



**Dissertation**

**By**

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**ADDIS ABABA**

**UNIVERSITY**

**The impacts of urban migration on  
village life : the Gurage case**

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**JUNE 1995**



**THE IMPACTS OF URBAN MIGRATION ON  
VILLAGE LIFE:**

**THE GURAGE CASE**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO**

**THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

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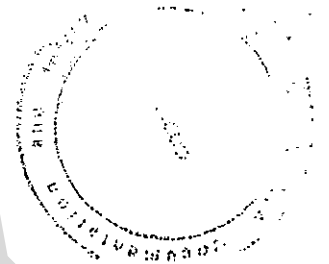
**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS**

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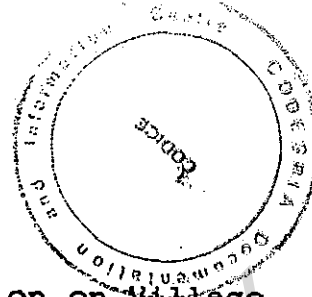


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The Impacts of Urban Migration on Village  
life: the Gurage Case

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ABSTRACT

An Amharic saying goes: Gurageña Land Rover Yemayedersubet Yelem, i.e. "There is no place where the Gurage and the Land Rover do not reach." The Gurage people are known for their large scale nationwide migration. This thesis assesses the phenomenon of Gurage urban migration, known as fanonet. The Gurage are a Semitic people that belong to the asat culture complex. They inhabit the south-western part of the former Shewa region, about 200 kms. south of Addis Ababa, now part of the Southern Ethiopian People's Administrative Region

This assessment of fanonet is based on material collected during field research conducted in a Gurage village called Zizencho. The data is predominantly qualitative, although a quantitative village survey was also carried out. The study examines the origins, causes, patterns, and streams of Gurage fanonet and its complex range of impacts on village life. Gurage fanonet began nearly a century ago with the incorporation of the Gurage and their land in 1888 into the national entity. Since then, Gurage fanos (i.e. migrants), have out-migrated, initially to the capital and then to other towns in Ethiopia. In their areas of destination, fano Gurage engage in different occupations ranging from menial and manual work, to petty trading and private businesses.

The phenomenon of fanonet has exerted economic, social and cultural impacts on village life. These three major fanonet-induced effects are interconnected and interact through labor absenteeism and/or remitted income (goods, skills, and cash), and changes in values due to the migrants' urban experiences.

Economic impacts arise from both a shortage of farm labor due to fanonet, and remitted income. The various uses of remittances created economic and social differentiation within the village society since the households of migrants possess imported goods and better quality housing. In addition, remittances created a village labor market, as fano households use remittances to hire other villagers as agricultural laborers. However, hired labor is not as efficient as a household's own labor and a decline in agricultural output has resulted. Remitted cash has also been used to build a network of modern roads throughout Gurageland, which has had profound impacts.

Socially, the absence of fano husbands has affected family structure, as village women married to fanos, often must assume the role of household head. This includes performing tasks that are traditionally male-specific, and results in increased workload and stress. Social impacts of fanonet also include the benefits of the construction of schools and clinics funded by migrants.

Cultural impacts of fanonet are so dramatic that the villagers have changed their perceptions, traditional values, attitudes and beliefs. Fanonet has resulted in the invention of new traditions and a distinct village social group. Finally, fanonet is even responsible for weakening the Guragegna language.

## List of Abbreviations

CSA	Central Statistical Authority
CSO	Central Statistical Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
GPSDO	Gurage People's Self-Help Development Organization
GRCO	Gurage Roads Construction Organization
HIV	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
OCZAP	Office of Central Zone Planning
OPHCC	Office of Population Housing Census Commission
PA	Peasant Association
SIM	Sudan Interior Mission
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease

## GLOSSARY

1997-2000

1997-2000

Abar	hot and dry season
Abata	father, concerned person
Aberus	a family consisting of a married man and women and their unmarried-children
Abogeda	as friends of the
✓ Abujedi	calico
Abujedi kemis	dress made from calico
Addisaba	Addis Ababa
Adef-tetiru	poor and good quality grain
Aeseharib	traditional title given to a veteran who did not retreat in the battle field
Afinije	ground pepper with spices
✓ Agaze	the highest traditional military title given <sup>to</sup> a veteran who led war and killed a hundred enemies
Ageyet	the highest traditional title given to a woman distinguished for her household management and preparing and serving traditional food ( <u>kitfo</u> ) and drinks ( <u>seher</u> )
Agnut	a wedding or an achievement
Agnut-ebar	a person who cannot afford a prestigious formal marriage
Amara	Amhara (the people)
Amire	May
✓ Anget	upper, neck
✓ Ankeffue	spoon hand-made from animal horns
Arafa	annual festival for Muslims
✓ Araqe	locally brew alcohol
✓ Asat	Ensete Ventricusum, also called false banana.
Atena	young eucalyptus wood
Atimet (bulla)	the best form of food squeezed from the decorticated stem and root of <u>asat</u>
Aweqeyat	the sky god of Cheha-Gurage
✓ Azhemene	Wedding, or best-men and friends of the groom.

✓ Azigart	traditional belt hand-made from cotton usually used by women
Azmach	king
Bahirzaf	eucalyptus tree
Balabat	noble man, chief
Balambaras	honorific title
Baraka	sufficient; volume
✓ Barnetta	hat
Basha	Amharic military title
Bedira	chants for the sky and/or thunder gods
Begemedede	(with) rope
Bene	month
Berdefere	a traditional title given to a veteran who broke through an enemy's camp
Berkefete	a traditional title given to a veteran who broke through an enemy's encirclement
✓ Bet	a house; sub-region
Birrele	small flask with a long neck used for drinking mead
Birrele-atabinet	cleaner of a small flask
✓ Bitter	clay made bowls of varying sizes
Boss	a locality around piassa in A.A. named after a company called Biss
Bojha	the thunder god of Gurage
✓ Botreka	the condition of having cracks in the callused soles of a foot
✓ Buda	tanner
✓ Buliko	blanket hand-made from cotton
Bura	voracious eater
✓ Chat	catha edulis, or celastrus adulis
Chercher	a coffee bush
Cheza	grass for thatching
Chika-Shum	village head-man
✓ Chulonet	domestic work
Dada	traditional title given to a man who owns at least a hundred cattle
Dames	a traditional title given to a person who is next to Dada in rank

Silitane	civilization
Simua	smaller <u>asat</u> plants
✓ Sini	cup
Suq-bederete	a shop on my chest
Tate	lower
Tahisas	December
✓ Tef	a grain from which Injera is made that is indigenous to Ethiopia
✓ Tej	honey wine
Tej-qejinet	someone who serves tej in a tej-house
Teletafi	a small shop, attached to a larger shop
Telfobekise	a lorry, or a bus
Tella	traditional beer
Tesikar	mourning ceremony
Tib	agnatic decent group, clan
✓ Tibtab	ribbon(for dress); strip of cloth
Tikurye	dark wusa
Tilla	umbrella
✓ Tinkya	clay made container used to carry water
Tirere	October
Tirkimit	August
✓ Tiwa	small clay made container used for drinking water or <u>Seher</u>
Turgiman	translater
Wana	day-time
Waq	the sky god
✓ Waqema	a wooden bowl
Wedere	local measurement of land equal to about 24 zher
Wefer	bull
Wege	a traditional song
Wegepecha	shrine of sky god of Cheha
Wegesha	traditional bone-setters
✓ Wehemebua	hat hand-made from dry asat sheath
Weizero	Mrs.
Weje	a herding group
Woraje	homestead
✓ Werim-yichen <u>fano</u>	circular migrants

✓Weshere	clay made container, or pot
Wetto	January
Wochi	expense
Wofencha	door frame
Wohita	root part of <u>asat</u>
✓Wonet	cultivating tool
✓Woreda	sub-district
Worwer	spring
✓Wot	sauce prepared from meat or vegetables
✓Wusa	asat food, the staple subsistence food of the Gurage
Wusacha	the process of harvesting, decorticating and pulverizing asat
Wynadega	sub-tropical
Yaberit	a name of a village
Yafejar	morning
Yalesh	a woman who has
Yamara kere	Amhara (Ethiopian) calender
Yamara-Wusa	wusa of Amhara
Yebirele matebia shibo	small flask cleaner
Yebitare	shrine of the fertility goddess
Yedebo-gred	female kin
Yedar	September
Yegene	of the village from the village
✓ Yegir-wazama	wooden bowl used to wash feet
Yegmya-gor	season of men's work
Yegred-fizer	traditional girl's song
✓ Yegred-huger	girl's clothe
✓ Yegred-waga	marriage transaction
Yegurage kere	Gurage calendar
✓ Yeje-weqama	wooden bowl used to wash hands
✓ Yejoka	pan-Gurage elders council
Yemedara-medara	committing an intentional homicide
Yemeshero-Mesqer	Meskal of July
✓ Yemishira gibir	bride's goods
Yegumbihe	particular mourning for respected persons.
✓ Yesafira-waqema	wooden bowl used to serve roasted barley
Yesamardam	ritual title for the head of sky god of Endegagn

✓ Yesef-waga	marriage transations
Yesera-dane	head of the village
Yeseratye	wage labourer
Yeserye-qershi	tribute money annually paid in the local month of Sereye, i.e April
Yetiyet bukure	a mule used to pack bullets
Yetor	traditional wrestling
Yewanacha-qib	a specfic amount of butter
Yeway deman	ritual title for the head of fertility goddess
✓ Yewedere	eating mat reserved for special guests/occasions
Yewegepecha-daman	ritual title for the head of sky god of Cheha
Yewense	a missing person or item
Yewezhe-echchu	praise chant for the thunder god
✓ Yezeber-gibir	modern household goods
Yidar Mesqer	Meskal of September
Yifitezipwar	literally: "turn the face back" (refers to the brides return to her new home in her husband's village after visiting her parents after her marriage)
Yinangara	Shrine of thunder good
✓ Yishta-giber	women's item or goods
✓ Yishta-gor	women's work season for harvesting asat
✓ Zeber	year
Zeger	kitchen
Zenbil	basket of woven palm leaves
Zer	heavy rainy season
Zher	local land measurement: 1 zher = 12 arms
Zimuamojat	boiled local cabbage prepared with cheese and butter



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## Chapter I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Theoretical Framework and Methodology

#### 1.1.1. Statement of the Problem

The causes, patterns, streams, and characteristics of urban migration as a global phenomenon and its impacts on both the communities of origin and of destination have been subjects of considerable investigation (although the communities of destination have received the most attention). However, whether or not the varied impacts of migration are beneficial, or harmful for rural villages has remained a matter of dispute.

There are two sides of the debate, the details of which are summarized below (also see the literature review in section 1.1.2.). Some studies maintain the view that migration contributes significant social and economic benefits to the villages of origin. Migrants are believed to employ their newly acquired progressive ideas, values, skills and remittances to bring about the improvement of their rural communities of origin. Migration, by facilitating the regular flow of information, goods and other resources, as well as personnel between the urban and rural areas, encouraged interaction between the rural communities and socio-economic aspects of life at both regional and national levels.

However, a number of writers contend that migration-induced changes are temporary and superficial, and do not lead to enduring structural changes in the economies of the migrants' villages. It has been further argued that migration is essentially a process of labor extraction and exploitation of rural villages, since it has negative impacts on agricultural productivity, including food production, patterns of household labor allocation, the conduct of the young and the structure of the family, and for the nutritional status of the migrants' families. However, within this debate, neither side has come up with a conclusive argument.

The aim of this research is to study Gurage migration and to explore its impacts on village life. The Gurage are one of the most urban-oriented ethnic groups in the country. In

the years following their incorporation in 1888 into the wider Ethiopian context, and particularly since the Italian occupation, Gurage villages have been encouraging the migration of their sons and daughters to various towns, mainly Addis Ababa. The size of the Gurage population increased from 2,000 in 1910 to 255,000 in 1984. The relative percentage of the total population of Addis Ababa that the Gurage represented increased from 3.1 percent in 1910 to 17.2 percent in 1952. It decreased to 7.3 percent in 1968, but had increased to 18 percent by 1984 (Alula 1993:161-167; OPHCC 1987:27, Table 16; Pankhurst 1961:1976; Garretson 1974:200; Shack 1976:256-58; ) constituting the second largest ethnic group in Addis Ababa, after the Amhara, according to the figures for 1952, 1964-68, and 1984. However, these figures may be unreliable.

The urban Gurage are known by other Ethiopians, as well as foreigners, for their industriousness and orientation towards achievement, as they are hard-working and economically successful within urban settings. They are also considered to be a highly mobile and adaptive people. An Amharic joke claims: "Guragena Land-Rover Yamaydersubet Yalem", i.e. "there is no place where the Gurage and the Land-Rover do not reach." The urban Gurage have engaged in manual labor including shoe-shining and domestic work, small scale industries and market trade. The role of the Gurage labor services in the capital can be noted by citing the fact that until a couple of decades ago, the Indian word "Cooli" (porter) in Addis Ababa was synonymous with a Gurage and people used to hail porters by shouting "Gurage! Gurage!" (Pankhurst 1968: 49; Shack 1966; 1976]. Since the birth of the Merkato (1935-41), apparently the largest market center in Africa (Deyoung 1967), by nearly displacing the expatriates, the migrant Gurage have been playing a leading role in the country's national economy, particularly in the commercial sector. Furthermore, it can safely be said that the Gurage have constituted the backbone of Merkato, where market goods and services, upon which the overwhelming majority of urban Ethiopians depend, flow primarily via Gurage traders and laborers (Shack 1966; Worku 1990; Bahru 1991).

The urban Gurage are also known for their migrant voluntary associations such as Idir<sup>1</sup> and Equb,<sup>2</sup> and for self-help development associations (Pankhurst, et al 1958; Alemayhu 1969; Fekadu 1972; 1973) which are concerned mainly with the revitalization of their village communities of origin. These development associations such as the Alemgana-Wallamo Road Construction Association and the Gurage Self-Help Development Association, for the northeastern and western Gurage areas, respectively; were described by some writers as models for indigenous development programs (Gebre-Yesus 1972/3; Kedir Mohammed 1984; Wolde-Selassie 1986/7; Mudesir Jemal 1987).

It continues to be a paradox that such an important fact as the relatively accelerated migration and urbanization of the Gurage remains only partially documented. While the role of the Gurage in urban life, especially in Addis Ababa, is well known, the impacts of their migration on the rural Gurage homeland has so far remained unexplored. Therefore, this study will attempt to understand the nature of the impacts of migration via the flow of goods, money, ideas and skills on Gurage village life.

### 1.1.2. Review of Related Literature

In general, migration is classified as either internal or international, that is movement of persons within a nation, or between nations (states, regions), respectively. There are different streams<sup>3</sup> of internal migration: rural-rural, rural-urban<sup>4</sup>, urban-urban, and urban-rural<sup>5</sup> migrations. This study focuses on internal migration within Ethiopia, particularly the movement of Gurage people between their home villages and urban areas. Hereafter, this phenomenon is referred to as either urban migration, or migration. Various forms of migration as movements of populations, have long been the subject of studies by historians, geographers, demographers, economists, sociologists, and anthropologists.

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<sup>1</sup> Burial (funeral) associations

<sup>2</sup> Rotating credit associations

<sup>3</sup> Stream is defined in terms of the departures and arrivals of the migrants

<sup>4</sup> Also termed cityward, labor, and/or urban migration

<sup>5</sup> Also termed return or homeward migration

### 1.1.2.1. Urban Migration

The urban migration of rural peasants, which since World War II has become a global characteristic of the modern world, has been much studied [Gmelch and Zenner 1978; Kemper 1979:10]. The causes and patterns of rural-urban migration, its effects on the rural and urban communities of origin and destination, respectively; as well as characteristics of the migrants have been dealt with by many writers of varying background, training, theoretical orientation and field experience.

The emphasis of anthropological research has been largely on the processes and strategies of adaptation of the migrants in urban settings. The majority of the early studies dealing with migrant adjustment in cities were strongly influenced by the Wirthian model (1938): "Urbanism as a Way of Life." According to this model, the demographic aspect of urban centers, i.e. size, population density, and heterogeneity, are emphasized as typical features of towns. These unique characteristics of the town are associated with the breakdown of the family and kin or non-kin ties, and the consequent impersonal social ties, individualism and anomie (normlessness, alienation, anarchy). Moreover, Wirth and other writers following him, claimed that migrants in cities are completely isolated from their relatives in villages, and their discussions were framed by the model of a dichotomy between "folk-urban" or "rural-urban" entities, considered to be mutually exclusive.

However, since Oscar Lewis' (1952) pioneering fieldwork in Mexico City, "Urbanization Without Breakdown," Wirth's formulation has been successfully questioned and rectified. This Wirthian model was (and is still being) criticized as static and one-sided, and failing to account for the feed back process of migration as, "the continuing changes in the rural communities of origin, in the urban communities of destination and in the migrants themselves" [Kemper 1988:187]. Regarding migration into African cities, many later studies concerned with migration in different parts of the world corroborated Lewis' findings and have shown that, Wirth's "Urbanism as a way of life" is not a reality for most migrants into

African cities, because they are soon integrated into urban networks and voluntary associations that provide support to the individuals and bridge the differences between the urban and the rural settings [Epstein 1958, 1962; Gutkind 1961; Abu-Lughod 1961:22-32; Little 1965, 1974; Mitchell 1966; Caldwell 1969; Mayer 1971; DuToit and Safa 1975; Parkin 1975; Hanna and Hanna 1981; ]. In criticizing the Wirthian urban-rural dichotomy, Janet Abu-Lughod, in her outstanding case study in Cairo [1961], argued that "...the dichotomy is as invalid in Egypt and in many other newly awakening nations as it is in the western nations, but for a somewhat different reason. In these cases the dichotomy has not yet sharpened due to the continued ruralization of the cities". Thus, it is well established that the urban and the rural areas are two ends of one and the same continuum of social life joined through migration, and that there is a feedback process of interaction, i.e. urbanization of the rural setting and the ruralization of urban life.

In addition, the network analysis method has been developed to study the process of urbanization and the migrant's adjustment to the urban setting. The notion of networks, according to Mitchell [1966:55], was first used by Barnes [1954] in his study of a Norwegian island parish and then developed by Bott [1957] in her study of conjugal roles in London families. Network as a concept refers to a number of ties which individuals build up around themselves in an urban setting. Bott differentiates between close-knit and loose-knit ties, the former representing interactions with a high density of connectedness, while the latter referring to those links with low density connectedness.

Following Bott's [1957] classical analysis of urban life, a number of researchers have employed the concept of network in their African studies [Southall 1956a, 1961b, 1973; Mitchell 1966; Mayer 1971].

#### **1.1.2.2. On the Impacts of Migration on the Village Communities of Origin**

The impacts of migration on the home village community are an important aspect of migration that has not been conclusively established by anthropological research, nor within studies from other fields. . . This aspect of migration has been much neglected by anthropologists and those who have dealt with it have not reached a consensus. Although to date there is no conclusive theoretical framework which relates migration to the village life, there are some arguments on the nature of its impacts. The existing dispute over whether or not migration is beneficial to the home villages may be summarized as follows.

There are two views. On the one hand, there are some researchers who argue that cityward migration through remittances, visits and returnees, exerts some meaningful positive (social and economic) impacts upon the migrants' village life. According to this view, returning migrants bring back home valuable work habits, progressive attitudes, and industrial skills that will upgrade the village labor force and provide the necessary capital to rejuvenate the "stagnated" economies of their rural homelands.

#### **1.1.2.2.1. The Positive View of the Influence of Migration on Home Communities**

Some observers point out that in spite of long term physical absence, the social and economic links between the majority of the labor migrants and their rural homelands, are always maintained and the migrants return to their villages of origin [Van Velsen 1960:260]. Economically, given the problems that arise from the decline in the size of arable land and few agricultural products, and from the limited value of agricultural products for exchange, as well as the village household's need for cash, off-farm income becomes necessary for the rural household. Thus, migration provides opportunities for the generation of non-farm income, and remittances are sometimes 'net income' for those members of the household in villages [Conelly and Chaiken 1987, cited in A. Fleuret 1990:199; Chaiken 1988]. Migration is characterized as a solution for the problem of rural underemployment and an essential component of the income generating strategy of many rural households [Lux 1972; Adepoju 1974; Knowles and Anker 1981; Tostensen 1986; Fleuret 1990:199].

The migrant's remittance money in their villages of origin is used mainly to meet consumption needs. It also serves significant investment purposes especially in education, housing (constructing new houses or renovating old ones), livestock, and purchases of land [Rempel and Lobdell 1980; O'Leary 1980, 1983; Fleuret 1988b). The regular flow of information, goods and other resources as a result of circular migration is another aspect of the continuing rural-urban feedback. "Migrants' rural kin are often better housed, clothed, fed and/or educated than those of non-migrants" [Groveton 1980; Were 1989; Fleuret 1990:200].

Moreover, during various natural or social disasters such as drought and famine, migration provides an important means of survival [O'Leary 1983; Fleuret 1986; Sperling 1986]. Several writers pointed out that the remittances are used to fulfill consumption needs and allow investments to be made "when other income generating opportunities, including food production, are limited or eliminated" [Fleuret 1990:200]. Regarding the family, as opposed to the breakdown of a domestic unit, migration implies rather the efficiency, flexibility and mutual interdependence of the household and its members [Stark and Lucas 1988]. Migration enables the migrants to obtain a portion of the national wealth earned in urban areas, a share which otherwise would not be obtained [P. Fleuret and Greeley 1982].

#### **1.1.2.2.2. The Negative View of the Influence of Migration on Home Communities**

A number of writers have argued against the positive impacts of migration. For them, migration is basically an extractive process resulting in the impoverishment of villages and the need for villagers to subsidize under-paid urban workers [Tostensen 1986:1]. The migrants' contributions to the village economy "will frequently be less than it would have been had they continued to work in the rural sector" [Gugler and Flanagan 1978:61]. Brown (1983) states that in Botswana local development was discouraged, manpower shortages created, productivity stagnated or declined and accumulation of capital was absent as a result of male labor migration.



The patterns of labor division in the village household are negatively affected and particularly adult women who remain on the farm are said to incur substantial increases in their work burdens, as they attempt to compensate for the absentees' labor [Moore and Vaughan 1987]. Greater poverty in those households of absentee male laborers and high rates of malnutrition among the village dwelling migrants' children have been noted, compared to those in household's where husbands and fathers are present [Richards 1939; Gugler 1976; Connell et al. 1976, cited in Fleuret 1990:199]. Migration contributes to inequality in access to income and standards of living in the village. This social and economic differentiation at the village level is considered as 'both a source of and a function of' cityward migration, which does not bring about increase in the village productivity [Lipton 1980].

Furthermore, "lack of direct male participation in family life and the absence of appropriate male role models in the household and community have been linked to the disintegration of the family and undisciplined behavior of youth" [Fleuret 1990:199, citing Mitchell 1959; Akong'a 1989].

Having presented the results of his in-depth investigation of circular migration and development in Andalusian Villages of the Spanish province of Granada, Rhoades (1988) concluded that enduring developmental consequences of migration are lacking. The better income, standard of living, housing and education attained by the families of migrants; the growth of a small business sector; the appearance of mechanized agriculture; and the temporary decrease in rural unemployment and credit problems and other effects resulting from migration appear to point to the positive features of migration, permitting the village people to "share the fruits of development." However, Rhoades has raised serious doubts about such migration-induced changes. He points out that such changes are superficial and not permanent, as they are not sustained after migrant investments cease. The migrants' money is usually principally used to meet consumption needs, and for the construction of new houses and filling these homes with modern furnishings, "but such investments do not

create resources or conditions which will guarantee long-run prosperity." Beyond the "glitter" of the migrants' village homes, "the stark village reality continues," i.e. the migration-induced changes are only "skin deep," as they do not represent fundamental structural changes in the economy [Rhoades 1988:219].

Likewise, Fleuret has presented similar information from her study on the Taita Hills District of Kenya, which shows that the major amount of the migrant's foreign earnings are used in the Taita Villages to satisfy consumption needs, and investment in income-generating activities or capital equipment is often minimal [A. Fleuret 1990:206].

#### 1.1.2.2.3. Inconclusive Results

Rhoades [1988] and Fleuret [1990], after conducting research on the impact of migration on the sending villages, have pointed out that all arguments made by the writers from both sides of the debate are inconclusive. They are only suggestive because they don't base themselves upon first-hand information concerning the actual behavior of returning migrants (Rhoades 1988:211). These studies from both sides of the debate "do not present specific evidence which clearly links the migration variable to particular household outcomes or circumstances in the sending communities" [Fleuret 1990:200].

In presenting a wide range of views and opinions concerning the impacts of labor migration, with an emphasis on the Asian experiences, Rigg noted that there is still no consensus concerning whether the impacts of urban migration upon agricultural communities are positive or negative (1988:66). Riggs explains this difference of opinion with the following:

Undoubtedly, part of the explanation for the existence of such a wide range of opinion is simply because rural areas are so varied. There are zones of intensive irrigated rice cultivation; areas of extensive cattle herding; places where communally controlled land is the norm; others in which share croppers predominate; areas where the cash economy is pervasive; and others where barter and exchange of good has changed little. With this in mind, it is scarcely surprising that researchers should stumble upon communities where migrant laboring is seen to be a 'bad' phenomenon, and others where it is regarded as 'good.' As often occurs, the danger lies in the extrapolation of the particular to the general and it is worth noting that most

investigations into the impact(s) of migrant laboring upon source communities rarely offer detailed, balanced assessments of the short term and long term costs and benefits of this mobility (1988:67).

### 1.1.2.3. Apparent Impacts in the Ethiopian Case

Cityward migration is characteristic of urbanization and industrialization, both of which have been relatively recent phenomena in Africa, and even more so in Ethiopia (although Ethiopia has one of the oldest urban traditions in Africa), where, to use Befekadu's words, "the feudal mode of production proved the fetter on Addis Ababa's and other town development" (1974:3). Due to the establishment of new economic structures in the capital and a few other provincial towns, and due to the construction of new roads during the Italian occupation, an unprecedented scale of communication and population movement was made possible in different parts of the country. Thus, cityward migration was accelerated and the majority of the migrants belonged to the young productive age groups (Befekadu 1974; Pankhurst 1976; Bahru 1991).

Concerning the symbiotic relationship between the urban and the rural areas in Ethiopia, Befekadu contends that urban centers have developed at the expense of the villages. The resources such as food, capital, raw materials, foreign exchange, unskilled and even skilled labor which are necessary for the development of urban centers have been "all gleaned from the rural sector for which no concomitant return was made" (1974:3). This contention of Befekadu has been corroborated by Eshetu who wrote: "To sum up, it can be said that urbanization in Ethiopia has done very little for the rural Ethiopian economy but has exploited it to a considerable degree" (1970:194). However, these broad generalizations need to be questioned as they are based mainly upon statistical data with no ethnographic input.

It is against this background that this study attempts to investigate Gurage migration and its impacts on the village life.

### 1.1.2.3.1. Studies of Ethiopian Urban Migration

Ethiopian literature on migration, in particular, and urbanization in general, is meager, especially when it comes to anthropological studies on the subject. However, there are a few studies which dealt with aspects of urban migration conducted by sociologists (Bjeren 1985), economists (Befekadu 1978; Eshetu 1970), historians such as Pankhurst (1965,1991), Bahru (1972,1991), Akalou (1967,1973), Deyoung (1967); and geographers such as Mesfin (1968, 1972).

When Bjeren carried out her research, which she later published in a book entitled Migration to Shashemene (1985), about three decades ago, there was even less migration research in existence. She reported that, at that time,

There were few urban studies of any kind published on Ethiopia, and no studies of migration. A few articles had appeared which made inferences about migration on the basis of the results of the First Round of Urban Surveys, such as the one by Mesfin (1970). The urban material consisted of articles about historical development of towns in Ethiopia by Pankhurst (1957, 1961, 1962, 1965), dissertation on the same theme by Akalou (1967), and geographical descriptions by Horvath (1966,1968,1969) "(185:5)

In addition, there are some studies on urbanization in the form of articles such as Kuls (1970), Gamst (1970), (Shack 1974), and subsections devoted to the same issue like Fecadu Gedamu (1972), and Markakis (1974) provided a general account on Ethiopian urban areas.

After Bjeren, Alula provided a comprehensive summary of the very limited literature on Ethiopian migration (1995:277-304). He grouped the studies as general and specific. The general studies attempted to describe migration on a national level (Bondestam 1972; McCann 1987, 1988; CSA 1991; Ponsi 1982; Kloos and Aynalem Adugna 1989). The specific studies examined migration to particular areas, regions or urban centers (Prost-Toiurnier 1972; Palen 1975; Bjeren 1984; Kloos 1982; Bekure 1984; Beyene 1985; Wood 1983; Hadgu and Asmerom 1985; Arkebe 1985; Baker 1986; Almaz 1990).

Urban migration is characteristic of industrialization and modern urbanization, both of which have been relatively recent phenomena to Ethiopia. However, Ethiopia has one of the oldest pre-industrial urban traditions, which goes as far back as the period of Aksumite civilization. At that time Aksum town, in the former province of Tigray, constituted the center for historic Ethiopia and several other traditional towns also emerged. In the following periods, although commercially well developed traditional cities such as Harar (since 1541) and Gondar (from 1663) developed in the country, there was no permanent capital until the birth of Addis Ababa in 1886 (Bahru, 1991)

Together with the foundation of the capital and the establishment of the Djibouti-Addis Ababa railroad, which was completed in 1917, the Menelik era marked the beginning of modern urbanization in Ethiopia. Then several railroad-side towns emerged and fifty years later " some of the railroad towns closest to Addis Ababa became the basis for the very modest beginning of Ethiopian industry " (Bjeren 1985:62; see Shiferaw 1982). Also Menelik II's territorial expansion to the southern and south-western present Ethiopia during the second half of the 19th century brought about the development of a number of towns in this part of the country. Such towns first emerged as the settlements of soldiers and then evolved into towns of commercial and administrative importance.

The period of Italian occupation (1935-41) was marked by even more expansion of modern urbanization in Ethiopia. This era not only resulted in the emergence of new towns but also the existing towns assumed new urban functions and characteristics. Formerly, land lords partitioned the land in cities. Such partitions consisted of the extended families as well as followers and workers of the land-lords, who owned and ruled these areas. " There was no labor market. Instead, all urban laborers were attached to the ruling group through various patron-client relationships." (1985:62). All these structural relations were altered by the Italians, who eliminated or detained the feudal land-lords, confiscated and made the urban land freely available; to use the words of Bjeren (Ibid),<sup>fo</sup> " all and sundry, without personal links of individual land owners, and this removed an important obstacle to growth of urban

population." Urban labor market with wage payable in money during this period is the most significant positive implication for modern Ethiopian urbanization (Fecadu 1972-82, Bjerer 1985:62, Alula 1995:302).

The post Italian period up to the 1950's was characterized by a sharp decline in urban activity (Horvath 1968:46, cited in Bjerer 1985:63). However, after the 1950's the establishment of Imperial Highway Authority, which constructed a number of internationally funded roads, resulted in the expansion of modern transportation networks and commerce. This factor together with the centralized regime of Haile Sellassie, which was characterized by high degree of government centralization furthered the process of modern urbanization in Ethiopia. New small towns, the main characteristic features of which were commercial and transportation centers, emerged. Also "an individual zone encompassing Addis Ababa and the railroad towns of Debre Zeit, Akaki Beseka, Mojo and Nazareth began to develop" (Bjerer 1985:63).

It is in the perspective of this historical context of Ethiopian urbanization that Gurage urban migration needs to be examined. Urbanization here is defined as the development of modern towns and/or cities in the context of Ethiopia. However, the term towns or urban areas have been defined differently.

In the 1968 urban survey, it was defined as "A Town is an area in which 1) the buildings and houses are contiguously aligned, i.e. side by side in rows; and there are 2) at least one public bar in which alcoholic beverages are sold; 3) at least one hotel, i.e. a house in which a stranger can pay for a bed for a night; 4) at least one permanent shop selling different kinds of goods; and 5) at least one weekly market in the town .... all five of the above conditions have to be true of to call a group of buildings a Town" (CSO 1968:II). On the other hand, based on population size, Markakis defined Ethiopian towns in two broad categories, the towns with over 5,000 inhabitants and those in which the inhabitants are less than 5,000. For Markakis, the town in the first group acquired an "urban" feature (in the European and North American sense) with the beginning of an economy that is not

agriculturally based, modern transportation facilities such as motorable roads and often air fields that connect with the capital, an array of government activities, such as schools beyond the primary level, field stations for various government institutions and a flourishing commercial life (Markakis 1974:164; cited in Bjerer 1985:64). Markakis described the towns in the second group as "points of rural concentration without any urban qualification" (Ibid, 1965).

#### 1.1.2.3.2. Studies of Gurage Urban Migration

Since 1888, the Gurage and their land have been incorporated into the wider Ethiopian state. The Gurage were subdued by Emperor Menelik and his forces at the Battle of Jebdu Meda after the end of fourteen years of Gurage resistance. This incorporation had impacts upon the socio-economic and cultural lives of the Gurage in significant ways. Firstly, mainly due to this development, the Gurage and their land have become an integral part of the larger Ethiopian national entity. Secondly, it brought about the establishment of the new structural relationship called the Neftegna-Gebar, i.e., "riflemen-tribute payers" relationship in Gurage, as in other parts of southern and southwestern Ethiopia. Thirdly, this same territorial expansion by Menelik II resulted in the birth of Addis Ababa as a capital city. Finally, these and other phenomena paved the way for Gurage urban migration, a phenomenon which evolved as a result of interactions between the internal and external structural forces<sup>1</sup>.

As described in the following chapters, these structural forces formed the historical and socio-economic context for Gurage migration from the late 19th century through the era of the Italian occupation and the Gurage Roads Construction Association, until the present time.

We do not have many studies concerning Gurage history and the socio-economic as well as cultural aspects of Gurage life. The only major work on the Gurage is William

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<sup>1</sup> For an account of the Gurage incorporation see Worku 1984, 1990; Bahru 1991

Shack's, The Gurage: A People of the Enset Culture (1966), which provides a social anthropological description of the Gurage and their culture. The migratory experiences of the Gurage have likewise not yet received much attention by researchers. However, there are some works such as Shack's (1976) article, Fecadu Gedamu's (1972) Ph.D. dissertation, Getnet's thesis (1992) and several B.A. senior essays in history (Kedir Muhamed 1984; Amara 1985; Sherif 1985; Tilahun 1987; and Kedir Mudesir 1989) that have included aspects of Gurage urban migration. Failure of agricultural productivity, shortage of arable land, and especially, tribute payment as well as taxation, are some of the causes for Gurage migration attributed by several writers (Shack 1966:72; Pankhurst 1968: 48, 49; Lebel 1974:101; Tilahun 1987: 9, 34-36). According to Fecadu, the characteristics of asat cultivation, unlike that of cereal cultivation, may allow seasonal migration. It was pointed out by some writers that when the Gurage were reduced to the status of gebar, i.e., tribute-payers, they were pushed to migrate in order to generate the necessary cash. Since then the Gurage have been migrating, initially routinely on a seasonal basis and temporarily for short periods and, later, permanently to the capital and the provincial towns ( Shack 1976; Tilahun 1987; Bahru 1991). However, the extent of Gurage migration and urbanization has not yet been fully documented. There has been very little attention in particular to the impacts of migration on Gurage village life. Therefore this study has attempted to understand the nature of the impacts of urban migration on the life of village of origins. For this purpose, a village called Zizencho was selected as a study village.

### **1.1.3. Objectives of the Study**

This study aimed at increasing the understanding of the historical, socio-economic and cultural dynamics of Gurage urban migration at the village level. The specific aims of the research were:

1. To study the history, causes, patterns, streams, selectivity (age and sex), magnitude and features of Gurage migration at the village level.



2. To assess the ways in which migration affects the quality of village life from the perspectives of the local people.
3. To examine the extent to which migration has brought about interdependence between the Gurage village and the broader Ethiopian national economy.
4. To investigate the effects of migration upon the social organization (marriage, <sup>marital</sup> ~~bride~~ <sup>payments</sup> ~~wealth~~ structure and composition of the family) of village society.
5. To provide an ethnographic account and to carry out a descriptive analysis of Gurage urban migration and its impacts at the local level from the perspective of villagers concerning migration as a phenomenon of social, economic, cultural and psychological significance.

#### 1.1.4 Choice and Justification of the Research Site

##### 1.1.4.1 Why Gumer?

The Gurage, in general, and the Sebat-bet Gurage in particular, have been known for their high mobility and urban orientation. However, the implications of this long established characteristic of the Gurage for the home villages have not been established. Therefore, research to address this issue was planned, and Gumer, within Sebat-bet Gurage, was chosen as the main focus area for this village-based research on Gurage migration and its impacts on the villages of origin. The choice of Sebat-bet Gurage, and particularly Gumer is based on my familiarity with the general socio-economic, linguistic, as well as cultural situation in the area in question, since I am a native Gurage from Gumer.

Within the study area, Gumer, due to limitations of available financial resources and time for the research, a smaller unit, i.e. a village was selected to be the scope of the detailed investigation for the research project. Also, in determining the scope for the study, the issue of manageability was considered particularly since an in-depth investigation concerning who is who, who leaves the village, why, when, to where, and the dynamics of the incoming and out-going persons, their motivational and attitudinal interactions can only be achieved by getting to know people on a personal basis.

I carried out two weeks of preliminary field work to select a study village in Gumer. During this period, I employed four criteria in selecting the research village. First, it was assumed that because of the varying agro-climatic conditions in the region, the villages acquire different characteristics emanating from distinct cropping patterns. For instance, it was observed that there are variations between the areas of asat growing as a main crop and areas that are cerealized, in terms of the seasonality of agricultural labor requirements, with significant implications for the patterns of out-migration in the villages. Therefore, in order to avoid excluding one or the other cropping pattern, and to capture the factors of both realities, a study village should contain both these characteristics. Second, the village should be locally known for its high magnitude of urban migration. Third, there should currently be some migration related development activities such as construction of roads, school, health facilities etc. in or around the research area. Finally, the researcher should have contacts and acquaintances with some villagers in the site in question. The village of Zizencho met these considerations and was chosen as a study village. It contains characteristics of both asat growing and cereal dominated areas and is known locally as Yefano-Jefuere, i.e. "village of migrants." Migrants from Zizencho and other neighboring villages are constructing a high school at the Gumer Woreda town of Arakit (for the detail description of this, see Chapter V below), which is an hours walking distance east of Zizencho. In addition, I have friends in this village and during the field work period, I based myself in the house of one of my friends, which enabled me to quickly befriend migrants' families in order to understand their networks, psychology, and the attitudinal and motivational interactions within the village.

#### 1.1.4.2. Why Addis Ababa?

Because the phenomenon of the impact of urban migration on village life involves not only the rural end but also the urban end of the same social continuum, it was important to consider, at least partially the situations, of the urban end in the research. Again because of

time and resource constraints, as well as the manageability issue, it was decided not to attempt to deal with all urban destinations of Gurage migrants.

Therefore, Addis Ababa was selected as the main focus of the research project in the urban field. This choice was based on, first, the fact that Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, is the largest town within close geographical proximity with Gurage land. Arakit, the Woreda town of Gumer is located 220 kms south of the capital, and Zizencho is just about five kms from Arakit. Second, from reviewing available documents, Addis Ababa was (and is) found to constitute the largest source of attraction for the Gurage urban migration from the beginning to the present. Thirdly, since the researcher lives in Addis Ababa and has fano contacts there, he was able to cross-check information from the village by interviewing migrants in Addis Ababa.

In addition, a short field trip was made to Nazareth town since it turned out that this town is another major attraction for the Zizencho villagers.

### **1.1.5. Research Methodology**

This research is mainly based on the first hand ethnographic material which was gathered during the field work period in Zizencho, the study village in Gurageland. In addition, secondary sources: related literature on the subject and archival records were consulted and used by way of supplementing the field material.

#### **1.1.5.1. Techniques Used for Data Collection**

A field work period of 3 months and a fortnight was carried out in Zizencho. The field work comprised four consecutive phases. The first phase was a preliminary field study for two weeks from May 14-29, 1994, during which Zizencho was selected as a study village. During this time, the researcher stayed mainly in Arakit town.

Phases two, three, and four consisted of a one month's stay each which were carried out from June 30 - July 30, September 10 - November 10, and December 1 - 31, 1994.

respectively. This field research timetable was deliberately designed to coincide with some of the local farming and festival calendar events.<sup>1</sup> In all this 3 month time, I stayed within Zizencho village.

In generating the valuable data during the field research period both qualitative and quantitative techniques were employed. The most important technique used to obtain qualitative material was conducting informal in-depth interviews and recording case (life) - histories.

Initially, in the field, I sought to explore the issue with an open mind by listening to people and through casual conversations at social events, night gatherings, the village meetings and tej houses, etc. At this early stage, I did not take notes during the conversations but did so immediately afterwards, or later while I was by myself. As such, gradually I got the sense of networks of migrants and established contacts with migrants' families, which enabled me to identify who I should talk to and what I should emphasize in carrying out the research project.

During the remainder of the field work period, informal, in-depth interviews were conducted and case (life) histories were recorded. I talked to selected persons of different ages, sexes, occupations, social statuses, and migratory experiences. Conversations concerning the phenomenon of migration were held with migrant and non-migrant household members. Although the non-migrant villagers were considered in the study for comparative purposes, the main focus was on the migrant families, and in particular, the wives of migrants. For the most part persons above the age of 18 years were selected for such conversations since they have had more migratory experience. Key informants were selected from fanos, returnee and current migrants, as well as non-migrant villagers. In particular, information concerning the general perceptions, attitudes, history etc. of Gurage urban migration was obtained through informal conversations with the elders and other villagers. Such discussions were also held with elders from the neighboring villages as well as sub-

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<sup>1</sup> See Table I and the village description sub-section below

localities. Recording personal histories and employing case studies were used to generate data for understanding the dynamics of Gurage urban migration. For the most part, unstructured interviews and case studies (histories) were conducted and recorded in the local language.<sup>1</sup>

By acquiring data via person to person contacts, participant observation was used in the field research. The interactions of the out-going and incoming migrants with one another, as well as with the villagers were carefully observed, and recorded. Such observations provided insights into the issues concerning how the visiting migrants interact with their families, neighbors, and kin both within the village and outside their villages, as well as in market places, churches, and other social locations. Also, the same technique generated understanding of the reactions of the villagers to the presence of the visiting fanos.

Furthermore, discourse analysis was employed by recording conversations regarding migration, i.e. about being at home and being away, and its impacts (negative and/or positive) on the quality of life in the village as opposed to that of the town. This procedure generated additional material concerning the villagers' perceptions and values as well as attitudes towards migration.

In order to acquire quantifiable data, which was not obtainable through the qualitative techniques mentioned above, a census-type household survey was employed as an additional tool. A household is defined as a group of persons consisting of one or more parents, their children and other members, living together in the same house (or houses). The local term for household is aberus. The questionnaire was first prepared in English and was then edited and commented on by my advisors, and was finally translated into Guragegna, the local language, and then the survey was carried out as such.

The questionnaire had two sections, the first one designed to assess the distinctive socio-economic, demographic, and migratory characteristics of all households in the village

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<sup>1</sup> However, see the section on the influence of Amharic in Chapter IV.

and administered to each head of the family. The second section contained more detailed questions on the migratory experiences of the wives of the migrants and was administered to 30 selected households. This selection was based on the qualitative material already collected on these and other migrant households and these 30 households were selected because they are headed by women whose husbands are migrants. Questions as to attitudes, the use of remitted money, farm labor, etc. were addressed to women. In both sections, both open-ended and closed questions were included. The English versions of both sections of the questionnaires are included in the appendix. Initially, the household survey was planned for the end of the third phase of fieldwork. However, this time coincided with the National Census and the villagers were tired of being interviewed. Hence, the household survey was postponed to the final phase of field work.

Two enumerators (interviewers) were employed to administer the survey. Each has completed grade 12. They had gained recent experience as they completed enumerator training and took part in the recent National Census. In addition, the researcher trained them as to how to handle the research topic. Both were native villagers from Zizencho and speakers of the local language. One of the enumerators was a young woman, and the other a male adolescent. They were chosen on the basis of their previous experiences and their acceptance within the village and they carried out the survey, with close supervision by the researcher.

#### **1.1.5.2. Techniques Used In Data Analysis**

Thus, every male or female head of the aberus, a household in the village, was interviewed and a total of 156 interviews formed the household survey. This quantitative data was tabulated manually and analyzed. In writing up the thesis, as shown below, the results of this analysis were counter checked with the qualitative data and used to examine the distribution, frequency, intensity, diversity, sex and age selectivity, and other characteristics of migration in Zizencho.

The analysis of the qualitative material began with the reading and re-reading of the field notes in order to organize them thematically. Then, the recorded personal (case) histories and informal interviews were transcribed, translated and sorted out. Then in the actual writing up, these material were described and analyzed. This descriptive analysis was carried out by presenting verbatim case material, making comparisons between and amongst the different personal histories, and by commenting on and analyzing them in the light of the current theoretical debates on the subject of urban migration and its impacts on the village communities of origin, which were explored in the related literature review. Again, as part of this analysis, the findings from the qualitative material were cross-checked with the results of the quantitative data analysis.

#### 1.1.5.3. Limitations of the Study

Although an attempt has been made to produce an in-depth ethnographic study based primarily on the views of the migrants, which should stimulate further comparative research on the topic, this study has the following limitations.

To begin with, the results of this research are spatially limited and statistically unrepresentative at the pan Gurage, or Sebat-bet Gurage, or even Gumer levels. As mentioned earlier, the limitations of time and financial resources, and the need for an in-depth approach, necessitated that the research project be limited to the village level.

As a socio-economic phenomenon, the subject matter is very complex and because the research investigates the perceptions, attitudes, values and beliefs of the villagers and related changes that occurred over time, even at the village level, the findings of this study are limited in time. This is because an understanding of complex aspects of human life such as attitudes, perceptions, etc. requires in-depth, careful and close documentation, hence extended ethnographic field research.

Therefore, there is a need for further research in order to conduct contrasting studies on villages of varying cropping patterns and agro-climatic extremes; and to test the

hypothesis that the different Gurage villages have different migratory experiences at the local level.

Also, as a male researcher, interviewing village women, and making them comfortable to talk about their experiences as freely as men would do, was sometimes a problem in the process of data generation. Hence, the study suffers from an inescapable gender bias both in data collection and analysis, despite the researcher's efforts and willingness to be more inclusive of women's perspectives in all phases of the research.

Furthermore, as the household survey was carried out during one of the peak farming seasons and the questionnaire was somewhat lengthy, some of the interviews were rushed and in a few cases the villagers did not have enough patience or time to complete all the questions. Due to this, some of the interview responses were unclear and uncertain and thus such responses were not included in the data analysis. Despite such precautions, there is a possibility of error in the quantitative findings. For these reasons the study has relied more heavily on the qualitative data about which the researcher feels far more confident.

## **1. 2 Background to Gurage Urban Migration**

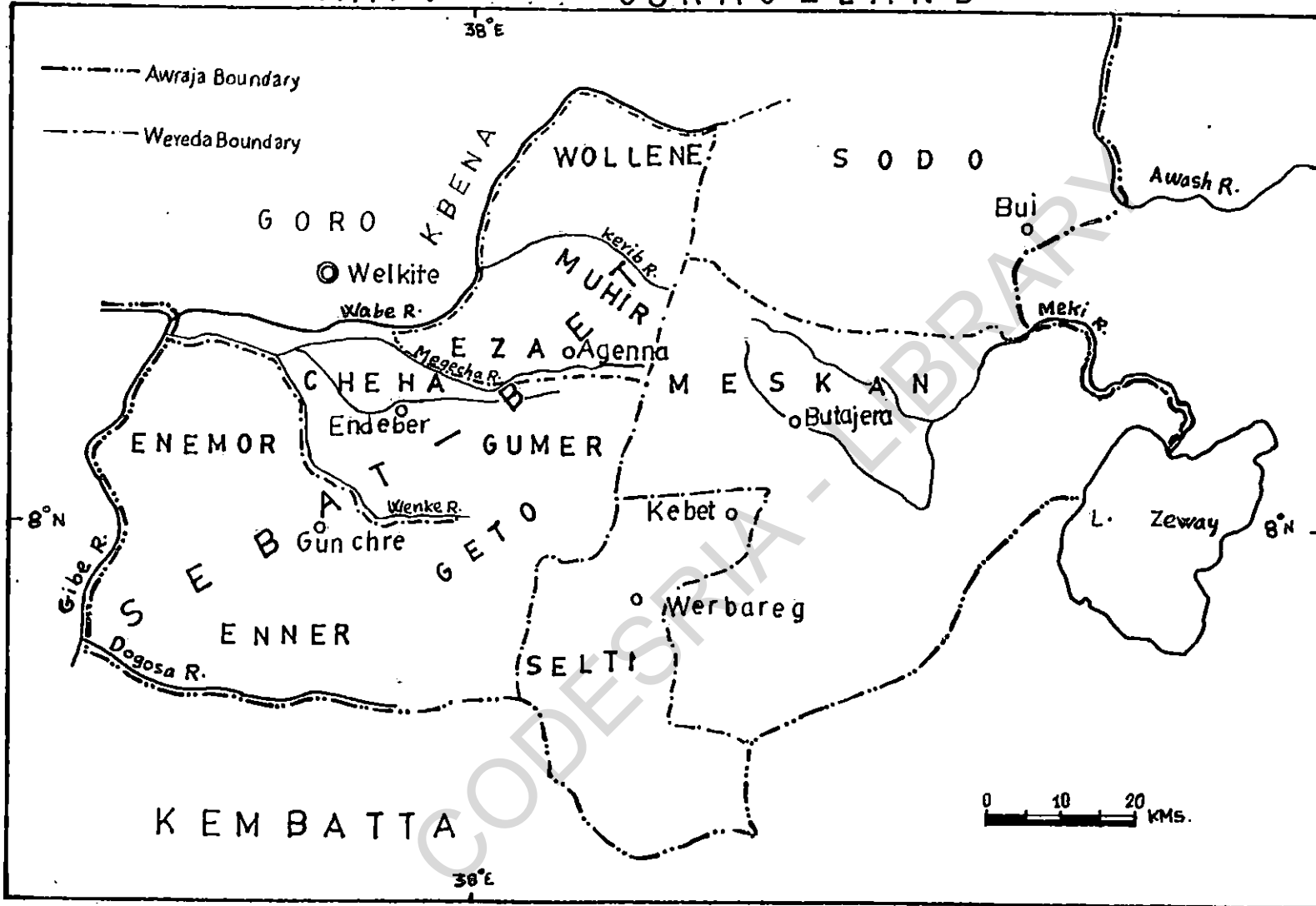
### **1.2.1 The Gurage People and their Area**

This study is concerned with aspects of the migratory experiences of the Gurage people. The Gurage inhabit what Shack (1966:31) has called Gurageland, which is part of the south-Western most range of the Central Ethiopian Plateau. The Gurageland is located in the south and south-east of Addis Ababa between 37 30' and 38 50'E, and 7 46' and 8 45'N (Muluneh 1993:35). Since the 1994 proclamation of regionalisation, Gurageland is found in the Southern Ethiopian People's Administrative Region, particularly the Gurage Zone (see Map I).

Gurageland is bounded by the Rift Valley in the east and north-east, extending as far as Lake Zeway; the rivers Gibe (Omo), and Wab (Rebu), and Awash in the west and northwest, and north; and the Kembatta massifs in the south. The cultural boundaries of the



# MAPI GURAGELAND



Adapted from M. Shack 1966

Gurage are the three sub-sections <sup>of</sup> the Oromo people such as the Mecha, the Tulama and the Arsi in the North, West and East, and the two Cushitic speaking groups of Yem, right across the Gibe, and Kembatta in the West and South, respectively (Shack 1966:4,6,31; Mulūneh 1993:35,37).

The Gurage speak a Semitic language composed of a cluster of dialects. Linguistically, they are divided into three groups: the Northern Gurage, (Aymellel or Sodo), the Eastern Gurage (Silte, Wollene, Zeway, etc), and the Western Gurage, mainly the Sebat-bet, i.e., seven houses or tribes, and Gogot (Meskan). The phrase Sebat-bet is a name given to a tribal confederation formed by the Seven tribes of Gurage long before Menilik II's incorporation of the entire Gurage into the empire. These seven member tribes are: Cheha-Gumer, Muher-Aklil, Maqoqor, Enor-Ener, Geto, and Endagagn (Worku 1990:3-8). For Getnet (1992:32), however, Meger, in lieu of Endagagn, constitutes a member to the Sebat-bet confederation. Shack (1966:4), on the other hand, considered Wollene-Wiro and Aklil, disregarding Maqoqor and Endagagn, as members <sup>of</sup> the confederation. The Sebat-bet Gurage live in the western part of Gurageland, whose boundaries are the people of Wollene in the north, Kontab in the south; Gogot, Alichowiro, Silte and Azernet Berbere in the east; and Yem, across the river Gibe in the West (for detailed and varying accounts on the Western Gurage, see Shack 1966, Worku 1984, 1990, Getnet 1992).

The main focus area of this study is Sebat-bet Gurage, particularly Gumer, which has also traditionally been known as anget-Cheha, i.e., upper Cheha. As part of the Western Gurage, Gumer constitutes a sub-district called Gumer Woreda, which includes the people and areas of Geto, Azernet Berbere, Alichowiro, and Gumer itself.

The Gurage of Sebat-bet have been grouped on the basis of common culture and language. The Western part of Gurageland which is inhabited by the Sebat-bet Gurage is divided according to climate into three different traditional altitude zones. This division corresponds with the three main agronomic zones known as kolla, woina-dega and dega,

which are locally referred to as egirema, gibtedir, and ansawa, respectively. According to Muluneh, kolla (tropical) is defined as an area falling between about 1,040 meters and 1,700 meters above sea level, woinadega (subtropical) as 1,700-2,400 meters above sea level, and dega (temperate) as ranging between 2,400 meters and 3,400 meters above sea level (1993:53).

The amount of annual rainfall in Gurageland is reported to range from 600 mm to 1000 mm in the kolla areas and from 1,000 mm to 1,400 mm in the woina-dega and dega areas within which the majority of Gurageland lies. (Daniel 1977:7,12-14,25; cited in Adhana 1991:3). Others estimated it to have varied between 1,000 mm and 1,524 mm (Kebede Tato, 1964; Ministry of Commerce and Industry cited in Shack, 1966; OCZP, 1987/88, cited in Muluneh 1993:55). Based on available rainfall records at Wolkite, Emdibir, Agenna and Jemboro (Gumer), Muluneh reported that the average annual rainfall varies between 1226.8 mm at Emdibir and 1425.6mm at Jemboro (1993:55), occurring in woina-dega and dega, respectively.

As in the largest part of Central Ethiopian Highlands (such as the former Illubabor, Kaffa, Arsi, Bale and southern Shewa), Gurageland experiences one rainy season of eight months (from March through October) in which most of the rainfall occurs (Daniel 1977:12-14, 25, cited in Adhana 1991:3; Muluneh 1993:55).

The major rainy season in Gurageland is called zer and starts from early June to mid-September and comes after the short period of spring rain (see Table 1 below). The remaining part of the year is dominated by the dry season known as abar. According to Muluneh, more than fifty percent of the total rainfall in Sebat-bet Gurage area occurs in the period of zer and this varies from about forty-seven percent at Jemboro to fifty-six percent at Emdibir, and from about twenty percent to thirty-four percent in the period of autumn and eleven percent to about nineteen percent in spring. Nonetheless, in the period between April and end of August, a bit over seventy-eight percent of the total rainfall occurs. The

rainfall occurrence for the winter constitutes just about six and a half percent of the total annual rainfall for the area (Muluneh 1993:55).

The study area, Sebat-bet Gurage in general, and Gumer Woreda, in particular, is known for its high population density, which was reported by Harris more than 150 years ago (Harris 1844:318, cited in Muluneh 1993:79). Getnet (1992) also noted that high population pressure has been one of the major factors which brought about changes in local Gurage land-use and natural vegetation patterns over time.

This region of the Gurage as a whole is noted to be in the category of the most densely populated regions in the country. As regards population density (defined as persons per square kilometer), Muluneh noted that the two Woredas of Ezhana Wollene and Cheha, his study area, "are comparable to the most densely populated Woredas in enset growing regions such as Kedida Gamela, Kacha Bira (both found in Kembatta and Hadiya) and Damot Gale in Wolayta where population density exceeds 400 persons per square kilometer" (1993:79; citing CSA, 1990). It is not unreasonable to assume that Gumer Woreda which neighbors these two Woredas, has had a similar or even greater, population density.

The population of the Sebat-bet Gurage, who are living in Gumer, Enor and Ener, Cheha and Ezha and Wollene Woredas, constitutes half of the total Gurage population, which is estimated to be over 1.9 million (Belete, 1993, cited in Muluneh 1993:79). According to the 1984 population and housing census returns, the average crude population density for Ezha, Wollene, and Cheha Woreda was 189 persons per square kilometer and this is about 4.8 times the national average. Based on the estimated 2.9 percent growth rate of Ethiopian population (CSO, 1983), Muluneh reported that the average population density increased to about 224.6 persons per square kilometer (1993). The rural density for the two Woredas was estimated at 417 and 387 persons per square kilometer of cultivated land in Ezana Wollene and Cheha, respectively. This is about twice the national average (CSA, 1990; cited in Muluneh 1993:80). Likewise, the study area, Gumer Woreda possibly has a

similar, or an even greater average population density of perhaps up to 500 persons per square kilometer. According to the unpublished report of the Gumer Woreda Office of National Resource Development, the total population of Gumer Woreda, as of September, 1994, was 288, 655, living in a total area of 71,700 hectares.

Furthermore, the results of the 1984 census show that, the population of village Gurage is predominantly rural at 92.6 percent of the total Gurage population. This is even more so when it comes to the Sebat-bet Gurage where the percentage of rural dwellers is "almost 100% in Gumer, 99.64% in Izana Wollene, 99.59% in Innamorna Enar, and 97.6% in Cheha" (OPHCC 1984:26, 53, 55, 56; cited in Adhana 1991:52). The total urban population in Cheha, Enor and Ener, Ezha and Wollene, Gumer, Dalocha, Silti, and Soddo accounts for only 1.36 percent (12,117 people) of the total population. Therefore, "the ruralness of the Gurage home region is in sharp contrast to the urbanity of the Gurage population at the regional (Shewan) and national (Ethiopian) levels, which counted for 13.8% and 22.77% respectively" (Adhana 1991:52).

Similar to other rural Gurage, the major economic practices of the Gumer Gurage are farming and livestock raising. Asat,<sup>1</sup> (also known as false banana), barley, wheat, pulses, potatoes and vegetables such as Gurage-gomen, or "the tree cabbage," constitute the major crops of the area. The cultivation of asat and the raising of cattle constitute the two mainstays of the Gurage economy as a whole. According to Muluneh, asat as a perennial crop in the Sebat-bet area covers "about 61 percent<sup>2</sup> of the cultivated land and is the chief source of food" (1993:178). Wusa made from asat, is the staple food of the Gurage, as is the case for the majority of Southern and Southwestern Ethiopian peoples. It is reported that asat constitutes the most significant "carbohydrate staple and co-staple crop estimated to cover about 132, 834 hectares, providing support for about 20 percent (10-15 million) of the Ethiopian population" (Terefe Belachew, 1993; Seifu Gebremariam, 1993;

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<sup>1</sup> Its scientific name is Ensete Ventricosum (Smeds 1955:19,20)

<sup>2</sup> The range is from 51 percent in dega to about 65 percent in woina-dega

cited in Muluneh 1993:178). Their principal cultivation tool is called maresha, which in the words of Shack (1966:55) is "...the two pronged iron-tipped digging stick". Land is the main production asset in Gurage.

The cultivation of asat is the basis of the rural Gurage's livelihoods and the plant is venerated by the local people. This has been attributed to the specific characteristics of the plant. To start with, asat grows suitably throughout most of Gurageland in general, and Western Gurage area, in particular. Some studies have shown that the plant is widely grown in the country between altitudes of 1,600 and 2,800 meters above sea level. It was also reported that asat is cultivated in the agro-climatic zones, the altitudes of which vary from 1,250 to 3,000 meters above seal level (FAO 1984:47; Smeds, n.d., cited in Adhana 1991:25).

In addition, the crop is known for being a stable and secure source of food. This is so because asat is a single stemmed, mono-cropic perennial, herbaceous and usually large, a "versatile plant" with a remarkable drought resisting capacity (Muluneh 1993:178, 179; Adhana 1991:25; Shack 1966:33-34, 52, 55; Ipcar 1970:48). In discussing the history of the invulnerability of the Gurage peasantry to drought, Adhana described the asat crop as a "dependable buffer against famine. Ensat as an insurance against famine is deeply embedded in popular consciousness" (1991:24). The multiple uses of asat for food, fiber, house construction, household utensils, fuel, medicinal purposes, etc. is another important attribute of the crop. Therefore, despite agro-climatically based variations in cropping patterns, in general, the world outlook, as well as the socio-economic and cultural life of the Gurage is predominantly based on the cultivation of asat to the extent that there has emerged an enset culture, unique in the Ethiopian landscape. Hence, William Shack (1966) identified the region as one of the prominent 'Enset culture' Zones and distinguished the area from any other cultural areas of Ethiopia (Muluneh 1993:179).

As regards the history of asat cultivation by the Gurage, nothing has yet been established as to when and where the Gurage first adopted the crop as a cultigen. Different

writers have held varying explanations for this historical process. According to Shack's report, "A Gurage often believes and says that asat is older than the first Gurage who so ever created the world and Gurageland, provided asat as a blessing to prevent starvation" (1966:55). Therefore, Shack noted that the first Gurage migrants adopted the cultivation of asat from the Sidamos, who are said to have been the indigenous inhabitants and cultivators of the plant before the early Gurage migrants arrived in the area. On the other hand, for Adhana the asat culture might have been brought by the early Gurage migrants to the present Gurageland because asat as a cultigen "has had a great antiquity and had occurred in a much wider area in Ethiopia before it became unique south-western Ethiopia" (Adhana 1991:31; citing Ehret 1979:170,175; Merid Wolde Aregay 1986:116; Simoons 1960:92, 96 Smeds 1955: 293,300).

Be that as it may, it is certain that the crop has succeeded in constituting the crux of the Gurage culture, and in becoming "the strongest competitor in land-use and is continuously encroaching upon annual crop regions of cereals and legumes" (Mulneh 1993:18). Adhana noted that the crop forms the "sinews of the culture of the Gurage peasantry", as a whole and in particular the Western Gurage,

.. have tenaciously clung to the plant, despite the onslaught of the cereal culture (1991:31). Since the time of its incorporation, the south-western Ethiopia has been undergoing a process of "cerealization" with results that appeared "to have impaired the future of the asat culture even as far back as the 1950s. (Adhana 1991:31; citing Simoons 1965:90-91; Olmstead n.d.153; Cerulli 1956:100, 119, 120).

In Gumer Woreda, there are perennial rivers such as the Wera, Ayseche, Winque, Gogobe, Kukuya, Haram and Goyo, although they are not used for purposes of irrigation. However, rainfall is apparently stable and most land is cropped twice in a year, although there are significant internal variations due to agro-climatic conditions. For example, the woina-dega and kolla areas are predominantly asat growing, constituting the least cerealized (influenced by cereal culture) part of western Gurage, in general. Asat constitutes the mono-staple crop except in the upper dega zones where barley, peas and

beans complement it (Muluneh 1993:178). Dega areas on the other hand, are more cerealized, i.e., producing more cereals (barley and wheat) and pulses (peas and beans) than the former. As is described in detail below, this variability of cropping patterns and agricultural production has important implications for the nature, patterns and effects of Gurage urban migration.

The Gurage social, economic as well as religious organizations, are based on the principle of a patrilineal lineage system (Shack 1976:252). The extended family and lineal kin provide the basis for communal labor for agricultural and domestic activities, and for the organization of such tasks. Marriage is usually patrilocal and even among the Orthodox Christian Gurage, polygamous marriage is practiced.

As regards religion, the Gurage have passed through a complex and varied history, whereby Christianity, Islam and traditional beliefs and practices, have been co-existing for centuries (Shack 1966, Worku 1990, 1991, 1992).

Concerning their political structure, the Gurage are one of many acephalous ethnic groups in Ethiopia, without a formal political structure. They have been traditionally administered by a council of elders called Yejoka,<sup>3</sup> which is a pan-Gurage judicial and administrative assembly (Shack 1967; Worku 1990).

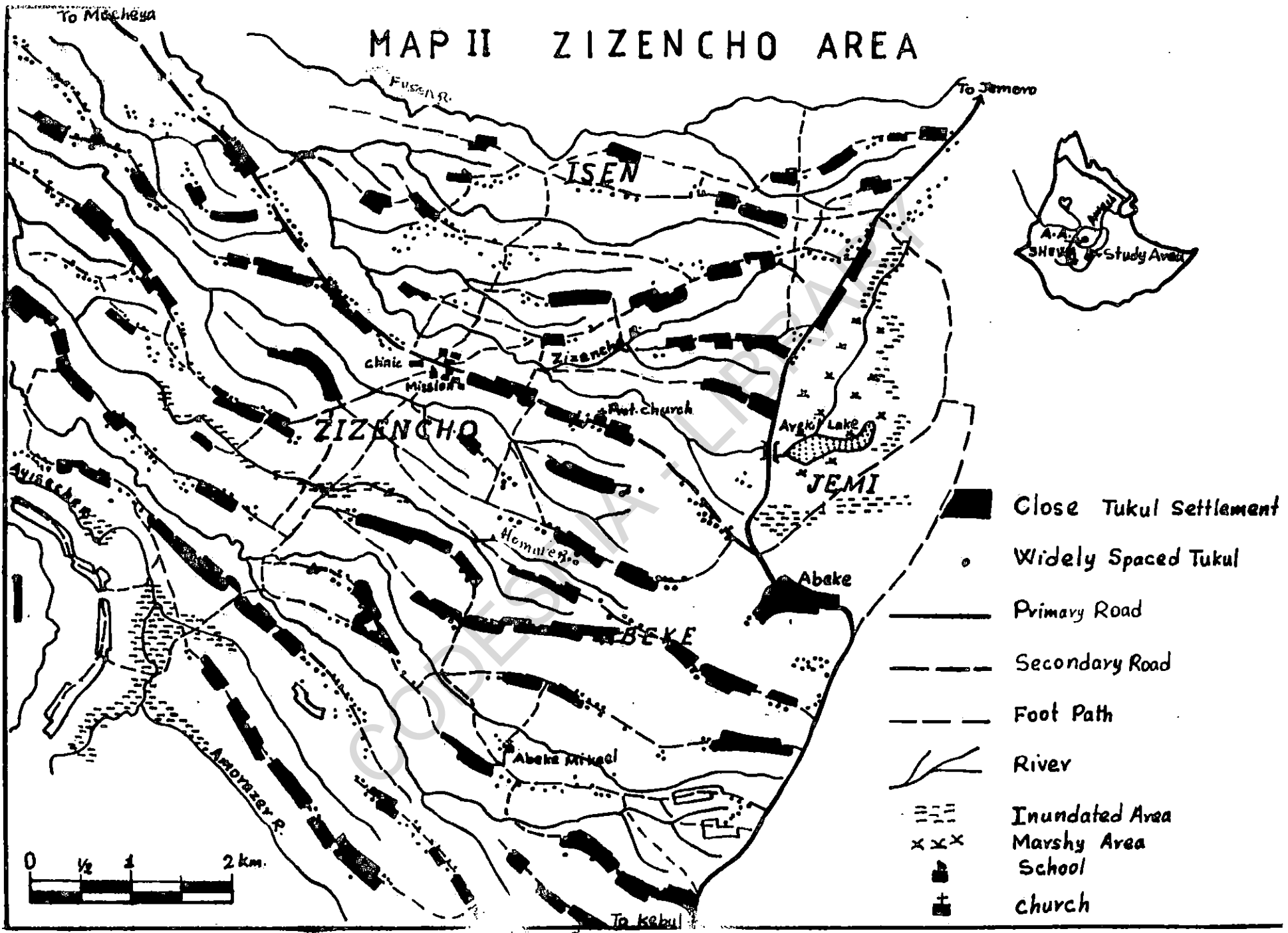
### **1.2.2. Description of Zizencho**

The village of Zizencho is located in Gumer Woreda, Gurage Zone, Southern Ethiopian Peoples' Administrative Region. There are 61 Peasant Associations (PAs) in Gumer and Zizencho and Teredo PA is one of them. Teredo is a neighboring village located south of Zizencho (see Map II). According to the data of the Woreda Offices, the total population of this PA is estimated to be 9,064 and it consists of 1,512 households. A census household survey conducted during the field research period in 1994 revealed that in Zizencho village there are 156 households and the total village population is 794 (see Table

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<sup>3</sup> See the discussion on Yejoka in relation to migration in Chapter IV





Adapted from 1:50,000 Map by the Ethiopian Mapping Authority, 1976.

2). This village is situated an hour walk or 5 kilometers west of Arekit, the administrative center of Gumer Woreda, which is 220 kilometers from Addis Ababa. There is a village called Jame immediately west of Arakit, before reaching Zizencho. The village of Zizencho is bounded by rivers Fuser and Homare in the north and south; and the main path (route) of Wegerdema and Bad village in the east and west respectively. Along the Wegerdema main route, there is a large flat land known as Yefunjawanze. It is a communal grazing land of about 16 different villages, including Zizencho. This communal land is locally known as Yewaq-Afer, meaning "land of Waq", the "sky god" of the Gurage. Waq is one of the three major traditional deities of Sebat-bet Gurage<sup>1</sup> and the Gurage followers believe that land, especially communal land belongs to this deity .

Like other Gurage villages, Zizencho is characterized by clusters of Gurage round houses and behind each house there is a field for the staple crop, asat which is typical of the linear Gurage village settlement pattern. As mentioned earlier, the strong complementarity and integration that has existed between the cultivation of asat and livestock raising, the basis of the Gurage village economy, is exhibited in the village settlement pattern. The village houses are situated in immediate proximity to the staple crop and other perennial farm crops. These houses are "not only human dwellings but also cattle and other livestock pass their nights together with human beings in one house but in separate compartments" (Muluneh 1993:201). Zizencho is a big village divided into three small settlements. These are called Nan-Zizencho, Gebit-Zizencho, and Tat-Zizencho. These prefixes, Nan, Gebit and Tat in Guragegna mean upper, middle and lower respectively. Accordingly, there are three different Idirs also locally known as Yegen Sera,<sup>2</sup> each having its own head called Yesera-Dane. These Seras are local institutions that have social (burial, mourning), cultural (house construction, weddings) and administrative functions in the villagers' lives.

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<sup>1</sup> For discussions of Gurage deities, see Worku 1992, 1991, 1990.

<sup>2</sup> Village burial association

According to the respective Yesera-Dane, there are 49, 48, and 72 member households in upper, middle and lower Zizencho respectively.

There are a few households which belong to more than one Sera in other villages but none within Zizencho, as these three sub-divisions are made on the basis of the number of households in Zizencho. According to the informants, in the past this village used to be inhabited by the Selti and was named after a Selti Gurage man called Zizencho. The Gumer Gurage are said to have pushed the Selti<sup>3</sup> to eastern Gurageland, where they are now living and replaced the latter in Zizencho and other neighboring areas in Gumer Woreda. Before they fought and pushed the Selti out of Zizencho and the neighboring areas, the forefathers of the present day Zizencho villagers inhabited an area further west of Zizencho in the present villages of Yagesh, Yegore, Yabeze, Wagapacha and the like.

At present, the inhabitants of Zizencho belong to five different tibs, the local name for clans: Yegebriateb, Mazahur, Yeren-Adeya (Selti), Yewaqeseb, and Yenfashetab. Members of Yegeberateb and Mazahur are the majority and the rest constitute the minority in the village. Of all these clans within Zizencho, Yegeberiateb is said to be the dominant clan in terms of political village leadership, as well as economically in traditional land possession. However, both Yegebriateb and Mazahur together with Yinequamet and Yirasteb are considered the major clans in Gumer. The very small minority of the present day Selti villagers perhaps constitute the remains of the historic large Selti settlement in Zizencho. There is only one head of household who belongs to the Yinequamet clan, the sixth clan in the village. In the past when intra-clan wars were common in the area, traditional warriors from both Yegeberiateb and Mazahur clans are said to have played prominent roles in several battle fields. Agaz Sifeno Mender of Yegebriateb and Agaz Shuremo of Mazahur are mentioned by the informants as excellent cases in point.

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<sup>3</sup> The Selti are also known by the Sebat-bet Gurage as Yeren-Adeya, meaning Upper Adeya (Hadiya) in contrast to Yete-Adeya, meaning Lower Adeya (Hadiya), referring to the Qebena.

As regards religion, the villagers are composed of the followers of Christianity (Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant), Islam and local traditional beliefs and practices such as Waq, i.e., the sky-god, Bozha, i.e, thunder-god, and Demuamawit, i.e., the fertility-goddess of the Gurage. There is one Catholic and two Protestant churches in Zizencho.

Concerning social services, there is an elementary school and a clinic, both named after the village, Zizencho. These services are said to have been first established by an American missionary called Havard Brant, who led the Sudan Interior Missionary (S.I.M.) a Protestant mission in the village. According to the informants, a man called Colonel Wolde Gebriel<sup>4</sup> is said to have contacted and influenced Mr. Havard in order to carry out missionary activities in Zizencho. The school and clinic were established 24 years ago. At the beginning students were accepted for third grade and then in 1970, 1971, and 1972/73 for fourth, fifth and sixth grades, respectively. The school program was run by S.I.M. until Mr. Havard was forced to leave the area by the local Derg authorities in 1976/77. In 1977/78 the School was transferred to the Ministry of Education (MOE) and since then students have been accepted from first to sixth grades. According to the Principal of Zizencho school, there are a total of 600 students currently enrolled in the school.

The Zizencho clinic was also established and run by the S.I.M., and later was transferred to the Ministry of Health (MOH) in 1976/77. Currently the Office of Gumer Woreda health department is located near this clinic in Zizencho, while all of the other Woreda offices are located in Arakit town. According to the head of the Woreda health department office, there are four clinics in Gumer Woreda: Zizencho, Bole (Arakit), Kutere, and Migo. Whereas Zizencho was opened by the S.I.M., as mentioned earlier, the remaining three clinics were established by the joint activities of both migrants and local Gurage of the respective areas. These clinics provide, in the words of the head, "integrated health services" such as vaccinations, contraceptives, treatment for emergencies, antenatal care and delivery services, and education concerning family planning, HIV/AIDS,

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<sup>4</sup> Who belongs to Yegeberiateb clan and himself a migrant now living in Debre-Zeit town

environmental cleanliness and so on. There is no health center, or hospital in the whole of Gumer Woreda.

Settled agriculture forms the economic base of the village. For the most part, like other rural Gurage, the Zizencho villagers depend on farming and livestock raising. Land is the major component of wealth, and asat and cattle constitute the mainstay of the villagers' livelihood. This reality of the Gurage village life is very well expressed by one respected elder.<sup>5</sup>

Ser-bene Eram ene,  
Eram bene asast ene,  
asat bene Seb ene,

This may be translated as "If there is no grass, there is no cattle. If there is no cattle, there is no asat; (and) if there is no asat, there is no human being." Thus, without grass (land) one cannot raise cattle and if cattle do not get enough grass it is difficult to obtain animal dung to manure the land for growing asat. Animal dung is the most effective traditional fertilizer used to replenish the fertility of asat and other farms. "The problem of soil impoverishment is countered by the use of manure, hence enset culture as a necessity is always combined with pastoral industry" (Muluneh 1993:201; Smeds 1956:39). Without asat-food, life is very difficult for the traditional Gurage villagers. Therefore, land, asat and cattle are considered by the local people themselves to be essential elements for the Gurage village communities. In the Sebat-bet Gurage area, over seventy different types of asat with local names were identified by the Gurage peasants (Worku 1993:3-5). There are many different types of asat plants and Zizencho village is said to be well known for such asat varieties throughout the Gumer area.

The villagers in Zizencho also grow different types of potatoes with varying local names such as yegurage, yehosana, yeshashemene dinicha, meaning potatoes from Gurage, Hosana (Kambata and Hadiya), and Shashemene respectively. The latter two have been

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<sup>5</sup> This saying was originally by Grazimach Wolde Michael, who lives in Cheha, and the researcher was told it by Azmach Wegefu, 38 years old, who is also from Cheha

introduced by the migrants. Cereals such as barely and wheat, and pulses (peas and horse beans) are produced in this village.

In summarizing the basic economic activities of the village, it is very important to introduce and discuss the local Gurage calendar. This discussion of the local calendar will also have significant implications for the descriptive analyses of Gurage migratory experiences in the ensuing chapters. This is because the main characteristics of migration, illustrated below, are closely linked with varying seasons of agricultural production and/or cropping patterns which are in turn determined by the agro-climatic as well as soil conditions of the area.

The Gurage have their own calendar called Yegurage kere as distinct from Yamara kere, i.e., the Amhara calendar, which is the national Ethiopian calendar. This indigenous Gurage calendar has 12 months of 30 days each, and one month of 5 or 6 days for a year (see Table 1 below). The local terms for a year, month, week, and day are zeber, bene, samit and kere respectively. Each month of zeber has its own local name. The new year begins on the first of the month Yedar (mid-September) and ends on the last of the month Tirkimit (August). A year is divided into four major seasons of three months each, locally called gor: mehena, abar, werwer and zer. However, Shack in this respect appears misinformed because he stated that "There are two seasons in the year, the wet, rainy season-zer, beginning in April (Sareya), and the hot, dry season-abar, beginning in September (Yedar)" (1966:32).

Accordingly, there are socio-economic activities typical of each season. In mehena (Yedar, Mesha, Tirere, i.e., September, October and November), the main activity is harvesting of asat-decorticating, pulverizing, and preparing the wusa food and storing it in a pit-hole. Shack also described this as:

Harvesting precedes the stages of planting since space required for planting new crops is made available only after matured growths have been harvested. Hence, the agricultural season actually begins at harvest, the beginning of a new year in the Gurage calendar (1966:59).

**Table 1: The Gurage Calendar and Pertinent Activities by Month.**

(This table mainly refers to the villagers' activities in the highland areas such as Gumer)

Activities	Gurage months	<u>Yidar</u>	<u>Meshe</u>	<u>Tirir</u>	<u>Mengese</u>	<u>Wetto</u>	<u>Munziya</u>	<u>Girmuat</u>	<u>Serya</u>	<u>Amire</u>	<u>Nase</u>	<u>Mesihero</u>	<u>Tirikimt</u>
	Equivalent Months	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.
Asat		V	H, Pr, S	H, Pr, S	S,P,C	P, C	C						
Potato					P	P, W	P, W				H	H	H
Cereals & pulses					H, Cl	H, Cl, T	T		Pl	Pl	Pl, So	Pl, So	W
Eucalyptus		Ct	Ct	Ct							P	P	
Bamboos		Ct	Ct	Ct							P		
Local cabbage		H	H	H							P		W
Fencing		F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Bunding							B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Migration		Rm Om	Om	Om Rm	Rm Om	Om	Om	Om	Om	Om	Rm	Rm	Rm
House construction							Hc	Hc	Hc				
Festivals		Me		Ch		Se, Ni							
Weddings		We-p											

**Keys**

H = harvesting  
 Pr = processing asat  
 S = storing wusa food  
 P = planting  
 C = cultivation  
 T = threshing  
 Cl = collecting

Pl = plowing  
 So = sowing  
 Ct = cutting  
 W = weeding  
 Rm = return-migration  
 Om = out-migration  
 Me = Meskal, marks the end of rains

We-p = peak time for weddings  
 Ni = Nipuar  
 Ch = Chist  
 Se = Sencha  
 B = Bunding  
 F = Fencing  
 V = Vegetation

These activities involved in processing asat are mainly undertaken by women and the local name for the process is wisacha. Thus this season is known locally as Yeshta-gor, i.e., the "season of women's activities". The informants noted that this is the only appropriate time to prepare asat food because the harvestable asat plants should be harvested before the dry season comes and harms the plants. Also, by doing so, space is made available for future transplanting of younger asat plants. This is so because the harvesting and planting gors "are practically consecutive and there is little time for leisure between them" (Shack 1966:63). In addition, the wusa prepared at this time is considered by the local people to be of the best quality. Men's main activities during this particular period are uprooting the matured plants and preparing the harvested asat for the women to start decorticating, as well as propagating the asat plant traditionally called fonefu-werete.<sup>1</sup>

The next season is abar (Mengese, Wetto, and Manzeya, i.e., December, January and February). Menges<sup>e</sup> constitutes the peak month for agricultural activities mainly carried out by gemeya (the local term for men) and is locally known as Yegemeya-gor, "season of men's work", although women play a considerable part in the process. As the harvesting of asat plants is a precondition for other activities, it follows the transplanting of asat to four different stages of the asat plant. Then the asat field is cultivated. Preparing the soil and planting potatoes, and harvesting the cereals and pulses (collecting, threshing and storing) are all activities undertaken during this time. For the villagers, this period is considered to be the happiest because all kinds of food are abundant and people are content. In relation to this, there is a Guragegan saying: Mengese mer anene, i.e., "What does Mengese not have", in other words, in Mengese you have everything. The seasons of mehena and abar are characterized by hot and/or dry weather.

The third season is werwer (Girmuat, Sereya and Amire, i.e., March, April and May) which is a relatively slack agricultural period. This time is wet and characterized by

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<sup>1</sup> "The propagation of asat by its vegetative parts, rather than by seeds, is a distinctive feature of the asat culture. The cultivated variety of enset plants are seed-sterile or only slightly fertile" (Shack 1966:60).



the occurrence of small rains. The main activities carried out during this period are preparing and collecting building materials and constructing houses.

The fourth season is zer, a very rainy period (Nase, Meshero, and Tirkimit, i.e., June, July and August) which is agriculturally another peak period for the villagers. In this season, the month of Tirkimit is referred to as the worst in terms of food supply and quite the opposite of Mengese. During this time, soil is ploughed, tilled and prepared for sowing. Cereals and pulses are sown. Seedlings of trees such as eucalyptus and pine are planted. The two seasons of zer (also alternatively known as Nase) and that of Mengese are agriculturally the most important periods. The particularly important months of Nase and Mengese are interchangeably used both as months and seasons in reference to zer and abar respectively. This is because most activities such as cultivation, harvesting, planting, transplanting and sowing of the main staple food crops (asat and cereals as well as pulses) are undertaken during this period. Concerning the zer season, there is saying in Guragegan: "Benase nesa beqote", i.e., "during Nase a dead body (corpse) is kept on scaffolding". This implies that this time is the busiest, so busy with agricultural practices that they are unable even to bury the deceased. According to the villagers, using time properly is essential because differences in days even between mornings and afternoons, or late afternoons have significant implications for agricultural productivity. The idea is to do things on time, otherwise as the Guragegna saying goes: gor yequashen gor yeresan, i.e. "things that are not carried out in their gor (seasons) are lost cases till the next appropriate gor comes." As is depicted in detail below, the Nase and Mengese seasons are the times during which a shortage of labor, mainly due to out-migration and the hiring of agricultural labor, are most common. These are also periods of widespread urban-rural interactions in the village as there is a lot happening in terms of the role of remitted money and the visiting migrants back in the village.

Land is an essential aspect of these agricultural practices and the basis of local Gurage economy as a whole. In the past, land was considered as clan-land used by the

members of the clan in question. Individual members had user-rights to the land. But when they wanted to pass it over to others in the form of contract or sale, they were required to give priority to their own kin. However, since the land reform proclamation, land was taken from those who had more land and was distributed by the PAs among the persons who had a small amount of land. According to my informants, despite the land reform and the consequent distribution of land, the 1975 land reform proclamation brought about a shortage of land in the village. This is because a lot of migrants (both those who were married and permanently settled in urban settings and those unmarried and unsettled ones) have come back and shared land with the villagers. Most of them did this either themselves or through their wives as they did not want to lose their rural claims. To this effect, some migrants brought their wives from towns to the village whereas others formed multiple unions by getting married to new wives to keep their shares of land in the village.

As a result, unlike in the past, these days few individuals own one wedere<sup>2</sup> of land in Zizencho. There are households which are living on even 2-3 zher of land. The local informants noted that before the 1975 land reform proclamation, some of the villagers were cultivating both with their hands (using a maresha) and ploughing with oxen, especially for cereal cultivation. These days, however, for the most part, they cultivate using maresha and cultivation is carried out mostly by men with their hands, as there is no longer enough land for individuals to employ an oxen-driven plough.

In Zizencho, trade is another means of subsistence. Usually, people engage in trade as a supplementary activity to farming. Trading in various items such as coffee, salt, different spices, wusa, cereals, flour and other agricultural produce is predominantly the domain of women. Men trade in cattle, horses, mules and wood. As a result of such commercial activities of the villagers, there is a degree of inter and intra village mobility. In addition to the two large local sub-markets of Bole and Kabul in Gumer and Geto respectively, there is a small market in the village called Zizencho gebeya, which is held

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<sup>2</sup> Local measurement of land which equals 12 zher, and a zher is equivalent to 12 arms (about a meter)

thrice in a week, on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays. Women are the main actors in this small market, and the villagers call it Yeshita-gebeya, i.e. "women's market".

One interesting aspect of trade in the area, as described below, is the sale of eucalyptus wood. The growing of eucalyptus trees is perhaps the most commercialized agricultural activity undertaken in the village. According to the informants, this tree is widely grown and is expanding even at the expense of the asat plant, as it is encroaching on the limited land used to grow the main subsistence crop. The tree is grown merely for sale and traders with lorries come to the village to buy and transport the wood to various urban centers, mainly to Addis Ababa. Trading in this wood is said to be men's specialty. This commercialization has a lot to do with out-migration, particularly to urban areas. The eucalyptus tree was first introduced by the first generation Gurage migrants, who were involved in planting this tree in Addis Ababa and its surroundings (see Chapter III below, for a detailed discussion). Urban migration has become an important aspect of village life in Zizencho, as will be discussed in detail in the following chapters.

### 1.2.3 The Fanonet Phenomenon

The process of out-migration is locally described as fanonet, while the out-migrants are referred to as fano. The term fano means different things for different persons. During the research period, I was given different definitions of the word fano by various informants, four of which are presented as follows.

For Agaz Habte, 80 years old, who has never-migrated himself, and is one of the most respected elders in the whole of Sebat-bet Gurage, fano means:

Those migrants who are engaged in trading, or other work in Shewa (towns) and circulate between the towns and villages of their destinations and origins respectively.

Another key informant, Hediro Mashewe, 80 years old, now a returnee, who was a fano himself forty years ago said:

A fano is a person who lives and works in Addis Ababa or in any other town, or oscillates between the towns and villages, whether or not they have a job in towns, or working in tej houses, trading in towns and employed in different types of work. Whosoever goes to ketemas (towns), or other rural areas (including the Sidamo region, where he used to go as a fano) is a fano.

According to this definition, however briefly a migrant leaves his or her village for urban and/or rural areas, whatever business they engage in, whichever places they go to, and for whatever purposes they are a fano, an out-migrant.

Bilatu Gebre, 35, a returnee, who completed his schooling through 12 grade in Nazareth a decade ago, described the meaning of fano as a person:

Who goes to and works in towns, circulates between the rural and urban areas, and is keteme (urbanite). Those people who live in towns permanently and often visit their parents or relatives in the village are also fanos. (In addition), persons who leave their villages temporarily for job (elsewhere) and come back with money are fanos.

Likewise, Imam Kemal, who is 50 years old and a returnee himself defined the term fano as a person's movement from his/her home village for work in far places and towns.

He said the term means:

To enter in towns and become civilized. Those Gurage who have left their villages of origin for ketemas (towns) in order to improve their lives and themselves from the backward life style, both on a seasonal and/or a permanent basis, are called fano. No matter which towns they go to, they are referred to as fano. Even those Gurage who go temporarily as guests to visit their kin in towns, and come back to the villages being improved and better dressed, are told by the villagers, 'you have become fanos' referring to their change of dress (clothes); as they wear new clothes like the fano.

On the other hand, Imam Kemal noted that those persons who are not migrating for the purposes of seeking jobs in towns are actually not referred to as fano. For Kemal those villagers who leave their home villages for educational reasons or are recruited to join the government armies are not fano. Also, those rural destined migrants who "leave the

villages, carrying their tools such as maresha, and sickle, for agricultural wage work in other rural areas" are not considered to lie within the fanonet category.

Furthermore, it has been found difficult to establish whether or not the term fano is a Guragegna word. It seems that, as a result of their interactions with the Amhara, the Gurage might have borrowed the term from the Amharic word fanno<sup>3</sup> and applied it to the phenomenon of out-migration. This notion of Gurage-Amhara interaction as the origin of the word fano was noted by one informant, Melese Neri 55 years old, who is a return migrant himself. According to Melese, the early Gurage migrants had to move as war captives and later as servants or followers of the Amhara Merkene and stay away for over a couple of years without visiting their villages. "Because of the long absence of our fathers from their home villages, they were referred to as fanos and then this word has become the name for all Gurage out-migrants during the later times".

Be that as it may, this shows that most villagers use the term fano in reference to both rural-urban and/or rural-rural migrants. Also, as will be discussed in detail below (see Chap. II and III), the rural-rural types of fanos have been involved in the process since the earliest periods onwards. They were moving initially to Addis Ababa and its surrounding areas, and then, after the Italian occupation period (1935-41), to other regions such as Sidamo, Gamu Gofa, Kaffa, Bale, Arsi, Kambata, etc., in addition to their former destinations mentioned above. There they became engaged as wage laborers in different on-farm activities: preparing the soil, planting eucalyptus trees, cutting fodder (Hovarth 1968; Pankhurst 1968:48-49, 269; Garretson 1974:201) working on coffee farms, etc. Those types of fanos have constituted a substantial portion of the current phenomenon of Gurage fanonet. Not only the non-migrating villagers but also the rural destined migrants themselves have employed the word fano in describing their rural-rural type migratory experiences.

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<sup>3</sup> Fanno in Amharic, according to Desta's Amharic Dictionary (1969/70:992) means, "a person who campaigns without a leader, who campaigns on his/her own will, who is woyane; is thirsty for fighting or war."

Therefore, it is implied that for the Gurage villagers the term fano conceptually refers both to those who migrate to urban areas and those who are rural-rural, despite the characteristic differences that have existed between the two in terms of both their streams and their occupations within their communities of destination.

It is interesting to point out that this lack of differentiation between the two types of fanos, rural-urban and rural-rural, has presumably emanated from the early rural-type features of Addis Ababa as a capital city of a relatively un-industrialized and/or un-urbanized country, Ethiopia. During the initial period, together with its surroundings, Addis Ababa constituted (and still does) the only major magnetic source of attraction for the first generation of Gurage urban migrants. Until the Italian occupation period (1935-41), the job opportunities that were available for in-migrants like the Gurage in Addis Ababa, were not essentially different from the work available to the migrants in their home villages of origin. As is explained below, the Gurage were engaged mainly in on-farm activities, which may be described as "urban agriculture" (to use Baker and Poul's phrase (1992:25). Several other writers also commented on the rural features of Addis Ababa. For instance, Shack wrote:

The machinery of industrialization has yet to be put into high gear, and it cannot be concluded that urbanization, given its full sociological meaning, has developed in Addis Ababa solely on the basis of ethnic heterogeneity and geographical size. In Redfield's terms, Addis Ababa is a 'folk society' based on a market economy; socially and economically it is undifferentiated from any other large market town in Ethiopia. Thus the question is not to what extent an urban industrial system has influenced a tribal system like the Gurage's, but to what extent one social system, whose economy is based on the land, has affected another social system having a land-based economy (1966:202).

Since the first generation Gurage urban migrants who were involved in farming tasks similar to village farm activities were referred to as fanos, it appears that as a result of the legacy of these early Gurage urban migratory experiences, the later generations of migrants, including those who are rural destined and engaged in agricultural activities, are still referred to by the same term fano like the ones who are urban destined and engaged in

essentially off-farm occupations. Therefore, based on the villagers' perceptions, the farm fanonet is broadly defined and used in this study to refer to the phenomenon of Gura labor migration (both urban and/or rural destined), although urban migration constitutes the predominant theme of the thesis.

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## Chapter II Fanonet in Zizencho (Gurage)

### 2.1. History

The specific characteristics of Gurage urban migration, fanonet in general, and those of Zizencho in particular, have been significantly affected by three major historical as well as socio-economic events. The conquest by Emperor Menilik of the Gurage and their land in 1888, which was followed by the establishment of a Merkene-Gebar relationship and the birth of Addis Ababa, constituted the first turning point in the history of Gurage urban migration, as it "marks the beginning of the urbanization of the Gurage..." (Baker 1992:128). The second major historical event that had important implications for the fanonet experiences of the Gurage was the Italian occupation. For reasons to be described below, the construction of the Gurage roads and schools has constituted the third major socio-economic event that provided great motivation for Gurage fanonet.

Gurage fanonet evolved as a result of interactions between the internal and external structural forces of those major events that formed the context for migration from the late 19th century through the era of the Italian occupation and the Gurage Roads Construction Association until the present time. Thus, taking those events as landmarks, the whole Gurage fanonet history could be divided into three periods: early: 1888-1935, middle: 1936-1966, and contemporary: 1967 - until the present. I call those fanos who started to migrate during the early, middle and contemporary periods, the first, second and third generation migrants, respectively.

#### 2.1.1 Early Period

Like other rural Gurage, the history of the fanonet experiences of the Zizencho villagers began with Menilik's incorporation of the Gurage and their land. Although the Gurage resisted and fought against the expanding forces of Menilik II for more than a decade, they were finally defeated by his forces in the battle of Jebdu in 1888. This final



conquest resulted in the establishment of new military garrisons in various strategic sites in Gurageland, where Menilik II's soldiers were stationed. These soldiers were called Merkene or Amara (i.e. Amhara) by the local people and the garrisons were referred to as ketema. The Merkene, or Neftegna (i.e. riflemen) are said to have been composed mainly of the Amhara, Tigre, Oromo and even some Gurage<sup>1</sup>. The ketemas eventually evolved to become administrative centers for the Merkene and were widespread throughout Sebat-bet Gurage. Such ketema in Sebat-bet Gurage included Cheza Sefer and Yeshehara in Muher and Aklil, Astazer, Quetana and Yewadeya in Ezha, Daquna, Yedoregebeya and Yaradashe (Jatu) in Chaha; Sarzegeba in Enor and Ener, Agata and Zara in Geto; and Jemboro and Abeke in Gumer<sup>2</sup>.

This historical phenomenon brought about a new structural relationship, the Merkene (Neftegna)-Gebar, i.e. riflemen-tribute payer, which subjected the predominant majority of the Gurage to the status of gebar. Thus, the hitherto free subsistence agriculturist Gurage were obliged to pay tribute and to provide other services including forced labor to the Merkene. The tribute, locally known as gibir, was initially payable in kind. It is commonly believed that the Gurage gebars were not able to pay tribute in their staple crop asat (Shack 1966:72; Label 1974:104; Garretson 1974:210; Marcus 1974:634, 335; Adhana 1991:59; Baker 1992:128). However, throughout the Sebat-bet Gurage area, the tithe was paid in wusa (asat food) over at least the first decade or so.<sup>3</sup>

Initially, the tithe was paid in wusa, which was said to have been called qita by the Merkene. Therefore those Merkene who received qita as tithe were referred to as qita-

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Basha Yemiru, who headed the Merkene in Enor and Ener, was an Enor Gurage himself and in former times was captured by Menilik II's soldiers and then recruited into the army. However, such persons who were recruited into the Imperial army, were also called Merkene, or Amhara, even though they were Gurage by birth.

<sup>2</sup> The heads of the Merkene were Fitaweraris Gebeyehu Buayalew, Teferedegn Zewdu, and Asegede for Gumer, Ezha and Chaha; Dejazmachs Beshah Aboye and Balcha Chacha for Geto and Aklil; and Basha Yemiru and Grazmach Garedeu for Enor and Ener and Muher, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> The following has been found through interviews conducted seven years ago with the native Gurage and the living Merkene elders throughout the Sabet-Bet Gurage. Accordingly, the fact that gibir was initially paid in wusa was found to be common knowledge amongst the elders in the area.

beli, i.e. those who eat qita in Amharic. It is said that a gebar was expected to provide every day one piece of baked wusa with zimuamogat, i.e. boiled local cabbage prepared with cheese and butter, for the Merkene in charge. This payment was supervised by the chiqa shums, appointed village headmen. The payment of qita tithe, locally known as yewusa gibir reportedly lasted for seven years, until the battle of Adwa in 1896. It was noted by the informants that gebars reportedly prepared tithe wusa from poorer quality wusa, locally known as tikurye<sup>1</sup>, or jiba. Also, the gebars were said to have included horse dung, ash, lime, and pieces of snake in the tithe wusa in order to poison the food.<sup>2</sup> This was one way of protesting against Merkene rule, and as a result a number of Merkene died and many became sick. Then, the Merkene became aware of this risk<sup>3</sup> and the gebars were required to eat a bite of the wusa gibir they brought before it was received by the Merkene.

However, this did not continue for long, since after the battle of Adwa, the wusa gibir was entirely replaced by grain tithe. Thus, the gebars were obliged to pay five quna of adef tetiru, i.e. which meant poor and good quality grains.<sup>4</sup> Grain tithe was payable in three quna of barley, one quna of tef (which was a must), and one quna of peas or wheat per month. The annual requirement was sixty qunas of adef tetiru grain. In addition, the gebars had to pay four Maria Theresa birr a year which was locally known as yeserya qershi as it was paid annually in the month locally known as Serya, i.e. April. Finally, the annual payments included thirty loads of fodder, three loads of fuel wood, a twenty-arm long ropes made of asat fiber, year gibir, i.e. cattle tithe which was a payment consisting of a specific amount of butter locally called yewanacha qib, and some honey. This list is not exhaustive. The gebars were also obliged to provide labor services, such as fencing, house

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<sup>1</sup> Meaning dark

<sup>2</sup> From this historic interaction, wusa food which is not well-prepared became referred to as yamara wusa, i.e. wusa of Amhara.

<sup>3</sup> Some suspected Gurage gebars were executed and/or detained by their Merkene lords.

<sup>4</sup> Barley was considered to be of poor quality, whereas tef, peas and wheat were good quality cereals and pulses.

construction, collecting fodder and fuel-wood, pounding grain, looking after the cattle and mules of their Merkene lords<sup>1</sup>, and accompanying their lords during military campaigns as well as on trips to Addis Ababa. During military campaigns, the gebars had to accompany their lords and they were asked to cast lots. Those who drew the accompanying lot were expected to wage a military campaign, whereas those who did not draw the lot were obliged to pay two Maria Theresa thalers.<sup>2</sup> If a gebar failed to meet any of the above obligations, the gebar was detained and even chained by the feet until he fulfilled his requirements.

Moreover, the gebars were obliged to carry and/or transport some of the annual tribute items to Addis Ababa, such as butter, sheep, bulls and heifers for annual festivities; rope, and other items desired by the Merkene in the capital. The gebars had to do this in turn and rotation was according to the chiqa shum's division. During these periods they were said to have stayed in Addis Ababa for 2-3 months, providing labor services as well. For instance, the informants noted that much rope was transported when Fitawerari Habte Giorgis constructed his house and about fifty sheep per village headman were also taken to the teskar i.e. mourning ceremony, of his wife.

Therefore, the Gurage fanonet experiences could not simply be explained in terms of the need for resources to pay tribute. It was much more complex than this and the situations varied over time. To begin with, as explained above, the tithe was payable in asat for at least the first seven years. At this stage (and well beyond it), the Gurage were forced to migrate unwillingly by the requirement to provide corvee labor in the capital but not due to any inability to pay the tithe with their local products.

This Gurage labor, along with that of other ethnic groups, was indispensable to the development of the capital, Addis Ababa, for leveling the surrounding hills, as well as house and road construction. The Gurage were engaged in the process as carpenters, masons, daily laborers, and porters and carriers of necessary building materials (such as

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<sup>1</sup>locally known as yetiyet bukure, i.e. bullet mules.

<sup>2</sup>This kind of tribute was locally known as yemehitya qes or vezemacha feri, i.e. payment of the cowards (of military campaigns).

grass, wood, stones and sand) brought from distant locations. Moreover, during the establishment of Addis Ababa, the capital was to be transferred to Addis Alem due to the acute problem of shortage of wood for construction and fuel. The Gurage laborers prevented Addis Ababa from dying out as a capital, as they played a leading role in preparing the land, in providing basic resources such as fuel wood, and in planting eucalyptus trees; in performing the maintenance for the trees, in cutting and preparing the mature trees for fuel and construction purposes; and in transporting the wood to the city. As such, they made the wood that was desperately needed for fuel and construction purposes available for the urban dwellers.

Then, it was after the gebars were obliged to pay the tribute in grain, instead of wusa gibir that more Gurage were forced to engage in the fanonet experiences. The fact that, unlike the grains such as tef, wheat, peas and barley, the staple subsistence crop asat was of far less exchange value is worth discussing at this point. The tribute was made payable only in grains such as barley, tef, wheat and peas, and crops like tef and wheat were not traditional Gurage products. The informants have attributed the beginning of fanonet first to providing corvee labor and then to this tribute payment solely in grains.

Thus, the Gurage had to fulfill what was required of them through other means such as providing labor and military services in the imperial armies and later buying grains. Eventually, the Gurage opted to leave their villages for urban areas in order to obtain the necessary cash for paying the tax.

The fact that the Gurage fanonet experiences evolved as a result of interactions between those internal and external structural forces which formed the context for out-migration, has been described by my informants, whose life histories I recorded during my fieldwork. The following is some of the account of one of my oldest return migrant informants called Ato Hediro Mashewe.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> He is 80 years old and was one of the fanos during the Italian occupation and his father was one of the first fanos in the earlier period. He remembers what his father and others told him about their town experiences as one of the earliest fanos from the area.

To begin with (the) Gurage started to migrate to Shewa<sup>1</sup> as a result of the Amhara gebar relationship. As my father told me, (the) Gurage urban experiences began with the obligations from Merkene. When the Merkene would go to Shewa, the gebar servants had to provide company to their lords. The gebar servants would carry their lord's luggage such as rifles, food, clothes, sleeping materials and all other things. They used a bamboo which would be split into four pieces from one end and wrapped with asat fiber from the other end in order to prevent further splitting to carry the luggage which would be attached to one end of the bamboo wood. The gebars would carry all these things walking and following their lords all the way from the village to Shewa, while the lords would ride horses or mules. Once they arrived in Shewa, our fathers (the gebars) were not allowed to stay in their lord's houses with them during the night. Rather, they would stay outside the house in the homestead. They had to provide services to their lords in Shewa, too. They would meet the obligations of cutting grass, collecting fodder, chopping and carrying wood, ploughing and tilling the land, fencing and building houses, planting trees, working as guards, carrying objects and other tasks as well. When their Merkene lords wanted to return to the village (Gurage), the gebars would provide similar company on the journey back to Gurage.

I feel bad when I remember the sufferings and horrifying times of our fathers during the Amhara (Merkene) rule. What bad things did the Merkene not do to (the) Gurage? They were forced to do everything for the Merkene lords. Even as I grew up, I remember that we had to collect wood from the Wegepecha forest (in Chaha) for the Merkene lords in Jemboro and Abeke (in Gumer). This wood was used for fencing and house construction. If some gebars for some reason, failed to meet such obligations, they would face a horrific problem as they would be detained and often beaten. Their wealth including cattle would be taken away by their lords. In addition, the Amhara would confiscate even the gebars' wives. The Merkene would keep the wives of the gebar in Jemboro and Abeke with them during which time it is said that the women provided labor services to the lord's wives and/or were forced to participate in sexual relations with the Merkene.

In addition, (to the labor services) they had to pay tribute to the Merkene. There were different types of tribute such as land tithe - which was paid annually in grains (mainly barley, wheat and peas) and cattle tithe to be paid in butter. (However) there were certain Gurage who had good relationships with the Merkene and these were employed in the armies. Such Gurage would have places (houses) to live in and/or around the compound of their lords.

This was how the Gurage urban experiences began. Initially, they were moving to Shewa and directed by the Merkene lords and as a result, the Gurage came to know the ways to get to the urban area and to adjust to different situations. Then, the Gurage began to migrate by themselves, seeking jobs in towns. As they moved, they brought their own tools such as wonet,<sup>2</sup> sickle and axe with them. Then in their areas of destination (in and around Addis Ababa) they carried out various activities such as tilling (cultivating land), cutting grass and chopping wood for payment in cash. The poor gebar would obtain money by performing these sorts of activities and the money received in this way would be used mainly for paying tribute (tithe), repaying debts, and covering expenses for annual festivities.

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<sup>1</sup> refers to urban areas, particularly Addis Ababa

<sup>2</sup> masrasha i.e. a two forked wooden tool used for cultivating

Meeting their obligations as gebars at least at the earlier period, was the most significant motivating factor for the Gurage urban migration, fanonet. Their need for cash was increasing, especially since the annual tribute was made payable in cash. Incorporation caused this issue of fulfillment of external obligations such as tribute payment and taxation and this has been addressed by other writers as one of the major causes for the Gurage fanonet (Label 1974:106, Garretson 1974:210, Marcus 1974:634, 335 and 637). Shack said that "the increasingly expanding number of Gurage who now migrate specifically for wage....is no doubt a consequence of the Land Act of 1929 which made taxation payable in money (Shack:1966:72). For Baker, (1992:128) the Gurage who did not have a cash crop, were obligated to migrate to towns, especially to Addis Ababa, to find work to fulfill their tax obligations. Adahan stated the following:

...ensat is (and was more so in the past)<sup>1</sup> an exchange value to a very limited extent. This necessarily leaves the ensat cultivator with wants which cannot be satisfied through the medium of his staple crop. This limitation must have been felt even more strongly with the imposition of external obligation as a consequence of incorporation into the wider polity. The Gurage had either to go over to cerealization or to meet their external obligations through off-farm activities...Production of cash crops did not present itself as a realistic alternative probably due to land hunger. Thus labor migration would have presented itself to the Gurage as the only way out (1991:59).

However, in the previous studies mentioned above, fanonet has been described only as a way of meeting external obligations. However, by the same token, fanonet provided some Gurage with a means of escaping such external obligations as tribute payment, taxation, forced labor services as well as being regarded as culturally inferior. According to my informants, there were gebars who were unable to tolerate the Merkene's social and cultural oppression and economic exploitation. These gebar migrated, leaving their villages, their land, homes and other assets such as asat behind. In some cases they brought their wives, children and cattle with them. Such migrants escaped in the dark to

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<sup>1</sup> his own parentheses

distant places such as Abeshige, then a no-man's land around Wolkite, and moving on to Addis Ababa, or its surrounding areas. Therefore, during the earlier period, fanonet evolved as a result of both the need to meet external obligations, as well as the need to avoid them, and attraction to the advantages of urban life. Thus, fanonet was not an entirely voluntary activity at this stage.

As mentioned above, the Gurage were among the corvée laborers in the capital after their incorporation in 1888. By the turn of this century, the word cooli<sup>1</sup> had become synonymous with the name Gurage in Addis Ababa. In 1910, according to Mereb, the number of fano Gurage in the capital was 2,000, which constituted 3.1 percent of the capital's total population.

The fact that the fano Gurage provided free labor starting from the 19<sup>8905</sup>20's has been mentioned above. At this stage, manual labor and petty trade was the main urban economic niche for the fano Gurage. This niche included daily wage laborers, porters, wood-choppers, cutting and collecting fodder as well as grass for thatching, preparing and carrying construction materials, stones, sand, wood and grass; carpentry, shoe-shining, baby-sitting, maid servantry, ploughing, planting trees, digging wells, and road construction. According to Pankhurst, the Gurage were said to have worked doing road construction for 10-11 hours a day for the minimal wage of one birr per day<sup>for</sup> a person (1968:700-710).

### 2.1.2. Discussion on the Origin of Gurage Migration

The origin of Gurage urban migration was described by several writers mainly in terms of the Gurage necessity to meet externally imposed obligations of the gebar system such as tribute payment and taxation which were payable only in grain and money, respectively. These studies mentioned above claim that the village Gurage who then became gebars were growing predominantly asat which was neither of great exchange

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<sup>1</sup> An Indian word meaning porter

value nor acceptable by the Merkene. The tribute had to be paid in grain and then in cash, which the Gurage did not have. Thus, the Gurage were left with no options but out-migration. "Since the Gurage could not make payments in ensat, they had to either produce cereals or obtain the necessary amount through exchange from elsewhere" therefore "tribute payment and taxation in cash are among such genesis" of Gurage out-migration (Adhana 1991:60,61).

It is true as explained earlier that the incorporation of the Gurage and their land into Ethiopian state and the birth of Addis Ababa provided the historical as well as socio-economic context in which the Gurage urban migration started to operate.

However, some of the findings of this study do not corroborate the idea of considering the so-called "tribute payment and taxation" as an adequate explanation for the ongoing Gurage urban migration for several reasons.

To begin with, Gurage out-migration was not, at least initially, motivated by tribute payment which was payable in grain, rather than the local Gurage produce, that is asat or its products. On the contrary, it has been shown that in all Sebat-bet Gurage, tribute was payable in asat and the Gurage baked the wusa staple food specifically for this purpose for about the first 10 years, or so. It was after the battle of Adwa that the tribute payment was changed from wusa to grain alone because the Amhara realized that gebar Gurage were poisoning the gibir wusa, i.e. "tribute wusa" and some Merkene died from it. Secondly, even after this change, it did not seem that Gurage of all agro-climatic zones had to migrate to urban areas in order to obtain the required cash to buy grain to pay the tribute. For instance, in the study area, Gumer, and the highland areas of Geto, Ezha and Muher, informants described that cereals and pulses were locally produced at that time and therefore the Gurage of this area did not have to migrate to towns because they needed to obtain the required amount of grain and/or cash for purchasing the former. However, Gurage in predominantly asat growing areas where cereals were not produced might have needed to obtain the necessary tribute grain elsewhere but still not necessarily in urban



areas. This is because oral informants explained that Gurage from these areas are said to have gone to cereal producing areas such as Gumer, Silte, Alichu Wiriro, etc. as laborers during the seasons of collecting and threshing cereals and pulses in those localities. The laborers were reportedly paid in cereals and pulses, which they were said to have used to meet their tribute payment obligations. This kind of labor arrangements are known locally as Yokena.

However, at this stage it may not be possible to establish when the local Gurage began to produce cereals for certain. This is a topic which worth further research. Despite this, it may be reasonable to assume that what the informants said has a grain of truth since these highland areas are conducive to producing cereals.

Be that as it may, the origin of Gurage out-migration, at least during the initial period, was not linked to the fact that tribute was not payable in asat but cereals. Therefore, initially the Gurage might have been exposed to urban settings as a result of meeting the requirements of accompanying their lords to the capital. This may be how the Gurage urban experiences began. They first came to Addis Ababa following their Neftegna lords and/or because they were required to provide forced labor there. Through these experiences, the Gurage came to know the ways to get to the capital and afterwards other towns. Then the Gurage began to migrate by themselves and adjust to different situations. Thus it may be argued that the Gurage urban migration was first conditioned by the necessity of meeting obligations of accompanying Merkene and even more significantly, providing corvee labor in Addis Ababa and its surroundings. Of course, in the later periods tribute payment in grain and taxation in cash could undoubtedly be considered as part of the significant factors that motivated Gurage out-migration.

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However, even these so called "push factors" could have exerted different influences at the local level in various agro-climatic zones of Gurageland and thus it needs to be looked at accordingly. For instance, Shack's statement, "the increasingly expanding number of Gurage who now migrate specifically for wage .. is no doubt a consequence of

the land act of 1929 which made taxation payable in money" (1966:72) apparently was a stronger "push factor" for the uncerealized Cheha area where Shack conducted his research than it was for Gumer where cereals were produced. In the case of Gumer, the informants suggest that the Gumer Gurage were able to pay tribute in grain. However to pay taxes in cash might have exerted a stronger influence on Gumer's (and other highlander's as well) out-migration than tribute payment in grain did. Even then it appears that it is a bit exaggerated to consider taxation in cash as such a conclusive cause, which had widespread influence on Gurage out-migration on a phenomenal degree.

This is because it does not seem that the Gurage urban migration had reached a large scale up until 50 years ago, after the birth of the Merkato in Addis Ababa. The Gurage migrants, according to the informants, were more attracted and encouraged by the Italian activities in Addis Ababa. At that period, the Italians established the Merkato as a market center (Deyoung 1967), destroyed the feudal type of labor arrangements based on patron client relationships and created a labor market with wages payable in money (Fecadu 1972:82; Bjerer 1985:62). These structural changes widened the existing urban job opportunities and opened new ones for the in-migrants of Addis Ababa, including the Gurage. According to the informants, the Gurage engagement in self-employed occupations such as petty trades, and settlement on a permanent basis in Addis Ababa is attributed to those measures taken by the Italians. Then, the settled and successful migrants provided a strong source of attraction for further Gurage urban migration. Because the Gurage have strong traditions of mutual cooperation and providing kin assistance based on their patrilineal clan system, this could have facilitated the expansion of Gurage fanonet on a larger scale.

However, looking at a wider context, the imposition of external obligations such as tribute payment, taxation in cash and providing forced labor services affected other ethnic groups, who are also predominantly the cultivators of asat such as the Wolayta, Kembata and Sidama. However, these people did not respond to the circumstances brought about

by incorporation by migrating on a large scale as the Gurage did. So why did the Gurage alone have migrate en-mass, to the extent of depopulating the villages, to the urban areas? This issue needs to be addressed with a further comparative study of the specificity of Gurage urban migration in relation to migratory experiences of other asat cultivators. To bring out the peculiarity of Gurage fanonet in the wider Ethiopian context is, however, beyond the scope of this thesis.

However, it may be suggested that there is a need to look into the specific Gurage socio-economic context for such peculiarity. As briefly suggested above, this particular situation might be described in terms of the Gurage kin based tradition of mutual assistance. This was also reported by one writer as follows:

.. while it explains the success and scale of the migration, Gurage tradition could not be taken as the initial impulse or generator of the process" (Adhana 1991:58). Adhana defined the phrase Gurage tradition as "the institution of clanship" and noted that it "provided the condition for the success of the Gurage to tap, through seasonal migrations, the opportunities offered by the wider Ethiopian polity (Ibid: p. 54).

The importance of this Gurage institution lies in the fact that it reinforced mutual cooperation among members and at the same time, promotes individual creativity and individual appropriation of the results of such creativity. In addition, the expansion of Gurage out-migration has to be attributed to this tradition, which "encouraged people to out-migrate into urban settings for which they had little preparation in their home areas" (Ibid:, P.55). Thus this clan based institution could be considered responsible both for encouraging and facilitating out-migration from Gurage villages and assisting the fanos in their adjustment and success in urban settings.

Thus, the Gurage large scale out-migration may be considered along these lines. However, whether or not the institution of clanship has a similar function among other asat cultivators is another important issue to be addressed by further comparative studies.

### 2.1.3 Middle and Contemporary Periods

During this period, as will be discussed below, a number of changes occurred in the characteristic features of the Gurage fanonet experiences. These changes were associated with the political and socio-economic changes that took place at the national level. The Italian occupation (1936-1941) was one of the most dramatic historical processes that had significant implications for the Gurage fanonet experiences. The victory of the Italians over Ethiopians in the battles of Tembeyen, Maichew and Mekele brought about a political change in that the Ethiopian feudal government was replaced by Italian rule. This nationwide political upheaval had profound implications for Gurage fanonet in several ways.

On the one hand, this upheaval resulted in structural change in the Gurage villages, the origin of fanonet. The event brought about the end of a forty four year old Merkene -Gebar relationship in Gurageland. This meant the end of the external obligations demanded by the Merkene, such as tribute payment, both in kind and in cash; and the provision of labor services by the gebar Gurage. My informant, Damo Delil Gizaw described the following:

The Italians liberated the Gurage from Merekene-caused slavery. The Amhara (or Merkene) did not treat us (the Gurage) as equals, but as slaves. Because of their bad deeds, God took them to Maichew, where they were finished by the Italians. God heard our cries and grievances and allowed the Maichew miracle to happen. Since then, there has been no payment (tribute), or work for the Merkene, and we (the Gurage) have become equals with them.

On the other hand, there were other consequential socio-economic upheavals such as the birth of the Merkato which evolved to become the largest market place in Africa, as well as the construction of a number of roads in the capital and other towns that were destinations of the Gurage fanonet. Road construction marked the period of the Italian occupation, and the Gurage contributed significantly to the road-building labor force. This role of the Gurage laborers in road construction has also been reported by other writers (Pankhurst 1968:49; Garretsson 1974:200; Amare 1985:14-15). It is noted that the Gurage had provided forced labor in Addis Ababa as far back as the era of Menilik II. "In fact,

some Gurage elders now emphasize, not without pride, that they built Addis Ababa" (Adhana 1991:61). These changes had significant impacts on the causes, patterns and streams of the Gurage urban migration.

Therefore, the Italian occupation period (1935-41) was another important historical event which resulted in an even greater wave of Gurage labor migration to different urban areas. During this period, a large number of Gurage usually in groups, outmigrated and became engaged mainly in road construction. My informant Hediro's experiences are typical of Gurage labor migration at this particular time:

My first experience going to Shewa was after the Italians moved into the country. I was working on road construction. Once, I was working for three months in Atabela, an Oromoland south of Sebeta, when the road between Addis Ababa and Wolkite was being constructed. Then from my village (a man called) Nuro Direta was with me. There were many other Gurage, too. The Ezha Gurage were the majority (though) even our foremen were from Ezha. There were three foremen and all were from Ezha. There were about 1,000 Gurage working under their supervision. (Also) there were Gurage from Geto, Gumer, Chaha, Ezha, Muher, Enor and all were working together. The number of the Ezha Gurage was greater than that of the rest of us altogether. (Our) job was crushing stones, digging the soil with a hoe and drawing soil out with a wheelbarrow. We would live in huts made of branches of eucalyptus called senterya. We were being provided with food such as chickpeas and flour. (In addition,) we would receive 7 lira for two weeks.

Then after the Addis Ababa-Wolkite road construction was finished, I was working on the construction of the Wolkite-Jimma-Gomma roads. As before, this time too, there were many Gurage working together with me. The foremen were still the same Ezha Gurage. I went to Jimma and Gomma twice and stayed for five months in all. (The fano) Gurage who then were with me were all men. Women were not coming with us. As before, we would earn seven lira per fortnight, in addition to the food provided (mainly chickpeas and flour). Right before the Italians learned that there was unrest,<sup>1</sup> they assigned guards in all key exits to keep us from escaping. (Despite this patrolling) one night all the fanos, numbering a thousand, under the three foremen, managed to escape. We were walking day and night for two days to get to Jimma, Abba Jifar's town. Then we would walk from Jimma to Wolkite and then to Gurage country. That is a bad story to remember. When we left Gomma, we did not receive our salaries. Moreover, some of the fanos died of malaria and of chanque<sup>2</sup> on the way back home. There were many cases of this kind on the way. Neither did the Italians stay (in Gomma). Sometime after we left, the English came and chased the Italians out of the country.

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<sup>1</sup>Refers to the fighting that ended the Italian Occupation, between the English and the Ethiopian patriots on the one hand and the Italians on the other.

<sup>2</sup> An illness caused by the biting of flies

The fano Gurage provided both free and wage labor for the local road construction activities in Gurageland as well. They worked as free-laborers when the road between Wolkite and Migo was constructed in Gurageland. The Gurage had to carry stones from distant locations and rivers which they used for road construction. In addition, they were said to have brought their wusa food from their respective homes and were supervised by their respective village headmen. Ipcar (1970) reported that the Italians used corvee labor for the majority of the road construction activities that were carried out during that time. In addition, a great number of the village Gurage were recruited as daily wage laborers and formen to work on road construction projects elsewhere<sup>1</sup>. Futhermore, the local Gurage were also recruited on both a voluntary and involvuntary basis for the military by the Italians through a village headman who was expected to fill a quota.

During this period, in urban areas the Gurage engaged in different types of petty-trading such as the selling of injera, furno,<sup>2</sup> pulses and cereals, vegetables, fish and other food items both at gulits,<sup>3</sup> and by carrying the items on foot. The fano Gurage were known for carrying their items around for sale on foot, calling "felagi-furno" (i.e. bread for sale) and "delago yalesh begemede" (i.e. rope in exchange for recyling a tanned hide used for sleeping) . Moreover, the young fano Gurage boys were particularly active in another type of petty-trade called suqe bederete, which literally means "a shop on my chest." It was so named because the boys carried on the chests assorted goods such as sewing needles, safety pins, bottons for clothes, qirinfude,<sup>4</sup> and qerefa <sup>5</sup>to name a few, standing on the streets in the capital city.

By the 1950's and 1960's the fano operating a suqe bederete business faced fierce competition with expatriate traders, mainly the Yemenite Arabs who then monopolized major commercial activities. These expatriates had governmental support in their struggle

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<sup>1</sup> See Hediro's experience in the first section on history in this chapter

<sup>2</sup> A European type bread (literally furno from the Italian word for oven)

<sup>3</sup> Small markets

<sup>4</sup> Cloves

<sup>5</sup> Cinnamon

to compete with the Gurage traders and when the Gurage were found selling itmes around the Yemenite shops, they were arrested by the police and jailed for a two week period. Upon release, they had to pay a fine. However, despite all the set-backs, the fano Gurage succeeded in expanding their businesses and eventually replacing the Yemenite Arabs in the commercial sector.

According to my informants, until after 1950, self-employed occupations such as trading had not been the main economic niche of the fano Gurage. For one informant, Abido Semani, to the best of his memory, by 1957:

..there was no fano Gurage who had a licensed residence and business of his own in Addis Ababa, except one, a man called Shekih Yesuf, who owned his own house in Benin-Sefer. The present possessions of the Gurage in towns such as villa houses, cars and multiple businesses were not the realities of that time.

Another informant said that it was after 1960 that a few fano Gurage emerged as owners of private businesses and the majority of the fano Gurage were engaged in various types of wage labor, hired by others, particularly by the expatriates. However, according to a few migrants, even before and during the Italian occupation, the fano Gurage were engaged in self-employed occupations since they had already organized their self-help association in 1961.<sup>1</sup>

## 2.2. Causes/Networks

The motivational factors for out migration changed over time and varied from person to person. According to my informants, the migrants' motivations to move out of their villages evolved from the interest in meeting their gebar obligations and obtaining cash for paying taxes and repaying debts, to covering expenses for marriage and annual festivities, as well as clothing, purchasing cattle and land, repairing old houses and/or building new houses; obtaining better access to education and health services. As explained earlier in this section, following the emergence of a new Merkene-Gebar

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed discussion, see Chapter V.

relationship, meeting their gebar obligations in labor services and later in military service in the imperial armies (Fecadu 1972:119) appears to have become a more important factor for the first generation migrants. The motivational factors for the first generation were thus relatively simple based on the demands created by the Merkene-Gebar relationship.

However, the motivational factors for the second, and even more so, for the third generation migrants are varied and affected by inter-related economic, demographic and social factors. A number of migrants who left their villages during the middle period were initially motivated by the prospect of better living standards in towns, about which they had heard through other migrants from their villages. For example, my informant, Damo Zerihun, one of the current migrants who became rich, was attracted to urban life by his better-clothed friends when he met them while they were visiting their village. Now he has families both in Nazareth and Zizencho:

My elder brother was living in Nazareth and I was living here (in Zizencho) with my father. Then I engaged in farming, helping my father. We used to have a lot of land here (in Zizencho) and in the villages of Enjefo and Gulcho and I had to plough in these places. When I left (the village) for town, I was fourteen. I migrated to town (Nazareth) because I was attracted by my friends who had then returned well-dressed, grown and having gained weight.

Similarly, Imam Kemal who is a return migrant, also had the same motivation to leave his village 33 years ago for Addis Ababa:

To start with, my father sent me with a man to Silte in order to attend Quranic school there. The man (who took me there) was a neighbor and educated in the Quran. Having brought my clothes and Quran, we went together to Silte. After I stayed attending school for one year in Silte, I had a one month's vacation, during which I came back to (my village) visiting my brother. There, I found that my age mate and friend had returned from Addis Ababa. I found him to be changed and improved in many respects. He was well-dressed in new shorts, shirt and shoes instead of the clothes made of abujedi (calico material) which we all used to wear as boys. Upon seeing him, I was impressed by how well-dressed he was! I felt jealous and thought that here he was looking so much better than I, while I was attending Quranic school.



Before that time, we were playing traditional wrestling.<sup>1</sup> I usually would beat him. You know that this tradition existed in our country (Gurage). Then, as we met, I looked like a rural deresa (i.e. versed in the Quran), whereas he came from Addis Ababa mature and with more weight than I. As a result, he asked me to wrestle with him, and when I agreed we both tried hard to beat each other. Unlike the previous time, I could not beat him, nor could he beat me. Finally, we realized that neither of us could win, we laughed and stopped the game. I felt guilty and frustrated that I could no longer beat him and attributed this to the fact that he went to Addis Ababa and became well-fed, whereas I stayed in the rural setting. I was annoyed and decided to leave the village for Addis Ababa. Therefore, I had to steal a sheep and sell it for transportation money, after which I escaped. I quit my Quranic schooling, although my father would have wanted me to continue.

There was a man called Ato Ayewedan, our neighbor, who was leaving for town. I had already known who was leaving for town. When I heard the news and I was prepared to leave with him. On the day of his departure, he left the village and was walking, not knowing that I was following him secretly to the village of Aberete (in Chaha). Then, as we reached Aberete, I revealed myself to him. He saw me and become annoyed at me because I had followed him. He did not like me coming with him, but he could not get me back because we had already come all the way down to Abrete (about 20 kms from Gumer) and neither could he send me back to Gumer by myself, as I may get lost, and he did not want to take me back himself. Then we walked to the village of Deneb, where we stayed a night in the place of Ayeweden's relative. That night, I was so tired and exhausted and Ayewedan was nagging and insulting me. The next morning we walked from Deneb to Wolkite where for the first time I saw cars running here and there amidst people. I was amazed and asked Ayewedan how was it that those qorqoro (cars) were not killing people. As I had never seen cars before, I was very frightening that they were run me over. We ate lunch there. Ayewedan, as he was a friend of my father, bought injera with shiro wot, a new food which I had not tasted before. Finally, he took me in a lorry to Addis Ababa.

These two cases presented above reveal several similar characteristics. First, both migrants were of the same age, 14, at the time of their first departure, although the second migrant departed 8 years after the first migrant. Second, by the village standards of the time, both migrants were not from poor families and their motivations for migration were not directly related to socio-economic family problems. Third, the decisions to migrate were not discussed or approved by their families in the village or elsewhere. Instead, they were influenced by other migrants in the village and decided to migrate by themselves, both stealing money and sheep for transportation from their fathers before escaping. Therefore, at least initially, in these cases, out-migration was not collectively considered strategy to

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<sup>1</sup> Locally known as veter

increase the household's income generating capacity. Hence, Baker's statement, which reads: "Once the decision to migrate has been made collectively by the rural households in conjunction with urban kin, migration occurs directly to Addis Ababa" (1992:135), can be questioned as this has not always been true of the decision making process for Gurage out-migration.

However, there are some cases in which out-migration has been a matter of collective decision-making for the members of households, and parents in particular. Unlike the previous cases, in some instances, parents collaborate with urban kin to decide who should migrate, how and why. For instance, the following cases reveal this characteristic. My informant Ato Melese Neri, who is 55 years old, and a returnee to the village, was sent by his father to Addis Ababa 38 years ago. He went with his paternal uncle, Ato Zerga, who was then back in the village to visit his family. Zerga was a fano living in Asegede Sefer in Addis Ababa (Merkato) and his job was chopping wood. When Melese went with Zerga to Addis, his father bought him clothes made of abujedi and one netala shemma.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, Melese left his village as a result of a joint decision by his father and uncle to do so.

Likewise, another informant, Ato Yilma Sirani, 38 years old and a return migrant, now working as the head of the department of administration and finance in Zizencho clinic, was sent twenty years ago to Yirgalem, Sidamo by his mother. At that time, he was a boy of ten years and the eldest son of his parents. His father died before he left, and this caused his out-migration:

My first urban experience was in 1967 when my mother sent me with Nursema Hassen to Yirgalem. Then Nursema owned a tea room business on a share basis with his friend in Yirgalem and he was (my) relative and neighbor. That time, he came back to the village to visit his family. As my father had died in 1961/2, when I was six years old, and I was the eldest son, my mother decided to send me to town with Nursema. She did so because she thought that by going to town, I would mature quickly to replace my deceased father as family head. Therefore, she sold a heifer and gave me money for transportation. Then, Nursema and I left Zizencho early in the morning and walked up to the village of Amora Medda, in Gibure.

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<sup>1</sup> A cotton shawl which he used as a blanket during the night in Addis Ababa.

where we stayed a night in a relative's house. The next morning we walked to Wolkite, and from there we took a lorry to Addis Ababa. We stayed in Addis for a week and then we left for Yirgalem, traveling on a lorry during the night. We reached Yirgalem just before dawn.

Other migrants (particularly those of the contemporary period) left their villages in order to complete their junior and senior secondary school education. This has been particularly the case since an elementary school was established twenty years ago in Zizencho. In this school, education was offered through grade six. As there were no junior or secondary schools in the area, the school-leavers (and drop outs) would go to Jemboro and Emdiber schools and to different urban centers such as Addis Ababa, Nazareth, Shashemene, Yirgalem and others. The two sons of Ato Melese Neri are example of such migrants:

I have two sons in town. Both attended school through grade six in Zizencho Elementary school. Then they quit and migrated because they could go no further in their schooling, as there was no school in the vicinity of our village. They left five years ago with a man named Lema Tereda, who is a rich fano in Awasa, owning tej-houses. He is our relative and initially I helped him to become a fano, while I was a fano in Sidamo. Therefore, he took my sons with him as a favor to me.

Ato Bilatu Gebre is a returnee who is now the head of Zizencho and Teredo Peasant Association (P.A.) and has been working for World Vision (a non-governmental organization) in the area. He was motivated by education when he first migrated. Bilatu was born and grew up in Zizencho, and attended classes through six grade in Zizencho and grades 8 and 9 in Jemboro. During that time he went to Addis Ababa and then to Nazareth during vacations:

For the first time I left my village for Addis Ababa in 1975, as school was closed for summer vacation. Then, I stayed in Addis for two months, working as birele-atabinet (i.e. cleaner of tej glasses) in a tej house called Edimeqetil in Markato. I got this vacation job through Lemma Haile Michael, my cousin, who was then living in Addis and knew people in tej houses. I went to Addis with Lemma, too. We took a bus from Jemboro and I paid for transportation myself, as I had money which I made from my business. I would go to Emdibir market to buy and bring goods such as kerosene, sugar, soap and bread which I would sell in the markets of Zizencho on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, and that of Wozute on

Thursdays and Sundays. Therefore, I was making a profit from this and I regained the initial investment that my father had given me.

As my vacation was finished, I came back to Gumer and resumed my schooling. I was in grade six and at the end of the year (1975/76), I graduated to grade seven. Again, during the summer vacation, I went to Nazareth where I stayed for two months, working in a shoe shop, which was owned by a fano from our village called Getahun Wolde Michael. I came back to Zizencho for the Meskal festivities. Then I attended grades seven and eight in Jemboro school. Finally, when I graduated from grade eight to nine, I went to Nazareth to continue my schooling, as I had a sister there. My sister was living with her husband, Wolde Elilo<sup>1</sup>, who was from Zizencho, too. Wolde was a rich fano owning tej houses, a hotel, butchery, grocery and a house in Nazareth. Then I continued to go to school while working in a butchery for Wolde, my brother-in-law, in my leisure time.

This case material illustrates the type of problems rural Gurage migrants faced. In addition, failure in agricultural productivity, shortage of arable land and especially, lack of tribute payment as well as taxes, are some of the motivations for Gurage migration, attributed by several writers (Shack 1966:72, 1976:262; Label 1974:101; Pankhurst 1968:48,49; Baker 1992:128; Tilahun 1987:9, 34-36). Most of the informants emphasized that the rapid rural population growth, shortage of farm land and poor resource base for agriculture, constitutes the major motivating factors for contemporary Gurage out-migration. Muluneh reported similar findings, stating that about 60 percent of his respondents described land hunger, and 30 percent mentioned rapid population growth as the most important and the strongest "push" factors (1993). The limited available farm land, which is the major productive asset in Gurage, has experienced a decrease in the fertility of the soil due to over-cultivation. The peasants cannot afford the costs of inputs such as fertilizers and special seed to cope with the depletion of the soil.

According to the data from the Woreda Offices of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources Development, Gumer Woreda is known on a national level for its high rate of absorption of fertilizers which is said to have been some 20,000 quintals a year. The price of a quintal is from birr 80 to 100, which is not affordable for the peasants, especially for the poor. According to the land classification made by Woreda Offices, the Gumer

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<sup>1</sup> Wolde influenced many other Zizencho villagers to migrate, particularly to Nazerath.

landscape is not conducive to agriculture, due to its dramatic hillsides that have been exposed to erosion for years. Households, as production units in Gurage villages, are incapable of providing basic subsistence for themselves. Therefore, out-migration has been viewed by the villagers themselves, as the only means of survival for many rural Gurage households.

My informant Agaz Habte Mereche, age 80 and one of the most respected elders in the area, but not a migrant himself, described how indispensable fanonet has been for the village life as follows:

Given that we are suffering from shortage of farmland, from loss of soil fertility of the small amount of land that we have, and high population density, our lives in the village would have been impossible had it not been for the fanonet, and the support from our fano children. It is due to them that we (the rural villagers) opened our eyes and became civilized in terms of our dressing, education, health services, roads and everything. Fanonet is part of our farm, field, our marriage, our wealth and resources such as cattle land and asat.

This implies that the village life, particularly its economy, has become dependent on income gained from fanonet through which it is linked to urban-based socio-economics and also that fanonet is conceived of as an essential resource.. As will be discussed in detail below in Chapter 5, the dependency and linkages between the rural and urban spheres have been made an even more complex phenomena by the construction of roads (and of schools, health services and religious institutions) which linked different areas of Gurageland with one another, and with the outside world. These major developments have made the village life and economy extremely open and dependent, thereby exposing it to changes in socio-economic activities in urban settings and in the surrounding regions as well.

## 2.3. Types of Migration

### 2.3.1 Changes in Fanonet Over Time

Since their incorporation, the Gurage have been migrating. Some significant differences had occurred between the earlier migration and the movements during and after the Italian occupation. Initially migration was routine on a seasonal basis and temporarily for short periods. Later, it became of a more permanent nature to the capital and other provincial towns. The urban activities and destinations of the Gurage migrants changed over time. For both the voluntary and the involuntary first generation migrants, Addis Ababa and its surroundings constituted the major source of attraction for the fano Gurage. That time, a one way journey would take the fanos a week or more, traveling on foot from their village to Addis Ababa and/or its surroundings such as Sululta, Sebeta and Holeta. They had to carry their food, mainly baked wusa, and instruments such as a sickle, marasha, axe, etc. which were important for their activities as fanos in urban and suburban areas. They were engaged as wage laborers in different activities both on and off-farm: working mainly as porters, guards, laborers in road construction projects, hired shop keepers (for the ex-patriots - mainly the Yemenites, Indians, Armenians, Greeks and Italians); and servants in tea rooms, hotels and tej houses. During this period, the majority of the fanos engaged in domestic work and manual labor. Imam Kemal said:

In towns, Gurage would carry everything. It was their job to carry everything ranging from zenbil (baskets) to stones<sup>1</sup>. People would shout 'Gurage Gurage!' to mean 'porter porter!' As there was no education (schools) in the villages at the time, the children of Gurage villages would rather be sent to towns for labor work. At the time of their departure, the plans of the fano would be to get to town and to take any job opportunity in order to obtain money, buy clothes, and then get back to their villages and buy cattle or land and build a house. They did not aim to settle permanently in urban settings. Therefore, children of the poor would start to migrate to towns and would there become servants, guards, and daily laborers in factories.

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<sup>1</sup> That was why the Indian word coolie for porter became synonymous with Gurage.

The Italian occupation was characterized by construction of new roads which meant that more regions of the country become reachable and this provided varied sources of attraction to the second generation Gurage fano. Although Addis Ababa remained the major source of attraction, then the Gurage migrated to other towns such as Wolkite, Jimma, Agaro, Weliso, Nazareth, Sidamo region (Dilla and Yirgalem) and others. The fano began to walk from their villages only up to Wolkite where since the late 1930, they would then take a lorry to reach their destinations.

During and after the Italian occupation period which saw the emergence of the Merkato as a market center, the fano Gurage have successfully engaged in self-employed activities such as trade and cottage industries and in the 1960's and 1970's, they have nearly replaced the Arab (Yemenite) and Indian merchants (Bahru 1991:197, Shack 1976:270). Iman Kemal<sup>1</sup> described this situation as follows:

Initially, many of us (the fanos) had been engaged in domestic work and manual labor. It was a rare case to see a fano Gurage running his (or her) business in an urban setting. This was a gradual process as those Gurage who were wage laborers in different activities such as tej houses, wholesale and retail trading shops, tea rooms, hotels, bakeries and others gained experiences and began their own businesses, each taking over in his (or her) respective area of employment. Those Gurage who would work in Arab owned retail trading shops began their own trade and the same was true for other fanos, too.

For the most part, the fano from Zizencho and neighboring villages have been concentrating on a specific economic niche which is working in tej houses. Working in tej houses, known as tej-qejinet and later on owning tej houses, is considered to be the specialty of fano from this area.

This was the influence of the second generation of fano, those that migrated during the Italian occupation. Some of these migrants were working as cooks for the Italians, in restaurants or households. For example, one of my informants, Damo Zerihun Elilo, who is himself a current migrant, described how he and others from his village were first

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<sup>1</sup> He was then a fano working in a bakery at Mercato in Addis Ababa.

influenced by the experiences of the earlier fanos. He is one of the very few successful and rich migrants in the village, owning a couple of tej houses and running other businesses as well in Nazareth. Damo Zerihun is 55 and has been a fano for the last four decades. He stayed in the village until he was 14 and went to a traditional school there.

I left my village for the first time to go to town in June 1953/4. Then I remember I went with a man called Gebre Sirato, who was from our village and his wife was a relative of ours. I stole 15 Maria Theresa thalers from my father and escaped to town with Gebre. The first day we walked as far as Gebure (now a small town 17 kms southeast of Wolkite), and we stayed a night in a house for which we paid 10 cents each. The next day, we walked to Wolkite town and we entered a car called telfobekise which took us to Addis Ababa. For the first night I stayed in Merkato at Shell area. The next morning, Sirato, Gebre's father took me to my sister's place in an area called Chaha-Sefer in Fitawerari Asegede Sefer (Merkato). She was married and living permanently there. My sister was happy that I came to town. I stayed with her for 25 days. My elder brother, Wolde Elilo, was a fano in Nazareth town. He had heard that I was in Addis. Gebre went to Nazareth and told my brother about me. As Meskal the annual festivity was coming, my brother came to Addis earlier because he was going to be a best man for his friend Shikur, who was from the village of Yerketera in Gumer. Then, he brought me clothes and we went back to Zizencho together. We celebrated Meskal with our parents and then I went to Nazareth, following Wolde, my brother. He was then a rich fano, owning a hotel, a tej house, a grocery and butchery as well as a house to live in. He was married to a woman from our village and had a family in Nazareth. I was living in his house with him and working in his hotel. Then I was working as a tej qeji in different places which were owned by Amhara women.

The Gurage tradition of counting on the support of kin has played a considerable role in the patterns and motivations of the fanos and particularly, in their changing occupations and degrees of success in urban settings, as Damo Zerihun's account illustrates:

In 1960/1, I opened my own tej house with the money I earned from my work as a tej qeji... In 1964/5, I opened another tej house and a grocery. In addition I am running a cattle fattening business... The first fano from our village who went to Nazareth and began his own business was Ato Haile Tejo. To begin with, he was working with Italians in Jimma. He had a friendly relationship with them and I heard from elders that he once brought Italian friends to Gurage from Jimma with him and people were reportedly surprised that he had Italian Ferenji friends. He was working as a cook for Italians. Then after the Italians left, he went to Nazareth and opened a hotel and tej house there. (My bother) Wolde Elilo and a man called Gebre Bizu followed in Haile's foot steps. Wolde learned about the hotel business from Haile and finally he began to run his own businesses such as tej houses, grocery and hotel. Then I followed Wolde and as I got organized and settled, my sister's sons Dendir, Nibizo and Tesfaye Nibizo who belong to Yinequeumit clan through their father and are from the village of Sedur, came to me in Nazareth. Now, Tesfaye has his own tej house and cattle fattening business in Wonji. In



addition, I educated two sons of my maternal uncle, Ato Bizani Lecha from the village of Chacho and a daughter and sons of my aunt Fujo Lecha as I took them to Nazareth for schooling up to grade 12. Also the son of Azmach Getahun, who is the administrative head of our clan, Yegeberyatib, stayed with me until he finished his high school. This is how our experiences of fanonet were influenced by one another.

In the process of growing from engagement in domestic work and manual labor to higher level positions running their own businesses, the experiences of the fanos varied, and the villagers divided them into three economic categories: yetegeno, gibichane and yantegeno, i.e. the rich, the middle income and the poor. However, in this ensuing subsection, the fanos' experiences are discussed on the basis of migratory periods which is useful for understanding their impacts in the village, and this will be taken up in the following sections, since these impacts are dependent to a large extent on their migratory time period and the degree to which the migrants achieve success in urban settings.

The results of the village household survey show that there are two types of fanos, current and former. The current fano are those who are still actively involved in the phenomenon of fanonet, to use the respondents' expressions, ehuwam fano vehere, i.e. "who are still fanos". The former ones, as described by the respondents, are those fanonet yeche, i.e. "who were fanos previously but not now". However, when those former migrants retired from fanonet was established because unfortunately, this question was not included in the field survey. Therefore, the term former fano refers to those persons who were once migrants in the past and are currently not taking part in the process anymore.

Accordingly in describing and analyzing the data, households in Zizencho are classified into three categories: current fano, former fano and never fano households referring to the households in which there are current, former and never fanos, respectively. As presented (Table 2) below, an overwhelming majority of the village households which constitute 66 percent (104 out of the total 156 households) fall within the category of current fano, while the remaining two groups of former fano and never fano represent the 22 percent and 12 percent of the total village households.

**Table 2. Village Households by Fanonet Experience**

Type of villager	Number of Households	Sex		Total Number of Individuals	Percentage of the Total
		Female	Male		
Current <u>Fano</u>	104	274	249	523	66%
Former <u>Fano</u>	34	95	83	178	22%
Never <u>Fano</u>	18	48	45	93	12%
Total	156	417	377	794	100%

Source: Field Survey, 1994

The field survey also looked at the current and former fanos' position within the family. As presented in Table 3 below, among the 167 current fano, 79 percent are not male households heads, but other members of the household, and this is a slight increase from that of the former fano of 62 percent. This may be attributed to the fact that many fano are children under 20 years of age (42 percent), and suggests that the trend towards younger migrants (as opposed to household heads) may be increasing.

**Table 3. Fanos' Position in the Family  
by Male household Head and Other Household Members**

	Current <u>Fanos</u>		Former <u>Fanos</u>	
	No	%	No	%
Male HH	35	21	23	38
Other HH Members	132	79	37	62
Total	167	100	60	100

Source: Field Survey, 1994

### 2.3.1.1. Urban Destinations and Occupations

The urban destinations and occupations of the fanos, for both current and former are summarized below in Table 4. Addis Ababa has constituted the major magnetic attraction for both current and former Gurage urban migrants, representing 32 and 25

percent, respectively. Nazareth and Shashemene come next constituting 19 and 17 percent for current fano and 13 and 12 percent for former fano. This data suggests <sup>that</sup> there is a trend towards Addis Ababa, Nazareth and Shashemene (68 percent of current migrants), and slightly less emphasis on some of the other areas of destination listed in the table.

Table 4. Urban Destinations of Current and Former Fanos

Destination	Current <u>Fano</u>		Former <u>Fano</u>	
	No	%	No	%
Addis Ababa	54	32	15	25
Nazareth	31	19	8	13
Shashemene	28	17	7	12
Akaki	13	8	7	12
Awasa and Shakiso	20	12	13	21
Metehara & Willinchiti	10	6	7	12
Others	11	6	3	5
Total	167	100	60	100

Source: Field Survey, 1994

Regarding the urban occupations of the current and former fano, the field survey revealed that a considerable change has occurred (and may still be occurring). There is a shift from an emphasis among the former fano on service and domestic work to self employed work such as petty trading amongst the current fanos. As shown in Table 5 below, petty trades and working in tej houses represent 42 and 17 percent of all the occupations considered for the current fanos. On the other hand, working in tej houses and petty trades constituted 38 and 28 percent of the occupations in which the former fanos were involved.

**Table 5. Urban Occupations of Current and Former Fanos**

Occupations	Current <u>Fano</u>		Former <u>Fano</u>	
	No	%	No	%
Petty trades	70	42	17	28
Working in tej-house	29	17	23	38
Domestic work	26	16	15	25
Schooling	17	10	5	9
Marriage	11	6	-	-
Public Service	8	5	-	-
Owning tej house	3	2	-	-
Not identified	3	2	-	-
Total	167	100	60	100

Source: Field Survey, 1994

### 2.3.2. Former Seasonal Fanos

These types of migrants are referred to in the literature on urban migration using different terms such as "repeaters", "circular" or "oscillating laborers;" referring to the movement of labor between the rural areas and urban centers. Among the Gurage, such migrants are called werem-vichen, or wetam-yegeba fano, i.e. literally the out-going-incoming migrants. These fanos usually engaged in wage employment or self-employed occupations in the informal sector such as petty trades for 3-8 months in towns. The majority of the Gurage fanos however, stay in towns for about 3-4 months, timing their movements to coincide with the farming slack times (see the Gurage agricultural calendar, Table 1).

In addition, there are such "circular" fanos whose destinations are found to be rural areas, where they engage in agricultural wage employment for a few months. Although the stream of such migrants is rural-rural, the local people call them wetam-yigeba fano, i.e. circular migrants. These types of fanos have been involved in the process since the earlier period onwards as they were migrating to Addis Ababa and its surrounding areas. There they engage as wage laborers in different on-farm activities.

However, since and after the Italian occupation period, the destinations for these types of migrants expanded to include regions of Sidamo, Gamu Gofa, Bale, Arsi, Kaffa, Woliso, Kambata, Silte and Hadiya. In Sidamo and Kaffa, fanos Gurage engaged in farm activities such as coffee farms, and in the other destinations, they engaged in tilling, planting trees, and cutting fodder. These fanos left their villages usually after they finished their Mengese, seasonal farm activities, at the end of December. They moved in groups of 3-8 men and travelled on foot to Wolkite and from there they took lorries to their destinations. Hediro Mashewe, for instance, recalled his own experience:

After the Italians left (Ethiopia), I used to go to Dilla and Yirgalem (in Sidamo) with my friends. Usually we were a group of 4-8 men from my village as well as from Geto. We used to leave at the end of Mengese and carry our marasha and sickle as well as qimus wusa (i.e. wusa baked in combination with barley flour and pepper) with us. We had to walk up to Wolkite because then the road did not reach as far as here (Gumer). From there we took lorries to Addis Ababa and then to Sidamo. There we were working on coffee farms, in particular we used to till the land within the coffee fields for planting maize. We used to stay for three or four months and live in a house which our bosses (the farm owners) provided. Then when we returned back to the village, we would bring 200-300 birr depending on how much we had worked, or how smartly we negotiated because we received a lot of money for a small plot of land if we were lucky. With the money we would mainly repay debts for annual festivities and pay taxes and buy clothes for our families.

I went to Sidamo (Yirgalem and Dilla) many times. Initially, my villager, who had gone there following his Merkene boss before, took me to Dilla. Then, as I became familiar with the people and coffee farm owners, I was going once a year for about ten times total. Friends and villagers would then come to my house before I left and ask me to take them to Sidamo with me. In this way, I took several friends and relatives there. Later, I stopped going to Sidamo. However, these days, many other Gurage are still going to Sidamo, one following the other.

### 2.3.3. Current Seasonal Fanos

Interestingly enough, this type of rural-destined seasonal movement has continued and expanded considerably to become a substantial aspect of the current phenomenon of Gurage fanonet. According to one of the fanos of this type, Aberra Endashaw, these days about 200-300 men from Gumer and Geto move annually to Bale, in particular to Goba and Robe. They reportedly stay there for 2-3 months from mid-February until mid-May, and engage in agricultural activities such as tilling and preparing the land for various purposes,

planting eucalyptus seedlings, and fencing. They move in a work group of three men and walk to Butajera, which takes them a day. From there, they take lorries to Essena<sup>o</sup> then to Ziway and Shashemene, where they stay the night. The next day, they ride a bus to Bale:

When we reach Bale, Robe, or Bale Goba, we begin working there immediately if we can get a job. If not, we move into the rural areas. We walk sometimes for 2-3 days, till we find a job. When we get work, we negotiate on a contract basis and agree on a certain size plot of land for a specific payment. The agreement varies, and sometimes we agree to till a plot of land of 1 meter for one birr. When we are lucky, we make 20 birr each for a day and in a three months stay we bring 300 birr net income back to our village. If we are not that lucky we get birr 200-250 net income.

Back in the village, I use the money to repay my debts which I usually borrow with 5-7 percent interest for Meskal, to buy fertilizer and pay taxes. The remaining money I use to buy clothes for my wife and children. My friends use their money in a similar ways like me. When we go we bring our marasha with us. We take the two iron-tips from the wood frame, put the tips in a fertilizer sack and wrap them. Then we carry the iron tips and the wooden part separately. When we reach Bale we fix it. This is how we bring our masrasha. Otherwise, it would be difficult to transport it in lorries with other passengers.

This kind of movement is interesting for certain significant reasons. First, initially it was begun predominantly as a male specific experience and has remained (even more so) so. In contrast, although it has been a recent phenomenon, women's involvement in the urban-destined movements has increasingly become quite a feature in the fanonet process. Second, the findings of this study show that the majority of this type of migrants are returnees, who have not achieved success in their urban-destined migratory experiences. Therefore, the rural-rural type of fanonet presented itself as an alternative to those unsuccessful repatriates. Third, this sort of migrants are often available in the village during the major peak farming periods, when the seasonal demands for male farm labor are extremely high. Therefore, it could be argued that the effects of this type of migration on the well-being of the village households might be far less critical in terms of agricultural output than other types of migrants' families.

#### 2.3.4. Permanent and/or Semi-Permanent Fanos

The case history of Damo Zerihun, who is one of the rich migrants<sup>1</sup> and has undergone the experiences ranging from being hired in domestic and manual labor to running his own businesses, will provide an illustration of the experiences of these types of migrants. Zerihun has been a fano for the last 40 years in Nazareth, as he went there following his elder brother Wolde Elilo, who was himself a rich migrant owning various businesses:

I went to Nazareth in January 1955, after I had finished harvesting the grain for my father. This was my second trip to town, as I had traveled to Addis Ababa the year before where I had stayed for about 25 days with my elder sister. That time I went to Nazareth because my elder brother called Wolde Elilo was living there. He had a family and a house, and he ran his own businesses such as a hotel, tej house and grocery. He was rich for his time. Then I started working as a waiter in his hotel. I was living with my brother. After a while, as I got adjusted to the work, I was transferred to his butchery. In the meantime, I got to know an Oromo man who was transporting onions from Mojo to Nazareth for sale. I went with this guy to Mojo, where I got a job as tej qeji in a tej house owned by a woman called Weizero Tsedale. I worked there for six months. Then I returned to Nazareth, as I was not getting along with Weizero Tsedale. As I had gained experience working in a tej house, I had no problem getting a job in Nazareth working in the tej house of a woman called Weizero Mulunesh. Business was very good there and I was making a lot of money for my own use. I bought clothes for myself and for my parents. I was visiting my parents in the village for every annual Meskal festivity, bringing them money to buy an ox to be slaughtered; clothes; salt; sugar; coffee; soap; and kerosene.

In 1960/1, I got married to my first wife in the village, when I returned for Meskal. The marriage was arranged by my father with the girl's parents, who were living in the village of Goye, in Ezha. I bought clothes for my bride and myself. I also bought a pistol and brought it with me for the wedding. Then, it was considered a mark of a big fano and a big deal (to have a pistol). In 1961/2, I brought my bride to Nazareth to live there with me. During this same time, I opened my own tej house for the first time. I remember that it was in the month of Hidar (September) that I opened the tej business and in the next month of Tabisas, there was the Mengistu Neway uprising.<sup>2</sup>

In 1965, I went bankrupt as business in my tej house was not good. As a result, I faced problems in feeding my family as, by then, I had four children and a wife in town who were financially dependent on me. Somehow we survived as God helped me. In 1968, I engaged in farming. I rented land on a contract basis from peasants in the surrounding rural area of Nazareth. That year, I planted two quintals of onions on the land and my yield was 200 quintals. I was happy and in the next year,

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<sup>1</sup> These migrants who have succeeded in having secure jobs, particularly self-employed activities, such as trade, are considered as rich migrants.

<sup>2</sup> A coup attempted by Mengistu Neway against Emperor Haile Selassie

the yield was amazingly high and I managed to transport four lorries of onions to Addis Ababa and I made a lot of money, with which I revived. I have been still pursuing this farm business, being supported by my brother in law who also has a small plot of land near my farm. Recently, we have been producing wheat, barley and tef, which we transport to Addis Ababa every year. In the farm, I also have a cattle-fattening business. In addition to my first tej house, I opened a grocery, which was licensed under my mother's name. Later on, I brought another tej house under my friend's name. Earlier I had bought 710 square meters of land on which I constructed a house, with concrete bricks for my former wife, with whom I have been separated 20 years ago. Since then, she has been living with her children in this house. I had 9 children from her, 7 are alive, and 2 died. Although we are separated, I am supporting this family as well, providing clothes and food and covering expenses for annual festivities.

After my separation from my former wife, in 1975, I married my second wife, who is an Amhara. I did not have children with my second wife. As usual, I would come back to Zizencho to visit my mother for Meskal with my second wife. She liked my village and our (Gurage) culture and she learned that I have land which I inherited from my father. My mother was getting old and she always insisted that my father's land and homestead should not be abandoned, and that I should have a family in the village and take over my father's place. She was insistent on this because I am her only son and she felt like this was something she owed me father. My mother discussed this idea with my second wife, when we came to visit the village for Meskal. My wife agreed to my mother's idea of getting me another wife in Zizencho. Then my second wife asked the elders in the village to find me a beautiful girl and they succeeded in finding one in the village of Abeke.

The elders sent a message to Nazareth that they had found me a bride and that my wife and I should come and see the girl. Accordingly, in 1982, we came back to Gumer and went to Abeke to see the girl. Immediately, we liked the girl and agreed with her parents for the marriage. In the next year, I married the girl, who is also an Amhara through her father whose forefathers came to Abeke as neftegna. The mother of my third wife is a Gurage, from the clan of Mezahur, however.

A year later, I constructed this house here (in Zizencho). I bought all the building materials such as 150 pieces of gordera (i.e. pine wood used for the wall) for three birr each, a mainstay for birr 400, and I transported them by lorry from Daquna (in Chaha) to Zizencho. I also transported wheat and barley for the workers from Nazareth. I paid 200 birr for the anati (traditional engineer) and 3 birr per worker per day. That is how I constructed this house.

Now, thanks to God, we (my third wife and I) have four children, the first one is a boy, born 10 years ago and the second is a girl, now 7 years old. The third and fourth ones are also girls, 4 years and 5 months old. The eldest son is in Nazareth living with us (my other Amhara wife and I) and attending school. My wives like each other. They are behaving well as if a mother and daughter, as my wife who lives in Nazareth sees the one in Zizencho as her daughter and the reverse. They visit each other during annual festivities and mournings (funerals). For example, my younger wife from Zizencho came to Nazareth when my other wife's parents died in Nazareth. Also, the latter came to Gumer when the former's brothers died in Abeke. Often, my urban wife would come with me to visit my wife in Zizencho for Meskal festivities.



Since I married a woman in the village, I usually come back three times in a year, for Meskal, for Chisht<sup>1</sup> and for Nase.<sup>2</sup> I came for the last Meskal festival and stayed for a month. When I came for farming seasons, I hired labor to carry out seasonal activities such as harvesting cereal and pulses, and planting asat during Chisht and ploughing and sowing grains at the time of Nase. In the last two years, however, I have returned to the village every two months because I have been following events to finalize my cattle-fattening project in Enjefo (a commonland in Zizencho and Teredo PA).

This history portrays the unique characteristics of Gurage migrants. Gurage fanos sharing Zerihun's experiences are not either seasonal or permanent, in the strict senses of the terms. Rather, they are more than just seasonal, or permanent, or semi-permanent and they are special types of migrants characterized by all these three patterns. They have settled lives, families, houses, and occupations both in the urban and rural areas of destination and origin.

### 2.3.5. Age of Current and Former Fanos

Table 6 below, reveals that the majority of current fanos are members of the age group between 11 and 20 years old, which represents the 42 percent of current fanos. 36 percent of all current fanos are between 21 to 30 years old. The majority of the former fano in the village are within the age categories from 41 to 50 (63 percent) and from 31 to 40 (25 percent) years old. Since the 1960's and the establishment of modern roads (see Chapter V below) the rate of out-migration considerably increased and the young (i.e. between 11-20 years old) have come to predominate the picture. As a result, the most productive persons of working age are migrating.

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<sup>1</sup>Annual festival held in ~~December~~ <sup>November</sup> in honor of Wag, the sky god

<sup>2</sup>A peak agricultural season of plowing and sowing of grain

**Table 6. Age of Current and Former Fanos**

Age	Current <u>Fano</u>		Former <u>Fano</u>	
	No.	%	No.	%
11-20	70	42	-	-
21-30	61	36	7	12
31-40	23	14	15	25
41-50	10	6	38	63
upto 10	3	2	-	-
above -50	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 1994

### 2.3.6. Women Fanos

In the earlier period the fano were predominantly composed of adolescent and adult men. The fact that women did not substantially take part in the migratory process could be described in terms of gender-based roles of the women in the village. The rural Gurage society is organized on the basis of the patrilineal lineage system and the social organization of its economy is established according to these principles of kinship. As in many other patrilineal societies, men are usually the heads of households and are considered to be the main income earners for the families, and to be superior to women. Accordingly, there is a tradition of a gendered division of labor in which women are mainly responsible for domestic tasks, whereas agricultural as well as other related activities outside the household are generally considered to be male tasks. Therefore, fanonet has been considered as a male-specific task, and has remained so until only recent times. My returnee fano informant, Imam Kemal said the following:

There are not many women among the fano Gurage. Even nowadays, their number is very small compared to that of men. This fact is related to our tradition. Women are expected to take care of things within the household: food preparation, taking care of children and cleaning the houses. Men have to go outside their houses and go around to support their families. Fanonet is one of such activities. Women cannot do these types of men's tasks. Neither can men take over women's domestic roles such as preparing wusa food and taking care of children.

However, during later period, particularly since the construction of Garage roads, women have begun participating in the fanonet process. Initially, the very young girls were migrating to towns where they usually engaged in chulonet, i.e. as maid servants in a household. Part of the case history of one of my female informants, Birhane Wolde, is a typical example. Birhane is currently in her late twenties.

My paternal uncle Gizaw, who was then trading onions from Shashememe to Nazareth, took me to Nazareth twenty years ago. I stayed with him for one year. Then, my uncle found a chulonet job in an Amhara household in Wonji (town) where I worked caring for babies and serving in the house. I lived with them for seven years. Initially, I was earning 15 birr per month and then my salary was raised to 20 birr a month. They (the employers) were nice and kind and they liked me. They sent me to school, where I attended through grade four. After I stayed for seven years in Wonji, I returned to my parents with my uncle for Meskal. We stayed in the village for a couple of weeks. Then I went to Addis Ababa, where I got a job as a maid in the residence of Kebede Seresa.<sup>1</sup> There I worked for four years earning 30 birr a month. At that time, I resumed my education and attending night school from grades four through seven. During this time, I was sending clothes for my mother, brothers and sisters, and money for my father. Three years ago, I returned to my village and attended grade 8 at Arakit Elementary and Junior Secondary School. I dropped out of the school the next year, as I failed in the 8th grade national exam. Therefore, a year ago, I married Lemma<sup>2</sup> and we have a baby son now.

Moreover, there were other women who migrated following their migrant husbands. For example, the first wives of ten of my informants, who also have wives in the village, migrated in order to follow their husbands.

Then, more adolescent and married young women appeared on the migration scene. These relatively new fanos have been motivated by social factors. This particularly applies to those young married women who must meet social obligations. For example, after they marry, young women stay in the village of their parent's-in-law<sup>3</sup> for two months or so. Then they return to their parents' village where they stay for two or more months. After this, they must return to their new husband's village which is locally known as yifite zipwar

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<sup>1</sup> A rich fano from the same area, who owns a bar, restaurant and four tej houses

<sup>2</sup> Formerly a teacher in Zizencho school, and now operating with his wife, his own tea room business in Zizencho

<sup>3</sup> Parents-in-law are locally referred to as Abina (father) and Amat (mother).

(which literally means "turn the face back"). Upon their return, the young women are expected to bring presents such as blankets, a gabi, and fly whisk for their father-in-law and dresses, baskets and coffee pots for their mother-in-law. To meet these social obligations, many young women have to migrate to towns in order to obtain money to purchase the above gifts for yifite zipwar. Most such women engage in trading second hand clothes and/or in wage labor working in hotels, restaurants and private households.

A number of them may not succeed in obtaining enough cash to cover the cost of the presents and then remain in towns. Some of them, who raise the money for gifts and return to their husband's village, have chosen to run away from their husbands and their village lives and migrate to urban areas, as they have been attracted to urban life. These types of women fano predominantly engage themselves in selling second-hand clothes, which are called selbaje. One informant criticized the migratory experiences of the young married women saying selbaje yetidar vebet sum herem, i.e. "trade in selbaje has become an enemy to marriage and family".

Thus, other young married women from the village have been attracted by the fanonet experiences of such women migrants, and by the stories of trade in second-hand clothes. These women then migrate to towns, leaving their children and families behind in the village. This kind of migration of young married women is considered by the villages, and particularly by the men, as "an undesirable job of loose women."

However, according to some of these young married women fano, out-migration is a good strategy for escaping fanonet created stress for those wives of migrant husbands, and from the burden of traditional village life faced by all women. In this sense, the migration of such women may be regarded as a means of resisting male supremacy within the village. From this study, I have found that the majority of young female migrants were married to poor fano husbands, and the majority of them attributed their own migration to the long absences of their fano husbands. In the words of one of my women fano informants:

I had a nominal husband. He was not living with me in the village as he was a fano in Addis Ababa. Neither did he visit me even for Meskal nor did he send me money. I waited for him for three years. It was not a real marriage, but an imprisonment. I had to do all tasks, both traditional women's and men's work. My life there (in the village) was stressful and frustrating. Then, I decided to escape and come here (to Addis Ababa), as I had heard about selbaje trade from Boneshit (another woman who had escaped from the village). I left my only son with my mother and I came here. Now, thanks to God I am happy and I made my livelihood from washing and selling selbaje.

Likewise, there are a considerable number of girls of marriageable age as well as married young women who have become engaged mainly in washing selbaje clothes for payment and/or selling them themselves. The relatively more positive experiences of self-employed women engaged in this type of occupation, have attracted more and more women not only from the rural villages, but also other fano women from towns have been engaged in other jobs such as working as maids in households and hotels, restaurants and other menial labor.

As a result of their migratory experiences, the marriage prospects of the young migrant women have grown as the fano men have become more interested in the young fano women than in the young non-migrant women in the villages. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning the fact that compared with the village girls of 14 and up, the young fano women have enjoyed more independence in courting and choosing their marriage partners. Also, when these young women migrants visit their villages, they arrive well-dressed and decorated. All these factors have influenced more young women of marriageable age to migrate to urban areas.

In this manner, the relatively recent appearance<sup>1</sup> of young women fanos could be described as fanonet created by fanonet. This is because the genesis of the migration of young women, both married and before marriage, is attributed to the inflationary effect of male fanonet on village marital life. Both the need for having modern (and usually expensive) bridal gifts (locally known as yemishira-gibir) and for fulfilling the social

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<sup>1</sup> That is since the 1960's and the establishment of a network of modern roads

obligations of presenting gifts to the parents-in-law of the brides, have been new elements introduced by the fanos into the village context. These new elements, together with many others, are considered undesirable things by the villagers. Moreover, unlike during the early period of migration, currently there are more young women who have entered into the fanonet process, not as labor migrants, but for educational and marital reasons.

### 2.3.7. Sex of Current and Former Fanos

Table 7 below describes the sex ratio for current and former fanos. The participation of women in out-migration increased considerably. Female migrants constituted 13 percent of the former fano and 19 percent of the current fano. However, the male fano are still the majority, representing 81 percent of the total current migrants.

Table 7. Sex of Current and Former Fanos

Sex	Current Fano		Former Fano	
	No.	%	No.	%
<u>M</u>	135	81	52	87
<u>F</u>	32	19	8	13
<u>Total</u>	167	100	60	100

Source: Field Survey, 1994

## Chapter III. Fanonet and Socio Economic Dynamics

### 3.1. The Fano-Families

In attempting to examine the socio-economic phenomenon of urban migration in Zizencho, with special reference to its impacts on the families of migrants as well as non-migrants, I found that the impacts vary from individual to individual, from household to household, and from clan to clan in the village community. As discussed in detail below, this has been the case since different migrants have specific migratory experiences, hence varying impacts on their respective households.

The fact that fanonet in its century old history has become an indispensable aspect of the village life system has been discussed in the foregoing chapter. In this chapter, an attempt is made to portray the varied and complex ways through which the fanos have been affecting the lives of their rural families. A fano family is defined here as a household in which one or more members has undergone a migratory, fanonet experience, currently or in the past.

As shown above (see Table 3), there are 156 households in Zizencho, of which 104 possess current fano members and 34 possess former fano family members. From the current fano, 35 male household members are migrants themselves, representing 21 percent of the total. In this discussion, only the situations of the fano-families, whose married male partners have had fanonet experiences are considered.

#### 3.1.1. Their Characteristic Features

By ways of remitted money, skills, ideas, goods, (~~or otherwise~~) fanonet has put in ~~X~~ some respects, the life situations of the households in the village apart, differentiating the fano- from the non fano households.

### 3.1.1.1. Clothing, Other Objects and Holding Festivities

The fano-households' access to remitted money and goods, such as clothes, and household utensils is the most obvious factor distinguishing the migrant from the non-migrant households. The fano-families, their wives, children, parents and other members of the households are better dressed than other villagers since the migrants bring them all types of clothing.

To be well dressed in modern clothes is associated with being a fano, since in the past the village Gurage used to wear traditional clothes made mainly from cattle skin. Thus, modern clothes are locally referred to as Yefano-huger, i.e clothes of the fano. Also to be wearing Yefano-huger is considered as a sign of "civilization" (modernity).

Likewise, the members of the fano-households, particularly their wives and children, are said to be "civilized" and have been revered by the wives and children of the non-migrant families.

In addition, the fano families have the advantages of receiving remitted goods such as soap, sugar, coffee, kerosene as well as kerosene lamps, butter, and in some cases, food such as tef, wheat, and corn flour.

However, at this point it is difficult to describe the size of each remitted item and how often these are received, since during the research period case-fano wives were found to be uncomfortable about disclosing information regarding such sensitive issues. However, they were prepared to tell the researcher that they are receiving some of the above mentioned items and particularly, household utensils such as plastic objects (jerricans, containers, bowls), bottles, trays of different sizes, glasses, cups, etc. These modern items were observed by the researcher, hanging on the walls of the fano houses, whereas the traditional Gurage household utensils, mainly ones made from clay and grass, are hung in those of non-fano houses.



Another aspect of the village life in which the use of remitted money has resulted in differentiation is the holding of festivities. Since the fanos have the financial resources, they are the ones who are revered for holding lavish festivities for annual festivals such as Meskal and Fasika for the Christians, and Arafa as well as Romedan, for the Muslims. Slaughtering animals is part of the ceremony and the fano spend varying amounts of money from 300 to more than 1,000 birr to buy cattle for such purposes.

During such periods, when the fano are around in the village, prices of things like cattle and wood rise in the market, and the majority of the farmers bring their items to the markets at this time and they can then sell them to the fano, who usually offer far better prices than the non-fano buyers would do in normal times.

In addition, the fano buy other items such as grass (fodder) for their livestock, eucalyptus as well as other wood, grass for thatching while they are in the village for annual festivals or farm seasons. As a result, prices of such items also rise. In addition, the normal wage rate for hired labour also increases from 3 to 4 and even 5 birr, particularly during peak agricultural seasons.

### **3.1.1.2.. Investment in Livestock and Land**

Buying livestock and land are other uses for remitted money. The fano or their wives with the fano money usually buy heifers, sheep, cows, horses (of both sexes) and rarely ox(en). Successful fano are known for having good horses with nice saddles. My informant Hediro, a returnee, stated, "Having nice horses and mules with complete modern saddles as well as decorations belongs to the fano, and has become wide spread in Gurage as a result." Therefore, because they have cows and the wives buy extra food, such as flour bread, butter and cheese, children of the successful fano are regarded by the villagers as better-fed.

Furthermore, having armaments, such as rifles and pistols, has been another means by which the fano have attained special social as well as political status in the village.

Hediro stated: Shigut biret tefano egiru yechene. Bazhemene bemesqer bechist bebihe yesarenohema yatirapewi. Dire ika yitecushiqar anebere, i.e. "(armaments such as) pistols and rifles have been introduced to the village by the fano. They shoot as they wish, on weddings, Meskal, Chisht and (even) mournings (funerals). Doing such things was unheard of amongst the village Gurage in the past."

Last but not least, purchasing land has also been in the sphere of remitted money use. In fact, it is believed that land is purchased by the fano. However, the incidence of buying land with remitted money has been found to be almost non-existent, and from the recorded fano-case histories, only in one of them was 2,200 birr spent on land purchase.

### 3.1.1.3. Housing

One of the most common characteristics of the fano households is receiving remitted money locally known as Yefano-waga<sup>1</sup> and its varying uses. One of the widespread uses of remitted money is its investment in house construction, a dominant activity in which perhaps the largest portion of remitted money is invested. One of my well versed informants, Hediro Mashewe, himself a return migrant, described this aspect of fanonet in his own words as follows.

Yehugrim hema, yebet erishem yefano qaru Wehebet yereso, begibireta, bemetemmeta. Yemenam seb yeshehoche hema tazazem yechelo. Sheret tafi enjera metete areqe yesare aher yatefo. Betem tareswi anque yebet dene gete namuna yeshekitewi. Beqershiahuna enem qar yacheno. Zih yamero yatego fanolo.

Like clothes, constructions of nice houses is the merits of the fano. They build the best houses, both in terms of the building materials and size. (While they are constructing), they obtain the largest assistance as almost all the villagers would come like the pilgrims to Shehoch (Sayid Buddelah of Yabret) because food such as enjera from tef and drinks like areqe (local liquor) are made plenty for the workers. Also, after the construction is finished, their (the fano's) houses are the best (furnished) and organized internally. They (the fanos) bring everything (from town) as they have the money. These kinds of things are done only by the successful fano.

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<sup>1</sup> Waga refers to wealth in the form of money or livestock. Here the term refers to money.

Thus, the majority of the fano houses, those of rich ones in particular, are all bigger in size and constructed with good quality building materials<sup>1</sup>. Traditionally, the village houses in Zizencho have been built using materials available in the nearby areas, and their size (both in terms of width as well as length) are said to have been far less than the modern ones built by the fano. Ageyet Woletet, a woman informant, 85 years old, said: Yedire goyebet yehua zeger yahir bane, i.e. "the size of today's zege<sup>2</sup> might equal that of the biggest house in the past."

From the case fano material I have recorded, almost all of the migrants have constructed houses (of varying size and quality, of course) using their fano-waga, remitted money. Of my case fanos, Getahun Woldemichael was proud to disclose to the researcher that he was the first fano to build a big house with good quality building materials.

It was twenty-three years ago that I collected materials to construct a house. Then I came back from Nazareth and went to a village called Yareje next to Daquna, in Cheha. There, I bought 140 pieces of gordera (pine wood for walls) for 250 birr and one echiba (pine wood pillar) for 17 birr. I left all this in Yareje at the homestead of the man from whom I bought the wood. Then I went to Nazareth and stayed there for a while. Having obtained money, I returned to Zizencho. There, I bought bamboo for 150 birr, as at that time atena (eucalyptus wood poles) had not become widespread in the Gumer area yet. I also transported the pine wood which I bought from Yareje by truck to the village of Jame.<sup>3</sup> I paid 90 birr for the truck and the wood was carried here by people from Jame.

Then, the construction was finished in two days: a day for the walls and another day for the roof. I had many people to work on it as I bought a big ox for birr 280, which now would cost more than a thousand birr, and killed and kitfo<sup>4</sup> was served for the workers. I bought them plenty of areqe. The size of the house was 18 jeef.<sup>5</sup> People were amazed by this size, as at that time this was the largest size in our area. Also, I was the first fano to transport building materials by truck from such distant places like Cheha. Everything was completed, including the thatching of the roof, in two weeks and then I went back to Nazareth.

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<sup>1</sup> These days pine wood, eucalyptus poles (locally known as atena), bamboo and cheza, a special grass for thatching the rooves of the houses, are considered to be of best quality construction materials.

<sup>2</sup> The smallest Gurage house, after herar and gove (three types of Gurage houses)

<sup>3</sup> The neighboring village to the east of Zizencho which is found on the left side of the Wolkite-Hossana road

<sup>4</sup> Traditional food prepared from chopped meat with melted butter and pounded dry red pepper. Kitfo is (considered to be) a Gurage specialty.

<sup>5</sup> Jeef are the traditional measurements for the width of a Gurage house and houses are described in terms of feet

It is clear from the foregoing presentation of case material that the fano have been obtaining labour assistance from the villagers because financially they manage to serve plenty of food, (and in some cases new food such as tef) killing animals for kitfo, and providing drinks like areqe, a task which, would be very difficult if not impossible, to carry out for the non-fano villagers. After Getahun's house, a number of other houses of varying sizes (between 14-24 feet) have been constructed during the past two decades. Transporting materials from distant places has now become common place in the village. Houses have been improvised in their designs and internal partitions. Several of such houses, unlike in the past, have several doors and windows, and have internal partitions called guada,<sup>1</sup> dividing the house into two parts for cattle and people.

Moreover, cost-wise, the expenses of constructing a new house have greatly increased during the past two decades. Damo Zerihun another wealthy fano informant, also constructed a large house of 22 feet, bought 1 piece of gordera, 4 wefencha and a mainstay for 3, 150, and 400 birr, eight years ago. Getahun, twenty years ago, purchased these same materials with only slight difference in size for 150 and 17 birr respectively. Zerihun had to pay 300 birr for a truck to transport the pine wood he bought from Daquna to Zizencho, while the same job was done by Getahun for 90 birr. Another fano from a neighboring village who constructed a house of 23 feet three years ago, told the researcher that he spent 20 thousand birr to construct the house. This same fano informant said that another fano friend even spent 30 thousand birr. Although this might sound a bit exaggerated, it is believable, since the cost of house construction has also risen for the non-villagers.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the houses of the fano are easily identifiable by their size, quality of building materials, new architectural designs and partitions, and their homestead fences, especially

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<sup>1</sup> The term guada itself is not a Guragegna, but an Amharic word introduced by the fano. There were internal partitions in Gurage houses before the contact period but these were referred to as derer, which divided the houses.

<sup>2</sup> See the next sub-section below

those of the wealthy ones, as the fence poles are large and locally known as Quwash. Traditionally, such big homesteads with the Quwash fences have been marks of big men in the village.

However, it is interesting to point out that, despite some architectural improvisations, almost all the fano houses have been constructed using the traditional Gurage house-building materials: wood (eucalyptus, pine and bamboo) and ropes from the asat plant. As eucalyptus is a recently adopted crop and pine trees are not common in Gumer, the use of these wood for house construction is a fanonet-introduced element in the study area. This is so because the adaptation and expansion of eucalyptus within the indigenous cropping patterns is associated with the fanonet experience. In addition, transporting pine wood from areas in which it is widely grown, such as Cheha, to Gumer for house construction, has resulted from the migratory experiences.

As in the past, the houses are circular in shape with plastered walls and thatched rooves. There is just one exception to the rule in Zizencho, as one fano constructed a house in rectangular shape and, it is roofed with corrugated sheets<sup>1</sup>. Even this same fano later constructed another traditional Gurage house, opposite this strange Korqoro bet, i.e corrugated sheets roofed house.

### **3.1.2. The Women Who Shoulder the Burden of Fanonet**

Among the fano-families, the wives of the migrants are found to be the most affected group and hence are the main focus of the discussion in this sub section.

#### **3.1.2.1. Traditional Division of Labor**

In order to discuss the various effects of fanonet on the wives remaining in the village, it is important to describe the traditional division of labour in the village community.

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<sup>1</sup> His name is Feqadu Bekele, and he is a wealthy migrant. He said that he constructed a rectangular house at that time since he was in a hurry to build a house because he had a land dispute. The rectangular house was simpler and cheaper to build than a round Gurage house.

The community is organized on the principles of the patrilineal lineage system (Shack 1966). Social and economic activities, both at the household and community levels, are carried out by the members according to a division of labour based on social and religious principles. Among the Gurage village households, labour allocations are primarily based on sex and age. Accordingly, there are traditionally defined domains of female and male activities.

Traditionally, the village women's major responsibilities include the categories of household maintenance, child-care and processing of the staple asat food wusa. Processing wusa involves the activities of decorticating, pulverizing, storing, cutting and baking and is exclusively women's activity.

This processing of asat is locally known as wisacha and is carried out during the season of Mehena (i.e one of the four seasons, September, October and November)<sup>1</sup>. Although the first part of harvesting asat involves digging up the mature plants and is usually carried out by men, the processing is the most significant women's seasonal undertaking for several reasons. First, wisacha takes place mainly once a year and it is at this time that they process and store wusa for the whole coming year.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, it is essential preparatory work for transplanting and cultivating asat in the following peak season of Mengese (December, January and February) which is one of the two most important male seasonal undertakings, the other one being ploughing and sowing grains in Nase (June, July and August).<sup>3</sup> Thirdly, as this season of Mehena is also locally referred to as yishata gore, i.e. "Women's seasons" a woman who does not accomplish this processing on time is regarded as lazy and inefficient. Fourth, the work is laborious and arduous, and the majority of women's productive labor time is devoted to this work.

Moreover, making different mats from asat rope, grass such as jipe (both for sleeping and carpeting) yewedere (eating mat), and traditional mattresses like kapuat and qichiqiche,

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<sup>1</sup> According to Muluneh, asat harvesting begins "from about mid-October to the end of December and/or mid-January, at the latest" in his research area of Ezhana Wellene Woredas (1993:182).

<sup>2</sup> However, households harvest a small number of mature asat plants during other local seasons as well.

<sup>3</sup> For the details on Gurage local timetable(calendar), see the first Chapter, Table 1

as well as baskets such as sef are other women's activities. Women make such traditional objects both for their own uses and for sale. Women's responsibilities also include fetching water (mainly from the nearby rivers) and fuel-wood, cleaning the house, carrying animal-dung and manuring, preparing food for the household members as well as traditional drinks such as seher and tella for male workers during agricultural undertakings.

Usually, young girls are followers and supporters of their mothers, in their domain of activities. Women, however, are not traditionally directly involved in agricultural activities in the fields, although they participate indirectly through preparing and providing the male workers with coffee, snacks, drinks and food. Moreover, women have not been allowed to own land, the major production asset in Gurage.

In contrast, men's work responsibilities are mainly agricultural, and men have been the owners of land. The planting, transplanting at the different stages, cultivation of asat, digging harvestable plants and preparing for decortication processes are carried out by men during Mengese, season. In addition, harvesting grain, cutting, collecting, threshing and storing of cereals and pulses as well as planting potatoes are undertaken in this same season. Mengese is referred to as yegemya gore, i.e. "men's season".

Land preparation, ploughing and sowing cereals and pulses during the season of Nase (June, July and August) are other significant men's agricultural responsibilities. Also, taking care of cattle (grazing, cutting fodder, providing water) and maintaining farms, or asat fields (fencing, making bunds, supervising manuring),<sup>1</sup> house construction (building new houses, or repairing old ones), chopping wood, planting trees, such as eucalyptus and local cabbage, as well as potatoes and of course heading the family are activities of the male domain. As young women assist their mothers, young men support other men as well as

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<sup>1</sup> Actually, manuring (collecting and carrying animal dung) is a woman's task. Men, however, decide and supervise when and what part of the manure should be used for which asat plants.

their fathers in the domain of adult male undertakings such as cattle-herding, wood chopping, fodder-cutting, harvesting grain, etc.

### **3.1.2.2. Additional Responsibilities**

This said, however, as a result of the migratory experiences of their husbands, the wives' traditional patterns of labour allocation have changed over time. The first structural change in the household occurs as a result of out-migration and the absence of a husband often makes a wife responsible for the household. Having become head of the family means for such women shouldering a greater burden of responsibilities, in addition to the traditional heavy work load for women, mentioned above.

#### **3.1.2.2.1. Shortage of Farm Labor**

The mechanism by which wives of the fano cope with their life situations in the absence of their partners vary. In some cases, the women have assumed full responsibility for their households which otherwise would be undertaken by their male partners. The experiences of Weizero Almaz, one of my female informants whose case history I recorded, is a case in point. Almaz has been the wife of a migrant husband for the past sixteen years. The husband has been working in a tej-house as tej-geji around St. George Church in Addis Ababa, until he lost this job last year. When he came back to the village for the Meskal festival, last year, he brought his nephews to take over his work until he returned. His nephews had stolen 8,000 birr from work and as a result he lost this job. Almaz said that he returned and is now depressed in the village. She assumed the responsibilities of her husband during his fanonet period.

I had to take care of the whole family. I have been in charge of all the work of men as well as my own work as a woman, such as asat-food processing and preparation, carrying animal dung, marketing work, making mats, cleaning the house and washing clothes, child-care (which is hard as we now have seven children) and all sorts of other work.



In addition, I take care of the cattle. I have been in charge of all work during the major agricultural seasons for asat; harvesting cereals and pulses in Mengese; and ploughing and sowing grain in Nase. I hire labour with the money my husband sends me. I pay 3 birr per day for a man and this price usually rises to 3.50 and even 4 birr during the peak seasons of Mengese and Nase. My sufferings as a wife of a fano are a lot because it is very difficult to deal with the competitive labour market during such peak seasons and sometimes I cannot find labour to hire even with high wage rates. I also suffered from doing several things at a time. On the one hand, I have to make coffee, and prepare snacks as well as food for the hired workers, which is a common offering in addition to the payment in cash. On the other hand, I have to supervise the hired workers' activities in the field. Therefore, I have to rush like a crazy person here and there from house to farm (getting torn apart between the responsibilities of the women and men). It is not possible for me to get a break from work.

In addition to agricultural responsibilities, Almaz had to assume a man's role in house-construction. Traditionally, among the Gurage, preparing and collecting building materials and constructing houses have been solely male roles. Usually, women's participation in house-construction has been making coffee and preparing food, snacks and drinks for men working on construction. In the absence of her migrant husband, Almaz played a man's role in building their house which was constructed nine years ago.

I constructed this house myself. My husband was not even around. His main part was that he sent me the money, which I used to buy and transport the building materials and construct the house. Nine years have passed since our house was built. First I had to collect the construction materials. I bought the det gorderas, i.e. pine wood walls, and mainstay in the village of Aftir in Cheha, and I brought them here using mainly the support from the villagers and kin. I also purchased bamboo, atena, (eucalyptus wood poles) and cheza, (special grass for thatching the roof) and transported them using hired labour and pack animals. Then, this house was constructed with support from villagers and kin, as well as using hired labour. That is how this house was built.

Almaz clearly illustrated her situation, saying " It is not possible for me to get a break from work." This is illustrative of the circumstances in which women left behind carry out their traditional work which has become increasingly arduous as a result of the out-migration of their men. The stress of wives left behind increases, seasonally, and is particularly high during the two peak agricultural seasons, Mengese and Nase.

The out-migration of the male adult members in general, and that of husbands in particular, creates a shortage of farm labour for the fano families in the village. In the

context of the sexual division of labour based on Gurage tradition, this phenomenon particularly diminishes the households' supply of labour for male-specific tasks such as cultivation, planting and transplanting asat, harvesting (cutting, collecting and threshing) grains, and ploughing as well as another land preparation for sowing grains and for planting vegetables such as potato and local cabbage. These and other male-specific tasks have traditionally not been open to women and, as a result, women do not have sufficient agricultural knowledge about these traditionally male undertakings.

This problem of shortage of farm labour supply is one of the common characteristics of all the fano families, although the mechanisms for dealing with and the degree of its effects on the lives of the households vary from one fano family to another.

These variations are closely related to the family composition as well as family size, to the level of household agricultural resources possessed, to the types of migrants and to their success as well as the amount and frequency of the remitted money. First, there are some migrants who usually come back to the village for the most significant season-specific male tasks, mentioned above. Such migrants bring money as well and hire labour to undertake the seasonal activities. The wives of these successful migrants experience less stress than those wives of the less successful fano. My informant Weizero Birqinesh Reta, is a young wife of one of the richest migrants in the village. Her husband has three wives, two in Nazareth town and one, i.e Birqinesh, in the village. She described her life as followings.

He (her husband) lives in Nazareth and has tej-houses, cattle-fattening as well as other businesses there. I have been living here for the last 11 years, since we married. Now we have 4 children, a boy and 3 girls. He has two other wives in Nazareth, who married him before me. My eldest son lives with one of my husband's wives in Nazareth.

My husband usually visits us (the family) thrice in a year for the Meskal festival (September), for Chisht in Mengese and for Nase. He stays for about two weeks each time and undertakes the farming activities of asat and harvesting grains. He usually hires labour and supervises the activities. When he does not come for some reason, I take over his roles of hiring and supervising. He usually leaves money with me when he departs, or sends it to me from Nazareth. I hire labour with money he gives me, usually paying 3.50-4 birr per day for a man. However, despite the fact

that he gives me enough money, and I do not have a problem of shortage, my supervision of the agricultural activities is not satisfactory. This is because farm activities carried out by hired labour in the absence of the male head are not usually well done, and because I cannot supervise the male workers sufficiently, because I am a woman and at the same time I have other roles of making coffee and preparing food for them.

Thus, even in the cases of the wives of rich migrants such as Birqinesh, despite the abundance of remitted money to hire labour, the problem of the loss of husbands' labour is experienced, and it is felt by the wives that hired labour is less efficient than, and could not fully substitute for, the missing husband's labour.

In the above case, the specific seasonal needs for the migrants husbands' labour at their farm households has been partially met by the migrant's return to the village as well as by hiring agricultural labour. In contrast, there are fano families who receive remitted money but no visits from their migrant members in person for such seasonal labour needs. The wives of these types of fano shoulder the full responsibilities for getting male-specific seasonal tasks accomplished. Almaz's experiences is typical of the situations of such fano-families.

If abnormal circumstances such as deaths or funerals of some close relatives or friends force him to come for a day or two, my husband does not usually come for seasonal agricultural tasks. He always comes only annually for Meskale festival, during which he stays for a couple of months. What he does for farming seasons is he sends money. He usually would send me enough money, as he had a good job. I would hire and supervise the activities during the seasons of Mengese and Nase. During these two peak agricultural seasons, the price of hiring labour rises to 4 to 5 birr/day for a man, whereas it is 3 birr/day per person in other times, in addition to providing them with coffee with snacks and food twice in one working day. Undertaking all these farming activities with hired labour is not that productive. Yegawa tegurbet wechi yirge, i.e it does not even cover the cost of providing coffee and hiring labour. The hired workers usually do not perform as efficiently, carefully and wholeheartedly for us (the wives of fano) as they would do for themselves or if they were hired and supervised by their fellow men. In some cases, they start work late and stop early. The amount of work carried out by 8 hired labourers in a day could be accomplished by 4 men if the adult male head is available to supervise. These kinds of things happen particularly during Mengese and Nase, as hired labour is not available at these times and thus we (wives of the fano) have no options but to hire careless and inefficient labour.

These accounts of shortage of farm labor and the inefficiency of hired labor, presented above, are supported by the findings of the interviews carried out with 30 wives of the fano<sup>1</sup>. Twenty-seven of the women interviewed (i.e. 90 percent of the sample size) said that they used hired labor during farming seasons and that hired labor is less effective than their own family labor. The reasons they gave for this that the laborers are careless, that they do not come on time for work and that the result is of poor quality, etc.

### 3.1.2.2.2. Decline in Agricultural Output

Therefore, from the foregoing presentations of case-material, the picture is clear that the loss of adult male migrants' labour by village households has not been fully offset by the remittance money; and that hired labour is less efficient for male farmer's than own labour. As a result, it has been found that these problems of loss of farm labour have resulted in a decline in the fano- families' agricultural output, and problems of food shortages. Out migration-induced loss of adult male labour has deep and multi-faceted implications for lives of the fano- households, and for that of the villagers as a whole. These implications are due to the fact that asat is a staple subsistence crop for Gurage villagers, the basis for their mode of production (Shack 1966), and that the Gurage traditional division of labour based on gender is strict and the seasonal needs for male-specific tasks such as those related to asat plant as well as grains are great.

This is so because out-migration has brought about the diminution of food production and threatens the households' food security. Almaz has been experiencing this particular situation.

Abata enewe Zenga yewense, yaberus yemishtim yedengahema ereme gonem ekim yewense, (i.e, as the family, wife and children would miss the absence of the important adult male head of family, likewise the cattle and the farm (asat field) do also miss (are affected by) such absence. Look at my asat field, despite all the remitted money I spent on hired labour to maintain my asat in a good situation, I would not get sufficient wusa, asat-food, for my children. In this respect, we (she and her family members) are not self-sufficient in regard to wusa. This problem of

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<sup>1</sup> There are a total of 35 wives of fano in the village

asat (shortage of food) resulted from the inefficient and irresponsible activities of hired labour. Since it was inappropriately cultivated, they misplaced the animal-dung which was already manured and as a result most of my asats have caught bura <sup>1</sup>. Things (agricultural tasks) that are not done by, or in the presences of adult male head are like this (unproductive).

Thus, not only does the farming output, particularly that of the subsistence crop decline, but also, as a result, it creates and increases the fano households' dependencies on the remitted money, and purchased food. The incidence of such increasing dependency of the fano-families is widespread and considered by both the migrant household members as well as other villagers as characteristics of the fano-families. The following description of Almaz's experiences is illustrative in this respect.

Like in other fano-households, in my family too, there is a problem of shortage of wusa (food). I do not have sufficient amount of asat-plants for making wusa for my children. Therefore, I usually buy food, mainly wusa, with the money he (the migrant husband) sends me. I also use the money to buy coffee, salt and sometimes flour and baked injera from the markets. When he does not send me the money, I cannot buy food and, as a result, my children get hungry and the family suffers.

This above presented cases represent the situations of the wives who assume extra responsibilities and receive remitted money to fulfil their new requirements. On the other hand, there are wives of migrants who bear additional work load but do not receive remitted money from their fano partners. Those types of wives rather use support from their husband's close-kin to compensate for the missing adult male's labour required for men-specific seasonal tasks. Asmat Anga who is 24, a Muslim and a wife of a fano, is a case in point. Her husband lives and works in Kolfe Atenatera, in Addis Ababa. He sells second-hand clothes there. During the absence of her husband, male-specific traditional tasks are not the concern of Asmat but her father-in-law's responsibilities.

Usually he comes back for Arafa <sup>2</sup>. When, he comes he brings clothes for me, our daughter, and his parents as well as brothers and sisters. He also brings me salt,

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<sup>1</sup> A local name for a disease that destroys the plant

<sup>2</sup> An annual festival for Muslims

kerosene, sugar, soap and coffee. Five years ago, he constructed this house with an amount of money he obtained in town. He does not come back, for agricultural seasons. Instead he sends small money to his father. Whether he sends money or not, all farming activities, cutting fodder and taking care of a cattle are carried out by my father-in-law. I am responsible for child-care, house cleaning, carrying animal dung, looking after the field and going to markets to exchange certain objects. Also, I make coffee and food for the workers during agricultural undertakings.

There are still other wives of the fano, who combine both the use of remitted money to hire labour and the support of husband's kin based on the principles of extended family as a substitution for the migrant labour. According to Asnakech Berhe, 38, Christian, who is the wife of one of the former most wealthy fano in the village, who recently went bankrupt; using kin support and hired labour are reliable mechanisms to replace the loss of farm labour. Her husband has two wives, one in Nazareth and the other i.e, Asnakech, in Zizencho. Asnakech was also living in Nazareth for a couple of years, before she came to Zizencho because of the land distribution, which was carried out 17 years ago. Since then, having received both support from her husband's kin and remitted money, Asnakech has been successful in creating a household, constructing a house, planting asat, and looking after her husband's land in the village.

After I came here from Nazareth in 1978, I cleared the bushes and prepared the land. I first planted potato. Then I begged fonfuwe<sup>1</sup> from the villagers and planted them, which I am still harvesting and eating. I repaired the old house. I did all this thanks to the support provided by my moresha<sup>2</sup> and the money remitted by my husband.... I hire labour at wage rates of 3-5 birr per day for a man, as wages vary seasonally. I make efficient use of hired labour because I provide them with well-prepared, nice coffee and food. Since they become satisfied with the food, *they work wholeheartedly as if they are working for men.*<sup>3</sup> It is just a question of handling them with good coffee and food even in the difficult seasonal labour market, those workers would like to hire their labour to persons, who are known for their provision of good coffee and food.

The last category of wives of the fano are those women who remained in the village, whose husbands are considered to be poor migrants. These types of fano are able<sup>1</sup> either to

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1 The seedlings of asat plant

2 Kinship term used by married women to refer to their husband's male kin

3 My emphasis

pay village visits for agricultural seasons nor to send money to their wives in the village. Such fano-households are the most affected by migration-induced loss of farm labour, decline of agricultural output and food-shortage. The wives in this group suffer most from the stress of maintaining their households. They support their families by entering the wage-labour market system in the village or in surrounding areas. They hire out their labour mostly to wives of the rich migrants, who have better access to money; and sometimes to those of rich peasants. These women, as wage-labourers, engage in female-specific tasks such as processing asat-food (decorticating, pulverizing, cutting) and making mats and baskets. Their wage is lower than that of men, between .50 cents and one birr per day, in addition to coffee and food provided to them.

Therefore, not only the poor fano- families who do not receive remitted money but even the majority of households, which are receiving remitted money to hire labour at the existing wage rate to offset the loss of farm labour, are increasingly unable to maintain the agricultural output. This is the case because, first, as mentioned above, the hired labour is less efficient than their own. Second, given that women have little access to knowledge of male-specific agricultural tasks, they cannot be as effective supervisors of hired male labour as a male household head would be. Third, many of the labourers will have recurrent seasonal agreements with certain farmers (most likely from the well-to-do farms and households, where there are resident husbands) who have first call on available labour for hire. In most cases the major male-specific tasks such as planting transplanting and cultivation of asat, harvesting the grains in Mengese, and ploughing and sowing cereals and pulse's in Nase are seasonally rushed jobs. Therefore, timing is one of the most important factors for the farm output.

The importance of the time factor in seasonal work has been described by Haile Gebre, as Begore yafejar tewana yaberit, i.e "during (peak agricultural) seasons, activities undertaken in the mornings are more productive than the ones in the afternoon of the same day." Thus, in terms of the output it matters whether the seasonal works are carried out in

time or not. Despite this fact, the wives of fano in the village are able to find workers from the limited, available labour for hire usually after the visiting wealthy migrants and/or the wealthy farmers obtain enough of it, and also mostly after the labourers finish their own seasonal tasks. Even late in the season, the hired labour may not even turn up for the agreed seasonal work. If the women are able to hire labour during hours late in the season, the undertakings may be rushed. As a result of all these factors, emanating from the women's own disadvantaged position as wives of absent migrant husbands and their relationships to men in other household, levels of farm output decline.

An overwhelming majority of the wives of the fano who were interviewed (78 percent of the sample size, or 23 women), said that they were losers in the village labor market and that their farm fields suffer, while they negotiate for and use hired labor, because as women they cannot assume the role of men.

However, there are some wealthy fano households, which, using remittance money, have managed to maintain and/or in a few cases, to increase farm output, particularly subsistence crops such as asat plants and barley. This group represents only the minority of the fano population in the village and includes those migrants who are considered as wealthy and successful in urban-settings, as well as in the village.

#### **3.1.2.2.3. Different Labor Arrangements**

In the foregoing discussion, the different circumstances in which the women remaining in the village cope with migration induced loss of farm labour, given seasonal labour requirements, has been explained at some length. This explanation has described different labour arrangements required just during Mengese and Nase, the two peak agricultural seasons in the local Gurage calendar. However, the phenomenon of migration-induced labor shortage assumes a different form during slack periods. It is important to bring out this aspect, because the shortage of adult males labour due to fanonet has also impacted on the fano-households. As was discussed earlier, house construction, chopping



wood, fencing and building, planting asat and other crops, cutting fodder and taking care of cattle as well are traditionally defined male-specific tasks. The wives of fano, or the fano themselves, in collaboration with their wives in the village, use different labour arrangements to accomplish such tasks. In some cases, the non-fano men would agree to work for the fano- households on a contract basis, performing tasks such as cutting fodder, chopping wood and other activities to replace missing adult males.

As compensation for the non-migrants' labor, fano would cover the expenses for the annual festivals such as Meskale and/or Arafa and buy clothes for the farmer and his family. This sort of arrangement can be broken when for some reasons either the fano wives or the hired labour does not want to continue the contract. Asnakech's experience is a case in point.

Previously, I had the assistance of farmers, who were cutting fodder and undertaking agricultural works for they would share meat with us. He <sup>1</sup> would buy clothes for them as well as their families, and cover the expenses of annual government tax. Also sometimes, the farmers would pay visits to him (her husband) in Nazareth, where he would host them for two weeks, or even a month. Despite all this, I found them gossiping about us. They were not cutting fodder for the agreed months. They would disappear as they wished. Then I started disagreeing with them and finally decided not to have such long-term agreements. I told him (my husband) rather to send me money, and he accepted my idea. Since then, I use the remitted money to hire labour as I wish, paying the going wage rate on a fortnight or a month basis. I usually pay 30 birr per month for a man cutting fodder; some times this rate rises to 35 birr/month. I do the same with fencing and bunding.

The majority of the fano households, however, use remittance money to hire labour for the above mentioned purposes. There are other cases in which different arrangements are employed at the same time. Damo Zerihun, a wealthy fano for example, hired two young boys to take care of cattle for his wife in the village. He arranged this with the fathers of the boys and Zerihun covers school fees for the boys and buys them clothes as well as the necessary stationary (exercise books, pens, pencils and books). In addition, he pays 5 birr/month wage, and covers the cost of meat for the annual festival of Meskal for the father

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<sup>1</sup> Her fano husband

of one boy; whereas he pays 10 birr per month wage for the father of the other one. The boys are students in the Zizencho Elementary school, and while they do not go to school, they take care of the fano's cattle. One boy, who is about age 12, takes the cattle out to the fields in the morning herding them there and bringing them back home at night. The other one, aged 16, is in charge of cutting fodder and milking the cows everyday. Their activities are being supervised by the wife of Zerihun. In addition, the fathers of the boys would sometimes go to Zerihun in Nazareth and stay with him.

Such labour arrangements are very important for the well-being of the farm households whose main adult male labour supplies are missing as a result of out migration. Especially taking good care of the livestock by cutting fodder, herding, providing water in time during dry seasons, etc. is essential for the livelihoods of the households because livestock and asat plant are the two mainstays of the village economy. Also, these two indispensable elements are complementary, as animal dung is the main natural fertilizer for asat, its output is very much dependent on animals dung.

However, the absence of the necessary maintenance for livestock and farms because of out migration is a major problem for the well-being of the fano-households, which are of course the majority of the migrant families in Zizencho. As a result, the implications of this problem are varied as well as deep. In the majority of cases, the consequences are a decline in agricultural output, food insecurity, poor nutritional status and related health problems for the wives as well as children of the fano-households. The description provided by one of my informants, Abbera Endashaw, a farmer and a rural-rural migrant, illustrates the situation. He said that some women are lazy. They destroy the fences themselves and use it as fuel wood.

If the fanos send money to their wives and if the wives receiving the remitted money are not strong and smart enough to use the money appropriately to maintain their farm fields and to take care of the livestock, the fano-families always have serious problems. Their farms and asat-fields have become an open grazing land for anyone, as they are not watched, fenced or bunded, but are just open fields. This sort of event destroys all the crops and all the wealth. Their cattle do not get enough fodder for who would cut and collect it? As a result the cattle become scrawny and eventually

die, especially during the dry seasons, for shortage of water. This time usually we take our cattle to distant places to get water because the nearby rivers get dry. There is no one to care for the fano livestock like we do for ours. In some fano households, the cattle stay tied with ropes in the field for a whole day, without their wood stake being changed. Also, they do not get water. As a result of all this, there is not enough food for the fano households. Their children are hungry.

In some other few cases, the women remaining in the village are forced to break the tradition of sex specific division of labour. Such women are involved in otherwise male-specific tasks such as taking care of cattle, cutting fodder, fencing and in some cases harvesting grains (cutting, collecting, carrying and threshing), which means of course additional work stress for them. Abbera continued to comment:

If their (fano's) wives are strong and smart, even those who do receive remitted money are like men. Even some of them are better than weak male farmers. Such wives take good care of their livestock. They cut fodder, barley straw residue, take their cattle to distant places to get water and do several things themselves, as we (men) do. They even fence, chop wood and harvest barley and beans.

### **3.1.3. Social, Psychological and Health Implications of Fanonet for Women**

As discussed above, women remaining in the village are found to be the group most affected by migratory experiences. These women have been both advantaged and disadvantaged as a result of their positions as wives of the migrants. The fact that they are admired and respected by the non-migrants because of their access to remitted money and goods such as food and clothes, in particular, has been made clear in the forgoing discussion. However, there is another aspect of the wives' life-situation in the village. That is, their very privileged position as wives of the fano also puts them at disadvantages at the same time.

#### **3.1.3.1. Psychological Stress**

To begin with, the position as the wife of an absent fano entails extra work responsibilities such as heading the family, household maintenance, farm and market work, fathering (as well as mothering) the children, etc. Due to the absences of the fano men, such

women have to take over what would otherwise be exclusively male tasks like taking care of livestock, cutting fodder, and supervising farm activities which are carried out by hired labour during peak agricultural seasons. As disclosed by the voice of Birkinesh Reta, Damo Zerihun's village wife, additional seasonal work stress is the result.

I am in charge of all men's work responsibilities. Especially during the farm seasons of Mengese and Nase they drive me crazy. He only sends the money. I have to think of all matters which are normally thoughts of men. I have to supervise the activities of the laborers I hire in the field, and at the same time, as a woman I have to prepare coffee and food in the house for the hired labour. Also, I feel shame as a woman to supervise the hired male labourers, as I have little knowledge of what they are doing. The hired laborers are not as respectful to us (women) as they would be to men supervising. It is a confusing situation. Sometimes, I feel that my responsibility as a woman is preparing coffee and food and hence prefer to stay in the house.

Furthermore, as the fano-husbands for the most part are absent from the village for a fairly long time (the range could vary from 4 months to one or even two years), the women remaining in the village have suffered from loneliness, missing their partners for an intolerable period of time. The psychic cost of such absences is often too much for the women, as well as their children. In some instances, the migrant husbands may not visit their village wives even once in a year during the annual festivals such as Arafa and Meskal. As described by Asnakech Berhe, Agaz Getahun's village wife, given that such festivals are traditionally significant, missing their partners at that time is psychologically, socially and culturally a difficult experience for the wives.

For Meskal, I prepared butter, afinje (ground pepper) wusa, fuelwood, and everything as much as I could thinking that he would come. Despite all my tiring efforts, he did not show up for three Meskals and for five Chishts. I would become shocked and sick as a result of his belittling deeds. Since then I have not been healthy. I have a bad headache.

Out of the 30 women wives of fano interviewed by questionnaire, fourteen (47/4) percent) responded that they are "happy to be a wife of a fano because I receive remitted clothes, goods and money." While 10 (33 percent) women said that they were "unhappy" to be the wife of a fano and the remaining 6 (20 percent) said they were "happy and unhappy" about their experiences as wives of fano husbands.

### 3.1.3.2. Multiple Marriage

This material presented above is taken from one of the wives' case-histories recorded during the field period. This woman is a wife of successful fano, who is polygamous. He has two wives, one in Nazareth and another in the village. He married his first wife 30 years ago in the village and, as he had not visited his wife for Meskal in the village, three years later this first wife went to Nazareth and since then has been living there. Twenty years ago, his mother, who then was living in the village, arranged a marriage with the second wife, who was then a young girl. The aim of this arranged marriage was to ensure that the migrant did not want<sup>to</sup> lose possession of his deceased father's land, which until then was looked after by his mother. At that time, however, due to the 1975 Land Reform Proclamation, land was being distributed by the PAs in the village, and then a fano who had no family there was unable to keep hold of his father's land. Those migrants, who had families, particularly wives who remained in the village, were considered eligible to have access to their land through their village wives. In such cases, the land was given to the women and would be registered under their names and government taxes were paid accordingly. The portion of land given to wives of fano was half the size of the land that had been given to the non-migrant farmers who were locally referred to as "full-farmers" as opposed to "half-farmers" i.e. the migrant households. Therefore, this migrant married his second wife. There are about fifteen case-fanos, four case histories of which are recorded, in the village, who have established new marriages in their village of origin as a result of the 1975 land reform. A couple of these cases have two wives in town, and another in Zizencho, and for the most part these types of fano are successful in the towns.

Thus, the wives of such polygamous fano-husbands are amongst those village women who are subjected to psychological stress, to varying degrees, by long absences of their fano men. The village wives have felt that they are abandoned and unfavoured by their fano husbands, whereas their co-wives in town, are more favoured and are living with the

fano husband at the expense of the village women. It seems contradictory that, despite such feelings, the village and town co-wives of a polygamous fano husband often have smooth and friendly relations with one another and their children. The case of Getahun's wives are illustrative of this situation. Asnakech, as a village wife, has described the interactions she has with her co-wife in Nazareth.

I usually go to Nazareth for various reasons such as for mournings, medical treatment, visiting my husband and my children. I stay in the house with my Gobisa (i.e. co-wife). She receives me warmly as her younger sister. She also comes here (Zizencho) for Meskal or mournings with him (husband), and she stays with me. I receive her warmly too, as a mother because she is the first wife. We like each other. She is raising and educating two of my sons. She sends me goods such as sugar, salt, pepper, butter, soap and sometimes clothes for my children here. Also I send here wusa, atemet,<sup>1</sup> barley and gomen (local cabbage).

However, the village wives still feel abandoned by their fano husbands and experience insecurity as a result. They are psychologically, socially and culturally insecure because their advantageous positions in the village as a fano wife, also put them at risks for adultery, unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortions, divorce and contracting STD/HIV, as well as other diseases. The case-fano-wives were not at ease about disclosing information concerning this aspect of their life situations, due to the social implications involved. However, during the research period, indirect mechanisms<sup>2</sup> were employed to generate such data and the results show that the women face the above mentioned risks, and the villagers as well as the migrants are aware of this phenomenon. One of the polygamous fano husbands, Getahun disclosed the contradictory life-situations of the wives of the fano as follows.

On the one hand our (the fanos) wives are in much better conditions than those of the farmers. They are better with respect to clothes, money, living standards, milk, cows and in many ways. (On the other hand), they are victims of abandonment (loneliness). We (the fano) are doing bad, victimizing them. There are some fanos who do not visit their wives (in the village) even once in a year, or two. It is not fair. (For instance) for the most part, I live with my town-wife. I usually stay with this

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<sup>1</sup> Local name for bullu, which is the most valued product of asat squeezed from processed asat.

<sup>2</sup> Such as talking to the fano husbands, the non fano-farmers, health workers in the clinics and students

one (the village wife) one-two months in a year. Sometimes I do not show up at all. I feel bad about her (his village wife), it is inhuman to stay separated from one's partner for such a long time. Once, I felt bad and 15 years ago, I suggested to her that we should get divorced and then she would be free to marry a man to live together and that I would take the responsibility of raising her children (from him). However, she refused my offer and said that she would rather live under my name in the same way than get divorced.

Of those fano wives surveyed for the household census, nine women responded (30 percent) that they are co-wives, i.e. their migrant husbands have one or more additional wives in the towns of their destination.

### 3.1.3.3. Extra Marital Sexuality in the Village

As a result of long absences of their fano husbands some of the women remaining in the village have been engaging in extramarital sexual activities, mainly to satisfy their sexual desires. However, among the rural Gurge, social norms have expected married women as well as men to refrain from pursuing extra marital relations- for sex, and adultery has been forbidden and punished. Women, in particular, are expected to remain faithful despite the long absences of their men, and there are some women who are said to have remained so. Despite this, my informants (both male and female) said that the majority of the wives, in particular those whose husbands are polygamous fanos, have affairs in order to avoid sexual deprivation. Getahun, himself a polygamous fano, described the following.

In the past, wives of fano were faithful. Recently, they start going outside their marriages for sex. The fano themselves taught them such nasty habits, which they acquired from towns. Such fano, when they return to the village, seduce the wives of other fanos. In the earlier times, the wives were refusing them when they would come to wives' houses and knock at their doors, the wives would embarrass them by yelling. These days, however, the wives of fano started being attracted to adultery. In some cases, they have permanent affairs with their lovers in the village. In a way the women are right since their husbands disappear even for many years. As human beings, as healthy persons who eat and drink, it is normal that they have sexual desires. What can they do. When they experience sexual desires, they see available men. The bad thing about this is that they get pregnant, or some take contraceptive pills. Those are smart ones, who hide their adultery from their husbands.

However, even some such women are unable to hide their deeds because we (the fano) suspect them as either they get skinny or gain weight from the pills. They are also very secretive in how they get those pills from the clinic. They do not directly

ask themselves but through their lovers. Those who are not successful in using the pills, get pregnant. They try to abort in order to avoid an unwanted baby or deliver a child, which is dangerous for their marital stability, as some fano divorce their wives because of adultery. In addition, there are some fano who have multiple sexual contacts mainly with women in bars and then catch STDs such as gonorrhoea, and transfer the diseases to their wives here (in the village). As a result, they and their wives become infertile (barren). Divorce is the result in some cases. There are several of such things.

This case material presented above is representative and illustrative of the incidence of extra marital sexuality and of its multiple social economic and health related consequences on the women and the village community as a whole. This material has been cross-checked with the clinical data<sup>1</sup> in the Zizencho clinic and interviews with the health workers. As a result, it has been ascertained that the majority of the clinical cases of STDs, particularly gonorrhoea, were wives of the fano. In addition, the health workers stated that use of contraceptive pills is highest among the fano-wives. However, further study is necessary to conclusively identify and establish the relationships between fanonet and HIV/STDs and how they operate in Gurage.

In addition, induced abortion has been mentioned as another strategy for the women remaining in the village to avoid an undesired baby. They use both traditional means such as different types of herbs, as well as modern mechanisms, though the latter are employed by only a few of them because it is reportedly too expensive for the majority of them. The women are said to have paid from 100-150 birr and they would cover this expense by selling their jewellery, which their fano husbands brought them. Then, the wives would be smart pretending to their husbands that they lost their jewellery. However, the fano wives are said to have predominantly used the traditional mechanisms of employing herbs, which are said to be cheaper than the "modern" methods of inducing abortion. As a result, many of them face health problems such as hazards related to incomplete abortion, uterine infections, pneumonia and loss of weight.

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<sup>1</sup> However, unfortunately it was not possible to obtain specific figures to present in this discussion



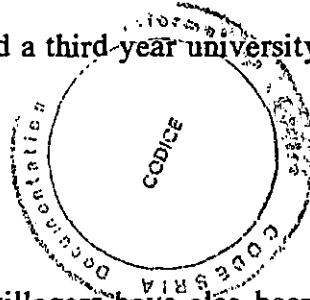
Another strategy that has been used by the wives of the fano, to cope with unintended pregnancy, which was mentioned by the informants, is that of paying visits as soon as possible to towns of their husbands' destination under the pretexts of seeking medical treatment or of missing their husbands. This provides them with the opportunity to pretend, when they have the baby, that the baby was conceived from their own husbands. These are some of the strategies that women employ to cope with problems emanating from their challenging living circumstances.

Such women married to fano, are exposed to multiple partner sexual relations not only because long absences of their fano men mean sexual deprivation, but also because the majority are brewing and selling alcohol. The majority of the village women, who are brewing traditional beer and mainly areqe, are the wives of the fano. Selling such alcohol has eventually become a significant source of income, and it has increasingly expanded over the past three decades. Informants have noted that adultery has been closely associated with the expansion of this trade in areqe. It is usually the men who consume areqe, and have been known to seduce and even assault the women brewers.

Moreover, there is another explanation as to why fano wives may engage in extramarital sexuality. It has been noted that the wives of the fano have, for various reasons, access to information in and from town. They usually visit their husbands or other kin-migrants in towns. They have opportunities to learn about the situation of sexual activities in urban settings, where the incidence of multiple partner sexual relations (lovers, prostitution and what not) is higher than in the Gurage village setting. As a result, they start to apply what they learn from their migratory experiences. Some of my informants also described that the fact that the fano wives are better dressed and in some cases, better fed than other village women means they are more attractive sexually to men than other women.

As a result of all this, the women are at greater risk from STDs such as syphilis, gonorrhoea, chancroids, as well as HIV than other women in the village. Clinical data have presented history linking STDS/HIV and fano. There are three deaths due to HIV cases,

of which villagers are aware, a fano-husband with his wife in the village of Jame, a young fano unmarried male in Zizencho, and a third-year university student in the neighboring village of Essene.



### 3.2. The Non-Fano Villagers

The lives of the non-migrant villagers have also been affected by the migratory experiences of their fellow villagers. Like the fano-households, the non-fano villagers have experienced advantages as well as disadvantages in many forms.

The foremost factor that has significant implications for the lives of the non-fano villagers pertinent to fanonet is the issue of the availability of farm labor. As it has been discussed in detail above, fanonet has brought about a decline in the supply of the necessary adult male labor for the fano households, which as a result necessitated alternative labor arrangements, predominantly that of hiring labor with remitted money. Therefore, the remitted money creates a labor market and provides the poor non-migrant, or returnee villagers, with the opportunity to provide their labor for hire within the village. They are benefiting, making the necessary money from the phenomenon of fanonet. Hediro Mashewe noted the following concerning this:

These days, thanks to the fanos in the village, we are making money here in our village. In the past, this was not possible; our fathers and elder brothers had to migrate to distant places to make such money. Now, the fano are hired in towns to make money, with which they hire our labor here (in the village). In our country (Gurage), cash is the rarest resource. Here it is very difficult to get money, even when you are in debt for 25 cents, it is not easy for many to repay. For some (poor) farmers, even to have one birr, or even to see one birr is not possible. (Therefore) fanonet is a good source of money for the poorest villagers. Poor farmers and those return fanos who have not been successful in towns, sell their labor for the most part, to the fano wives or visiting fanos. Of course, a few rich farmers also hire such labor. Thus, the poor get money which they use to purchase and plant potatoes, simua (small asat plants), gomen, and coffee and food for their families, as well as to pay taxes and idir contributions.

Therefore, the poor non-fano villagers gain from the situations of a migration induced decline in the supply of labor, which during peak seasons in particular, results in a rise in

wage rates. The history of the growth of wage rates has been disclosed by one of my oldest non-migrant informants, the respected Agaz Habte and others. They noted that hiring labor began during the period of the Italian occupation (1935-1940) as a result of fanonet. At that time, the wage for a male laborer was 25 cents per day. Later, it rose to 50 cents where it remained until the 1974 revolution, after which it reached one birr, one birr and fifty cents, and then 2 birr. Over the past two years, the wage has become 3 birr during the slack season and 4-5 birr during the peak agricultural season. It has been noted that " ..the fanos raise the wage because they have the money."

These hired male laborers are those villagers who are predominantly the unsuccessful returnees as well as those who have never had the urban contacts necessary in or to migrate to towns, although the latter are very few. They have families (parents) and their own farms, including land. The majority of these hired laborers do not have less land than the fanos. Usually such farmers form traditional corporate work groups locally called geze, whose members are referred to as gezemene. A corporate work group may consist of three or four male farmers. They hire out their labor as a group and usually after they finish their own seasonal farm activities. When they hire out their labor each member receives all the wages of the group in his turn and it so rotates. For instance if the going rate is 3 birr, per person a day and if the group is composed of four farmers a member receives 12 birr from the group's collective labor, in his turn. In addition, the group is provided with coffee, snacks and lunch by the person who hires them. Such laborers work six or even seven days in a week to earn money which they use for purposes such as purchasing seasonal crops, food, coffee and paying annual state taxes, monthly idir and in some cases, weekly equb contributions.

Bilatu Gebre, who is 30 years old and a returnee farmer, has an interesting case story which provides an example of the situation of such a laborer:

We (the non-fanos) get money by hiring out our geze (work group) mostly for the fano, because they offer high rates. Otherwise, how could we get money? As we are not going to town anymore, hiring geze is our main source of cash to pay for taxes, idir and equb. We pay two birr per month for idir and five birr a week for equb. Our equb members are 48 men and the amount is 240 birr. I have not gotten it yet. When

I receive the money, I want to buy a heifer. (Also) I had another equb five years ago. When I received it I bought a small heifer and now I am drinking milk from this cow. I also bought simua and planted them and they have now grown large enough to be harvested.

It is interesting to present this illustration because these non migrant farmers have formed a group of wage laborers<sup>1</sup> making money, so to say, within the village. Secondly, and perhaps more significant in terms of long-term consequences of fanonet, this labor market created by the same phenomenon enables the non-migrant villagers to share the remitted income, which is used in some cases like that of Bilatu, productively. Thirdly, given that most of these hired laborers have already had fanonet experiences, the remitted income made available for them through hiring labor in the village might have satisfied their need for cash and prevented them from migrating. This means that remitted money is playing a useful role in the village economy by keeping the highly demanded supply of productive farm labor in the village. Apparently, the already severe labor shortage created by the absent fanos would have become even greater had these laborers also migrated.

Not only the men, but also many women, have joined the village labor market, as a result of fanonet. Women of poor non-fano households work as hired labor, predominantly for the rich fano's wives, and for some well-to-do farmers. The hired women laborers carry out female-specific activities such as processing asat, decorticating the stem and pulverizing the root of asat; cutting wusa, carrying animal dung, making jipe and baskets for the fano wives, especially the wives of wealthy fanos. Bilatu's wife, Mesker one of ~~the~~ my female informants who is the wife of a non-fano, presented her own experience which is illustrative of women's experiences as hired laborers. As mentioned above, the wages of women laborers are far less than those of male laborers.

Wives of fano (rich) are not working like us. They are queens of the area and rather hire our labor to get things done. (For instance) I sell my labor for them and the payment varies depending on the type of job agreed on. When we (hired women laborers) do the feqet (i.e. decorticating asat) the current wage is one birr a day for a

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<sup>1</sup> Menene or veseratye are Gurage terms for wage laborers

woman. In the past it was only fifty cents and it was only recently increased. We start the work at ten o'clock in the morning and stop at six in the evening. In addition, they serve us twice coffee with snacks and for lunch and they give us a piece of whita (i.e. the root part of asat) which we use for dinner for our families.

If the job is yewusa chucha (i.e. cutting the asat food) which we do for the fano-wives during annual festivities, such as Meskal, Fasika (Arafa, Romadan), the rate is fifty cents a day and we are offered the usual food as well as coffee and one giptiya wusa ( a piece of asat food and enough for dinner for a night,) in addition to the fifty cents. When we work on making mats, we receive fifty cents a day. We use this money to buy coffee and grains for snacks. I also buy salt, pepper, spices and other women's objects like cheese and butter and wusa. Also, I pay two birr a week for equb. We are fifty five (in the group) and the amount is 110 birr. When I receive this money, I will use it to buy things such as butter for Meskal for my family.

Thus a decline in the supply of farm labor means a rise in wages and an advantage for the poor hired laborers. However, the rise of wages as a result of the fano money may negatively affect other groups in the village community. Although the fano households are the major hirers of labor, other villagers such as well-to-do farmers and households in which the resident male head is sick, or involved in another occupation such as being a civil servant, or busy in other public activities such as those of elders and peasant association leaders also depend on hired labor. This group may be forced by the fano-money to pay rates which are very high for them. Thus, fanonet has an inflationary effect on wage rates in the village labor market and there are resulting losers as well as gainers. Moreover, it has been noted by the informants that this fano-caused rise in wages has a destructive impact on the village tradition of mutual assistance based on kinship principles. The traditional labor assistance from relatives declines because the kin are attracted by higher wages. Agaz Habte said that:

...our tradition of kin support is disappearing. Money has weakened the kin-based relationships and mutual supports. These days the idea has become 'I eat my hands and you eat yours.'

In addition, remitted money has put the non-fano villagers at a disadvantage due to its inflationary effects on prices of items such as cattle, sheep, horses, and house construction materials. Prices are said to be far higher during the annual festivities such as Meskal, Arafa, and Chisht because these are usually the visiting times for the fano. The farmers who are

selling things such as cattle, sheep, grass, and wood (particularly eucalyptus) and giving land on a contract basis wait until Meskal or Chisht comes, and the fano return. They prefer to sell to the fano and not to non-fano farmers, as they receive higher prices from the former. Therefore, the non-migrant villagers have to compete in the market with the fano, who are in a more advantaged financial position. This is commonplace, particularly during the annual festivities. For instance, when the prices of cattle rise up to 500-1,000 birr (a price affordable for the fano), the farmers are sometimes unable to purchase cattle altogether. Also, the poor farmers in particular, often have to purchase smaller cattle for prices higher than their income levels. In this respect, the remitted money also causes the general cost of living to rise and makes circumstances very difficult for the poor non-fano villagers.

However, on the other hand, other villagers who are selling their items to migrants have benefited from the fano-induced rise in prices on the village market.

One significant aspect of the village life, where the inflationary effect of remitted money is most obvious, is house construction. As was discussed above, perhaps the largest portion of remitted money is invested in building new houses. The fano have begun to construct larger size houses using pine wood for walls, door frames, and mainstays. As a result, pine wood is now considered to be the best quality building material in the area. As Gumer is temperate and a highland area, pine trees are not found for this purpose. Hence, pine wood must be purchased in Cheha (where pine wood is abundant) and transported to Gumer. Therefore, the prices of building materials such as pine wood, bamboo, atena (young eucalyptus trees), cheza (thatching grass), and others have been increasing dramatically as a result of remitted money. Therefore, a precedent in the village has been created by the construction of larger size houses of superior quality using pine wood purchased with remitted money. These houses have become the mark of a big person according to the perceptions of the villagers. As a result, the non-fano farmers have started to build these types of houses which are too expensive and unnecessarily large for them

when one compares the fano-induced inflated cost of construction with their lower levels of income. Imam Kemal pointed out that:

We (the farmers) learned to build nice, large and good quality houses from the fano, but at the cost of our basic resource. If you are not supported by the fano relatives from towns, you have to sell all the heritage you have. Some farmers sell their oxen and cattle on which the family's livelihood is dependent. There are people who sell even a portion of their land on a contract basis to cover the cost of building a house.

Therefore, it is apparent that the highly inflated cost of house construction, in the absence of access to remitted money, has consumed the essential agricultural resources of the non-fano farmers, making them poorer. By investing their remitted money unproductively in house construction, the fano have created a difficult precedent for the non-fano villagers to meet by using their valuable farm resources such as cattle, oxen and even land.

However, the non-migrants have benefited from the widespread house construction activities by engaging as wage laborers in the process and, even more importantly, by selling construction goods for the fanos at high prices. Moreover, the fact that fanonet puts the fano households, especially women and children in a better position in terms of clothing and education, means that the non-fano household women and children, in particular, experience feelings of jealousy and inferiority in terms of clothing and education. This feeling disturbs the peace in family life, as women and children of the non-fano farmers may demand such items from the male head of household, who may not be able to provide them. Not only in the non-fano farmers, but also among the households of the poor fano, feelings of jealousy and dissatisfaction have developed as a result of the advantaged positions of the fano households.

Finally, the non-fano villagers are positively affected by fanonet as a result of labor arrangements, other than hiring labor. The non-fano farmers benefit from working for the fano households on a contract basis and in return receive money to repay debts and cover costs of annual festivities such as Meskal and Arafa. They receive clothes for themselves as well as for their children and wives, and also they pay regular visits to their fano hosts in

towns. This fano to non-fano mutual support and interaction is explained by Agaz Getahun, a fano informant, as follows:

We (the fano) buy clothes for the farmers and their families. We cover their costs of annual festivities. The male farmers work in our farms. Their wives do jobs such as wusa processing, cutting, decorticating and carrying animal dung for our wives. The males usually come to town and stay with us. We host them, providing shelter, food and drinks. We really support each other. Our money is important for them and their labor is significant for us.

### 3.3. The Village Economy

#### 3.3.1. Village Labor

As noted in the preceding chapter, fanonet in its varying forms has been a significant characteristic of Gurage life for over the last hundred years. In its more than a century old history, this study shows that fanonet as a social and economic phenomenon has been affecting the village economy in many varied and complex ways. The issue of the farm labor in the context of the local economy has been found to be a complex variable, through which fanonet has exerted far reaching consequences upon the Gurage village economy.

On the one hand, the massive out-migration of mainly young and adult male fano has created loss of farm labor in the village. As discussed previously, the fanonet induced decline in the supply of labor has become a fundamental problem during the peak farming seasons of Mengese and Nase in the Gurage local calendar, as farm tasks are traditionally gender-specific and major seasonal agricultural activities<sup>1</sup> are male-specific. This has brought about the decline in agricultural productivity, particularly of asat and thus, shortage of food since asat is the main source of food for the villagers as a whole. This migration-caused loss of the most important and productive adult male labor has resulted not only in a considerable decline in farm out-put, but also in the deterioration of agricultural resources such as asat plant fields and other farm land, fencing and bunding, take care of cattle and land preparation because good care and maintenance is not carried out. As a result, the majority of

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<sup>1</sup> Such as cultivation as well as plantation of asat, preparation of land, ploughing and sowing as well as harvesting of cereals and pulses



fano households are easily detected in the village by two distinguishing characteristics: the first one being their distinct housing and clothes described above, and the second characteristic is their neglected farm land. The following story told by Dereja Nuro, a non-fano farmer informant, may portray this situation:

Once a non fano farmer went to Addis Ababa to visit his fano kin there. In the town the farmer met one of his fano villagers. While exchanging greetings, the fano man asked the farmer about the well-being of his wife, children and farm. The fano felt sorry for the farmer's situation as the latter was not well fed and dressed like himself. Then the fano said 'you look dirty and thin what is wrong with you, what happened to you?' The farmer replied: 'You are right that I am dirty. I look like your farm and you look like my farm (in the village).

According to this story, on the one hand the fano is considered to be in good condition as he is well-dressed and fed and is symbolic of the well maintained farm land of the farmers in the village. On the other hand, the poorly dressed and thin appearance of the farmers is taken to represent the inadequately maintained and deteriorating farm fields of the fano.

Moreover, migration-induced loss of mostly young and adult male productive labor has affected not only the availability of farm labor, but also it has changed the age and sex profile of the village human resources. Fanonet is still a predominantly male phenomenon, and the male migrants constitute 81 percent of the total current out-migrants of Zizencho, while female migrants account for 19 percent. In addition, a high proportion of the current migrants are between the age of 11 and 20 years (42 percent), while 36 percent of the migrants are between 21 and 30 years of age. As a result, the village population is predominantly composed of women (whose gender-specific agricultural tasks are limited), as well as the very young and old who are not agriculturally very productive. This also affects the community activities and social events such as house construction, mournings (funerals), gerat i.e. village security patrols carried out during the night, weje, i.e. traditional cooperative herding groups, to name a few. Agaz Habte, said the following:

...The village is left without its most productive (agricultural) human resource. For most of the year, you do not find many adult males here (in the village). It is us (the old) and women who are always here. We have been suffering from the shortage of

people to carry the sick persons to clinics, to carry dead bodies, prepare graves and perform burials; and to carry out house construction. Other male specific activities that are affected are: constructing roads and bridges; hunting, gerat (patrolling at night), and weje, i.e. participation in a herding group. The fano wives have not been required to step in to replace the missing labor as a result of fanonet. We (the male villagers) make the wives free of such male responsibilities because they are women. Especially, when a farmer constructs a house in the village, we have a tradition of free labor assistance for three days, which is required of every adult male head villager. But, as a majority of our villagers are fano, we do not count on them because they usually are not staying in the village to meet such idir-based obligations of village community activities.

Therefore, because of fanonet-induced diminution of human resources available for such group tasks, the villagers have to find other means of carrying out these communal activities. For instance, for house construction, the non-migrant villagers have to hire labor as a substitute for the missing labor resulting from fanonet.

However, this fanonet-induced shortage of human resources in the village has, on the other hand, had desirable effects upon the village economy. Given the fact that there is an acute shortage of farm land and rapid population growth in the village, fanonet can be also seen as a partial solution to these problems. The same informant, Agaz Habite, disclosed how fanonet provided an alternative to the villagers:

As you know, nowadays people have become many. In the past, even during my boyhood in Zizencho, the number of households was very small, many times smaller than the present size. Nowadays the village is full of households and there is not enough farm land for so many people. Also, our farm land has lost its fertility and what it produces is very limited. Our farm out-put is very low. There are many households which are not even capable of maintaining their basic subsistence needs, if such households are not supported by remitted income. Had fanonet not been given to us from God,, where else could we go? Where could Gurage be entering? Our lives in the village would have been impossible had it not been for the support from our fano children....fanonet is part of our farm field, our marriage, our wealth and resources such as cattle, land and asat.

Therefore, fanonet, through different uses of remitted income has also had positive effects on the village economy. The wage labor market, resulting from fano money, has enabled the non-migrants to earn the necessary money by selling their labor to the fano families within their very village. As such, remitted money has made a contribution to the maintenance and, in some cases, to the improvement of a household's level of farm

productivity. Especially when the fano money is used by both the migrant and the non-migrant villagers, to buy cattle and in a few cases, land, the resource base for farming and its output is improved.

### 3.3.2 Uses and Sizes of Land-Holdings in the Village

In previous studies, the shortage of arable land and rapid population growth have been cited as characteristic features of Gurage village communities (see Shack 1966; Ipcar 1970; Getnet 1992; and Muluneh 1993). Scarcity of land, which is also a consequence of high population pressure, is described by the informants as the most acute problem for the villagers in Zizencho, in particular, and Sebat-bet Gurage as a whole. The village Gurage uses of the scarce farmable land include cropping, grazing, vegetation consisting of both natural forests and man planted woodlands such as eucalyptus. Muluneh based <sup>on</sup> his field research conducted in Ezha and Wollene, and Cheha woredas<sup>1</sup>, on agricultural land "which is supposed to comprise cultivated lands, grazing and browsing lands for about 95.7% of the total geographic area of the three PAs" (1993:119).<sup>2</sup>

It was further reported that cultivated land as well as fallow land comprises the largest category of land use and represents about 42 percent of the total geographic area of the three PAs. Fallowing, however, is not a common practice in the highland area and it lasts just a year. Even then, it is used by the peasants for grazing. Grassland and wood lands are reported as the second and third main use of land accounting for about 30 and 17.7 percent (here eucalyptus trees predominate constituting 12.6 percent), respectively. The remaining land uses such as roads, settlements, forests, water bodies etc. are all noted to account for 10 percent (Muluneh 1993:125).

As Gumer is a neighboring area, the circumstances concerning different uses of land are similar, particularly in Zizencho, as described above. Because of the rapid population

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<sup>1</sup> Which are neighboring places of Gumer, the focus area of this study

<sup>2</sup> The PAs are Norcha in dega and Agenna in woina-dega Ezha, and Debissana Karacha in kolla Cheha.

growth and the expansion of new cash crops such as eucalyptus trees, the size of cropped land and of individual land-holdings has reportedly diminished considerably over the past three decades, or so.

As summarized in Table 8 below, households in Zizencho are nearly divided between 1-3, and 4-7 zher of land. The slight majority of 60 households, or 43 percent, live on land sizes between 4 to 7 zher, while 58 households (41 percent) possess land sizes that range from one to three zhers. Comparing the three types of households (current, former and never fano) within the size categories of 1-3 and 4-7 zher, a greater percentage of current fano (48 percent) <sup>and former fano</sup> have land holdings in the range of 4-7 zher, whereas relatively fewer never fano (28 percent) have land holdings of this size - rather most of the never fano have between 1-3 zher of land. These figures indicate that the households of current fano <sup>and former fano</sup> in Zizencho, are relatively in a better situation with regard to land holdings than the never fano households.

**Table 8. Relationship Between Migration and Land Holdings**

Types of Households		Size of Land-Holdings in <u>Zher</u>					Total
		4-7	1-3	8-11	above 11	Not Identified	
<u>Current Fano</u>	No.	50	42	6	2	4	104
	%	48	40	6	2	4	100
<u>Former Fano</u>	No.	16	14	1	1	2	34
	%	47	41	3	3	6	100
<u>Never Fano</u>	No.	5	8	1	2	2	18
	%	28	44	6	11	11	100

### 3.3.3. Trade and Commercialization of Farm Produce

Another major fano-induced contribution which has a significant bearing upon the village economy, is the construction of the roads by the Gurage Roads Construction

Association, formed by the fanos, over three decades ago (for the detailed discussion see Chapter V below). In addition, through the flow of remitted money, goods, and ideas as well as skills; the construction of roads in rural Gurage has made the village economy extremely open and linked to the economic activities in the urban areas of the fano's destination. As a result, for those at the national level, this event was created by the phenomenon of fanonet, and has reinforced the process of fanonet and the flow of commodities, money and labor. It also has the effect of commercialization of the village economy.

Therefore, as a result of fanonet, trade has been promoted. One interesting aspect of trade in the area is the sale of eucalyptus wood. The growing of eucalyptus trees is perhaps the most commercialized agricultural undertaking in the village. According to the local informants, this tree is widely grown and is expanding even at the expense of asat. The tree is grown mainly for sale and the farmers are so attracted by its high exchange value that they are planting it even in the asat fields. Traders, mainly commercial fanos with lorries, come to the village to buy and transport the wood to various urban centers, mainly to Addis Ababa. Trading in this wood is said to be male-fanos specialty.

This activity has been noted to be a very lucrative trade and one of the informants, Tafesse Tehelqu, himself a commercial fano trading this wood, described his experiences before and after the fall of the Derg regime. According to the story of Tafesse's experiences, the trade in eucalyptus wood was more lucrative and expanded in the area because of expenses entailed in the process such as taxes at government posts and lorry rent were far less during the Derg regime than they are at the present time. In the past, the traders were paying 35, 60, 800 birr for the bridge post, tax, and lorry rent for which they are now paying 250, 150, and 2,000-2,500 birr respectively and additional payment of 100 and 500 birr for the Woreda development and the development of Wolkite town. Previously, they would make a profit of 3-4,000 birr per lorry and would transport at least one lorry full of

wood in a week. But now they make this profit only in a months time. They are reportedly discouraged by this situation.

They buy the wood directly from the farmers in the village for varying prices depending on the size of the wood. The farmers formerly would receive 3, 2.50 and 2 birr per piece of quami, weraje and mager for which now they are receiving 3 birr, 2 birr and 50 cents, respectively. However, despite this decrease in the prices of eucalyptus wood, many lorries are still transporting Gurage wood to different urban centers, predominantly to the capital. As a result, the farmers are making a lucrative profit from their own farm activity in the village. It has been noted that there are some farmers who make fairly large amounts of money, by village standards ranging from several hundred to 5,000 birr (after a period of five years), particularly at the end of the rainy season. They use this money to improve their household's living standard.

In addition, the non-selling farmers are also gaining from this trade. According to my informant, Tafesse, a trader hires about thirty farmers in order to cut the wood and carry it from the village to the main road, and then to load on lorries, work which usually takes a week to collect a large enough load for a lorry, which is said to have formerly been 400-600 pieces. However, the actual number is reportedly 800-1,000 pieces and the traders formally report a smaller number in order to get a discount in government taxes. The wage is 4-5 birr a day for one man. Therefore, the trade has a desirable effect of creating jobs for such village farmers who can benefit through selling their labor. Furthermore, this lucrative trade has a revitalizing effects on the village economy.

However, the process is said to also have a negative effects on the farm economy. The informants noted that because the farmers are attracted by the lucrativeness of the process, they are using their land increasingly for this purpose, even to the extent of substituting eucalyptus for asat. Eucalyptus trees demand a great deal of mineral from the soil and thus decrease soil fertility and land productivity. It is also said to have devastating implications for cattle because the tree's leaves are acidic and destroy the grass, creating a

shortage of grazing land as well as fodder. Moreover, it is noted that the tree also demands a great deal of water, and dries the springs. To use Agaz Habte's words:

We always advise the people not to plant the eucalyptus trees near the rivers and springs, by common (grazing) land and in the fields. But, they did not listen to our advice and they planted them. Now this has brought drought in our land.

Therefore, as a result, farm out-put is said to have declined and there is an apparent danger of replacing asat with eucalyptus. Like eucalyptus wood, there are other items which have become commercialized as a result of fanonet caused links. These include bamboo wood, baskets, skins and hides, selen<sup>1</sup> and barley which are transported to urban areas. However, commodities such as clothes, consumable goods (salt, sugar, flour, kerosene, stationary) and consumer goods (radios and watches) are flowing from the urban centers to the villages.

Therefore, as a result of these fanonet-caused interactions and the establishment of a modern transportation network which reinforced links between the village end and the urban end of the social continuum, the village economy has become increasingly dependent on and been exposed to changes in economic undertakings in the other end of this continuum. The economy is increasingly becoming cash oriented and the majority of the households, as production units, are not self-sufficient any more, i.e. they cannot satisfy their basic subsistence or consumption needs if not subsidized in one or another form by remitted income through fanonet, or other off-farm income.

Fanonet is responsible not only for the considerable expansion and commercialization of the crop but also for its first introduction to the Gurage area. Initially, eucalyptus trees are said to have been brought back by the first generation Gurage migrants, who were involved in planting this tree in the capital and its surroundings (Muluneh 1993:140; citing Horvath, 1968). However, although it was introduced during the initial fanonet period (1888-1935), up until the last three decades, or so the growing of eucalyptus trees was not a

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<sup>1</sup> Mats hand-made from palm leaves

wide spread phenomenon in Sebat-bet Gurageland, particularly Gumer. The informants remarked that this crop was first expanded in the Cheha area. This seems likely since Cheha is closer to Wolkite and Addis Ababa than Gumer is. However, in 1957 and 1959 when Shack carried out his field research in the Cheha area, the crop was not yet expanded. He noted that "The eucalyptus tree is *rarely* seen, village settlement is dense and compact..." (my emphasis) (1966:30). Also, it is still fresh in the memory of the researcher that 15 years ago there were just a couple <sup>of</sup> peasants who were growing eucalyptus trees in his home village, Gumer.

Furthermore, the findings of one recent study corroborated with this view that the expansion of the crop is a recent phenomenon.

Woodlands which largely are eucalyptus tree lots, increased from 4% (1957/72) to about 13% (1993), and showed an expansion of about 196% in the last 21 to 36 years. But grasslands, one of the very common land uses in the region accounted for 40% of all lands under consideration in 1957/72 only 30% in 1993. It showed a drop of about 25% in the period at the cost of expansion of crop land and woodland. Forest cover also decreased by about 18%, while shrub lands remained nearly constant and settlements and roads (Jefuer) increased by about 82 and 5%, respectively, in the period. ... Almost in all zones what had most notably changed was woodland. In Norcha (dega) woodland expanded most at a rate of about 19.9% while settlements, roads and cropped are at about 6.01, 0.18 and 0.9% rate per annum, respectively, probably at the expense of grassland including fallow land (Muluneh 1993:136-7).

Therefore, since Zizencho is located in the dega agro-climatic zone in Gumer like Norcha, it is not unreasonable to assume that similar process of changes has occurred over the last 30 years in the study area. It is ironic that, despite the existence of chronic land scarcity described above, this new cash crop, eucalyptus, has considerably expanded by encroaching on the limited crop land and grasslands. This rapid expansion may be attributed mainly to the establishment of modern road networks since the 1960's in the Sebat-bet Gurage area.



## Chapter IV Fanonet and Cultural Dynamics

As discussed in detail in the chapters above, due to the fanonet induced rural -urban flow of ideas, information, goods, money, skills and persons; the villages and the towns are fundamentally interconnected and integrated. As a result of these century old two-way cultural interactions, changes have occurred in the villager's perceptions, attitudes, values and beliefs, hence culture.

### 4.1. Local Perceptions of Fanonet

Fanonet, as a social, economic, cultural and psychological phenomenon in the context of the village quality of life has been perceived differently by different villagers, i.e. the non-fanos perceptions are quite distinct, in some respects, from those of the fanos themselves. Agaz Habte, as well as others, have noted that there are desirable and undesirable effects resulting from fanonet and likewise it is perceived both positively and negatively, depending on which aspects are referred to and by whom. In general, fanonet is perceived positively by the majority of the villagers as an agent of "civilization", or "modernization" with particular regard to aspects of life such as clothing, housing and furnishing. New material goods are the highly praised indices of fanonet-induced modernity and much change has occurred in this arena.

#### 4.1.1. Dressing and Artifacts

Shack following his field research in 1957 and 1959 in Gurage, wrote: "There are no local wage markets in any Gurage village and the vast majority migrate to Addis Ababa. Moreover, there has been no noticeable change in material culture,<sup>1</sup> which symbolizes 'progress' as a consequence of increased cash" (1966:82). If this was the real picture of the impacts of Gurage fanonet on village life at that time, very dramatic changes must have

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<sup>1</sup> My emphasis

occurred so that this description written by Shack thirty years ago, is no longer a reality in Gurage village society. The changes in Gurage material culture such as traditional clothes and other items are profound as discussed in detail as follows.

Dressing in modern clothes brought back by the fano is considered by the villagers as an index of civilization. To use Agaz Habte's words, "...It is due to them (the fano) that we (the rural Gurage) opened our eyes and become civilized in terms of our dressing, education, health services, roads and everything..." In the past, the Gurage traditional clothes were made of animal skins, such as cow and/or oxen-skin clothes locally known as mere for adult men and qeta for women; and sheep and/or goat skin-made dresses locally called nimad, of two different sizes for very young and adolescent children. These clothes were locally made by special artisans locally known as Buda i.e tanners. In addition, other cotton-made traditional clothes such as gider and buliko garments for well-to-do adult women and men respectively; and netela for the ordinary persons. These cotton-made dresses, known as fafuya, were locally made by the shamer, i.e weavers. Then, during the earlier and middle periods of fanonet, other synthetic fabrics such as abujedid (calico) and kaki garments were introduced and people began to wear hand-sewn calico pants called serefer and shirts called ejetebab for adult males. They previously wore traditional belts called tibtab, i.e made from cotton-garment for men and azigart for women as well as men; and a hat made from enewa, dry stalk of asat, which is locally called wehembua. Later, starting from the Italian occupation and after, different clothes prepared from processed fabrics and shoes have been introduced into the Gurage villages. As such, traditional clothes hand-made from animal skins and cotton were replaced by synthetic clothes. Agaz Habte was proud to explain this change in dressing styles of the village Gurage as one of the greatest achievements of the fano.

Thanks to our children (the fano), all diseases (resulting from being dressed in traditional clothes) that existed in our country (Gurage village) are now eliminated as

a result of clothes from the fano. Diseases that enter through feet such as moyale<sup>1</sup>, boterka<sup>2</sup> and esohe<sup>3</sup> are avoided by wearing shoes. Diseases, that enter (the body) from the head are avoided by wearing barnetta, (i.e hats).

As such, this change in clothing is considered not only as a sign of modernity but also as an agent responsible for improving the health status of the villagers.

Improvements in housing is another positively perceived effect of fanonet. House construction and the purchase of household objects are the distinguishing characteristics of migration-caused change in the village. One can detect the presence of a fano member in a household by looking at the size and quality of the house, and the types of household utensils available within the house.

In pre-fanonet times, household utensils had been predominantly locally produced either by special local artisans such as potters, wood workers, tanners and iron-smiths, or by ordinary people. Clay-made objects such as bitter, (bowls of various sizes and quality), enjapa (containers used to drink water, milk, or traditional drinks such as seher) and tiwa (small containers used to drink seher) were traditionally hung on the walls in the houses. These are now being replaced by bowls, trays, glasses, and jerricans. Different sizes of clay-made containers, like tinkya and weshere, used to carry water, and gamba weshere, used to brew seher, are now being replaced by plastic and iron-made containers of different sizes. Clay-made traditional coffee-cups called finjan have been completely replaced by sini cups and are no longer present in households.

In addition, wooden utensils such as different types of waqemas -yeje yegir, yesafira and gebete<sup>4</sup> - and eating objects made from grass and parts of asat plant such as sefe, yewedere and sleeping objects like jipe and kapuat as well as quchiqiche are disappearing as a result of remitted objects. In particular, gebete, (a wooden-tray) and yewedere, (an eating

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1 Jigger

2 Cracked feet resulting from frost and cold weather

3 Thoms

4 Which are used for washing the hands and feet, and for serving snacks and food, respectively

mat) have traditionally been considered as marks of respected women, because such household utensils are traditionally referred to as yeshita gibir, i.e. women's objects. These items are being replaced by metal trays. Moreover, the modern iron spoons have taken the place of the locally produced ankefue, spoons made from animal horns. In the majority of fano households, and in particular the successful ones, the utensils hung on the walls are predominantly remitted objects, which are locally referred to as yazeber giber, i.e. modern objects. Possession of such household objects is also regarded as a mark of modernity. Therefore, it seems that fanonet and the flows of commodities that result, have negatively affected the local technology, particularly local artifacts.

#### 4.1.2 Food Security

Another fanonet-induced change in local customs is that concerning consumption, particularly of food and beverages. As a result of migratory experiences, new food items and beverages have been adopted by the villagers. Food such as tef and corn flour are usually purchased with remitted money and consumed by the villagers, predominantly the fano households. In addition, purchasing butter and cheese as well as meat to be consumed during ordinary days is associated with fanonet. Such new and expensive tastes developed from purchasing consumer goods are perceived as merits of fanonet and as a result the villagers have developed a negative attitudes towards their traditional staple food, wusa. The nutritional value of wusa is considered to be far less than that of new food items such as enjera and bread, and one of my informants described his attitude towards wusa saying " It is surprising that we are living on eating wood i.e. wusa compared to spongy nice food such as enjera and bread".

However, the status of the fano households with regard to food security, in relation to the non-fano households, varied from individual to individual, hence the differing perceptions among villagers. Hediyo Mashewe, now a non-fano villager described the situation as follows:

The food situations of the fano families even these rich ones, are worse than that of farmers' households both in terms of farm output such as asat, cereals, pulses and of livestock raising. A farmer can feed himself as well as his household members satisfactorily for a day with only one wehta, (a root part of asat). On the contrary, no matter how successful they are and how much money they are remitting, the fanos could not satisfy their households with food from their farms.

They rather count on their money. They are purchasing and consuming food items produced by the farmers. Their capacity to satisfy their families is usually temporary, only lasting until the remitted money is finished. During the brief times in which the fano visit their families, food such as butter, cheese, meat, eggs and enjera as well as bread are plentiful in their households. Their family members are satisfied and their houses are shining with the light of happiness like the moon light.

This situation makes the non-fano households, particularly children, feel jealous. This ends, however, rapidly as the visiting fanos leave the village or when the remitted money is finished. Then, except for a few successful fano households which use remitted income productively, in the majority of the households the food security becomes worse and clouds of food insecurity replaces the light of happiness and satisfaction in their houses. When viewed from the perspective of food security, fanonet is not desirable, whereas fanonet is a really inspiring beneficial experience in terms of consumer goods such as clothing, household utensils and purchased food.

In addition, the following conversation reinforces the case material presented above.

The conversation was held with a group of ten farmers and was initiated by the researcher during a coffee break among the ten farmers who then were ploughing land <sup>to</sup> sow peas. They were hired by the PA leader in Zizencho, and the group was entirely composed of adult male household heads. The majority of them used to be fano although a couple of them had never migrated. They were found to be divided in describing their perceptions of fanonet - one group praising and the other criticising the migratory experiences in relation to the traditional quality of life in the village. The farmer in the group who had never migrated and praised the traditional village life said the following.

In Gurage, a respected and accomplished male wusa winner is the one who produces enough wusa for maintaining his household, is the one who does not go to the markets to purchase wusa for the family. The non-fano farmer's households are in a much better situations than the fano ones because all the good things such as a good farm field, well- maintained asat plants, good horses, good sheep, good milking cows, good oxen, varied grains and everything are found in the houses of the farmers. The one thing which is not found in farmers houses is money. (On the other hand), in the houses of the fano there is nothing but money. In order to have what is found in the farmer's houses, the fanos have to buy them. They have to buy everything. If the fanos do not buy food then their children will starve.

By contrast, in the other group, a fano returnee, commented as follows:

Farming in our country (village) is not a good job through which a person can improve his standards of living. To be a farmer means to be backward and uncivilized in terms of clothing, nutrition, wealth, and education. If you have the money everything is in your hands (control), as you can do more things with your money than the farmers can. Look at me, when I was a fano I was great in terms of money, health, and food, and was I fatter than I am now. As you see me now, I have become smaller and thinner since I returned to the village.

However, this same returned-fano noted that in the face of a lack of financial success, village life is much better than urban life because to be poor is easier in the village, as one can get assistance from kin. If a person becomes ill, the kin will take care of him(her) and when a poor villager runs out of food, he(she) counts on his (her) close kin for food. As such, the village is seen by the returning migrants as a guarantee for survival in spite of failure in urban settings.

Overall, fanonet appears to be perceived by the villagers as an indispensable aspect of village life and is financially attractive as well as supportive to the cash-poor agriculture based village economy. Even the women who remain in the village, who are the most negatively affected, view fanonet as a desirable life experience. This perception of the women, particularly the wives of the fano, is depicted in the following Gurage women's saying:

Achem Eweta mis Emaru,  
Wetam yefekam huta sitaru,  
Wetam yegeba huta sebu.

i.e: A husband who never migrates, is a donkey, (and) the one who migrates for a long time (disappears) is a devil; the one who gets out and back (circulates temporarily between the village and towns) is a human being (good husband).

It is interesting that, despite all the negative implications of fanonet discussed in detail above in relation to psychological, social, economic and cultural aspects of the women's lives in the village,<sup>1</sup> women most often regard their fanonet-related life-experiences positively.

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter III

#### 4.1.3. General Attitudes towards Fanonet

Not only the women, but nearly all the villagers are found to perceive fanonet-as an effective strategy for maximizing the families income-generating power. The fanonet experiences in the village are viewed as an indispensable sub-culture to the village culture. The following was noted by Agaze Habte:

Fanonet is part of our (the villagers) farm field, our marriage, our wealth and resource base such as livestock, land, asat. Our lives in the village would have been impossible had it not been for the support from our fano children. All our worries, and all our problems concerning annual festivities, weddings, mournings, clothing, housing, education, medical treatment, house construction, government taxes and others have been solved by our fano children, who are trading selbage<sup>1</sup> and working in tej-houses in urban areas. However, we (the rural Gurage) did not spend happy annual festivities (Meskal and Arafa) during the last two years as before because our selbage (trader) children were not able to do their business in ketema (towns). We heard that the current government has prohibited them from trading. As a result, they were unable to buy animals to be slaughtered for the annual festivities. They did not bring us clothes, kerosene, and money as before. Many households were unhappy during our otherwise highly celebrated festivities (Meskal and Arafa).

The case material presented above illustrates how fanonet is perceived by the villagers, how much village life is dependent on remitted income, and how exposed the village economy is to fluctuations, brought about by economic or political circumstances, in the urban settings. As noted above, since the EPRDF government has been established, there have been attempts to ban informal economic activities such as street-vending including trade in second/hand clothes, by the government policy in urban areas, particularly Addis Ababa. Trade in clothes, selbage in particular, both on the streets and in small shops, called teletafi, is one of the specialities of the fano Gurage who represent the predominant portion of the population engaged in such urban activities. As a result of the government ban, the fano Gurage could not make enough income to be remitted to their villages of origin and this has been strongly felt by the village households, which have been dependent on such remitted income for various purposes in their village lives, as mentioned in the case material above.

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<sup>1</sup> Second-hand clothes

This is a typical example of the fanonet-induced inter-dependence of the villagers on remitted resources, and of how fundamental the village-town integration is, in that the social, political, economic and cultural changes occurring at one end are also significantly felt at the other.

This overdependence of the village life on fanonet-created sources of income has been reflected in proverbs and traditional blessings. One such Guragegna saying is as follows:

Tike enen shewa yewerim yebihe.  
Tay enen Ewe Gebva vekram yebihe.

i.e. A person who does not have a (fano) child(ren) weeps in Shewa(i.e towns), (like) a person who does not have a sheep (to sell) weeps in Ewe Gebva (i.e Bole market in Gumer).

Furthermore, another aspect of the daily lives of the villagers in which this integration (inter-dependence) is emphasised is in traditional blessings, which are widely practised among the Gurage. In Gurage tradition, during the times of rituals, sacrifices, coffee and areqe drinking, night gatherings, and annual festivities, the elders give blessings and pray for the well-being of people, their farms, cattle, land, harvests, rain and the peace as well as stability of the country at large. Interestingly enough, the well-being of the towns and the well-being as well as success of their fano children receive much attention within such traditional prayers and blessings. The elders say in Guragegna:

Shewa denim forahe wehe yeher. Yeshewa Denganda yetigabano, yetiseketino.  
Oofa inqurfit enhebino genemenda selam yehir. ,

i.e. Urban areas be well. Let our children in Shewa be well and successful. Let them face no set-backs and obstacles (in their achievements). Let our country (Ethiopia) be at peace.

Thus, the well-being of the towns of their fano children's destination and the well-being and successes of the fano are real concerns (worries) in the villagers' daily lives because the village life could be affected by the bad and/or good fortunes of the fanonet experiences in the urban areas.



Finally, one more point which needs to be made here is concerning the villagers' perceptions of their fano children's areas of destination. At the earlier period of fanonet, to begin with Entoto, and then Addis Ababa and its surroundings, constituted the predominant destination for the Gurage migrants. As a result, the villagers described the fano as persons who migrated to Entoto or Shewa. Through time, the Shewa reference has become widespread. Even after the middle period of fanonet, during and after the Italian occupation, at which time the fano Gurage had begun to migrate to places other than the capital such as Jimma, Agaro, Nazareth, Shashemene, and Yirgalem, the villagers continued to use Shewa as a reference to their fano children's places of destination. This has remained predominant and is used to refer to all places of the Gurage-migrants' destination including the capital and other provincial towns. Therefore, in all case material presented in the foregoing discussion the term Shewa is used in this sense, and the phrase Yeshewa-Denga, i.e Children of Shewa is alternatively used to refer to the fano. Also, Shewa is considered by the villagers as a heavenly place. One of the elders in the village described it as a "place where God resides", while another said " Shewa is a place where God is urinating and that is why all these masses of people lead a heavenly life just from living on a stone, without soil to grow food..." As such, the fano childrens' lives are viewed as pleasant and priveleged.

#### 4.2. Marriage

One of the aspects of the village life in which fanonet has induced dramatic change is the villagers' attitudes and values, concerning marital life. As a result of their uses of remitted income to purchase items such as livestock, land, luxury consumer goods (clothing, household utensils, and food items), house construction and guns/pistols, the fano have achieved a new prestige and status. This is a new social position in the village structure achieved by all successful fano regardless of family socio-economic status, since sons of a poor family could become wealthy. This new social position has improved the fanos' marriage prospects and put them at an advantage in relation to the non-fano farmers. This

change in the marriage prospects in favor of the fano, at the expense of the non-fano villagers has also been reported by other writers (Shack 1966; Tilahun 1987:35-36). By contrast, the non-fano villagers who engaged exclusively in farming formerly had much better marriage prospects than the fanos did. The phenomenon of fanonet is said to have been "marked except for (home-based) long distance trade, by community ambivalence even as late as the 1960s. Community ambivalence no longer exists now. In contrast to the 1960s a 'seasoned migrant' appears a more favorable choice of girls for wedlock than a peasant proper, who possesses the means" (Adhana 1991:58; citing Leslau 1966:101,103; Shack 1966:80).

#### 4.2.1. Marriage Transactions

Among the village Gurage "traditional" marriage has involved social contracts in which marriage is arranged by the parents of the spouses. Such formal arrangements have united not only the bride and groom, but also their families as well as lineages, on which the Gurage kinship system is based. Villages in Gurage are organized on principles of patrilocality and in general terms marriages are virilocal. However, there is a tradition of offering goods and/or money mostly by the grooms' family to that of the bride before the wedding, a process which is known as yegred waga, i.e prices of girls. Yegred waga is paid by families of the fano as well as the non-fano grooms and/or the grooms themselves to the family of the bride for the purchase of household goods for the bride called yegred gibir, or yemishra gibir. These are displayed at the wedding. These household good become the property of the bride at marriage and when divorce occurs, the items are taken by the bride. In addition, the groom buys and presents clothes known as yegred huger (bride's clothes) to the bride via her family. Since the money offered by the groom is used as capital by the couple to start a new household, it may be described as a form of indirect dowry, "property passed by the groom to the bride at marriage" (Goody 1976:11). According to the case material recorded during the research period, the size and nature of this yegred waga, have undergone change over time, largely as a result of fanonet.

The informants said that in pre-contact times there was no exchange of goods and/or money in the form of marriage transaction. The exchange of gifts was not that important. However, the most important consideration in arranging marriages was the issue of social rank and clan-status of the parents of both the bride and groom. Health was another criterion, as both couples were expected to be healthy and not disabled. Beauty was also another consideration. With respect to occupation, the children of farmers had high marriage prospects. Other than these considerations, Agaz Habte noted that: "The Gurage were simply arranging marriages. The bride's family had to wash their daughter and give her to the groom's family. It was just like that".

Then, during the early period of fanonet, a certain amount of money was paid in the form of yegred waga, and at first this act was negatively perceived as buying a slave. The following poem, locally known as Wege, which was then composed on the occasion of a certain wedding for which a man called Bankashiye paid two Maria Theresa thalers as a marriage transaction for his son. The groom's side composed the following, which was told by Agaz Habte;

Mir Yeshile Bankashiye  
Behuwet qershi barya siye,

i.e How fortunate Bankashiye is  
He bought a slave (bride) with (only)  
two Maria Theresa thalers.

Later on, because of migration, further changes occurred in marriage transactions. During the second period of fanonet, i.e during and right after the Italian occupation, extra terms of reference such as yadot-waga, i.e mother's price and yegibir-waga, goods' price, and yegred-huger, i.e bride's clothes were included in the category of yegred waga, i.e marriage transactions. Then the mother's price of 30 birr, goods' price of 60 birr, and bride's clothes such as one shama (dress made from nylon fabric), one under-cloth, one shash (scarf) and one netela (cotton made dress) were paid as marriage payment. This payment was begun by the fano and created a precedent, in fact an undesirable one, for the

non-fano villagers' children. The lion's share of the marriage transactions of any form, and particularly of money, goes to the bride. The payment to the mother of the bride is one of the new elements introduced by the fanos. This yadot waga is considered just as a gift and does not involve the idea of bride price, a payment which is considered as a compensation to the bride's family for their loss of the bride's labor with marriage, which is common throughout Africa (Goody 1976:4-6)

Yegred-waga which was started by the fano seems to be viewed as more a matter of prestige than a compensatory payment of marital or fertility rights. It has been inflated as a result of the competition created by the fano, who have been competing by increasing the money involved in the marriage transactions as a strategy to increase their honour. Therefore, the marriage payment has been escalating and recently it reached 300 birr and 600-1,000 birr for mother's price and good's price, respectively, and more than two types of clothes for the bride. Three decades ago, Shack noted that meeting marriage and other social obligations was included in the list of spheres in which most migrant's earnings were invested (1966:82). It is worth noting here that fanonet brought about not only the invention of new traditions, but also it has resulted in the dying out of tradition as will be discussed below. Fanonet created its own traditions such as marriage transactions, and wedding practices. Some of the fanonet-induced traditions such as yegred waga are now institutionalized to the extent that one cannot tell that they are new inventions. Therefore there is a process in which new traditions are being invented and old traditions are dying out.

#### 4.2.2. Weddings

The inflationary effect of remitted income on marriage is so great that it resulted in a rise not only in yegred waga, as mentioned above, but also in the increased cost of weddings. In the past, my informants remarked that weddings were very simple, and unlike in more recent times, ceremonies were held by the parents of the spouses in their respective houses. Food and drinks were prepared by parents of both bride and groom and served for

the friends and relatives of the bride and groom by their respective families. Unlike in the present time, the bride's friends, locally known as meset, did not come with the bride to the groom's parent's home, nor did the groom and his friends traditionally known as azhemene, go to the bride's family home. Rather, the groom was supposed to stay behind, while his azhemene, usually two or three friends travelled half-way to welcome the bride and her meset of two friends. That was how the two parties were supposed to meet. Then the social norms expected the bride and groom to hide from their perspective parents in law for a certain period of time. This norm was strictly followed by both parties as a symbol of respect to the parents-in-law and that was why the groom did not go on his wedding day to the bride's family's home and the bride entered the groom's village in the dark.

However, these and other related traditions have been dying out as a result of fanonet-experiences in the village life. The fano begun to go on their weddings to the bride's family home and bring the bride back to their villages "in the sun", during the day time. According to my informants, this fanonet-induced change has been occurring for over the last four decades. Damo Zerihun's, experience is typical of this phenomenon.

I married my first wife here (Zizencho) 37 years ago. My wedding was a week before the annual Meskal festival. My father arranged this marriage with the parents' of my bride from the village of Goya in Ezha. I brought a white wedding dress (known as nechi ejetebaba), a shirt, pants as well as coat, and a pistol while I was in Nazareth for my wedding. My other fano friends who were at my wedding had pistols, too. In the evening of my wedding, I remember it was on Saturday, we (the azhemene and him) went to Goya to bring the bride. My azhemene friends and I shot our pistols skywardly both on our departure from Zizencho and our arrival in Goya. Then, people were astounded, not only because of the way we were dressed and our shooting was strange, but also because we were the first azhemene from here ( my village) in which the groom himself went on his own wedding. It was really a new experience as three years before my friend, Agaz Alemu did not go on his wedding with us to your (the researcher's) village (of Wilbarag) as his bride was the daughter of Mankurya, your (researcher's) kin. For my wedding we spent two nights at the bride's father's house and the next day we brought my bride escorted by her meset (friends) back here (in Zizencho).

Likewise, this new approach to weddings has been adopted by a number of other migrants and non-migrants as well. As such the villagers have had no choice but to break their traditions and adapt to these changing circumstances, created by fanonet . Also, more

new elements have been incorporated in the wedding customs over the last 25 years, or so. One such new additions is what has been locally called yesef-waga, i.e literally meaning "basket-price". This is paid by the groom's, friends to the bride. On the wedding day, after the azhemene, escorting the groom arrive in the bride's family house, the best ladies (bridesmaids) bring and put before the azhemene an empty locally produced basket called sef.<sup>1</sup> The azhemene are required to place some money in the basket, i.e pay the basket price. The informants noted that the rate has been increasing over time from 5-10 birr to 30 birr to 100, 500 birr and in a few cases even 1,000 birr over the last two and half decades. The following case of Agaz Getahun, another fano informant, is illustrative evidence. Getahun has two wives, his first wife lives in Nazareth and the second wife, in Zizencho.

When I married Asnakech (his second wife) twenty years ago, we went to her family's house in the village of Muletta, which is a few minutes walk across this village (Zizencho). Then we brought about five rifles for the wedding, as my fano friends and I had our own rifles, and we were shooting skywards a lot. As we had plenty of bullets, we shot as much as we wanted to. As we entered her father's house, the girls asked us (the azhemene) to pay the basket-price. At that time the rate was birr 10 for us (the fano) and even less for other villagers (non-fano). I was so attracted by her beauty I offered them 30 birr for which I asked her best-ladies (bridesmaid) to bring her (the bride) before the azhemene and get her to shake my hands, which she did and I paid 30 birr. People who observed and heard of this act were amazed because then couples like us (him and the bride) were not traditionally allowed to be physically in each other's sight for the wedding, let alone shaking hands with one another. It was considered to be taboo. This was my second marriage as I married my first wife ten years before, when things like paying basket-price and the groom asking the bride to shake hands with him were unheard of.

Furthermore, as a result of such fanonet- created precedents as presented above, traditions are said to be breaking down, and dying out, in some respects. Previously, according to tradition, the bride was expected to stay away from the groom before and during their weddings. However, as a result of fanonet experiences in the village life, the bride sits initially beside the best-man and then right next to the groom, and chats with her new marital partner as well as their azhemene. Also, during meal times, the bride feeds the groom and

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<sup>1</sup> Which otherwise is used for serving snacks such as gollo, i.e roasted barley

azhemene bits of wusa, with spoonful of kitfo<sup>1</sup>. In former times such tasks were responsibilities of best-ladies (bridesmaids). In addition, it has become fashionable for the best men to invite the bride and groom to dance together to local traditional music as well as modern Amharic and even western songs sung in English.

Moreover, in some cases, instead of the traditional food such as wusa and kitfo, non local food and drinks such as enjera and wot, and bottled drinks (including soft drinks, beer and even whisky), are prepared and/or transported from urban areas for wedding ceremonies. Also, using cars and/or horses, alternatively or in combination, and video cameras for the village-weddings of the fano is no longer uncommon and taperecorders and cameras have also become commonplace.

#### 4.2.3. Implications of Inflated Marital Payments

All these new circumstances brought about by fanonet have profound impacts upon the marital life of the village society. First, as noted in the foregoing discussion, some traditions have been dying out and/or breaking down, while new customs have been in the making. Second, it has resulted in the rise in the general cost of bride price, weddings, and other aspects of marital life. Third, and perhaps most significant, it increased the honour and status of the male and female fano and improved both their marriage prospects at the expense of the non-fano villagers' prospects. Fourth, the highly inflated marriage payment has brought about considerable delay of the marriage of the non-fano villagers' male and female children.

This fanonet-caused delay of the non-migrant villagers' marriage has far reaching implications for the village lives of the young, particularly the girls and for the social norms that govern sexual behavior. To begin with, traditionally among the Gurage, the age of youth at marriage varied from 13-20 years for girls, and from 16-25 for boys. Premarital sex was and still is unacceptable for the young and for girls in particular. Tradition expects

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<sup>1</sup> Mashed meat and/or cabbage prepared with butter as well as spiced pepper which is a Gurage speciality

young girls to avoid sex before marriage, and virginity is emphasised, whereas premarital pregnancy is socially stigmatized. However, all informants report that because of the marriage payment, marriages have been delayed and the young (and particularly the non-fano) are forced to wait until the age of 20-25 and above for girls, and 25-32 and above, for boys. Agaz Habte described this situation, saying:

The high bride price is the evil of fanonet. If you (the researcher) go to many houses of the farmers in the village, you may find 3, 4 or even 5 young girls who have passed their marriageable age. Several of them have already experienced premarital pregnancies resulting in childbirth, or induced abortion. These were acts unheard of in Gurage before. You also may find the same number of boys who have exceeded the usual age of marriage.

The social implications of premarital sexuality for girls are varied and complex. First, in such a traditional community as the Gurage, in which premarital pregnancy is strictly prohibited, pregnancy for a young girl before marriage often results in shame both for herself, as well as for her family and clan as a whole. This is so because in Gurage tradition there is prestige and status attached to formally arranged marriage, known as agnut, and the youth, particularly young women, are expected to consent to this type of marriage to satisfy the expectations of their parents. Therefore, pregnancies before marriage have brought about the loss of such prestige for the girls' parents as well as themselves. The girls do not have the traditional status of bride and they marry as women with previous marital (i.e. sexual) experience and not as girls having the status of a traditionally arranged marriage (agnut) for the first time. As a result, in their life to come such women would be referred to as agnut-ebar, i.e a person who cannot afford the prestigious formal marriage. This is an insult that entails a high psychological cost for the women who must live with it.

This study reveals that there are different ways for the girls to cope with their premarital pregnancies: attempting to induce abortions using traditional and modern methods, and when these means are not successful, delivering the unwanted pregnancies. The majority of such girls are said to use abortifacient herbs which are reportedly cheap and usually prepared by local women herbalists. A very small number of them are noted to be



using the rather expensive modern abortion-inducing medicines, which are provided secretly by some health workers of the surrounding clinics. According to the informants and the data from Zizencho clinic, there are some girls who have suffered and/or even died from the overdose of both traditional and modern methods of abortion. Sepsis and shock are noted as common results of the process. Those who fail to abort an unwanted pregnancy, must deliver their pregnancies either in the village or elsewhere, and often do so in urban areas. Then, the girls may give the unwanted babies to their mothers and leave their villages for town, where some may become prostitutes and/or petty-vendors of second-hand clothes and the like.

Girls who have passed marriageable age (i.e. above 20 years of age) are found to be exposed to premarital sexuality particularly during social events such as weddings, betrothals and other related ceremonies in which girls as well as boys are allowed to spend a couple of nights outside their parents' houses. Weddings are one of the ceremonies in which young boys and girls have the opportunity to get together. During such ceremonies, drinking a lot of alcohol such as areqe, has become fashionable. Especially, for the fano who return from towns with relatively large sums of money, drinking to the point of drunkardness and then sexually seducing young girls has been found to be a common practice. During this time the girls are also said to be pushed by the fano to drink areqe, and then to engage in sexual activity which may bring about the associated problems discussed above.

Another high-risk meeting ceremony for premarital sexuality was noted to be the young girls' visits to the bride-grooms house made a month or so after the wedding ceremonies, which is locally known as yedabo-grede, i.e "bread-girls." The young girls are named after bread because they bring bread and areqe if they are Christian, or bread, soft drinks and chat in the case of the Muslims, to the bride-groom's house, where they spend a night or two. The groom kills sheep or a small bull to serve the "bread girls" during their stay at his home. This very "tradition" of bread-girls is said to have been created by fanonet itself. The young drink areqe and may engage in sex, with the implication of premarital

pregnancies for the girls. This common pattern of sexuality before marriage not only spoils the girl's chances of agnut, formal marriage, but also risks their health and even their lives from STD and HIV. This is because as a fano, those young men who seduced the girls, might have had experiences of multiple sexual contacts, which is usually characteristic of migratory workers. As a result, the fanos might contract STDs and HIV and transfer these diseases to the girls.

These girls may suffer, not only from the consequences of premarital sexual activity, but also from psychological depression resulting from fanonet-caused delay of marriages. The situation is particularly stressful for the girls and their parents, especially mothers. In the predominant cases, the mothers and the girls explain the delay in terms of bad fortunes brought about by some malevolent spirits. Therefore, many cases were reported to seek ritual means such as going to the village of Ambad to see a fortune-teller man who ritually pours a mouthful of seher, taking ritual food (Dapuwa and quro) and sacrificial red sheep, (Demyat) to Wera, the spiritual river, and visiting sorcerers as their strategy of alleviating the problem, which is thought to be spirit-caused. As was noted by one informant, for such mothers, "The beauty of the girls withers away like the leaves of a flower, as time goes by" and this adds to the ongoing depression of the girls.

In addition, marriage delays described above, have often broken the tradition of giving preference to the eldest child. In traditional Gurage marital life, when there is more than one girl of marriageable age within one family, a formal marriage is supposed to be arranged for the girls on the basis of seniority, i.e. the first born is eligible for the first formal arrangement. However, this tradition of seniority has been broken because the long delay may make the parents desperate and they then arrange a marriage for the younger daughter. There is the other side of the story, however. In some conservative families, the seniority norm has been strictly observed by refusing the younger girl's chances for marriage before the older ones. Informants report that the results of some of such refusals are premarital sexuality, pregnancies and undesired babies.

However, despite the above mentioned negative effects, the delay in marriage caused by high bride price, for the young could presumably be viewed as an advantageous phenomenon. Given that the Gurage villages are densely populated as a result of rapid population growth, the delay of marriages for the young might result in a diminution of the village birth rates once if the young marry early, they produce many children, hence additional mouths competing for village resources.

On the whole, fanonet - produced money has brought prestige and status to the migrants which increases their prospects of marriage at the expenses of the non-fano villagers. According to my elderly informants, in the past good farmers and their children had better prospects than those persons engaged in non-farming occupations. However, the remitted income has changed the traditional values in favour of the migrants. Therefore, the non- fano villagers have been forced to live beyond their levels of agriculturally based income not only by the high marriage payment, but also by the rise in the general cost of marriage as a result of holding lavish weddings and other related ceremonies and extravagant exchange of goods and/or money made by the fanos. The number of friends of both the bride and groom, meset and azhemene, respectively, at a fano wedding, usually exceeds the limits set by the social norms and traditional laws.

### **4.3. Traditional Values and Attitudes**

#### **4.3.1. The Expansion and Commercialization of Alcohol**

As a result of fanonet experiences, marital customs as well as other traditions have undergone change over time. Greater consumption of alcohol by the villagers is another newly introduced feature of village life. In the pre-contact period the Gurage traditional drinks were different types of seher, a locally brewed drink made from barley and water. This local brew does not have any alcoholic content and has been served for special occasions such as various annual festivities, weddings, funerals, mahibers (traditional religious associations) and other festivals. Also, this drink was predominantly brewed for

domestic consumption although it was noted by the informants that the seher brew was produced by some women for sale at weekly-held large local markets like the Bole market. The informants recounted that the traditional drinks called tella, and areqe were introduced a century ago. Tella, and, particularly, areqe unlike, seher brew, have a high alcoholic content.

However, initially the brewing and consumption of tella and areqe were limited to the Neftegna-Ketmas, i.e. garrison towns. The main consumers were the Neftegnas themselves, joined by a group of Gurage administrative elites, who were working in close contact with the Neftegnas, such the Balabat, Chiqa Shums, Turgimans and recruited Gurage soldiers. Therefore, until fanonet became an essential aspect of village life, these alcoholic drinks such as tella and areqe were not a feature of Gurage village life. It is said that these drinks have become part of the traditional village as a result of migration. During the early period of fanonet, tella and areqe were brewed by some wives of migrants and consumed by the villagers. Since the Italian occupation period, the brewing and selling of alcohol like tella and areqe, have considerably expanded with the expansion of fanonet. Over the last three decades, this alcohol business has increasingly become commercialized. Initially, it was noted that the business was started and carried out by the wives of the fano and the brewing then was said to have been seasonal, particularly during the times in which the fano would return back to the village because the migrants were the majority of the customers. Gradually, the trade has become one of the major sources of income for the village women as a whole, for the non-fano as well as fano households. Also, brewing and selling areqe has become a year round women's activity, as the seasonal visiting migrants are no longer the sole purchasers. The non-fano farmers have assumed the habit of drinking areqe throughout the year. As a result, tella has nearly replaced the special local brew seher, and areqe has become the most commercialized alcohol in the rural villages.

This habit of drinking arege and chewing chat has become a widespread behaviour of the farming village society. This drinking habit is noted to have profound repercussions on different aspects of village life and the villagers attribute it to fanonet experiences. Yilma Sirani described this as follows:

The habit of drinking a lot of arege and getting drunk has resulted from fanonet as it takes place during weddings and annual festivities when the fano are around in the village. It gets worse as nowadays people have begun to drink even during mournings, house constructions and cultivation. The farmers are already used to drinking much arege and they have lost their work discipline and strength. If you look at the hired labourers they are not as productive as our fathers were in the past. This bad habit has brought about starvation and poverty in the households of such farmers.

This fanonet-caused drinking habit has several negative impacts on the life of the villagers. First, the predominant number of drinkers are said to be the male farmers, who are traditionally the main bread-winners of the farm households. Also, as mentioned elsewhere, the major agricultural works such cultivation of asat, and grain production, are male-specific tasks. Therefore, the farmers loss of physical strength from drinking a lot of arege has resulted in the decline of their productive capacity and then in the diminution of agricultural output for the individual households and/or for the village farm economy as a whole. This deterioration of the working capacity of the most significant agricultural work-force has made some of the village households incapable of providing the basic subsistence such as food for their members.

Second, not only has production decreased, but also the traditional work discipline has declined. It has been noted that some farmers are so addicted to drinking arege that they drink even before having breakfast, which has a devastating impacts on their well-being. In particular, drinking during cultivation, house construction, even mournings was formerly unheard of among the rural Gurage and causes the break of the traditional work discipline. The implications are several and very complex. Agricultural jobs carried out by such workers are said to be rushed and the labour inputs are far less efficient and intensive. In some situations people are noted to be drunk to the point of loosing their minds. For

instance, at a house construction party for a fano, a villager got very drunk and reportedly fell down from a roof of a house, which he was working on, breaking his right arm. In another instance, drunk villagers fell down while carrying a dead body to church for funeral and the corpse fell to the ground. Also, providing much areqe for workers during such situations has become almost a norm, and this has become serious difficulty for the non-fano villagers. The workers would not be willing to work without having areqe, as precedents have been created, and to afford buying areqe is very expensive for the non-migrants. As the work is so often rushed, the results are lower-quality products. As is discussed below, these fanonet-caused difficulties have become issues which have been addressed on a pan-Gurage level at the traditional elder's Council called Yejoka.

Third, it was also noted that those farmers who became addicted to alcohol, are said to have been hiring their labour and selling their vital farm resources to use the money for drinking. Agaz Habte said that the village Gurage:

..acquired the habit of drinking areqe through the fano children, who in turn have taken it over from the Amhara and Italians. The Amhara and Italians were drinking after they got stuffed eating meat, eggs, butter, milk bread, and enjera, and even then just small amount in Melkya, (i.e little cups) in order to keep their bodies from getting fatter.

(Unlike the former), Gurage (villagers) now drink areqe for breakfast and they drink as much as they get. There is no limit for them. They sell their hiba simua (small asat plants of lower transplanting levels), asat, eucalyptus wood, sheep and even land on a contract basis for drinking areqe. Some eat chat and others (the majority) drink areqe. Both get drunk and as a result are not willing to listen to the elders. Therefore, farmers are not respecting the elders, they have been cursed by us (the elders). We (elders) always try to advise the people but no one is observing our words and then we cursed them. That is how poverty has come to Gurage (area).

Therefore, as pointed out above, the addicts are said to have been selling basic farm resources which are significant for their households' well-being.

Fourth, alcohol consumption has a deteriorating effect on the health of the households run by such men and on the quality and development of the village human resources, resulting in poorly-fed family members- primarily children and wives. Agaz Habte made the following remarks:

In the past, farmers were strongly (intensively) producing enough food, enough barley, enough asat. People (villagers) had enough food to eat and enough seher (brew) to drink. Therefore, they were very healthy. Women who were eating gollo (roasted barley), besewe (food made from barley flour) and seher were healthy and faced no difficulties even during child birth. Let alone people, even horses of some big men were given barley. (On the contrary), nowadays, let alone for horses, there is not enough food for people. Today, people are not capable of producing enough food even for their own families. Farmers have become weaker and weaker as they drink much areqe and chew much chat. (As a result), people are not healthy. Both children, women and old people have health problems. This is because they are not eating useful food as in the past. Rather people adopt and consume harmful food (drinks like areqe).

Fifth, village men, who usually drink are known for creating problems for their households and the rural community as a whole. Such men create difficulties for their families, particularly for their wives, who are sometimes beaten by their drunk husbands. Others may commit terrible acts such as burning theirs or others' houses and killing people. In the past, these sorts of actions were disliked and their incidence was little or very low. However, Haile Gebre, another informant, said that with the expansion of drinking areqe and chewing chat in the villages medara besam, i.e. "the incidence of crimes (such as murder and arson) has become high", because "much chat and areqe make people blind in their thinking and commit such medara (murders)". Therefore, because of the high incidence of such crimes, the traditional laws of Yejoka have been broken and the rates of blood and/or compensation money have become inflated.

Moreover, such criminal acts have multiplied by the fanos' misuse of armaments. The migrants brought back pistols and rifles to the village and they began to shoot initially at weddings and then during annual festivals, rituals, and even funerals. All these are social and cultural events at which a lot of people come together, and at which people drink a lot especially when the fano are around to buy areqe for the villagers as well as for themselves. Often innocent people are mistakenly killed by the bullets shot by the fano, who usually shoot skywards to gain prestige for themselves and their clans. However, as either the shooters or the victims, or both usually get drunk the loss of lives in such social and cultural

occasions has become a recurrent pattern, hence adding to the number of medara, i.e. murders.

#### 4.3.2 Traditional Titles

Another aspect of the village life that has changed as a result of fanonet is the values attached to traditional titles. Traditionally, among the Gurage, titles were given to individuals on the basis of their merit. Respected elders had to evaluate whether or not the merits would match with the attached traditional values. These titles were divided into three groups: ritual (religious), civil and military titles.

The ritual (religious) titles are those given to the ritual dignitaries such as Yewegapecha Damam, Yeway-demam, Getakuya and Yesamardam for the heads of the sky-god of Cheha, Damuamwit (fertility goddess), Bojha (thunder god), and the sky-god of Endagagn, respectively. These as well as other related ritual titles are hereditary on the basis of male seniority except for the female ritual head of the sky-god of Cheha, and they are exclusively clan-specific. Likewise, such titles have been reserved for and by the same clans.

The civil titles were both hereditary and attained by charismatic men. One civil title Azmach, i.e. king, which is hereditary, has been given to the clan leaders, whose responsibilities are said to have been administrative, peace-keeping, leading and arbitrating matters concerning their clans. Other civil titles are given to individual persons based on their merits and achievement. One such title is Damo, the highest traditional civil title, which is given to a man for his acknowledged wisdom in stabilizing peace and arbitration, for his wealth in the form of livestock, farm, land and others, and for his charity to the poor.

Initially, the title of Damo was ritually specific as it was only used for the husband of Yewegapecha Demam, a lady ritual dignitary of sky-god of Cheha. Other civil titles like Dada and Dames were initially offered to men who had become rich in cattle, owning not less



than a hundred animals. All the civil titles except Azmach and the ritual Damo, have been attained by individuals for their merits.

Likewise, military titles such as Agaz, i.e the leader of war, which is the highest military title among the Gurage, was given to a warrior who killed at least a hundred enemies in the battle fields. Other titles next to Agaz are Abagada, men who killed less enemies than an Agaz, Aeseharib, a person who did not retreat in the battle, Berkefete and Berdefere, warriors who broke through the enemy circles and performed brave deeds. All these and many other military titles were not hereditary, but social norms expected individual warriors to acquire merits which were worth deserving the attached traditional values. As the Gurage rural society was (and still is) based on agriculture, acephalus and inter-clan and/or inter-tribal wars were common place. Hence, being a successful farmer, a man of charismatic wisdom, or a warrior were traditionally highly valued achievements for men. Likewise, women of wisdom, who had acknowledged talent in women's domain of household management such as preservation and preparation of traditional food and drinks, satisfying their husbands, hosting guests and what not, were given the title, Ageyet, which is the highest traditional title for women in Gurage. Both titled persons were highly respected by the community members, and there were special values attached to their titles as well as positions. For instance, such titled elders and veterans had particular eating and drinking objects, particular funeral ceremonies and specific praise chants locally know as Wege.

However, as a result of fanonet experiences the values of traditional titles such as non-hereditary civil and military ones, have changed over time. The values of the above mentioned traditionally cherished titles have been dying out, as they have been outshined by the values of fanonet-caused cash oriented achievements. Unlike in the pre-contact period, the fanos are now the most respected and influential figures in the farm community, who are honored with highly valued traditional titles such as Damo, Agaz, Aeseharib and what not. These titles like Damo and Agaz were traditionally the highest and rarest for the values attached to them. For instance, my informants noted that at the start there were only two men

with the title Damo: Damos Megenas and Amdene of Gumer and Geto- in the whole Sebat bet Gurage. Nowadays, there are a number of Damos and Agazs and persons honored with other traditionally precious titles within a village; as a result such titles have said to have lost their traditional value and have become cheap, being used for ordinary persons. It is said that not only the fano themselves but also their parents and families have been offered the traditional titles, since given their access to remitted income, they are the ones who may easily command the respect of the villagers.

In the past, features such as being born into a prestigious status group and/or being honored with the traditional titles, which are acquired through personal efforts had provided individuals with greater social respect. However, such persons are no longer as respected, if they do not have access to remitted income. The following was expressed by Iman Kemal:

Formerly, the traditional titles (such as Damo and Agaz) were given to people who had wisdom, special talents in fighting, farming, arbitrating, and were patient, kind and generous, to the poor with their wealth. These days, (however), such titles have been offered predominantly to the fano and their families as well as others who somehow have access to money. Such people get the titles, not because of their good history, cherished characteristics or of their noble births, but because they have access to remitted income and buy drinks (such as areqe) for the villagers. Persons of noble births are not being respected. They are now replaced by the fanos and/or their parents. In the village, the fathers of the fano, even those who do not have the capacity of performing the elders' roles of arbitration and settling dispute, and those who even have a humble birth, are the ones who command the respect of the villagers. Such fathers wear clothes such as a hat, overcoat, gabi (i.e cotton-made garment) pants, coats and shirts, shoes and fly-whisks as well as riding horses (mules), which are bought by their fano children, and they are given the noblest traditional titles (such as Damo and Agaz). Just like this, they have become big men. Therefore, in the public meetings (and social and cultural focal points), people stand up to welcome these men (with new fanonet-caused status) but do not do so for real elders, even though the real elders are men of wisdom and of noble births. In order to receive such respect you have to be either a fano or a father of a fano.

It is worth emphasizing that, as noted in the case material presented above, it is not only the value terms of reference, which are considered as the yardsticks of whether or not individuals' merits are worth deserving the traditional titles, but also, and more importantly, the attitudes and values of both the titles-givers and receivers towards each other and towards the traditional titles themselves have undergone changes over the past four to five decades

since fanonet has become an essential feature of village life. It could be argued that since life styles have become considerably commercially oriented as a result of fanonet, which has constituted the major source of the necessary finance for extremely cash-poor farm economy, the fanos' movements and their struggle to make money in a very competitive urban-settings and remit it back to their villagers of origin may be considered as individually achieved merits in a peaceful but fiercely fought commercial battle-field so that they deserve traditional titles such as Damo and Agaz. Also, most of the recorded individual histories of my case fanos reinforce this argument, given that they had to pass through hardships engaging in menial urban jobs which were despised by other groups, particularly those from the ruling class. Thus, the term Gurage had become synonymous with "porter" in urban settings, and despite all these obstacles, the fanos have become commercially *successful*.

In addition, since the incorporation of the Gurage and their land into the wider Ethiopian entity in 1888, the inter-and-intra-clan wars ceased to be a widespread phenomenon in Gurage society. Therefore, the traditional roles of the warriors have not been as essential to the society any more. Instead, the fanonet experience has become an essential feature in the life of the rural Gurage. It seems a historical process that the traditional titles and values attached to them in relation to the individual's success in the two formerly cherished performances farming and warriorship have been overtaken by the individual's achievement in the fanonet experiences, a phenomenon that has become the order of the day since the Gurage incorporation.

Furthermore, not only the use of the traditional titles and their implications but also other special values attached to them have changed in favour of the fano. In pre-contact period, according to the Gurage tradition, special funeral and tasker ceremonies were held exclusively for big men and women of traditionally valued titles. Then, special mournings locally known as Yequmibihe (i.e literally, "standing up while mourning") ceremonies were held for distinguished and/or titled elders, veterans, ritual heads, clan leaders and/or respected women titled with Ageyet. Carefully composed mourning chants, which had first

to be discussed and approved by respected elders, were chanted, mentioning and praising the cherished qualities and merits of the deceased person. Traditionally among the Gurage, mournings are held during five days for an ordinary person, whereas the ceremony lasts for seven consecutive days after the burial ceremonies for special persons mentioned above.

However, nowadays such special mournings, or funeral ceremonies are being held for the fano and/or their families. One of my informants, himself a return migrant, has noted that "the precious mourning-chant of formerly distinguished warriors are now being chanted for the fano, their parents and wives just because they have money, although they have never chased even a fox let alone fought in battle-fields. This is one of the acts which are destroying our old culture."

In addition, the fano are also noted for breaking the traditions by holding lavish ceremonies during funerals and tasker. When death happens in the fano households in the village, the fanos accompanied by other fanos, kin and friends, come to the village by bus(es) and/or small vehicles to attend funerals. At this time, they bring several jerrycans of areqe, and food (injera with wot), cereals and /or pulses such as wheat, barley and peas, salt, kerosene, masho lamps and other goods with them. There are a few cases in which the fano brought a video camera and videoed the funerals, which was unheard of in Gurage culture. When they come they kill an ox, cow or a heifer, or small bulls and serve their guests with kitfo and wusa, (enjera in some cases). During tasker too, they prepare lavish food and drinks. All these actions have created undesirable precedents for the poor non-fano villagers, who have been also forced to hold expensive ceremonies, which are far beyond their levels of income. Some poor farmers are forced to kill what ever cattle they own and this makes them even poorer.

#### 4.4. Annual Festivals

Another area of village life, that has been highly influenced by fanonet, is the villagers' religious beliefs and practices. In Gurageland, there are several religious beliefs

and practices which are carried out in associations both with the traditional beliefs, such as Waq , Bozha, and Demuamuit<sup>1</sup>, and with the modern religions such as Christianity and Islam.

#### 4.4.1. Traditional Beliefs and Related Ceremonies

As regards traditional beliefs, there are three annual festivals in honour of the above mentioned three major Gurage deities, that is, Chisht, Nipuar and Senche for Waq, Bozha and Demuamuit respectively.<sup>2</sup> The annual festivals of Chist and Nipuar are celebrated predominantly by the male followers both at their respective shrines of Wegepecha and Yinangara and at the places of each and every individual follower. Senche is mainly celebrated by women at Yebitare and Moqerere, the two shrines of Demuamuit. The influences of the fano have changed the type and size of gifts involved as well as the circumstances in which gifts are exchanged as part of celebrating such annual festivals as Chisht and Nipuar.

In the pre-contact period, the followers were coming from all parts of the rural Gurage areas, both on foot, and/or riding horses or mules, to the respective shrines to celebrate those festivals. At that time the gifts and sacrifices people would bring for the ritual dignitaries included honey in cattle horns, gomira<sup>3</sup>, small asat plants, asat fibre, small bulls locally known as wefer etc. Since the period of contact, however, the fano have been coming from different towns all over the nation riding public buses and driving their own automobiles to these social and ritual focal points. The fano bring ritual gifts such as ritual clothes and umbrellas locally called gimiga and tilla, respectively, money and several small bulls, in addition to the pre-contact items mentioned above. They also transport much arege and kill animals to serve their villagers and others attending the ceremonies.

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<sup>1</sup> The sky, and thunder gods, and fertility-goddess, respectively

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed description of these three cults see Worku 1990b, 1991, 1992

<sup>3</sup> The particular wood for such ritual purposes

and from the fano monopoly on available labor, as they may not be able to hire the labourers at the right time for the right seasonal tasks even if they are able to pay higher wage rates.

#### 4.4.2. Meskal

The annual festivities during which the villages are flooded with the visiting fanos, are those of Meskal for the Christians and Arafa for the Muslims. The predominant number of migrants are visiting their villages at the times of these two festivities, not only because they constitute the two largest and most elaborate ceremonies among the Gurage, but also because during these festivals, significant social and cultural events such as weddings are held.

Let us take Meskal as an example to discuss the fanonet-induced changes in relation to the traditions of celebrating annual festivities. Meskal is a Christian tradition being annually celebrated in September in the memory of the finding of the true-cross. Meskal in Amharic means cross, whereas its Guragegna equivalent term is Mesqer. Traditionally, the Gurage used to celebrate the annual Mesqer festival in their local month of Meshero (July), which is locally called Yemeshero Mesqer, according to their local calendar. However, as a result of the establishment of the Neftegna - Gebar relationships and related expansion of Christianity in Gurage, the Gurage have been forced to celebrate Mesqer according to the Amhara-Christian tradition imposed on the Gurage. Therefore, the Gurage have since then been celebrating Mesqer in September, which is in the local month of Yedar. Hence, this is locally called Yedar-Mesqer as opposed to the indigenous Yemeshero-Mesqer in July.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, the celebration of Mesqer festival has further undergone changes over time as a result of the experiences of fanonet in village life. The villagers have both positive and negative attitudes towards fanonet induced changes occurring during the celebrations of such annual festivities as Mesqer.

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<sup>1</sup> As for the details of Mesqer celebration among the Gurage, see Nigatu (1987).

On the one hand, the fano's influences are praised because they use their remitted money to cover the cost of holding the highly valued annual ceremonies. The migrants come back to their villages bringing relatively large sums of money that they earned in towns, to celebrate the Mesqer festival. At this time the fano bring not only money but also other goods such as clothes, soap, kerosene, salt, sugar, coffee, butter, and of course areqe, as well as bottled drinks such as beer, ouzo, and whisky (in a few cases). The fanos plan ahead for the Mesqer festival and that is how they manage to afford the expenses incurred in the process. The prices of items such as livestock are very high, and the transportation fees are extremely expensive. At this time, the transportation rates usually rise by 300 percent. For example, under the normal conditions the rate for a bus ride for a person from Addis Ababa to Arakit is 22 birr, whereas during Mesqer and Arafa the rate goes up to 60 birr for the same one-way trip. Despite all this, the fanos are happy to spend all this money to make their families feel happy during one of the most traditionally important annual festivities.

Agaz Habte said that it is thanks to "our fano-children" that the village Gurage have no longer been worrying about the important annual festival such as Mesqer.

In the past, the poor had to work for the rich for which the poor were given a small portion of meat for their Mesqer. Nowadays because of the Shewa children (the fano), every household is self-sufficient since the Shewa children buy animals for their households, their fathers, their brothers, their parents-in-law and for their neighbours. Those households, in which there are no fano family members are supported freely (or on the basis of labour arrangements) by the fanos of the neighbourhoods.

The Shewa children come with their urban families for Mesqer, paying expensive transportation rates for both trips to and from the country (villages). This shows how respectful they are to their parents and families. It is a real source of great prestige and honour for us (the village Gurage). That is how our (the villager's) worries in life, our problems, clothes, our annual festivities and everything have become the responsibilities of our Shewa children (the fano).

On the other hand, however, these praised influences of the fano are seen to entail negative effects for the non-fano households in the village. One such negative impact is the inflationary implication on the prices of things during the times of such annual festivities. The prices of goods such as cattle, sheep, wood, grass (fodder as well as thatching)etc. are

known to increase during these times. For example, the price of a bottle of one litre arege costs 2 birr under normal conditions, whereas it rises to 3 - 3.50 birr during the annual festivities because the fano usually offer high rates. Therefore, the non-fano villagers have to deal with the fano caused high prices of things in village markets, which involves expenses beyond their levels of income. The prices of animals to be killed for the festivals is another typical example of such fanonet - caused inflation. Agaz Habte said that recently:

Everything has become expensive. Especially, the price of animals for slaughter has become extremely high. In the former times, an animal which cost 12 Maria Theresa thalers was large enough for 12 households for Mesqer. Now this kind of ox (cow) is purchased for 1,000 birr to be used by one or two households. Today's meat doesn't have as much baraka (i.e. volume) as in the past. This rise (in price) resulted from the Shewa children's competition amongst themselves. Another bad thing brought about by the Shewa children is that the (Gurage) tradition of contributing and killing animals in a group (and ritually) in the respected elders' houses in the village has been abandoned. Now, every household is killing a small bull which costs 200 - 300 birr each, rather than contributing to buy big animals to kill in a group as was the case formerly.

As such, this collective tradition of sharing rituals and respecting the elders has been dying out.

However, the fact that the fanos bring all the clothes and goods and hold lavish ceremonies means their households feel satisfaction. This same phenomenon creates feelings of discontent and unhappiness for the non-fano families in the villages. The non-fano household members, particularly their wives and children feel jealous of their counterparts.

#### 4.4.3 Fechet

The foregoing discussion has been about the influences of fanonet - positive as well as negative - on village life in relation to the celebration of annual festivities as perceived by the villagers themselves. However, there are some ritual festivities periodically held as the need arises. Fechet is one of these types of periodic ritual ceremonies among the Gurage. It is a ritual practice carried out by male members of certain clans when needed at a particular place. The practice involves praying, blessing, sacrificing animals, and preparing and



serving ritual food and drinks. The purposes of such ritual practices include acknowledging the spiritual power of the patron deities and spirits and seeking spiritual protection and support for the well-being, success, prosperity and health of the members of the clans involved. These types of ritual practices, Fechet, have been performed by different clans in different villages, in which the fanonet influences were found to be considerable.

One such clan based ritual practice has been carried out in Zizencho by the members of Yegeberyatib clan, which is one of the large clans in Gumer. It was performed six years ago and referred to as Yegeberyatib - Fechet, i.e. "ritual practice of the members of Yegeberyatib." This Fechet has been described by my case fano informants as "the most lavish ceremony held in Gurageland". This ritual practice was carried out in January, 1989, and reportedly lasted for five days. It is said that there were about ten thousand members of the Yegeberyatib clan, who came from various parts of Gurage such as Silte, Gumer, Eza, Geto, Enor, Cheha, and towns such as Addis Ababa, Nazareth, Awasa, Wonji, Wolinchiti, Akaki, Yirgalem, Dilla, Jima, Agaro, Lekemet, Holetta and others; to attend the ceremony. Reportedly, one hundred animals (oxen and cows) were killed at this ceremony and a considerable amount of food (wusa, and injera) and drinks, which were transported by the fano from towns, were served for the 10,000 strong crowd who attended. The cost of this lavish ceremony was predominantly covered by the fano- contributions, and some rich fanos reportedly contributed as much as 50-60,000 birr each. According to the informants, this was the first large get-together of the members of Yegberyatib clan during the past four decades. Forty years ago at the same place, in Zizencho they held a less elaborate, but similar Fechet, which was organized by their clan-head, a man called Balambaras Gibi . However, the recent Fechet was much more elaborate than the former, both in terms of the huge number of the attendants, the lavishness of the festival and the elements of modernity involved, such as using a video-camera to record the process.

#### 4.5 Local Language, Guragegna

Language as a cultural and social force is one aspect of life in which the Gurage have appeared the losers as a result of their fanonet-caused interactions with other groups, particularly the Amhara. The fact that Guragegna has been negatively affected by the fanonet experiences has been noticed by the village farmers and elders as well as the fano themselves. One of my informants, Imam Kemal, made the following statement, which is typical of the villagers' conceptions of the impacts of fanonet- on their local language.

Formerly, even in my age, the number of native Gurage who could speak Amharic was very limited. Such Gurage (persons) were a few and they were rare as translators for the rest of the Gurage. They were respected and highly valued as they were important for administrative matters in (the Neftegna towns) Jemboro, Abeke, Daquna, Yedoregebya and others. Such Gurage were called turgeman (i.e. translator) and were even paid for their translation. Then, Guragegna was extensively and exclusively spoken by all rural Gurage. With the expansion of fanonet, this has undergone changes. Now our language (Guragegna), (which is) our culture is destroyed because of fanonet. As you (the researcher) know very well, the majority of us (the Gurage) are the fano. In towns the fano (Gurage) speak mainly in Amharic because if we (the fano) speak in our language other people (non-Gurage group, especially the Amhara) would laugh at us.

(Thus), we were feeling inferior (ridiculed) with our language and everyone of us would like to speak in Amharic in order to avoid other's laughter and bad jokes (ridiculing) against us during our life time in towns. (Not only in urban areas), when we return to our villages we usually continue speaking in Amharic, even with our non- fano family members who do not have the opportunity to learn Amharic. This is because we (the fano) would like to demonstrate our (fanonet- acquired new skill in) Amharic and in general, fano like to be showy (boasting in the village) dressing with new and modern clothes speaking in Amharic, buying arege to invite the villagers, and going to market places (and other social and cultural focal-points). Therefore, (following what the fano have been doing), our (the fano) children and even the children of those farmers who have never been fanos started to speak in Amharic, leaving Guragegna aside. Now, every villager both young and even old non-fano elders, is using (fully or in combination with Guragegna) the Amharic language.

Our (the Gurage) language is becoming despised and abandoned by our own children (even the village Gurage). To your (the researcher's) surprise you do not find a Gurage (village person) who is able to speak pure Guragegna (i.e. without combining with some Amharic words). All our (Gurage) traditional songs such as Yegrad figure and Wege are half Guragegna and half Amharic. This is just what the situation looks like. Is it not a pity to see our language, our culture (identity mark) dying out? You educated Gurage (referring to the researcher) should do something soon.

It is an interesting point that during the research period, some of the case fanos, whose life-histories were recorded, were found to prefer speaking in Amharic rather than in Guragegna as they related their migratory experiences, despite the fact that the researcher asked them to narrate in Guragegna. Even those case fanos, who were willing to relate in Guragegna, could not avoid using many Amharic words and expressions within their Guragegna narration. For example, even Imam Kemal, one such case fano informants, part of whose recorded case material concerning the negative fanonet- influences on the local language is presented above, could not avoid using Amharic words in his speech. At first he began speaking in Amharic, although he switched over Guragegna because of the researcher's request to do so. Then in his hour long narration which was tape recorded, Imam Kemal used many Amharic words and/or expressions. Therefore, the concern he described as presented above, has been substantiated by the degree of the Amharic influence within his own speech and expressions in combination with his own vernacular.

In addition, as discussed in detail below in the ensuing sub section, the researcher found evidence of similar Amharic influences on even the old Gurage elders, who were heard using some Amharic words and expressions in their talks given in the pan-Gurage Yejoka elders' council meetings, which were held in collaboration with fano in the towns of Emdibir, Gurage, and Addis Ababa. Interestingly enough, designing the means and ways of promoting their vernacular was one of the pan-Gurage social and cultural problems addressed. Also, the traditional wedding songs, weges, i.e. praise chants and even the ritual songs such as Bedira and Yewezhe - echehu, praise chants of the sky and thunder gods, respectively, which were recorded by researchers, are found to be a mixture of local language with Amharic words and expressions.

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning here that not only are the fanonet influenced Amharic words are widely used in the traditional songs and praise-chants but also, and more significantly, the content of such traditional songs has changed. In the pre-contact times, the content of the Gurage folk-songs were poems predominantly composed to praise the good

qualities of charismatic individuals in wars, farming, arbitration; and to chant about the spiritual support of patron deities for the individuals' success as well as for the well-being of the society as a whole. However, for the subsequent contact periods, the contents of such folk-songs have become predominantly about fanonet, i.e. the misfortunes and/or successful experiences of the fano in their towns of destination and the spiritual support afforded to them by the local patron cults in their achievements. Two examples of such folk songs may provide illustrative evidences of the issue in question.

One such typical song is a traditional Weg, praise-chant, which was composed by a villager, a man called Arega Somisa, who lived in a place called Gura, in the southern part of Cheha. The content of this song refers to the fanonet experiences in this part of the rural Gurage area, in comparison with the basic village farm economy. Unlike in Gumer area, in Cheha and in other temperate and hot areas of Gurage such as lower Enor and Ener, lower Ezha, lower Muher and Aklil, coffee and chat have been produced mainly as cash crops as well as for domestic consumption. Therefore, the patterns of fanonet vary from village to village according to the varying farm activities of the different agri-ecological zones of Gurage mentioned above. Likewise, the migrants of a particular village origin are known to engage in specific occupations in the towns of their destination. For instance, the majority of Gura Cheha, Gumer, Geto and Ezha fano are predominantly engaged in weaving, tej-houses, sweater-knitting and selling, and hotels as well as vegetables trades, respectively. The following Wege, traditional song was composed in relation to the weaver migrants of the Gura Cheha. Because the villagers were attracted to towns by the weaving occupation carried out by the fanos, their village farm economy has been neglected and as a result the households have become poorer, as revealed by the poems of this song<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Arag's songs are compiled by Estifanos Markos and the following song is from this unpublished collection, p.3

## The Wege, Song

We are born in good times, in which there is order but not gibir (tribute); during the bright reigns of the King of Shewa, chercher (coffee) has been introduced (to Gurage) from Jima, (as a result), everybody rides a segar (horses or mules), Fast galloping (mules) sinar from Shewa. These days being wealthy and respected emanates from one's farm field, and money has become available in derar (a partition with in the houses). Just during the mornings, fifty pieces of chercher (coffee trees) are being planted.

All big men (farmers) of Gura are unwise, as they migrate to Shewa instead of making money by planting chercher; to beg money from weavers. A farmer who plants five hundred (trees of) chercher, his mourning should be the most praised in the village. Why do you Gura Cheha not plow the soil? What is there to hinder you (from farming)? A town is established here in Emdibir, and you (the farmers) always run there for arege, to burn your lips with this bad drink (arege). What do you think is the cure for such disease? If milk is available in a house, (milk will cure it). However, milk is not available if one is not cutting enough fodder. As you start to think of your family late in the afternoon, you are still drinking (arege). If a neighbourhood farmer has sheep, you (the lousy farmers) ask for the sheep telling the farmer that you need the sheep's colour for ritual reasons. If a neighbourhood farmer has Guarva asat types in asat rows, then the farmer starts worrying about you taking away his Gurya asats within two years of the final transplanting period; because he knows you will steal this during the night. Surely there is a genet (heaven) from God. Where does a good farmer sleep after death? With Jesus on God's bed. When diabilos (satan) comes before them, they see him dressed in gold. The lazy farmers are being hunted, and will be buried forty arms deep within the ground. There are a lot of good things in the village (which are abandoned by the fanos) (such as), during Nase (season) you cut fodder, and if you cut grass fodder, then you can drink milk. In Mengese, the cultivation of asat is performed. In Tirqimt,<sup>1</sup> chercher is cultivated and planted. This is how discussion about life is made. Those who neglect farming need to be told these shameful stories. As a result, they would be encouraged to return to farming

The implications of the above-presented traditional praise-chant are that even the lucrative farm activities such as the cultivation of chercher (coffee) have suffered and

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<sup>1</sup> Name of the local month, it's equivalent being August

deteriorated from fanonet caused negligences as well as behaviours like drinking areqe. This phenomenon has brought about the decline in farm out-put for the village households and economy at large. Also, the village leavers are criticized for their out-migration to obtain income from weaving in towns, thus abandoning the opportunity of increasing their levels of income through the plantation of coffee within the village economic structure.

The second example is taken from a modern Gurage tape made a few years ago in Addis Ababa. The singer is a fano Gurage called Mohammed Awole, who composed the Gurage song himself. The name of Mohammed's song in question is Gegendira Nihine, i.e. "let us be ourselves" which emphasizes Guragegna language as a mark of identity. In his song Mohammed noted that the fano Gurage are culturally abandoning themselves by abandoning their vernacular, Guragegna, hence the advice "let us be ourselves" by speaking in their vernacular, which is one of the identity marks of being Gurage. The song is presented as follows:

May I speak about what I saw?  
May I describe what I am not happy about?  
Is there anyone who is hurt like me?  
Better to be ourselves, better to be ourselves.  
Better to tell others, we should not abandon our language.  
Although we have our own language, traditional songs are sung in Amharic in our homeland.  
Please girls, what happened to you?  
Others culture (language) is not that useful, (so) be yourselves!  
Where can it be found? Where can it be found?  
Let me ask you girls, let me ask you girls.  
A person who has become big by abandoning (weakening) himself (language),  
Do you know such as person?  
In our home village, where we were born and raised, Amharic has entered and expanded.  
We should not think that we have become big just because we speak in Amharic.  
Rather, it is a self-degrading act to be like another.  
Better to be ourselves, better to be ourselves.

This cultural loss of the Gurage as a result of their interactions with other ethnic groups in new urban settings can be attributed to various factors. First, the urban circumstances in which the fano Gurage have come to interact with new ethnic groups was formed on the basis of the superiority of the culture and hence the language of the then ruling

ethnic group, that is, the Amhara. Second, the Gurage were among the groups despised by the Amhara and the structural relationships were established in such a way that the Gurage were put in the gebar status since their incorporation. Third, the fano Gurage engaged in menial as well as manual labour, which was despised by the ruling ethnic group at the time. Fourth, the fano Gurage were (and still are) considered by many to be one of the second rate ethnic groups, which have been considered as a source of amusement and jokes for others. Others have been making jokes about the Guragegna slang and the manual labour they engaged in, and their concern with making money. Therefore, all these factors contributed to the weakening of the Guragegna language.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, as the saying goes Guragena Landrover Yemidersubet Yelem, i.e. "there is no places where the Gurage and Landrover do not reach", the Gurage are known for their mobility and for their receptivity to other's language and culture. Whereas the Gurage are successful in adopting others languages and cultures in all places of their destination, however, they have not been successful in getting others to accept the Gurage culture, and particularly the Guragegna language. For historical and political reasons, there was not much interest in Guragegna, whereas the reverse has been true for the Gurage. However it is true that losing one's own culture and/or language is often the price that the migrant pays for moving beyond his world.

The unfavourable positions of the Gurage in urban settings have not only discouraged them from using their own vernacular and as a result weakened Guragegna, but have also pushed them to change their tradition-based names. For instance, the majority of my case fanos have changed their original Guragegna names in order to avoid the negative attitudes attached to them as well as the ridiculing jokes made by others about such names. As Table 9 below shows, such fano changed indigenous names are Goytabe into Getahun, Zeru into Zerihun, Kiftaga into Abbera, Dendir into Alemayehu, Kereyabishe into Tigist, and Anissa into Teklu.

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<sup>1</sup> On the intelligibility of Amharic among the clust of Guragegna dialects, see Ernst Gutt (1980:79).

Moreover, the negative attitudes of others have affected not only the fano themselves but also, through them, the Gurage naming traditions in the village. The fanos are found to be using non-Gurage traditional names for their children and this precedent has been followed by the majority of the non fano villagers as well. In the household survey carried out in Zizencho during the field work period, among the fano households the majority of all the children are given non- traditional names, which is true for many of the non fano households' children. However, the expansion of new religions (Christianity and Islam) and education in this area could also be considered as contributory factors for changes in the Gurage traditional naming.

**Table 9.**  
**Examples of the Fanonet Induced Changes in Indigenous Guragegna Names.**

Indigenous names		Changed (Modified)Names	
Names	Meanings	Names	Meanings
Goytabe	God gave me	Getahun	Be Lord, leader
Zeru	The kin	Zerihun	Let him be the seed
Kereyabishe	Time will give	Tigist	Patience
Kiftaga	Open for my turn	Abbera	He lit (the light)
Dendir	Get strong	Alemayehu	I have seen the World
Anissa	Rise up	Teklu	The Plant

#### 4.6. Yejoka Laws

The Gurage, as one of acephalus ethnic group, have had a history of a traditional institution known as Yejoka, which has been led by the council of elders, known as Yejoka



Council. According to oral tradition, this institution was first established by a man of wisdom called Gepuwe Geta, a Cheha Gurage, about three and a half centuries ago. Gepuwe Geta was said to have been spiritually guided by Waq, the sky-god to form this institution particularly at Yejoka in the village of Yabeze, which is one of the shrines of Waq. Since then, Yejoka has gradually evolved into a pan Sabat-bet Gurage indigenous administrative institution which, as described by Shack (1967), has played administrative, judiciary, parliamentary and legislative functions (roles) in Gurage society.

Among the Gurage, all spheres of life have been regulated by the laws of Yejoka locally known as Yejoka Qicha. Every Gurage, men and women, young or old, is traditionally expected to observe the laws of Yejoka. Likewise, all individuals, at least in pre-contact periods, have observed the laws of Yejoka and those who violated these traditional laws were subject to severe punishments depending on the nature of their crimes, according to the laws of Yejoka. However, during the fanonet periods, during which fanonet has been an essential feature of the village Gurage life for most of this century, significant changes have occurred in the laws of Yejoka.

There are many fanonet induced changes in relation to Yejoka laws and to discuss the details of all such changes is beyond the scope of this sub-section. However, it is presumably sufficient here to discuss some exemplary changes resulting from migration.

One of these fanonet-caused changes is the one which occurred in the marital life of the villagers. Marriage arrangements have been traditionally regulated by the laws of Yejoka. All activities such as betrothing, weddings as well as marriage transactions, are supposed to be performed according to the laws of Yejoka.

However, as a result of fanonet induced inflation of marriage payments, the laws of Yejoka have been broken. As discussed elsewhere, in the past exchange money and/or goods in acknowledgements for taking the brides was not part of Gurage tradition. This was begun by the migrants and has become a common practice in the villagers' marital customs. The negative effects of the high marriage payment have been strongly felt by the non-fano

villagers and the issue has been discussed by the Yejoka Council over the past seven decades. Half a century ago, the traditional codes of Yejoka concerning marital life were modified to include marriage transactions within Yejoka laws. According to these modifications, the amount of marriage payment, the standards of weddings and the amount and types of exchanged goods, and the number of friends (azhemene and meset) for the bride and groom were decided to be uniformly observed equally by those in all income brackets. During this modification, the young girls composed a song complaining against the elders in the Yejoka Council, who tried to control the inflationary marriage payment effects. At that time, Kegnazmach Amerga of Chaha and Azmach (King) Turga of Ezha were among the elders of Yejoka Council.

The young women's protest song went:

Becheha Amerga,  
Bezha Azmach Turga,  
Yederara Sherika,  
Tedemedom bilfelifo;  
Yiname eqeminde Yehuwet Sefo; i.e.,

Amerga from Chaha  
Azmach Turga from Ezha  
Sherika from Derara  
Get together (in Yejoka) and talk much,  
We (the girls) can afford two sef (baskets) ourselves.

This meant that the sum of money determined by the Yejoka elders for marriage payments of 60 birr, was considered so low by the girls that the elders did not need to discuss the matter so much for such low rates. Even thirty years ago, Shack noted that elders complained that fanonet made young people, "disrespectful and insubordinate; the influence of Shewa causes young men to rebel against traditional forms of discipline" (1966:80).

However, despite all these efforts to curb the negative effects of remitted income, the marriage payment has continued to rise and the social, economic as well as the cultural implications have become more varied and complex. As time has passed, traditions have been broken and people have become far less respectful of the elders and the traditional laws

of Yejoka. On the other hand, several modifications and attempts have been made by the elders of the Council in order to deal with the escalating price of marriage payment. One of such attempts is the one which is going on currently. This discussion of elders on Yejoka laws has been occurring for over the last decade. As in the past, the elders were discussing matters in the rural areas by themselves for the last nine years.

However, once they realized that they were unable to control the fanonet-caused inflation by themselves, the rural elders decided to work on the matter in collaboration with the fano themselves. Therefore, the elders' council wrote a letter to the fanos through their urban based association called the Gurage People's Self Help Development Organization (GPSDO). In this letter the fano children were invited to take part in designing and modifying a process to alleviate the difficulties resulted from remitted income. The elders were wise to include the fano in the process in order to control the problems created in the rural life by the fano themselves. As a result, discussions have been carried out for a year by a committee composed of both representatives of the rural elders and the urban fano (of which the researcher is a member). The meetings have been held both in the capital of Addis Ababa and in rural Gurage, particularly Emdibir. When the meetings are taking place in Addis, the fano association covers all costs of transportation and other incurred expenses for the elders who come from the villages.

This new phenomenon is interesting in several respects. First, it is the first of its kind because traditionally Yejoka laws were made and modified by the rural elders alone. For the first time, the fano (through their urban association) are included in the process. Not only are the fano included as members of the main committee, but also, and more significantly, the chair-person for the main committee is a fano, who is also the chairman of GPSDO. Second, in the past, such Yejoka Council meetings were held predominantly in the rural areas, Yejoka in particular. With this development, however, Yejoka meetings have also been held in Addis Ababa. Third, formerly, all the discussions and modifications concerning traditional laws were conducted orally. Now, because of the participation of

educated fano in the committee, everything has been recorded in writing and using audio-tapes. Fourth, the influences of the fano through remitted income on the village life are so strong that it can be argued that the villagers have become over-dependent on the fanonet, as events such as changing or promoting the traditional laws of Yejoka cannot be effectively carried out without the participation of the fano. This is ironic in that the majority of the problems concerning the enforcement of traditional law, have been created by the fano themselves. Fifth, the modified and up-dated laws of Yejoka have been strongly observed by the fanos as a result of their participation in the process. Sixth, in the recently modified codes of Yejoka, interestingly enough, the issue of women's interests has been considered for the first time in the history of Gurage legal tradition. In former times, the young (girls and boys) were not allowed by the social norms to choose their partners, as marriages were arranged predominantly by parents and the youth were expected to fulfil the wishes of their parents. In the new codes, however, both partners (the bride and groom) are now permitted to decide who to marry. Also in the past, divorce was mainly initiated only by men. Now, women are also permitted to request a divorce if they decide not to live with their husbands for sound reasons presented to the (male) elders.

According to these modified laws of Yejoka, holding lavish ceremonies on betrothals and weddings, as well as payment of any fanonet created marital obligations, are forbidden. The number of azhemene and meset, friends of the groom and bride, respectively, has been limited to between 7 and 10 persons from each side. Different kinds of competition among the fano are required to cease. Concerning the strict implementation of these and other modified laws of Yejoka the young girls revealed their dissatisfaction by composing a song as follows:

Mashinemenda genem.  
Jersimenda genem.  
Yesefemenda genem.  
Yeshewa duriye erameta chenem, i.e.

We (the young girls) cannot have our machine-clothes any more,  
We cannot have our jersey-clothes any more,

Even the payment for our sef (baskets) is forbidden;  
(As a result), hooligans of Shewa (those unsuccessful fanos) are happy (because now even they can get brides with low or little marriage payment).

Despite such complaints, the newly modified traditional laws have been more widely observed than they were before. This has been achieved because due to the fano's participation in the process the draft document has been distributed and, discussions were carried out by various Idir associations of the fano in different towns. Therefore, the majority of the fano have been made aware of the changes and/or modifications effected in relation to the traditional laws of Yejoka.

In addition, other fanonet- created difficulties such as the habit of drinking alcohol, areqe in particular, and the issue of traditional blood money<sup>1</sup> have been topics of discussions. In the meetings of the committee, it was emphasized that drinking much areqe and consuming a lot of chat have negatively affected the village community life. Therefore, the consumption of these two items, areqe and chat, is strictly forbidden, particularly during the times of agricultural activities in the field, arbitration and trials carried out by the elders during public meetings; house construction, mourning and/or funerals, betrothals, and women's decortication of asat. The action is cursed by the elders and, in addition, those who are caught in the act of consuming either substance are required to pay 100 birr.

Moreover, due to the increasing expansion and/or commercialization of alcohol in the rural areas, the violation of social norms and traditional laws has been also increasing. Especially, the records of crimes such as murder and arson have increased and the blood money has been raised as a result. Therefore, these issues of murder and arson have been on the top of the agenda for the Committee. It has been decided that the blood money must be raised from 5,000; 2,500 and 1,250 birr to 30,000; 15,000 and 7,500 birr for the three traditional levels of murder locally known as Mura-dem, Medara and Yemedara-meda<sup>2</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> Punishment for serious crimes such as murder, assault, house burning, etc.

<sup>2</sup> In Gurage legal tradition there are three different amounts of blood money for three types of murder. The first type is Mura-dem, i.e. "full murder", referring to intentional or premeditated murder. The second one is Medara, i.e. "accidental murder" referring to unplanned murder. Finally, the third type is Yemedara-meda i.e.

respectively. When deciding this, the committee considered the fact that inflation of the general cost of living in the village and the consumption of much alcohol and chat pushed people to commit crimes, and that, therefore, the rise in the blood money might have a deterrent effect on criminal actions.

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"participating in an unplanned murder." The circumstances in which the murders are committed determine the amount of blood money.

## Chapter V. Development and Fanonet

In the previous chapter, a detailed discussion was presented concerning how the phenomenon of fanonet in the form of labor absenteeism and remitted income has changed the perceptions, values, attitudes and beliefs of the villagers. In this section, an attempt is made to describe the roles the fanos play in the development of the village communities, in terms of both their urban-based associations and via the ideas, skills, goods, money and other resources they bring back home. Development is defined here as modernizing undertakings such as the construction of roads, schools and health facilities, introducing new technologies and commercialization of agriculture.

### 5.1 Construction of Roads in Sebat-bet

#### 5.1.1. Background Information

As discussed in detail in the second chapter, in the years following the incorporation in 1888 of the Gurage into the wider Ethiopian context, and particularly since the Italian occupation, the Gurage villages have been sending local sons and daughters, through migration, to various towns, mainly Addis Ababa.

The fano Gurage are known by other Ethiopians, as well as foreigners, for their industriousness and achievement orientation, being hard-working people and economically successful within urban settings. Especially since the birth of the Merkato (1935-41), believed to be the largest market center in Africa (Deyoung, 1967), by displacing the expatriates (mainly the Yemenis), the fano Gurage have been playing a leading role in the country's national economy, particularly in the sector of commerce (Shack 1966 Worku 1990; Bahru 1991; ). It can safely be said that the fano Gurage have constituted the backbone of the Merkato, where market goods and services, upon which the overwhelming majority of urban Ethiopian depend, flow primarily via Gurage traders.

In addition, the fano Gurage are known for their migrant voluntary associations such as Equb i.e rotating fund raising associations, and Idir i.e. mourning (funeral) associations, and for self-help development associations (Pankhurst 1958; Seifu 1969; Fecadu 1972, 1973). The fano Gurage are particularly known for their strongly maintained links with their farm households and concern with the revitalization of their village communities of origin.

The migrant Gurage have addressed the various issues of revitalizing their home village areas through their development associations such as the Alemgana-Wallamo Road Construction for the northeastern Gurage, which has been described by Fecadu Gedamu (1972).

Likewise, a development association called the Gurage Roads Construction Organization (GRCO) has been established for the Sebat-bet Gurage, for the western Gurage areas, which is the concern in this sub-section as it is a development linked with the phenomenon of fanonet in the study area.

The historical, social and economic aspects of GRCO have been described by several writers (Mudesir 1987; Woldewillassie 1986/7; Kedir 1984; Gebreyesus 1972/3). However, the GRCO is discussed here as an infrastructural development that resulted from the Gurage fanonet experiences, as well as its impacts on furthering out-migration and other aspects of village life.

### 5.1.2. The Roles of the Fanos

The GRCO is a non-governmental organization established by fanos, that has brought about modern transportation networks in an otherwise, geographically inaccessible Gurage area. As a large number of children of the Gurage villages have been moving to urban areas, particularly the capital, and as their home region was not reachable, modern transportation facilities were needed. Thus,



... the enlightened members of the community who were determined to change backward living conditions held a series of consultative meetings both in the countryside and in urban centres. The series of consultation and subsequent dialogue generated by the elders paved the way for the formation of The Gurage People's Roads Construction Organization. GRCO's organizational structure and operational guidelines were ratified by the general assembly of the Gurage people and provided the institutional framework needed to pull together community resources for the construction of roads. The roads have linked the region with the main highway system of Ethiopia (GPSDO 1995:3-4).

As pointed out in Chapter Two above, the Italian occupation period (1935-41) was marked by the construction and expansion of the modern transportation system in Ethiopia. Muluneh, citing Charles Ipcar (1970), wrote that: "The history of the modern transportation network began with the construction of several motor roads by the Italians during the 1936-1941 period" (1993:97). The road from Wolkite to Migo for instance, was constructed at that time. The local Gurage peasants had to provide corvee labor during the construction of this road and this corvee labor was strictly supervised and monitored by the Italians through the village headmen. This road constituted a precedent for the subsequent roads constructed by GRCO. This situation was similarly characterized by Ipcar (1970).

Since its establishment in 1961, the GRCO has played a remarkable role in constructing modern transportation networks in the Sebat-bet Gurageland. During GRCO's three plus decades of development endeavors, more than 420 kms of all-weather roads were completed and opened to traffic. 4,480,000 birr is being invested to construct similar roads that measure about 64 kms, which will bring four sub-regions in Sebat-bet Gurage area together. Some further 360 kms of all-weather roads are planned for construction in the near future. The major portion of the cost of the construction has been funded by GRCO, which contributes 65 percent of the total cost, whereas the remaining 35 percent is subsidized by the government (GPSDO 1995:4).

As a result, unlike in the pre 1960s', these all-weather roads have connected not only the whole Sebat-bet Gurage region to almost all parts of the country but also each and every sub-region, and /or villages together. Shack's statement: "no regular communication exists

between Gurageland and the outside world" (1966:202), is no longer true. According to Muluneh's calculation, based on the total measure of over 320 kms of all-weather roads (although the measure is actually 420 kms),

..road density in the Sebat-bet Gurage area is about 93 meters per square kilometre of area while for the two weredas (Ezhana Wollene, and Cheha, his study areas) it is 171 meters (about 150 and 175 meters for Cheha and Ezana Wollene Weredas respectively). This is about 10 to 11.7 times higher than that of the national average which is only 15 meters/km<sup>2</sup> (1993:98).

This is one of the fano's contributions to the development of the rural communities of their origin. The roles of the fanos in collaboration with the rural elders include: the formation of GRCO, rallying and mobilizing the Gurage communities both in rural and urban areas, administering the construction of new roads and managing the completed roads, and furthering other development undertakings. The major part of the initial plan for the establishment of a modern transportation network has been accomplished with the construction of the all-weather roads mentioned above. Then, the need for more comprehensive and inclusive development projects has evolved within the GRCO.

Therefore, the GRCO, which was geared initially to road construction, has been restructured and was renamed as The Gurage People's Self-Help Development Organization-(GPSDO) in 1988. The former programs of GRCO were assumed by the GPSDO and other new socio-economic development agendas have been adapted. The main purpose of the GPSDO is said to be initiating, furthering and " coordinating basic integrated rural development by mobilizing the efforts of the beneficiary people at the grassroots levels, as well as government and/non-government organizations" (GPSDP 1995:9). In addition, providing and promoting agricultural, educational and health facilities as well as services; upgrading cottage industry, promoting Gurage history and culture, providing electric power, transport and communication, as well as wholesale and retail banking services are included in GPSDO's development agenda (GPSDO 1995:9).

Currently, GPSDO is run by committees formed at different levels - from PA, Woreda, Zonal to national - which are composed of voluntarily fanos Gurage. It has more than eighty employed workers, two offices, in Wolkite and Addis Ababa, and manages 25 public transport vehicles. GPSDO runs and employs these cars as the main sources of income on the roads established by GRCO. Structurally, under the main committee of GPSDO, there are seven development sub-committees representing the seven member sub-regions of the Sebat-bet Gurage which form GPSDO. Each of the development sub-committees pursues its own modernizing activities in its respective sub-regions, in addition to the roles in the collective endeavor via the main committee.

It is reported that GPSDO "involves over 3,000 selected members who render service without any remuneration. The responsibilities are discharged by elected members (of the fanos Gurage) outside office hours, on weekends and public holidays. The tasks include planning, organizing, managing, coordinating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the overall activities of the organization" (GPSDO,1995:10-11).

### **5.1.3 The Impacts of Improved Road Networks**

The most significant result of the construction of modern roads is that Gurageland has become accessible to surrounding areas as well as to other parts of Ethiopia. In turn the intra and inter-accessibility of the Gurage region has facilitated both the rural-urban and internal flows of persons, ideas, skills, and goods.

#### **5.1.3.1 Impacts On Fanonet**

Itself necessitated and induced by the movement of persons, the emergence of modern transportation networks has facilitated and reinforced Gurage out-migration. It could be argued that this development of modern road networks has rendered the Gurage fanonet a phenomenon of ever larger scale.

This is because the movement of people has become much easier than it was in former times. The first generation migrants had to walk on foot from their villages to urban areas, carrying their luggage themselves. At that time, this travel took them a couple of weeks even when the migrants used animals (horses, mules, donkeys) for riding and/or packing. In contrast, since the construction of these all-weather roads, the fano Gurage take public transport vehicles right from their villages, or from places which are at walking distance from their villages, to the various towns of their destination. The description provided by Shack, concerning modern transportation networks in Gurageland 30 years ago, contrasts sharply with the present day scenario. Shack described: "There are no cars and bicycles in Gurageland. One lorry makes a weekly visit to Enderber during the dry season to collect qancha fiber; and an occasional land-rover may arrive at this time" (1966:201; footnote number 4).

However, the contemporary migrants' travel on public buses (which offer service on a daily basis) from their villages to Addis Ababa takes them less than 12 hours, whereas the same trip took the initial migrants well over 8 days. It is even simpler for the current successful fanos, who cover the same distance in 4-5 hours, driving their own land-cruisers and/or small automobiles. These days, it has become commonplace to see a considerable number of such private automobiles in Gurage villages during the annual festivals such as Meskal and Arafa, weddings, and mournings (funerals).

The fact that the development of modern road networks has brought about changes in Gurageland is observed by other writers, too. For Muluneh, "together with a growing population pressure it has induced and facilitated the land use change by way of growing more and new cash crops and population migration to urban centres outside the region" (1993:99).

Thus, not only has the volume and the frequency of the Gurage out-migration considerably increased, but also its characteristics have changed. Before the construction of roads, the fano Gurage predominantly consisted of adolescent and adult males. Since the

1960's, however, the village women (young and adult) and very young (male as well as female) children have been increasingly appearing on the migratory scene. Furthermore, even the movement of the very old men as well as women have become part of the fanonet process.

One researcher rightly observed this situation and reported that the Gurage region is "...probably the only rural region where one would frequently come across peasants (young, middle-aged, and old) who had traveled out to Addis Ababa, other places in Showa, or to other regions" (Adhana 1991:53).

Like the age-sex profile of fanonet, its motivational and attitudinal interactions have undergone changes, as a result of the modern road networks. These have enabled the otherwise isolated people to have access to commercial activities, to educational as well as health services and institutions, and other socio-economic phenomena that are taking place in the surrounding areas and other parts of Ethiopia, and the world at large. In addition to the need for cash, seeking education, medical treatments and commercial benefits have appeared as part of the major motivational factors that give greater impetus to the Gurage out-migration. As was noted by Agaz Habte:

Thanks to our fano children and their fruits (the roads) now every person, even those who never thought of going to Shewa, such as the very old, sick, blind and disabled persons, go to towns and get health services, become cured, and return to their villages. If someone dies in the hospital, the corpse is transported on a leonchina, like an alive person, back to the village. In the past, this was not the case. Then, dead bodies of our kin were abandoned. They did not get the kind of dignity that the current Gurage are having. Also, unlike in the past, we are not walking from here (the village) to town. We are so lucky and privileged that we go to town seated.

As a result, new types of fanos have appeared in the picture. Because the development of modern road networks has facilitated the adaptation and expansion of new cash crops and of commerce, commercial migrants have become commonplace and a significant portion of the migratory population. Such migrants leave their villages for commercial reasons and carry out business transporting agricultural products such as eucalyptus wood, chat, hides and skins, grains (barley), etc. to towns for sale. Back in the

villages, such migrants trade items which they transport from urban areas, such as clothes, salt, soap, sugar, fertilizers, and the like.

### 5.1.3.2 Impacts On the Village Farm Economy

The establishment of this modern road infrastructure has produced certain significant changes in the agriculturally-based rural economy. One of the most widespread and strongly felt changes is that seen in the traditional cropping patterns. New cash crops such as eucalyptus trees have been introduced by the first generation migrants (see the Introduction) into the asat dominated Gurage village economy. The new road infrastructure, by linking the Gurage economy with that of Ethiopia, in particular, and the world at large, brought about expansion and commercialization of new cash crops, mainly eucalyptus and chat. These two agricultural products are perhaps the most commercialized items in the whole Gurage region.

Muluneh also reported that new cash crops have been introduced to the Gurage region as a result of the fanonet experiences. " For instance, the introduction of Bahir zaf (eucalyptus tree) into the Gurage areas owes to Gurage labor migrants who were involved in planting the same tree in and around Addis Ababa" ( Muluneh 1993: 140, citing Horvath, 1968).

As discussed in detail elsewhere (see Chapter III, the Village Economy sub-section), the two new cash crops, eucalyptus and chat, have considerably expanded even at the expense of asat, over the last two decades. According to Muluneh's land-use study in his two research Woredas of Ezana Wollene and Cheha, eucalyptus tree lots have expanded " by about 196.3% in the last 21/36 years" (1993:140). Therefore, the development of modern road networks not only changed the traditional land-use patterns, but also promoted the expansion and growth of trade in cash crops like eucalyptus wood, chat,<sup>1</sup> coffee, and wusa,

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<sup>1</sup> The botanical name is *Catha edulis*, and chat is widely chewed as a stimulant. This crop has now become one of the most expanded and commercialized crops in lower Muher, Ezha, Cheha, Enor and Ener, but not in Gumer.

asat fiber, etc. This tendency has evolved into "specialization depending on best suited environments for different cash crops. As such eucalyptus and orchards of oranges and areas under chat have increased" (Muluneh 1993: 140).

In Gumer and Geto areas (my study Woreda), however, the tendency towards specialization in eucalyptus trees is apparently very high. It is interesting to point out that even wusa, which was of far less exchange value than grain in the pre-1960's period (see Chapter II), has become part of the agricultural products that are transported to Addis Ababa for sale. Not only eucalyptus wood but also other items such as baskets, barley, hides and skins are being exported to Addis Ababa for sale.

In former times intra- and inter-sub-regional and village flows of persons, information, goods and other resources in Gurageland were seasonally limited (fixed). During the wet rainy season of zer, (April - September),

Internal travel is then virtually suspended, and movement between villages is reduced to the minimum as the open grass plains, saturated with water several inches deep, prohibit long distance travel dry season advances, social relations between villagers increase, markets are replenished with their normal complement of personnel and goods, and inter-tribal exchange is renewed (Shack 1966:32-33).

The development of road networks facilitated the internal movement of people and trade items as well as farm inputs. Currently, the transportation of various agricultural outputs internally between the highland and lowland sub-regions is common. For example, the highland areas of Gumer, Geto, Muher and Ezha are more cerealized and farm products such as barley, peas, horse beans and other grains predominate. However, in the lowland parts of the above mentioned areas where asat is predominantly cultivated, cereal culture is not common.

Moreover, plants such as pine trees, chat, and coffee are predominant in the lowland areas, while bamboo trees are widely grown in the highland areas. All these climatically specialized farm outputs are being transported for sale in the major sub-regional markets of one, or another climatic zones. For instance, pine wood is regularly transported by truck

from Cheha to Bole market, which is held weekly on Saturdays, in Gumer, where pine trees are not common. Also, fresh chat is available for sale every day on the road side towns in Gumer, where chat is not grown.

The considerable expansion of commerce, both within the Gurage region among the different sub-regions and with the outside regions, particularly urban areas, is attributable to the fanos' exposure and orientation to the cash economy and business activities in their destination urban settings, in addition to the expansion of transportation facilities.

Furthermore, the new road networks have attracted a few investors to commence economic projects in the area. For example, Damo Zerihun has requested and received land in a place called Enjefo (Zizencho's neighboring village in the south) to realize his plan to initiate a livestock fattening project.

Finally, as a result, old small towns such as Emdiber and Jemboro expanded and other new small towns in Gumer have developed such as: Mazorya, Arakit, Kabul, etc. and others in other areas.

However, it should be noted that the expansion of transportation facilities and commercialization of recent cash crops such as eucalyptus trees have had adverse effects on agricultural production. These new developments have considerably disturbed the Gurage traditional relationship with the natural environment. They have brought about deforestation of the forests, and environmental degradation.<sup>1</sup> The villagers are very aware of these adverse effects and they are attempting to control the expansion of products such as eucalyptus via the Yejoka Council. Furthermore, the informants stated that dust from the continuous road traffic, coats asat and negatively affects the volume as well as the quality of wusa from this asat.

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<sup>1</sup> However, a detailed discussion of these environmental impacts is beyond the scope of this thesis.



### 5.1.3.3 Other Related Changes

As the development of modern transportation has effectively solved the problem of geographical inaccessibility, the establishment of other modern infrastructures has been made possible. Currently, the Sebat-bet Gurage is accessible via both telephone and postal services. There are telephone and postal services at Emdibir, which in the past, was the administrative town for the whole Sebat-bet Gurage; and telephone services at Agena, which has one of the largest local markets in the region and has now evolved to become an administrative town of Ezhana Wollene Woreda. In addition, according to the conversations held with the leaders of sub-regional development committees under GPSDO, telephone and postal services are envisaged to be established in Gumer, Muher and Enor and Ener sub-regions. All these developments have been made possible as a result of the efforts made by the migrants.

Furthermore, the villagers in and around Migo in Geto and residents of Emdibir town in Cheha are now provided with clean tap water. In addition, individual fano often provide their farm households with clean water by financing the digging of wells. Likewise, there are several fanos who invest their money to develop spring water for all the villagers in their places of origin. For instance a wealthy fano called Ahmedin Husien has done this for his home village, Arakit, in Gumer.

Electrification also has recently become part of fano-induced developmental undertakings in the Sebat-bet Gurage area. For example, Emdibir and Guncheri towns in Cheha, and Enor and Ener, respectively have been electrified as a result of the efforts of the fanos of the respective sub-regions in particular. Moreover, other sub-regional development committees have started to make the necessary technical preparations for electrifying their respective sub-regional towns (GPSDO 1995:5).

## 5.2. Schools

### 5.2.1 Construction

Again, the description provided by Shack concerning education in Sebat-bet Gurage thirty years ago provides a sense of how much has changed:

The impact(s) of mass education in Ethiopia has produced no currents of change in Gurageland. Only a fraction of the eligible school population receives formal training; family restrictions prevent more than a few girls from attending school. Adult literacy, evaluated in terms of the reading and writing of Amharic, is a skill acquired only by a few chiefs, headmen, clerks and traders. There is no literature in the vernacular (The only publication in Guragegna is a Catholic catechism printed in the Cheha dialect during the Italian Occupation, Foot Note 7)" (1966:202).

As will be described in detail below, considerable changes have occurred since the time of Shack's observation. There are three novels, to my knowledge, published in Guragegna. The pioneer work being Sahile Sillassie's Ye Shinega Kaya, which was translated into English and published by Wolf Leslau as Shinega's Village. The two other published Guragegna novels are that of Gebreyesys, Ye Chamut Shika (i.e. Chamut's Trap), and Teketinet Agevinet (i.e. From slavery to Becoming Agevet). All of these changes in the educational status of the Sebat-bet Gurage, have occurred mainly as a result of fanonet since education and health have also been concerns of the fano Gurage, in addition to roads.

The construction of a modern road network also facilitated the establishment and expansion of social services in Sebat-bet Gurage region. As mentioned earlier, in addition to the construction of modern roads, GRCO-GPSDO have been undertaking the construction of schools and health centers. According to one survey (which was carried out for GPSDO), up to the year 1993, ninety-nine schools have been constructed in the six sub-regions of Cheha (19), Muher and Aklil (11), Ezha (14), Enor and Ener (25), Geto(11) and Gumer (19). Of these, 73 are elementary (from grades one through six), and 22 include grades one through eight. The remaining four are composed of grades seven through ten, seven through twelve, a high school began with grade 9 in 1993 (additional grade 10 was

opened in 1994) and a comprehensive secondary high school (9-12, grades), respectively. At present, in all of Sebat-bet Gurage, there are a total 44,913 students (the breakdown by the respective levels is 39,755; 3,345; and 1,813 (Gebreyohanes 1993:9,18). The number of girls and young women attending school has considerably increased, although far fewer girls have the opportunity to attend school, compared to boys (For the situation in Zizencho, see Table 10 on the next page).

Of the 99 schools, the construction cost of the 53 has been totally covered by private funds, predominantly with by funds coming from the migrants, whereas the cost of the remaining 39 has been financed by both civil society fund (from rural and urban Gurage) and government subsidies. The percentages of the people's (villagers and fano) contributions for the construction of 53 and 39 schools are computed to be 53.53 percent and 39.39 percent, respectively (Gebreyohannes 1993: 7, 9, 19, 31, 41, 50, 72).

### 5.2.2. The Roles of the Fanos

These facts and figures show that the migrant Gurage have been playing a considerable role in expanding educational facilities in their village communities of origin. This project has been largely carried out by the sub-regional development committees organized under GPSDO, as each sub-region committee is running its own projects in the respective sub-localities. Therefore, on the top of the lion's share of their financial contributions, the fanos have taken over the responsibilities of planning, mobilizing, rallying, coordinating, managing, fulfilling and evaluating the project activities. As such, the predominant number of elementary and junior secondary schools in Sabat-bet Gurage have been built as a result and/or because of the fanos and their devotion to assist their home-village communities. In particular, the construction of high schools has recently become common throughout the region. Therefore, as a result of "the concerted efforts of the development committees five high schools are built in Cheha, Enor and Ener, Geta,

**Table 10. Number of Children Born, Alive and Children's Education by Household Type**

Types of Households		Children born			Children alive			Children's Education Level				
		F	M	T	F	M	T	None	1-6	7-8	9-12	T
Current fano	No.	286	297	583	262	242	504	140	99	25	9	273
	%	49	51	100	52	48	100	51	36	9	4	100
Former fano	No.	86	79	165	78	56	134	72	26	9	3	110
	%	52	48	100	58	42	100	65	24	8	3	100
Never fano	No.	43	45	88	35	36	71	41	14	5	1	61
TOTAL	%	49	51	100	49	51	100	67	23	8	2	100

Gomare and Moher and Akilil. Preparations are underway to establish two high schools in Iza and Indegagn sub-regions" (GPSDO 1995:5).

In the study area, Gumer Woreda, alone, the construction of two secondary high schools are underway. Also, there are four different development committees: Migo, Geto, Alichu-Wiriwo, and Central Gumer within the same Woreda. In some senses, these committees based on narrow sub-localities, compete among one another. For instance, the Migo and the central Gumer committees have been competing by constructing high schools in Migo and Arakit, respectively. Arakit is the Gumer Woreda administrative town and Migo is located 17 kms south-east of Arakit. Although the expansion of education and other development projects are the major motivations, the issue of raising the prestige and status of the fanos, especially those who are running the various development committees in their respective sub-localities (regions), appears to have played a considerable part in the competition. It is apparent that, despite its positive aspects, the competition might have adverse effects on the strong and well organized development mobilization for common purposes and/or goals.

The presentation of the following case material on the construction of Arakit Secondary High School may illustrate the fanos' involvement in such rural development projects. This information was obtained from Imam Kemal, a returnee, who played a considerable role in the process.

We began the movement to construct a secondary high school in Arakit town five years ago. The initiative was taken by us, heads of the three PAs of Arakit, Essen, and Zizencho and Teredo in this area. We formed a committee composed of five men and I was elected to be a chairperson, while Ato Tadesse Molla became the secretary. We also selected five respected elders to work with us as coordinators. We have employed these elders to agitate and mobilize the villagers for the high school construction purpose. Then we started to collect the financial contribution, which was 30 birr from each household and a sum of 50,000 birr was contributed when the EPRDF moved into Addis Ababa. We deposited this money in Wolkite Bank and, three years ago, we went to the capital to mobilize the fano children.

There, as a result, the fanos formed their own special committee and since then they have taken over the responsibilities of planning, coordinating and fulfilling the project. Especially, there are certain individual fanos without whose benevolent contributions the project may not have become a reality. These big role players are

as follows. First, Amin Seman, who led the town committee, raised 500,000 birr on a credit basis, with which the project work was launched and contributed 60,000 birr in cash, in addition to the 15,000 birr generator purchased for the school's laboratory. Second, Nuri Dibaba has taken over the committee leadership from Amin (as the latter faced health problem recently) and contributed 80,000 birr in cash for the project. Also, after Amin left the committee, Nuri has been contributing his own money for the construction on a credit basis. Third, Kebede Seresa, who is a member of the committee, contributed 50,000 birr cash.

Furthermore, almost all fanos of this sub-locality contributed a lot, according to the assessment made by the committees. As a result, a number of blocks have been constructed, according to the current standards for secondary high schools set by the Ministry of Education. Thus a modern secondary high school in Arakit began. Grades 9 and 10 were opened in 1993, and 1994, respectively. The remaining grades and formalities will be added in the ensuing years.

### 5.2.3. The Implications of Schools for Fanonet

The use of remitted money for the construction of schools and other socio-economic facilities, together with the establishment of modern road networks, is one of the effects of fanonet from which the whole villagers (migrants as well as non-migrants) have benefited. As a result of the construction of schools, the villagers have been educating their children and in particular, the successful fano households have used the remitted money to send their children to schools and thus, their children have better access to education and the necessary supplies (paper, books, etc.), both in the villages and in towns.

However, the construction of schools in the region has had certain adverse effects on village life. First, the fact that only elementary and junior secondary schools have been available until very recently means the majority of school leavers and/or drop-outs have been out-migrating to seek further education mainly in urban areas outside the Gurage area. In this way, the establishment of schools has provided another impetus for the young Gurage out-migration. Second, it was learned that the largest number of the school leavers (drop-outs) migrants quit their schooling, as they do not have the necessary support in towns. Only a few of them who can count on close kin support, are said to have been able to pursue their education in their towns of destination. Therefore, those who cannot pursue schooling, engage in labor work and/or petty-trades such as selling selbaje, i.e. second-

hand clothes. The informants emphatically described this process as the loss of important and productive village farm labor. This is so because neither were these school leavers (drop-outs) agriculturally well raised so as to become good farmers nor could they push further in schooling in order to succeed in their lives. Therefore, these types of migrants are said to eventually lead a difficult and stressful life in the village.

#### 5.2.4. Implications for Village Life

In addition, it has been observed during the research period that the construction of schools has brought about a shortage of farm labor in the village as a whole and the fano households in particular. The fact that children are going to school means that their labor input is missing in the households' income-generating activities even during the peak agricultural seasons.

This absence of the schooling children has decreased the labor input and hence negatively affected the levels of household income. Also, it creates a greater work load for the wives of the fano households, who already have suffered from the absence of their migrant partners. Therefore, it is, as noted by the informants, a process of extracting the young, emergent labor force from the village farm economy.

These adverse impacts of the better educated migrants on the farm economy have been reported by other writers in other contexts, as well (Rigg 1988:73; citing Tirasawat, 1985; Quibria, 1986; Fuller et al., 1983). Rigg noted that " ... it is not unreasonable to assume that if this were the case then their absence would retard the process of 'development' in a community" (1988:73). In the case of the Gurage, although the fano children tend to be more educated, the expansion of educational facilities at the lower levels, at least, has attracted a considerable number of the non-fano children as well. Thus, the implications for the peasant economy are even greater and more wide-spread. This picture may be further illustrated by the following Guragegna saying, which goes denga

tatimerot besat egire atakilt weqibir yifeze, i.e. "better to plant eucalyptus trees in the homesteads fields than to send children to schools."

On the other hand, it is as a result of the expansion of education in the area that some better educated individuals have appeared as part of the community. Also, these educated members have played (and are still playing) a considerable role in planning, coordinating, leading and implementing the development projects in the Sebat-bet Gurage region. Currently, the persons who are running administrative matters at Zone, Woreda and PA levels, are mostly products of these village schools.

### **5.3. Clinics/Health Facilities**

#### **5.3.1. The Construction of Health Facilities**

The remitted money has been used to build health facilities such as clinics. In the study area, Gumer Woreda, there are four clinics in all for the population of about 300,000. These clinics are located in Zizencho, Bole, Kutere, and Migo, and are named after these respective places. As mentioned earlier in the introduction, the Zizencho clinic together with Zizencho elementary school was established by the Sudan Interior Missionary (SIM) 20 years ago. The remaining three clinics, according to the informants, have been built as a result of the concerted efforts of the fano and villagers of the respective sub-localities. Currently, all four clinics are run by the Gumer Woreda office of the Ministry of Health (MOH). According to the head of this office, these clinics are providing general health services such as family planning, treating emergency cases, ante natal and delivery services, treatment of STDs and health education concerning STDs/HIV and other topics.



### 5.3.2. The Roles of the Fanos

Therefore, the fanos have not only used their remitted money but have also played a considerable role, by rallying and mobilizing the urban and village based resources, in the construction of health facilities in their village communities of origin. Such fanonet-induced establishment of health facilities may contribute to improve the health status of the villagers. Also, it "may have the effect of increasing production by improving the efficiency of the human resource base" in the villages (Rigg 1988:73).

Concerning how beneficial these health facilities are for the villagers, especially the mothers, Agaz Habte said the following:

Previously, when women had difficulties during delivery Wegesha (i.e. traditional mid-wives) were the only support available for the suffering women. Then the Wegesha were putting their hands into the laboring women's uterus to tie the baby's neck with qancha (asat-fiber) and discharge the baby by cutting the part that connects the baby with the uterus of mother with sara (a small knife). Then they were pulling the fiber tied around the baby's neck in order to get the baby delivered. There were many women as well as ~~and~~ their babies who died of this uncivilized way of treating the laboring women. These days, thanks to the availability of clinics established by our fano children women are delivering peacefully in the clinics. They return home with their babies alive.

## Chapter VI. Summary and Conclusions

The Gurage are well known for large scale migration. This study aimed at describing this phenomenon and its impacts on village life. In the foregoing chapters a detailed description was provided concerning the origins, causes, patterns and streams of the phenomenon of Gurage fanonet, and its complex range of impacts on village life. In this final chapter, the major findings from the study will be summarized and highlighted. Then, the major themes recurring throughout the discussion will be briefly discussed, and finally, concluding remarks will be offered that relate the major themes and findings to the main theoretical debates concerning the implications of urban migration for the village communities of origin.

The ORIGINS of Gurage fanonet are linked to the incorporation of the Gurage and their land in 1888 into the wider Ethiopian context and migration has since operated within this wider context. The causes for this phenomenon are political, economic, demographic and socio-cultural. The streams, modes, patterns and causes of Gurage fanonet have undergone significant changes over time. These changes have been marked by three major historical and socio-economic processes.

The first process was the incorporation of the Gurage and their land into the Ethiopian state. This major event provided the first impetus for Gurage fanonet which included: providing labor services for the Merkene, both in the village and in Addis Ababa; and tribute payment and taxation payable in cash. The fanos of this initial period are referred to as first generation fanos. These early migrants had to travel for a week or so from their villages to Addis Ababa following their lords and/or by themselves. The Gurage provided corvee labor in the capital as far back as the 1890's.

The second major event that had important bearing on Gurage fanonet was the Italian occupation. The migrants of this period, up until 1967, are referred to as second generation

fanos. The Italian period was characterized by road construction activities in various parts of Ethiopia. The Addis Ababa-Wolkite-Jimma road was a product of this time, and fanos were involved in the road construction activities which also encouraged the fanonet process. Fanos of this time only had to walk from their villages to Wolkite, from which they could catch lorries to Addis Ababa and other towns.

The third major socio-economic process that influenced fanonet was the establishment of a network of modern roads throughout Gurageland that began in the late 1960's. This has been the most significant development for the facilitation and encouragement of fanonet. The roads themselves are a product of the fanonet phenomenon. These roads have linked Gurageland internally, and externally to other parts of Ethiopia, via daily public buses utilized by out-migrants. This period of fanonet is referred to as contemporary and the fanos are also called third generation fanos.

The incorporation brought about an end to the independence of the Gurage and independent control over their land. Previously, the Gurage had a long history of clan-based self-administration of their country as a politically independent entity. As a result of incorporation, the Gurage and their land became part of a unified Ethiopian political reality and the Gurage faced politically imposed obligations, such as tribute payment necessitated by the Merkene-gebar relationship. As a result of the interactions between the internal and external structural forces, the Gurage need for cash evolved. Because of the contacts created from incorporation, socio-cultural interactions took place and brought about cultural exchanges, influences and attractions. All these factors separately and inter-connectedly /- contributed to the development of the phenomenon of Gurage fanonet.

On the rural end, external obligations such as providing labor services, tribute payment, obtaining cash for paying taxes and repaying debts; and internal requirements such as covering expenses for marriage and annual festivities, as well as clothing, purchasing cattle, renovating old houses and/or building new houses, and obtaining better access to education and health services could be described as so-called "push factors" for urban

migration. The development of Addis Ababa, particularly the birth of the Merkato, provided the strongest urban attraction for Gurage fanonet nationwide. Once the Gurage began to settle permanently in towns, the phenomenon of Gurage fanonet was and continues to be perpetuated by the Gurage kin-based tradition of mutual assistance, which facilitated more Gurage out-migration from the village and their adjustment and success in the urban settings.

Addis Ababa as well as its surroundings constituted the major source of attraction for the first generation Gurage fanos. Although the capital has always been the destination for the largest number of Gurage fanos, the destinations of the second and third generation Gurage fanos also included different towns in the former provinces of Shewa (Nazareth, Shashemene), Sidamo (Yirgalem, Leku, Shakiso, Awasa), Kaffa (Jimma, Agaro), and Arsi (Asala) in the order from greatest to least number of Gurage fano. In those urban areas, Gurage migrants, particularly those from Zizencho engaged in varying occupations ranging from menial and manual work (such as shoe shining, domestic work, work as porters, petty trading and schooling), to government employment, to owning and running high level businesses such as whole sale and retail trading, import-export enterprises, hotels, restaurants, tej houses etc.

The first generation fanos engaged first as forced laborers and then as wage laborers in house and road construction, as well as leveling the hills, and planting and maintaining eucalyptus trees in and around the capital. Later, fano Gurage began working as laborers in different urban activities: whole-sale and retail trade, hotel bakeries, restaurants and tej-houses. Gradually, with these experiences and cash they earned working for others, some of them began self-employed activities by starting their own businesses. In particular, during the Italian occupation period, the birth of the Merkato encouraged the fano Gurage to begin and expand their own private businesses in Addis Ababa. Then with the expanding transportation networks in Ethiopia, fano Gurage increasingly migrated to various towns. A typical occupational pattern for a fano was to begin with shoe shining and/or chulonet (i.e.

domestic work), graduating to petty trading or street vending (such as suq bederete), and then onto a higher level of private business. The fano Gurages' urban occupations have been considerably influenced by their clanship and villages of origin. An urban occupation in which an early fano engaged in often become a major field of urban operation for subsequent fanos who were kin and/or rural neighbors of the pioneer fano. This was the case as pioneer fanos encourage the out-migration of their clan members and villagers by facilitating their adjustment in urban settings. This brought about the specialization in particular urban occupations of groups of fanos from the same clan and village.

The phenomenon of Gurage fanonet is not exclusively urban oriented. There are some fano Gurage who migrate to the coffee producing rural areas; in particular, to Sidamo (mainly to Yirgalem and Dilla) and Keffa. Others go to the Bale region (mainly to Goba and Robe). There they engage in on-farm activities: plowing and preparing land for planting coffee and eucalyptus trees, and cultivating coffee farms. These fanos are essentially rural-rural migrants. However, the villagers refer to them as fanos, too and these rural migrants also perceive themselves as fanos. These fanos are migrating on a seasonal basis; the majority from February to June.

Like in many other developing countries, the overwhelming majority of the Gurage fanos are young adult males. Although the number of women migrants is small, it has considerably increased over the last two decades. The majority of the migrants are seasonal, although there are a number of permanent fanos, as well. The fano Gurages' permanent settlement in towns, and Addis Ababa in particular, appears to have began after the end of the Italian occupation period. This phenomenon may be explained in terms of the Italian urban policy, which eliminated the land-lords (who had owned most of the urban land), and the social structure based on the patron-client relationship. This policy made it possible for in-migrants, such as the Gurage fano, to own land and settle on it. Also it created an urban labor market with a wage payable in cash, and the Merkato was a product of this process.

Therefore, apparently some fano took advantage of these new opportunities to settle in the capital on a permanent basis.

Whether Gurage fanos migrate on a permanent or a seasonal basis, they still maintained strong links with kin and villagers in their communities of origin. In addition, the villages provide a place for retirement of Gurage fanos when they get old and/or are not successful in urban settings.

Since Gurageland is one of the most densely populated areas in Ethiopia, rapid village population growth and scarcity of arable land are the most significant motivational factors for current Gurage fanonet phenomenon.

In discussing Gurage fanonet and highlighting the range of impacts on village life presented in detail in the previous chapters, three central dimensions, i.e. economic, social, and cultural impacts, appeared to be recurring themes throughout the various discussions.

The **ECONOMIC** impacts of fanonet on village life present themselves via remitted income and labor absenteeism. Remitted income is mainly used by fano families to cover costs of house construction, feasting, covering expenses of marriage and annual festivals, meeting governmental and social obligations, purchasing cattle and local foods, education, starting businesses, and land purchases.

Remitted income has created economic as well as social differentiation among villagers, distinguishing the fano from the non-fano households in terms of possession of imported clothes and household goods, consumables, quality of housing, holding of lavish festivities, and employment of wage labor . In addition, fano households are often headed by women, whose husbands are living in urban areas either seasonally or permanently. Therefore there is the emergence of a distinct social group of fano families; a group with its own life-styles and values.

These positive economic benefits mentioned above are mainly experienced by the wealthy fano families (as opposed to unsuccessful fano families). Such economic benefits

do not apply to all fano households in the village. The varying experiences of fanos have had different economic consequences for their village households. The greater majority of fano families are within the poor category, and they receive limited off-farm resources, they suffer from shortage of farm labor and the resulting decline in agricultural production and food insecurity. However, even poor fano households receive some benefits from their experiences of fanonet, as they receive some goods such as clothes and kerosene.

The economic impacts of fanonet encompass the fano households as well as the non-fano households and the village economy as a whole. The village-wide economic impacts of fanonet include: the introduction of a village wage-labor market, development projects funded by remitted money, and the flow of cash via the expansion of trade and the commercialization of farm products.

Shack, following his field research in Gurage three decades ago, wrote: "There are *no local wage markets* in any Gurage villages and the vast majority migrate to Addis Ababa" (my emphasis) (1966:82). In sharp contrast, labor markets in Gurage villages have now become common. Together with a shortage of farm labor and remitted money, fanonet has created a village labor market, in which the wage is payable in cash. The non-fano villagers earn remitted money by hiring out their labor to fano families, in particular during the peak seasons for farming.

The creation of a labor market, with the wage payable in cash is one of fanonet's most significant effects which has profound economic, social and cultural implications for village life. It brought about the two segments of employers and hired wage labors within village society. The village labor market is a major channel via which off-farm resources are re-distributed among the non-fano families. The majority of poor, non-fano villagers have benefited from this opportunity. In addition, the wage labor market provided the basis for the current cash-oriented village economy.

Another significant contribution of fanonet was the construction of 420 kms of modern roads throughout Gurageland, primarily using fanonet-generated cash. These roads

linked the Gurage area with other regions of Ethiopia and with various sub-localities within Gurageland. This development led to the expansion of internal and external trade as well as the commercialization of local farm products such as eucalyptus wood.

However, fanonet has had adverse impacts on the village economy as well. It has extracted a majority of the economically productive labor from the village and resulted in a serious shortage of farm labor. As a result, the fano households in particular, and the village society as a whole, have suffered a decline in agricultural production and shortage of locally produced food. The findings of this study indicate that remitted cash does not entirely offset the absent farm labor within the fano households, since the hired labor is less productive, less efficient and less intensive.

Furthermore, the expansion of trade and commercialization of certain new cash crops such as eucalyptus trees by the fanos, have adversely affected the land-use pattern and hence food production, in addition to exacerbating environmental degradation.

The **SOCIAL** impacts of fanonet on village life can be highlighted within three areas: women wives of fano remaining in the village, marital life, and social services. Village women married to fano husbands comprise the most affected group in village society. Out-migration of married men has brought about structural change within fano families, resulting in women assuming the role of heads of household, a role previously uncommon for women. Traditionally Gurage women have had very limited decision-making power in the household, as they have been overshadowed by their husbands within a society based on patrilineal clanship.

The wives of fano oversee their households and receive remitted money and goods - mainly clothes and household utensils. However, there is also a negative aspect of this new social position held by fano wives. They shoulder additional work responsibilities for male-specific tasks including: the hiring of labor and supervising of farm activities carried out by



hired labor, in addition to their traditional women's work load (maintaining the household, caring for children, processing and preparing food, etc.).

Some women themselves undertake male-specific tasks such as: caring for livestock, collecting and cutting fodder, hoeing, etc. Hence, there are conflicting interactions in the making between new and traditional patterns of labor allocation. In addition, such women often suffer psychologically from prolonged separation from their husbands, and, as a result, are more likely to engage in extra-marital sexual relations with the possible consequences of HIV/STDs and the risk of unsafe abortions due to unwanted pregnancies.

Moreover, a number of fanos, and in particular the wealthy fanos, are polygamous and have a wife in town and a wife in the village. This pattern of multiple marriage emanated from the 1975 Land Reform Proclamation which nationalized rural land and distributed it among poor peasants. To ensure that they did not loose possession of their rural land in the village, these fanos engaged in multiple marriage, so that a village wife kept the land.

The dynamics of marital life in the village have also been affected by remitted cash in other significant aspects as well. Fanonet introduced a new tradition of marriage transactions, made payable both in cash and in-kind, directly to the bride to be used to begin the new household. This new practice has become a village "tradition". The fanos have competed amongst themselves in offering bigger and better gifts as part of marriage transactions. This has greatly increased the marriage prospects of the fanos at the expense of the non-fano villagers. In addition, fanonet-induced inflation of marriage payments have delayed marriage of the village youth. This has had adverse effects, particularly for Gurage village girls such as increased premarital sexuality, resulting unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, and greater risk of HIV/STDs. However young girls themselves, are in favor of the higher marriage payments despite some of the adverse consequences.

On the other hand, fanonet has exerted impacts on village social and health services, since education, health and welfare in the village communities, have been of special concern

to the fanos. Fanos have channeled their remitted cash into village projects by importing goods for the village sera (village burial association), fundraising to send the children of non-fano to school, covering expenses for annual festivities, and/or death rituals for the non-fano villagers. Yefano-waga (i.e. remitted cash) is used to build new schools and improve old ones, to establish health facilities (clinics) and other modern infrastructures such as telephone and postal services. The establishment of these modern infrastructures has significantly improved the quality of village life in many respects. On the other hand, the modern roads and schools have facilitated and reinforced fanonet and Gùrage out-migration has expanded on a larger scale as a result.

The CULTURAL impacts of fanonet are most dramatic in that the villagers have modified, changed and/or abandoned their traditional perceptions, values, attitudes and beliefs. Fanonet created a distinct social category of the fano households living in village society. This emergent social category has its own life styles, values, attitudes and interests. It is distinct in that persons of different ages, gender, social backgrounds, and occupations are grouped within this new category and identified as fanos. Therefore, we are seeing the inventions of new identities and traditions in the making. A former farmer, for instance, is acquiring a new identity, becoming an urbanite entrepreneur, becoming literate, exposed to the outer world, etc. Thus, fanonet is creating multiple social and cultural identities.

Fanonet, via remitted income and access to it, has exerted so strong an influence on the villagers' perceptions that fanonet is praised by all villagers for its economic improvements in lifestyles; whereas farming is viewed as a low status activity, even among the non-migrant peasants. On the other hand, there are aspects of fanonet that are criticized by the villagers because of its adverse impacts such as low farm output and food insecurity. The phenomenon of fanonet is considered to be responsible for changes in Gùrage material culture such as the abandonment of traditional clothes made from animal skins and cotton and the partial replacement of traditional objects made from wood, clay, grass, etc., with

remitted imported utensils. However, these and other fanonet-induced changes are viewed as signs of silitane, i.e. "civilization". Fanonet is also perceived as an indispensable source of resources for the village.

Fanonet has afforded prestige and social status to the fano households and this has changed the attitudes of villagers. In particular, the marriage prospects of the fanos have improved, at the expense of the non-migrant villagers. One aspect of life in which the fanonet-induced change has become almost a "tradition" is in marital life. The fanos have begun a new custom of marriage transactions which includes presenting gifts in kind and cash from the groom's side to that of the bride, which go directly to the bride herself. This has been introduced by fanonet and it has become so institutionalized that, without careful historical analysis, it appears to be an indigenous "tradition" and is already considered by most of the Gurage themselves as an ancient tradition.

Furthermore, the creation of other new traditions and values are in the making. The expansion and commercialization of alcohol in the village is likewise attributed to fanonet. The effects of the expansion of areqe, a new cultural element, are varied, and also include expansion of drinking habits among the farmers, loss of intensiveness and efficiency of the village labor force, the breaking of traditions, and increasing criminal acts such as murders and arson. Furthermore, pre-marital and/or extra-marital sexual relations are linked with the expansion of alcohol.

In addition, the values and semantics of Gurage traditional titles have changed over time. Because they have access to remitted money, fano families are the ones who are honored with the traditional titles, although they have not earned these titles according to traditional norms. Likewise, traditional religious beliefs and practices, as well as the celebration of annual festivals have undergone changes in terms of what is involved in the process and how they are carried out. Overall, traditions such as some of the cultural laws of Yejoka (i.e. Elders' Council) and those related to marriage, have been broken, and the local language has been considerably weakened.

The three major areas of impacts outlined above: economic, social and cultural are interlinked. It is obvious that their inter-connectedness lies in the fact that all have emerged from the same phenomenon of fanonet. In particular, labor absenteeism and/or remitted income have constituted the two common denominators for the fanonet-induced economic, social and cultural dynamics that have occurred in the village. The very absence of the migrants created both remitted money and a shortage of labor, two sides of the same coin. Remitted money is used to purchase clothes, goods, livestock, and to construct new houses and hold lavish ceremonies. Such uses of remitted cash contribute to improve the lives of the fano families economically, hence creating differentiation between the fano and non-fano households. These economic improvements brought about a distinct social group in village society with its own lifestyles: clothing, household goods, eating habits, values and attitudes. Thus, the impacts of fanonet are so intricately inter-connected that the most dramatic cultural impacts are consequences of the profound economic effects. Remitted cash is also used to hire farm labor, and this also creates social differentiation in which a group of villagers become wage laborers and another group become employers. The complex life experiences of the wives of fano: psychological, economic, social and cultural, also provide a common ground for the interconnectedness of the economic, social and cultural dynamics, which are interacting via labor absenteeism and remitted income as highlighted above.

As noted in the summary of related literature in Chapter I, the opinions of most researchers concerning the impacts of migration are varied and fall within one of two categorical groups, the one emphasizing 'positive' and the other one concentrating on 'negative' impacts. To date, we do not have a conclusive theoretical framework which relates migration to the village life and provides "detailed, balanced assessments of the short-term and long term costs and benefits" of migration (Rigg 1988:67). This study has sought to avoid classifying the varied impacts of fanonet as predominantly "positive" or "negative",

but instead to portray the complexity of the phenomenon and the interrelationships between the various impacts on life in the village community. In concluding it is useful to consider how the findings of this thesis shed light on the major theoretical debates outlined in the literature review. The following four theoretical debates are considered.

Firstly, the roles of remittances in village life is one of the areas of dispute among researchers. On the one hand, it is noted that remittances have improved the economic lives of the cash-poor villagers. They are also used productively in the areas of education, housing, livestock, and land purchases. On the other hand, others argued that the use of remittances is mainly consumptive and unproductive, and not a substitute for the loss of productive farm labor. Migration is seen as an extractive process resulting in the impoverishment of villagers.

In the case of Gurage, the economic impacts of fanonet are profound and varied depending on from whose perspective one examines them. Regarding the wealthy and middle-income fano families, remitted income has brought about considerable economic improvements in life-styles. However, fanonet has created a shortage of farm labor and a decline in agricultural production and locally-produced food for the poor fano households. Food insecurity is the main consequence. The shortage of farm labor is a common characteristic of fano households of all socio-economic status. Thus, it may be described as a major negative economic impact for the village fano households as a whole.

However, there are other groups of non-fano villagers that have benefited economically from this same phenomenon of shortage of farm labor. The shortage has enabled them to share remitted resources by hiring their labor out and some of them use the cash wages productively, for instance, in purchasing livestock. The use of remitted money for hiring farm labor, created a wage labor market in the village with wages paid in cash. It may be argued that the introduction of a labor market and the establishment of modern transportation, education, and health facilities are the greatest contributions of fanonet to the village communities.

Regarding the argument that remitted income does not substitute for absent labor and that migration is essentially an extractive process, the Gurage data indicates that although remitted income does not fully substitute for absent labor, it nonetheless gets the job done. Gurage fanonet does have negative impacts. However, it cannot be described as an essentially extractive process given the considerable positive contributions it has made to village life. Since the Gurage area is one of the most densely populated regions in Ethiopia and scarcity of farmland is chronic, the large-scale Gurage fanonet has provided a means to cope with the problems of high population pressure, land shortage and labor excess. Improved communication networks and schools, in turn reinforced the process of considerable out-migration. In addition, these developments facilitated the expansion of trade and commercialization of agricultural product such as eucalyptus trees. As a result, the Gurage village economy is strongly integrated within the wider Ethiopian socio-economic sphere.

This process has brought about the transformation of the traditional subsistence agriculture into a mixed economy consisting of production for subsistence and for cash. The integration between the local and the larger economies is now such that village Gurage are no longer self-sufficient in meeting their subsistence needs. Previously the subsistence economy, local technology and the natural environment were more than adequate for sustaining village Gurage livelihoods. However, this is no longer the case, and as a result of fanonet, all village Gurage have become dependent on remitted income, although to varying degrees.

The second theoretical debate centers around whether or not greater societal inequalities are created by urban migration within the village. Some argue that the benefits of migration are spread evenly throughout the village population, while others argue that benefits are concentrated within a particular group, leading to greater socio-economic inequalities within the village. The Gurage data shows that although the majority of village households experience some benefits from remitted income, there is a clear economic

distinction between the fano and non-fano households, which does entail greater socio-economic inequality. Furthermore, there is an economic distinction within the fano households, between the households of successful fanos and the households of unsuccessful fanos.

Rigg has noted that insufficient attention has been paid to the extent to which migration also impacts on village non-migrant households (1988). Most of the existing studies concerning impacts on village life have focused exclusively on migrant households. This Gurage study has examined the impacts on both migrant and non-migrant households and found that non-migrant households are both positively and negatively affected by fanonet. Due to the labor shortage created by fanonet, non-migrants can hire out their labor to benefit from remitted income. In addition, given inflation, they receive higher prices for items such as building materials which the fano purchase. However, they are also negatively affected by the inflation created by fanonet which results in the prices of many village items rising beyond their income levels.

A third debate has centered on whether or not migration brings about cultural and technological change. It has also been argued that the impacts of migration are not merely economic, but that the interaction brings about cultural change through ideas, skills, attitudes, etc. and that migration makes rural villagers more receptive to change in areas such as technology. Others have concluded that migration itself does not bring about change. This study has found that Gurage fanonet is responsible for a dramatic change in the attitudes, values and beliefs of both fano and non-fano households in Zizencho, as well as other areas of Gurage. In addition, fanonet has created new traditions of its own that have been embraced by the village as a whole. An example of such invention is that of marriage transactions.

~ The fourth theoretical debate concerns the social implications of migration for village women. Some researchers have argued that migration is responsible for greater rates of divorce, deviant sexual behavior, and mental illness. In addition, others have argued that

migration results in a greater work load for women, while others view migration positively since it provides women with greater freedom and increased decision-making power in the absence of their migrant husbands. This study has found that overall, the negative impacts of fanonet outweigh the positive impacts for Gurage village women. Fanonet increases the workload of Gurage village women, and necessitates that they take on traditionally male-specific tasks such as supervision of agricultural laborers. The majority of Gurage women themselves tend to view this negatively, rather than positively in that they are not comfortable assuming some of these tasks, as the society does not accept them within their new roles (i.e. supervising male laborers), and the additional responsibilities create stress.

What may be termed "deviant sexual behavior" within traditional Gurage society was discovered for migrants wives, as they may take on male lovers to offset the loneliness of their husband's prolonged absences. The positive aspect of fanonet for migrants wives is represented by the household objects and goods they are able to purchase with remitted income. This study found that migrant's wives have an ambiguous social status as a result of fanonet in that they are revered by other villagers for their material goods such as clothes, and yet they are also considered suspect as they may be engaged in extramarital sexual relations. Despite all the negative aspects of being a fano wife, many young women still desire a fano husband.

➤ Finally, the majority of the debates concerning impacts of migration on aspects of village life such as farm labor, farm output, food security, lives of women, changes in farming practices and tools, human resources, social inequalities and income distribution, modernizing effects, and village dependence on remitted income are too dichotomous in their categorization of impacts as either positive or negative. The Gurage data shows that this categorization is too simplistic. The thesis has also revealed that what is good from one point of view may be bad from another, and calls for a need to stress that the same person can view different aspects of fanonet as positive, negative, or neutral. Gurage fanonet is



thus, a complex phenomenon yielding a wide range of impacts on the economic, social and cultural aspects of village life.

The phenomenon of fanonet has brought about the transformation of the traditional subsistence agriculturist Gurage into peasants, but not just into peasants, a category which suggests still a very rural outlook. What we see in the case of Gurage is a particular type of peasantry, which is qualitatively and substantively different from, and beyond ordinary peasants who are inward-looking. The Gurage peasants are different in that they have one foot in town and the other in the village, or one eye looking inwards and the other outwards. They are in transition between the ordinary peasantry and something new. To the best of the researcher's knowledge perhaps an appropriate term or concept to describe the peculiarities of the current Gurage peasantry has not yet been coined. At this point, we may refer to Gurage peasants as urbanized-peasants who are cash-oriented.

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### Appendix 1: List of Informants<sup>1</sup>

No	Name	Age	Sex	Place of Interview	Date of Interview	Occupation	Remarks
1	Abbera Endashaw	33	M	Zizencho	Dec 5, 1994	Farmer	Current fano
2	Abbera Kebede	36	M	Arakit	Nov 2, 1994	Civil servant	Woreda Office for Natural Resource Dev't
3	Almaze Tekle	38	F	Zizencho	Sept 11, 1994	Farmer	Wife of a fano
4	Askale Lakew	30	F	"	July 6, 1994	Farmer	Return fano
5	Asmat Biza	26	F	"	Sept 12, 1994	Farmer	Wife of a fano
6	Asnakech Berhe	38	F	"	Sept 29, 1994	Farmer	Wife of a fano
7	Asrat Degmu	36	F	"	Nov 15, 16, 1994	Civil Servent	Return fano
8	Ayewdaln Yirero	72	M	Enor	March, 1989	Farmer	an elder
9	Babeta Kersye	55	M	Zizencho	July, 1994	Farmer	Return fano
10	Belay Badechi	38	F	Werbarage	Nov 9, 1994	Farmer	Wife of return fano
11	Bilatu Gebre	35	M	Zizencho	July 5, 1994	Farmer	Return fano, PA leader
12	Bilatu Gebre	30	M	"	July 3, 1994	Farmer	Return fano
13	Birqinesh Retta	26	F	Zizencho	Sept 17, 1994	Farmer	Wife of wealthy fano
14	Birhane Wolde	30	F	Zizencho	July 3, 1994	Trader	Return fano
15	Damishewet Legu	48	M	"	Dec 4, 1994	Farmer	Wife of never fano
16	Demisse Nida	43	M	Werbarage	Nov, 9, 1994	Farmer	Return fano
17	Dessalegegn Yirga	38	M	Nazareth	March 20, 1995	Farmer	Current seasonal fano
18	Feqadu Bekele	42	M	Zizencho and Addis Ababa	Sept 27, 1994; March 28, 1995	Current fano	Wealthy, Polygamous
19	Fekadu Menjo	48	M	Zizencho	July 10, 1994	Farmer	Return fano
20	Gebrehananna Mulassa	86	M	Agena, Ezha	May, 1989	Farmer	Return fano, respected elder, pensioned
21	Gessa Libabo	78	M	Daquna	May, 1989	Farmer	respected elder
22	Getahun W/Micael	48	M	Zizencho	July 10, 11, 1994	Current fano	formery wealthy, polygamous
23	Gizaw G/Sillassie	68	M	Chezasefer, Muher	May, 1989	Farmer	respected elder
24	Habte Mereche	80	M	Zizencho	June 3, 1994 Sept 15, 16, 1994	Farmer	highly respected elder

<sup>1</sup> This list does not include all of the interviewees. For example, the names of all of the 30 women interviewed as part of the in-depth fano household survey do not appear.



AAU SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MASTER'S THESIS RESEARCH  
THE IMPACTS OF URBAN MIGRATION ON THE VILLAGE LIFE: THE GURAGE CASE

Worku Nida

HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ALL ZIZENCHO VILLAGE HOUSEHOLDS

Part 1: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. The following table should be completed by asking the head of a household (HHH):

No	HH Members names	Relation to HHH	Sex	Age	Place of Birth	Place of Cur. Res	Since When	Place of Prev Res	Marital Status	Educ.	Lang.	Clan	Religion
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1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

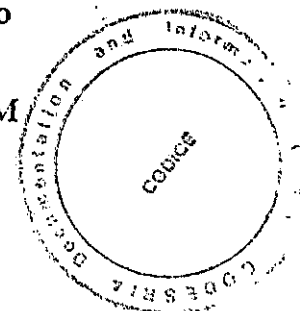
8.

9.

10.

2. How may children do you now have?

Total No of children living now in this house		No of children living elsewhere		Total No of children born alive		Total No children who have died	
F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M



SECTION II: SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA

3. What is your primary occupation?

4. When did you start this occupation on a permanent basis ?

5. What are your secondary occupations?

- 5.1
- 5.2
- 5.3
- 5.4

6. How much land do you own?

6.1 Previous land occupation?	Size	Type	Since when
6.2 Curent land occupation?	Size	Type	Since when

7. If your landholding has increased or decreased, explain why:

8. Describe the type and number of domestic animals you have:

8.1 Cattle:	Calves	Heifers	Cow	Oxen
8.2 Sheep				
8.3 Goats				
8.4 Horse	Male	Female		

9. How much asat do you have (# or rows)

- 8.1 Harvestable asat
- 8.2 Hiba asat

10. What other crops and plants do you grow?

11. Describe the size and quantity of your dwelling house(s)

Type of house	Size in feet	Building Materials	Door(s)	Windows(s)	Year of Construction
Function					

11.1

11.2

11.3

11.4

11.5 How did you get the building materials?

12. What consumer durables do you have?

12.1 Radio

12.2 Tape Recorder

12.3 Bed

12.4 Mattress

12.5 Blankets

12.6 How did you acquire these consumer durables?

SECTION III MIGRATION

13. Have you and/or members of your family experience out-migration?

13.1 Yes

13.2 No

14. If yes, describe the migratory experiences in your HH:

Name of migrants	Relation to HHH	1st Town	2nd T.	3rd T	Occupation
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C/RNM

15.1

15.2

15.3

15.4

15.5

15.6

15.7

**PART TWO**

Questionnaire administered to 30 women wives of the fanos (migrants) in the village

1. What specific tasks do you perform because your husband is a fano?

1. Household work

2. Caring for livestock
  3. Farming tasks
  4. Off-farm activities (brewing areqe, making jipe, etc.)
  5. Others
2. How do you cope with the absence of your husband during peak agricultural seasons (Mengese, Nase, etc.)
    1. Hiring labor
    2. Support from kin and/or villagers
    3. Using household labor
    4. Others
  3. If you hire labor, what is the source of the cash?
  4. Do you think hired labor is less efficient than a households own labor?
    1. Yes
    2. No
  5. If your answer for the above question is yes why?
    1. Hired laborers start work late and stop early.
    2. Even after they begin they are not intensive and wholehearted.
    3. They work carelessly and the product is of poor quality.
    4. All of the above
  6. What do you think the reason for less intensiveness of hired labor?
    1. Absence of male supervision.
    2. I do not supervise because I don't have agricultural knowledge.
    3. I have agricultural knowledge but I don't supervise because I don't have time.
    4. Others
  7. List any itmes your husband has brought back to you this year.
  8. What do you do with the money sent by your husband?
  9. Who decides how to spend the remitted money?
    1. Husband sends instruction with money.
    2. " tells me what to do with the money while he is visiting.
    3. I decide myself.
    4. Most of the time we collectively decide when he visits the village
  10. Are there things on which you can not decide in the absence of your husband? If so, what?