of rain and land, is bad governmental policy.

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Glossary

<i>Adbar:</i>	A festival which is celebrated monthly at the beginning of the month to bless the whole of the month
<i>Ato:</i>	A title of respect for a man; Mr.
<i>Balagara:</i>	A household ritual that may involve animal sacrifice to appease guardian spirits inherited by children from deceased same gender parents.
<i>Belg:</i>	The short rainy season usually occurring during February/March/April. The harvest from this season takes place in July and August.
<i>Bereha:</i>	Desert.
<i>Birr:</i>	The currency of Ethiopia (16 <i>birr</i> = approximately £1).
<i>Borotecha:</i>	A festival which is practiced for the health of livestock
<i>Chat:</i>	A plant which has leaves which contain a mild narcotic. Its leaves are chewed.
<i>Cherekit:</i>	A short form of Sorghum.
<i>Debo:</i>	Communal working party in which labour is exchanged for food and drink.
<i>Dejazmach:</i>	A military title.
<i>Derg:</i>	The name of the military government which ruled Ethiopia from 1974-1991.
<i>Dikuman:</i>	A garden plot of land.
<i>Equb:</i>	A rotating savings and credit association.
<i>Eshet Wora:</i>	A festival of maize and sorghum maturation.
<i>Fechasa:</i>	A ritual carried out by women the household to appease guardian spirits for three days.
<i>Fitimtim:</i>	An engagement contract.
<i>Fintako:</i>	A ritual in which food is thrown to propitiating spirits.
<i>Fitawrari:</i>	"commander of the front"; a military title.
<i>Gabi:</i>	A shawl-like garment made of a double-layer of white cotton cloth.
<i>Gada:</i>	The age-grade system of the Oromo people.
<i>Galla:</i>	A local term for Oromo, with does not have derogatory connotations.
<i>Ganta meri:</i>	Militia commander.

<i>Geleba:</i>	The left over chaff after the cereal has been separated
<i>Genfo:</i>	Porridge.
<i>Gesho:</i>	A plant which is used to ferment beer.
<i>Gisso:</i>	A form of labour sharing also known as <i>wenfel</i> involving reciprocal work exchange with may involve preparing food and drink.
<i>Gott:</i>	A sub- <i>kebele</i> administrative unit.
<i>Gult:</i>	A landholding system under the imperial regime, in which land grants were given as fiefs to noblemen who had rights to expropriate peasants' produce as a reward for administering and defending the area.
<i>Guluma:</i>	A traditional form of access to land, where parents give land to their son to save produce for his future marriage.
<i>Hiwas:</i>	Cells, a sub- <i>gott</i> administrative unit, within the <i>mengistawi budin</i> .
<i>Iddir:</i>	A burial society.
<i>Injera:</i>	Ethiopian flat bread.
<i>Kalicha:</i>	Muslim religious leaders.
<i>Kasa:</i>	A form of compensation in traditional conflict resolution.
<i>Kebele:</i>	A political boundary marking a village, an association of villages or an urban dweller's association.
<i>Kelewa:</i>	A type of small mosque.
<i>Keribo:</i>	An unfermented drink with no alcohol mostly prepared in Muslim households.
<i>Kolo:</i>	Roasted grain.
<i>Kurban:</i>	A ceremony to commemorate the death of a close relative.
<i>Lem-tef:</i>	Semi-fertile soil.
<i>Madego:</i>	A form of adoption.
<i>Mashila:</i>	A long form of Sorghum.
<i>Megazo:</i>	Share-cropping.
<i>Mahiber:</i>	A religious society which meets monthly on a Saint's day; each member takes a turn to host the group providing food and drink.
<i>Meher:</i>	The main rainy season - in most places from June to mid-September. Crops sown during this period are harvested from October to December.
<i>Mekenajo:</i>	A form of pairing of oxen by two peasants who have one each, in which they plough in turn.
<i>Melkeгна:</i>	landlords, often the Argoba.
<i>Millash:</i>	A small feast prepared by the parents of the groom 1-2 months after the wedding.
<i>Mengistawi Budin:</i>	A sub- <i>kebele</i> administrative unit.
<i>Meskel:</i>	the day for the commemoration of the founding of the True Cross
<i>Mich:</i>	a disease believed to be cause by sun stroke.
<i>Mogn Bagegn:</i>	A disease, the name is literally translated as, "is found a fool".
<i>Nug:</i>	Rapeseed.
<i>Neus Kebele:</i>	A sub- <i>Kebele</i> administrative unit comprising 2-3 <i>gott</i> .
<i>Ribbi:</i>	Lending animals for somebody else to rear.
<i>Rist:</i>	A form of land holding in imperial times based on descent groups.
<i>Segdet:</i>	Prayer held by devout Muslims five times a day.
<i>Senbete:</i>	A Sunday association which meets on the grounds of a church. Members take turns providing refreshments.
<i>Shemma:</i>	large woven shawls made from cotton worn by men and women.
<i>Tef:</i>	A millet-like cereal, with a high value.
<i>Tigegna:</i>	Dependent farmers.
<i>Tella:</i>	Home-made beer.
<i>Timad:</i>	Measurement of land size. 1 <i>Timad</i> = 0.25 hectares.

<i>Tiringo:</i>	A type of fruit.
<i>Wereda:</i>	An administrative division above the <i>kebele</i> .
<i>Wenfel:</i>	A traditional form of labour sharing locally often referred to as <i>giso</i>
<i>Wot:</i>	Stew eaten with Ethiopian flat bread.
<i>Ya-injera lij:</i>	An adopted child.

Acronyms

ANDO	Argoba National Democratic
APDM	Organisation Argoba People's Democratic Movement
CUD	Coalition for Unity and Democracy.
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
ILCA	International Livestock Centre for Africa
LWF	Lutheran World Federation.
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
SC	Service Cooperative
TB	Tuberculosis.
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund.

Appendix A: Ethiopian calendar

Ethiopian Month	Gregorian calendar starting date in 2005
Meskerem	11 September
Tikimt	11 October
Hidar	10 November
Tahsas	10 December
Tir	9 January
Yekatit	8 February
Megabit	10 March
Miyazia	9 April
Ginbot	9 May
Sane	8 June
Hamle	8 July
Nehase	7 August
Pagume	6 September

There are 13 months in the Ethiopian calendar, 12 of 30 days and the last one, Pagume, of 5 or 6 days depending on whether it is a leap year. The above table provides the starting date for the Ethiopian month in the Gregorian calendar for 2005.

Appendix B: Seasonal Calendars

Women's activities												
Christians only												
	Meskerem	Tikimt	Hidar	Tahsas	Tir	Yekatit	Megabit	Miyazia	Ginbot	Sane	Hamle	Nahasie
Women's agriculture	weeding		harvesting								weeding	weeding
				threshing								
Men's fields												
Women's crops												

		Meskerem	Tikimt	Hidar	Tahsas	Tir	Yekatit	Megabit	Miyazia	Ginbot	Sane	Hamle	Nahasie	
Men														
	building houses	commonly performed during the dry months; not in the rainy season												
	making furniture													
	migration													
	weaving													
Women														
	trading													
Livestock sales														
	ox													
	cows													
	sheep													
	goats													
	donkey													
Livestock diseases														
	anthrax (ox and cows)													
	black leg (ox)													
	? (donkeys)													
	nameless (sheep)													
	nameless (goats)													
	CBPP (ox and cows)													
Fuel Availability														
	wood													
	kera (maize)													
	kera (sorghum)													
	guto (maize)													
	guto (sorghum)													
	dungcakes													
	gind (maize)													
	gind (sorghum)													
Water availability														

Children's Labour													
		Meskerem	Tikimt	Hidar	Tahsas	Ter	Yekatit	Megabit	Miyazia	Ginbot	Sane	Hamle	Nahasie
Boys	weeding												
	scaring birds												
	Herding												
	Harvesting												
	Threshing												
Girls	child care												
	Fetching												
	water / wood												
	House work												
School terms													
	modern												
	Quran												

Consumption , harvesting and credit													
		Meskerem	Tikimt	Hidar	Tahsas	Ter	Yekatit	Megabit	Miyazia	Ginbot	Sane	Hamle	Nahasie
Consumption													
Christians	Meat												
Muslims	Meat												
Both	injera												
	roasted												
	boiled grain and beans												
Christians	beans												
	Porridge												
Muslims	Porridge												
Hungry season													
Credit needs (women)													
Credit needs (men)													
Festivals	Muslims/Christ.												

Health Calendar												
	Meskerem	Tikimt	Hidar	Tahsas	Ter	Yekatit	Megabit	Miyazia	Ginbot	Sane	Hamle	Nahasie
Women												
lung cancer												
diarrhoea												
malaria												
liver												
inability of giving birth												
Men												
malaria												
lung cancer												
gastritis												
amoeba												
coughing												
cold												
diarrhoea												
Children												
meningitis												
<i>Tiktik</i> (cough)												
Measles												
Diarrhoea												
TB												
Polio												
Anaemia												
Amoeba												

Crops												
	Meskerem	Tikimt	Hidar	Tahsas	Ter	Yekatit	Megabit	Miyazia	Ginbot	Sane	Hamle	Nahasie
Maize	harvesting		threshing					sowing			weeding	
Sorghum	weeding			harvesting				soil preparation and planting				
Wheat												
Tef												
field peas												
Amrach												
fenugreek												
sesame												
Lentils												
cotton												
Potatoes												
sweet potatoes												
Onion			Planting			harvesting				Planting	harvesting	
Chat												
Nug												
sun flower												
Grass												
Trees												
cow peas												
shimbira												

Labour												
	Meskerem	Tikimt	Hidar	Tahsas	Ter	Yekatit	Megabit	Mivazia	Ginbot	Sane	Hamle	Nahasie
Men	weeding	harvesting	harvesting	Harvesting	ploughing	sowing		sowing		ploughing		
	harvesting			threshing	manuring	manuring		weeding		sowing		
	ploughing							ploughing		weeding		
	Scaring birds											
Women												
Christians	weeding	harvesting	harvesting	Harvesting	manuring	manuring		weeding		weeding		
	harvesting			threshing								
	Scaring birds											
Muslims	do not participate in farming											
Both	spinning cotton											
	fetching water											
	fetching firewood											