

Introduction to Gadaa System

- The meaning of *Gadaa*
- ***Question: What does Gadaa means?***

Introduction to Gadaa System

- “The term *Gadaa* cannot be given a univocal interpretation.
- It stands for several related ideas: political, religious, cultural and economic issues
- it refers to any period of eight years during which a class stays in power.
- It refers to a specific grade (VI) through which every class pass

Introduction to Gadaa System

- All activities and life of each and every member of the Oromo was guided by an egalitarian socio-economic and political structure of the society called **the Gada system**.
- The Gada system is a class system that succeeds each other every eight years (Eight years periods) in assuming political-military administration, economic management, and other social activities.

Introduction to Gadaa System

- The Borana Oromo has 11 age grades while Gujii Oromo has 13 age grades of *Gadaa*.

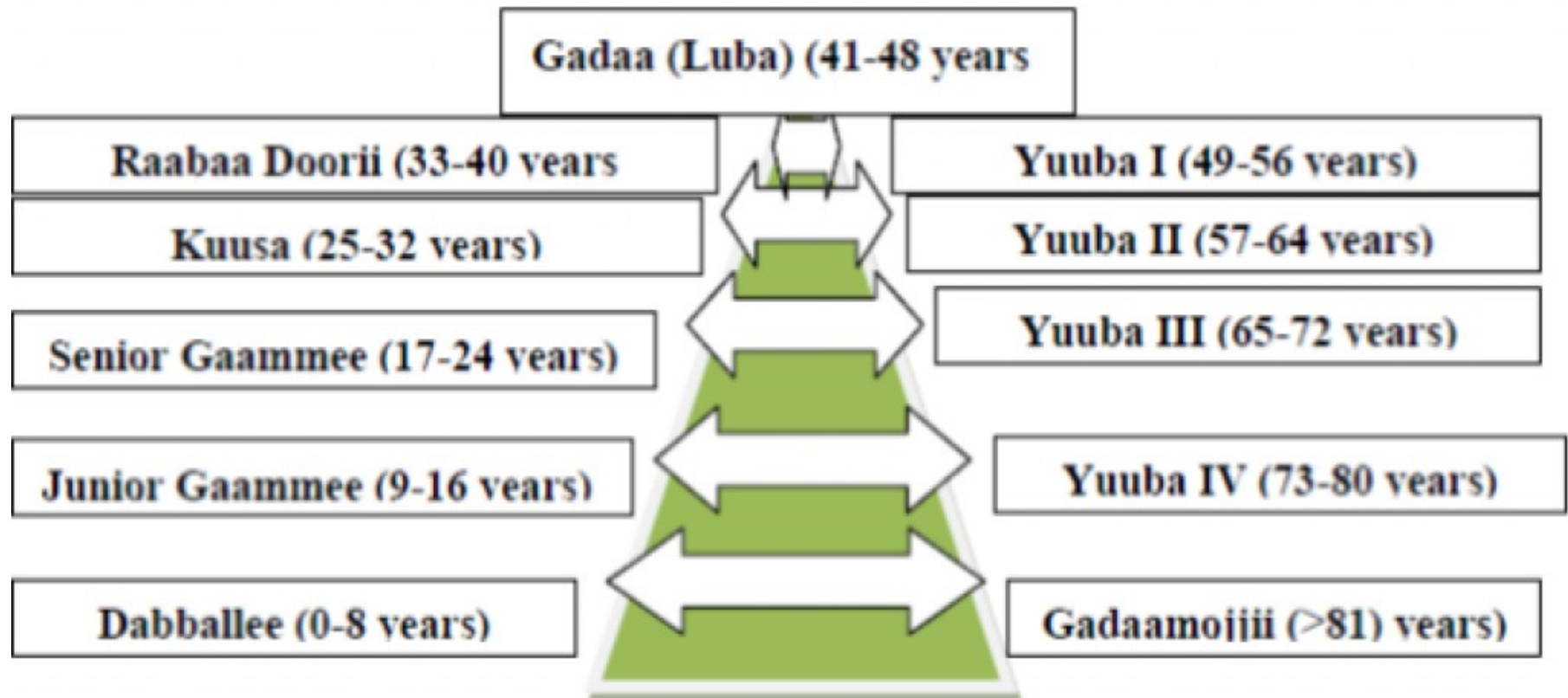
Introduction to Gadaa System

■ Guji Oromo

1. Dabballee,
2. Qarree Duraa,
3. Qarree Duubaa
4. Raaba
5. Kuusa
6. Doorii,
7. Gadaa

8. Baatuu,
9. Yuuba,
10. Yuuba Guddaa
11. Jaarsa
- Guduruu,
12. Jaarsa Qululluu,
13. Jaarsa Raqeya
14. Ginya

Introduction to Gadaa System



Introduction to Gadaa System

- ***Gadaa as Reign:*** The 6th grade is called *Gadaa* grade (or simply *Gadaa*). Ruling grade is also called gadaa grade within the whole Gadaa system.
Sometimes create confusions.
- The 6th grade is called the Gadaa grade and the leader is called Abbaa Gadaa

Introduction to Gadaa System

- The 6th grade is the time when adult member become politically mature to control the surrounding and make important decision on the matter concerning wider public.
- Each successive *Gadaa* period (ruling time) has its own memories and nostalgia.

Introduction to Gadaa System

- ***Gadaa* as system:** however, due to scholarly ramification and due to the holistic nature of *Gadaa* itself, *Gadaa* is not merely about age(period) or the age of rule(politics) per se.
- *Gadaa* is cultural system that govern the Oromo people social, cultural, economic, and political lives.

Introduction to Gadaa System

- ***Gadaa* as indigenous Knowledge:**
Gadaa can also view as important indigenous institution.
- *Gadaa* system as such has been registered as intangible heritage by UNESCO, in 2010.
- The Oromo people regard *Gadaa* system as their common heritage.

Introduction to Gadaa System

- **Gadaa as indigenous Political organization:**
- political organization is a means of social control.
- **Social control** refers generally to societal and political mechanisms or processes that regulate individual and group behavior, leading to conformity and compliance to the rules of a given society, state, or social group.

Introduction to Gadaa System

- **Gadaa as indigenous Political organization:**
- Many mechanisms of social control are cross-cultural, if only in the control mechanisms used to prevent the establishment of chaos or anomie.
- Several indigenous political organizations for maintaining order has been found, among which *Gadaa* system is one.

Components of *Gadaa* System

- The *Gadaa* system is constructed in three sub-systems:
- Age grades,
- *Gogessa/Miseensa* and
- *Luba*

Components of *Gadaa* System

1. Age grades

In Guji Oromo there are 14 age grades

In Borana Oromo there are 11 age grades

Components of *Gadaa* System

1. Age grades

- Age grade is partition of individual ages into eight years block periods starting from time of birth; individual ages are ranked into 11/14 grades, each containing 8 years.
- In each grade, an individual receives shared responsibilities and the members of the grade have sense of solidarity.

Components of *Gadaa* System

1. Age grades

- The solidarity of a grade is maintained through collective mobility (*Godansa*) and ritual activities.
- The transition from one *Gadaa* grade to another is marked by rite of passage or ritual ceremony performed by *moving* to sacred places called *Ardaa Jilaa* (the scared sites).

Components of *Gadaa* System

- Let us discuss the age grades and their roles one by one: Literarily, in both Guji and Borana Oromo their roles are similar.

Components of *Gadaa* System

■ 1 Daballee

- The first grade is named *dabballe* (I). It is a grade always occupied by a class of people sharing a common identity by virtue of the fact that they are all the sons of the ***Gadaa* class who are in power**
- They have unique hair-style, known as *guduruu*.

Components of *Gadaa* System

■ 1 Daballee



Components of *Gadaa* System

1. **Daballee:** *the first Gadaa grade)* *from age 0 to 8*



1. Daballee

- Daballee are free and irresponsible groups. Being daballe is simply a privilege to the child as well as the mother.
- Corporal punishment of Dabballee is strictly prohibited.
- , they shall be disciplined verbally and “psychologically.”

1. Daballee

- Even other children who take refuge to a home of Daballee will also be excused from any form of punishment.
- Dabballe's hair will never be cut and he will have a **fictitious** name until the naming ceremony (ceremony of passage to the second Gadaa grade) is undertaken which is called ritual of **Gubisa** in Borana and **Maqbaasaa** in Guji Oromo: Ritual where by boy shave heads and enter the second grade.

2. Gammee Junior (*from age 9 to 16*)

- For the *Dabballe-Gamme* transition rite, the class succeeded in bringing together some eighty families. The actual ceremony consisted of two segments — the hair shaving rite and the giving of names/Gubisa in Borana and Maqbaasaa in Guji Oromo.
- Father shaved all the son's hair to show transition from Daballee to Gammee Qaraa in Guji Or Gammee didiqqoo in Borana which means little Gammee.
- parents and their friends called the boys by their new and very masculine names during this time
- Not only the initiates but also their fathers and mothers acquired New forms of address after the ceremony

2. Gammee Junior



2. Gammee Junior

- In addition to the terminological and behavioral changes, the child also experiences a shift in the locus of his activities.
- He moves out of the domain of the hut and into the domain of the kraal.
- The principal responsibility the boy assumes after his rite of passage is the responsibility of looking after the small livestock and horses of the family.
- Borana graze their calves and horses in the immediate vicinity of the camp. For the younger boys this is quite a task.

3. Gammee Senior (Age 17-24)

- The senior *gamme* grade {*gamme gugurdo*) opens without any formal promotion ceremony.
- The oldest boys in the class are permitted to go on war parties, cattle raids, and hunting expeditions with older gada classes.

3. Gammee Senior (Age 17-24)

- These Young men are also trained to become junior warriors by taking part in war campaigns and hunting large animals; they learn the practical skills of warfare, military organization, and fighting so that they can engage in battle to defend their country and economic resources.

3. Gammee Senior (Age 17-24)

- The young men also involve in what is called it *fooraa*. Which means taking the family herds/cattle and goats into the untamed grazing lands or remotest river valleys.
- Grade III also marks the beginning of an important subsidiary institution that Borana call *harivvaa-* *Friendship-*

3. Gammee Senior (Age 17-24)



4. Kuusa (age 25-32)-25-28

- One of the most important Gadaa grades is the Kuusa Gadaa grade.
- This phase is called the active or adulthood phase
- In the Gadaa system, there are four political stages of recognized authorities: Kuusa, Raaba, Doorii and Gadaa. The last three being with fully designated responsibilities of administration and participate in law making processes.

4. *Kuusa*

- Between the third and fourth Gadaa grades(Borana) boys become adolescent and initiated into taking serious social responsibilities.
- The ruling group has the responsibility to assign senior leaders and experts to instruct and counsel these young men in the importance of leadership, organization, and warfare.
- They also learn songs, parables, proverbs, cultural and historical maps, and other social skills that they can use in public speech to praise the living and dead heroes or to criticize and ridicule cowardice and traitors.
- Oratory, the art of public speaking, is highly valued in Oromo society; “the forms of delivery, the wit of the speaker, his tone of voice, his posture, eye contact and ability to command the attention of the audience” are skills to be honed and admired.

4. Kuusa

- It is at this grade that future Gadaa councilors have to be elected. The election of the Gadaa councilors takes place at the time when the rite of passage of the senior gamme to Kusa Gadaa grade takes place.
- The election process is known as lallaba (proclamation).
- To be nominated as a candidate as well as to be possibly elected the Borana consider the following criteria: personal qualities (skills such as courage, patience, open-mindedness, reconciliatory and orator); competence of the candidate among his peers and his knowledge (commitment for) of cultural values;

4. Kuusa

- The more the candidate owes high probability to be elected); the candidate has to have a positive image before his own clan and other clans; and recommendation from religious (Qallu) institution
- it is also part of the ceremony to plant a flag made from white and red colored garment called a (baqqalaa faajjii) (a white flag).
- During the ceremony, “the boy sang their age-set songs (tunnee) and the songs of Gadaa passage (mokkee).
- The fathers and mothers then stood to face each other around the flag, and the fathers sang a song of praise to their wives” The transition ceremony takes no less than two weeks.

4. Kuusa

- In Guji Oromo, Kuusa begin with the ceremony of Qarree buufataa and Bobba'iisa. The father of the Qarree Duuba take his son to the ending ceremony on the date of Baallii whose attendance the Qarree for the first time acquires both economic and political rights. During the ceremony two heifers respectively named Qarree and bobbaasi are given to the son what will then remain the formal property that Kuusa own upto its transition to Raabaa.

4. Kuusa

- During this time, the groups began to learn about rules, customs, leadership by the Yuuba and Baatuu
- They become formally free from their father control- Baatuu/Yuuba
- They elect their future Gadaa council in Borana/ Adula
- Junior warrior

5. *Raaba in Guji(age 29-36) Raabaa Doorii in Borana (33-40)*

- As Kuusa transforms to Raabaa, they become senior warrior who devote a great deal of their time to warfare
- A groups whose responsible for defense of their peoples' land, properties and life.
- Kuusa promoted to Raabaa by Baantii Haadata ceremony
- Upon becoming Raaba full economic right is given

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6. Doorii in GUJI (37-40)

- To be a doorii, the raabaas cut a tree called woddeessa (the event is called Woddeessa Muriisa) and horooroo is replaced by woddeessa.
- At this stage, the individuals participate in administrative and law-making process.
- In short, they are the group who are ready to take baallii from their predecessors.

6. Doorii GUJII (37-40)

- In the due processes of promoting the Raaba into Doorii title, there are peculiar undertakings that both men and women perform. Among them exist the Qajimaa Murtiisa/Cutting Qajimaa of women and woddeessa muriisa/ Cutting wodesa of men which marks transformation of the whole generation set into the next level of socio-political ranks – Doorii
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- In short, they are the group who are ready to take baallii from their predecessors.
- Doorii children is now promoted to Daballee and it does not indicate always biological age but their social age-group according to the aging of the Gadaa system
- Doorii is a legitimate government in waiting

7. *Gadaa GUJII (41-49)*

- This is a critical and the last stage of active phase.
- It is here where individuals fully take the responsibilities of ruling their people and decide on the issues related to the welfare of their society.
- It is a very decisive stage that the individuals attempt to show their potential of contributing to the system.
- Since this stage is very critical, the name of the system (Gada system) and the holder of baallii power) is also called Abbaa Gada'aa (Abbaa Gadoo).



7. Gadaa GUJII (41-48)

- The Gadaa form representative government and administer the society for the following eight years.
- When new abbaa Gadaa come in and get seated with his senators and councilors, the outgoing abbaa Gadaa gives the new abbaa Gadaa fresh milk saying Hoo'aa mi'ii gadaa tiyyaa- Here is the fresh milk for you- the product of my reign.
- And the new abbaa Gadaa say , Gadaa tiyya mi'aawi-be beloved in my reign.

7. *Baatuu, Yuuba(49-)*

- People in the stages after this stage have no separate and distinct roles in the society became, they are in the retirement and extinctive phase.
- The individuals in retirement stage are knowledgeable as they accumulate experiences and knowledge through long period of services.
- Therefore, they “oversee the political and military activities of luba in power” (Asmarom 1987:10).
- This phase includes Baatuu, Yuuba and Yuuba Guddaa

7. *Baatuu, Yuuba(49-)*

- The Baatuu “elevate their sons by the father’s personal supervision” whereas the Yuuba take “advisory responsibility and authority on proper performances of ritual activities, and on the interpretation and proper ruling of the law” (p.124).
- Similarly, the Yuubaa are “retired” and they retain “advisory authority” and “--- they may be required to serve directly in the assembly of the Gada class in power as some of them assistants --- and they are considered as “ritual experts” as well as they are peace maker (s) “(Nicolas, p.4).



End of Chapter one

Chapter Two

- **Gadaa and Cultural Heritage of Humanity**

Chapter Two

- **Gadaa and Cultural Heritage of Humanity**
- **At the end of this chapter, you will be able to:**
- Enumerate the Gadaa system as **intangible cultural heritage of humanity**
- Point out the **cultural values of Gadaa system**
- Describe the **religious dimensions** of Gadaa system
- Mention the **rituals and festivals** attached to Gadaa system
- Explain Gadaa system as an example of **African civilization.**

Gadaa and Cultural Heritage of Humanity

Heritage defined:

- Heritage has been described as anything somebody needs to collect and conserve and to pass on to future generations.

Types of heritage:

- Heritage is generally classified as **natural and cultural** heritages.
- **Natural Heritage:** Walia Abex, cave, fountains.

Gadaa and Cultural Heritage of Humanity

Types of heritage:

- **Cultural heritage:** is the creative expression of a people's existence in the past and present.
- It tells us about the traditions, the beliefs and the achievements of a country and its people.

Gadaa and Cultural Heritage of Humanity



Gadaa and Cultural Heritage of Humanity



Gadaa and Cultural Heritage of Humanity

- Cultural Heritage:
- According to the Ethiopian Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage Proclamation of **No.229/2000**, cultural heritage is any tangible or intangible entity characterized by the following features:

Gadaa and Cultural Heritage of Humanity

- The result of human activity and creativity...
- Produced both in the prehistory and historic periods, and
- Has a considerable value in its scientific, historical, cultural and artistic and handicraft contents...

Gadaa and Cultural Heritage of Humanity

- **Classification of cultural heritage**
- Cultural heritage is generally classified in to two as **tangible and intangible.**
- **Intangible:** As the name indicates intangible cultural heritages are those that cannot be felt by hands but can be seen and heard them.

Gadaa and Cultural Heritage of Humanity

- They embrace all forms of traditional and popular or folk culture, which are transmitted from generation to generation orally or by gesture.

- Unlike the tangible one, intangible cultural treasures cannot be physically described for they are only deposited in the human mind.
- Gadaa is a traditional system of governance used by the Oromo people in Ethiopia developed from knowledge gained by community experience over generations.

- Ethiopia hosted the 11th session of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2016.

Inscription of Gadaa system into Intangible cultural Heritage

- The big news for Ethiopia is that the Gadaa system, an indigenous democratic socio-political system of the Oromo, has been inscribed on the representative list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity.

- Ethiopia also inscribed the commemoration feast of the finding of the True Holy Cross of Christ in 2013 and the Fichee- Chambalaalla, New Year festival of the Sidama people in 2015

Inscription of Gadaa system into Intangible cultural Heritage



FICHE CHEMBELALA FESTIVAL

Criteria for the inclusion in to UNESCO

- Criteria for the inclusion of cultural properties in the World Heritage List:
- I. Represent a masterpiece of human creative genius; or
- II. Exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world.
- III. Bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has not disappeared; or

Criteria for the inclusion

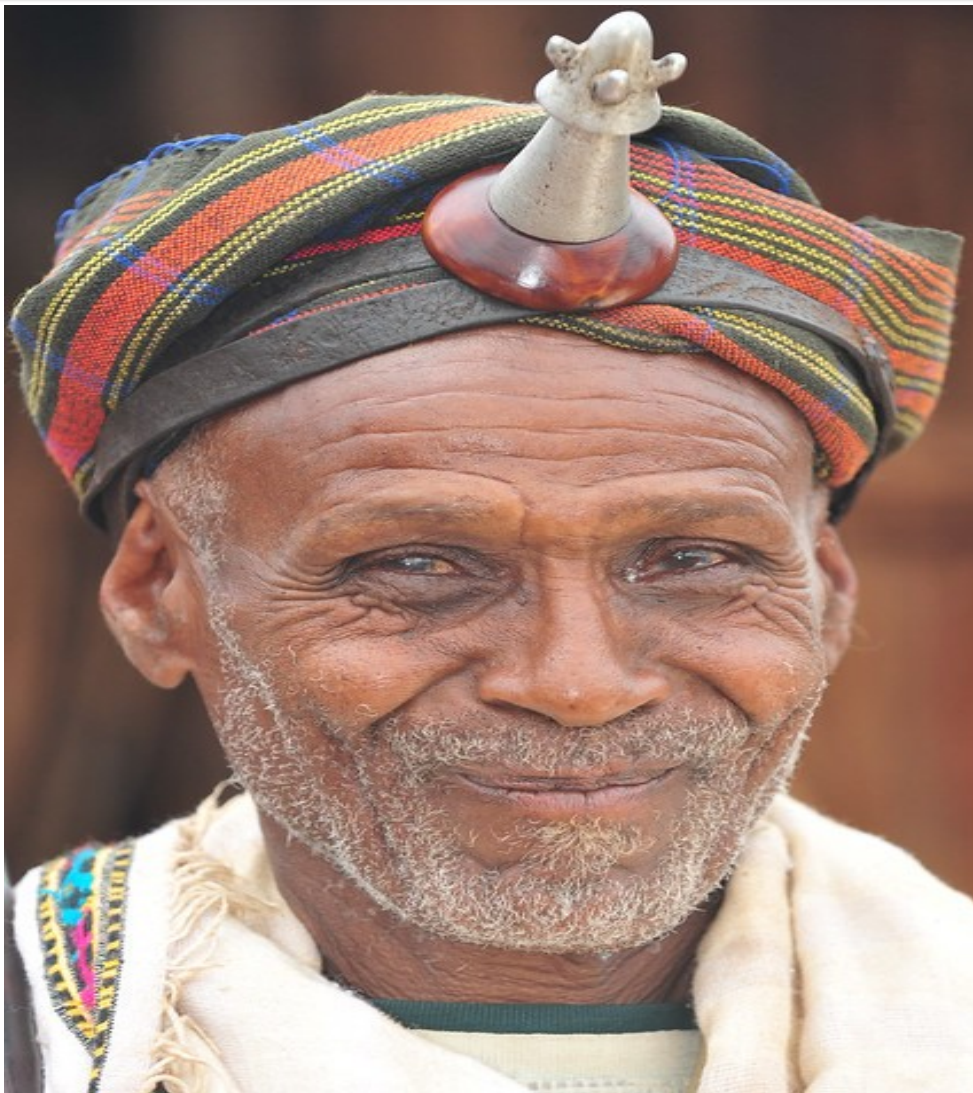
- **IV.** Be an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history; or
- **V.** Be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement or land-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change; or



Criteria for the inclusion

- **VI.** Be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance

Elements that make Gadaa system Intangible Cultural Heritage



Elements that make Gadaa system Intangible Cultural Heritage

- According to the 2003 UNESCO convention, the following heritages are listed under intangible cultural heritages.
 1. Oral traditions and expressions including language as a medium of the intangible cultural heritage;
 2. Performing arts (such as traditional music, dance and theatre);
 3. Social practices, rituals and festive events;
 4. Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and
 5. Traditional craftsmanship.

Elements that make Gadaa system Intangible Cultural Heritage

- The Ethiopian Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH) proclamation of 2000 considers the different kinds of performances and show, folklore, religious beliefs, wedding and mourning ceremonies, music, drama, literature and other similar cultural values as intangible cultural heritage.

- **After the inscription, the UNESCO wrote this on its website about the element of Gadaa system:**
- Gadaa is a traditional system of governance used by the Oromo people in Ethiopia developed from knowledge gained by community experience over generations.

- Gadaa system possesses some prominent unique features when compared to western democracies. Western democracies are very deficient in the distribution of power across generations and age groups.

Gadaa and Western Democracies



- When one passes from one grade to the other, his roles and responsibilities in the community also changes, in such a way, an individual or group of individuals whom are assuming the office will be critically tested in the system.

Gadaa and Western Democracies

- Another one of the distinctive features pointed out is the testing period of elected leaders.
- The researches explain that the Gadaa system greatly believes in rigorous practical or actual testing of the candidates before they assume office unlike western democracy which in most cases exclusively relies on election.

Cultural values of Gadaa system

- Gadaa as a system of governance embodies several institutions which manifest themselves in an overall socio-economic and political culture.
- Gadaa has been an egalitarian and democratic socio-political and cultural system of governance, which has also been practiced among all Oromo branches and other Cushitic peoples, like the **Sidama, the Konso and the Gedeo**.
- The Oromo Gadaa, however, has been a complex system, which governed almost every aspect of all Oromo life, wisdom and philosophy in general.

- ***Guddiffachaa and Moggaassaa***
- The **Guddiffachaa** has been the practice of adopting Oromo or non-Oromo male or female individuals usually at a young age by a given family.
- In this case, the adopted sons or daughters would have equal rights and privileges with the biological sons or daughters. Such practice still exists among the Oromo widely.

Cultural values of Gadaa system

- **Moggaassaa** is the adoption of relatively large group of people usually by an Oromo clan or clans to be integrated to their community.
- Here also, the adopted group will have equal rights and privileges with Oromo clan members and will share the entire negative and positive encounters of the community like participating in wars that the Oromo community fights and getting equal share from the spoils.

Cultural values of Gadaa system

- *Guddifachaa* is the process of taking another family's child and making him/her a member of the family with all privileges, and responsibilities. It was one means of resolving childlessness and social integrity between families and clans.
- The main reason for *guddifachaa* is to enable childless couples to have children and heirs. This is largely practiced by other Oromo groups.
- Would be father and would be mother, hold *kallachaa* and *caaccuu* during the *guddifachaa* ritual. As a result, the *guddifachaa* child is referred to as, “‘ilmoo Kallacha’ or ‘Caaccuu’ ” to mean that the child is born legally to the family.

Religious Dimension of Gadaa System

- In the Gadaa system, the ceremonies and rituals are religious in nature, but the system itself is a system of social organization and political leadership.
- Oromo religion played a significant role in identity maintenance among the Oromo.

Religious Dimension of Gadaa System

- In Gadaa system, religion was not the concern of individuals but it was for the whole society. Although the *Qaalluus* did not hold political authority and religion was conspicuously separate from politics, the *Qaalluu* village was the heart of political contest for Gadaa leadership or *Gumi* or *Lallabaa*.
- There was intimate contact between the *Qaalluu* institution and the *Gadaa* system since most of Gadaa candidates are blessed by *Qaalluu*.

Religious Dimension of Gadaa System

- There were possible cases of contact between the Gadaa leaders and the *Qaalluu* when he states that the *Abbaa* Gadaa was buttered by the *Qaalluu*.
- Historically, there was the great *Muuda* ceremony before the 16th century as well as between 16th and 19th centuries, in which the *Qaalluus* played a critical role in the evolution of the Oromo nation.
- Before the great movement of the Oromo, there was the office of *Abbaa Muudaa* (great *Qaalluu*, or high priest) in the highlands of middle south.

Religious Dimension of Gadaa System

- Quite various scholars unanimously convinced that the pilgrims from different directions of Oromo land used to go to *Abbaa Muudaa* (father of anointment) in South Eastern Oromia (i.e. cradle of the Oromo) to receive blessings.
- Every third generation in each family was bound by custom to make pilgrimage to *Abbaa Muudaa*.
- The pilgrims used to go, with stick in one hand and carrying myrrh to honor the *Qaalluu*, getting hospitality from the villages on the way to *Muudaa* center.

Rituals and festivals attached to Gadaa system

- One of the well-known festivals of the Gadaa ritualized tradition is the '*Ateetee*'.
- The *Ateetee* is popularly known as *Aayyoo* or *Aayyole*, literally the mother, who is a symbol of forgiveness.
- This ritual ceremony stresses the blessing of God and the continuity of peaceful orderly life and fertility in the household- for both cattle and people.
- The most common symbols of fertility in the Oromo *Ateetee* include, milk, butter, honey-wine (*bulbula*), hydromel/mead (*daadhii*), beads (*callee*), green grasses (*Irreensa*) and the blood of the sacrificed animal. .

Rituals and festivals attached to Gadaa system

- Consequently, the constant use of butter in both rituals and daily life is intended not only to keep people healthy and give them a shining complexion, but also to keep them wet, that is, fertile.
- In terms of economy, butter as a symbol of abundance has a deeper meaning in the life of traditional Oromo. Spraying or ejecting hydromel from the mouth (*daadhii biifuu*) is another symbol for blessing one's life and fertility.

Rituals and festivals attached to Gadaa system



Rituals and festivals attached to Gadaa system



Rituals and festivals attached to Gadaa system

- During the *Ateetee* ritual ceremony, the chief elder blesses the barren women by spraying *daadhii* (hydromel) over them.
- In Gujii Oromo, the senior member of the Gadaa system, the '*Yuuba*,' blesses the barren woman saying, "*Gadaan tee haa jiitu*," literally 'may your Gadaa be wet.' It also means 'may your womb be fertile.'

Rituals and festivals attached to Gadaa system

- “*Thanksgiving*” occasions had become part of the national culture and ritual institutions until the proscription of a democratic tradition of the Gadaa.
- The Oromo society is popularly known for their *Irreechaa* (also spelled *Irreessa*), tradition- the folk festival of recreation and feasting for the bounty of harvesting season.

Rituals and festivals attached to Gadaa system



Rituals and festivals attached to Gadaa system



Rituals and festivals attached to Gadaa system

- *Irreechaa*, literally bunch of tall and fresh grasses, refers to 'Thanksgiving' and is marked by great delight accompanied by serving a variety of national foods and drinks.
- *Irreechaa* is the most important cultural festival of Ethiopia's 35 million ethnic Oromos who gather to celebrate the end of the rainy season and welcome the harvest season.

Rituals and festivals attached to Gadaa system

- While attending *irreechaa*, people carries artifacts that symbolize staying of Oromo institutions such as *horooroo* which are carried by men and *siqqee* carried by women and other ritual objects.
- Importantly, such euphoric occasion is marked by carrying tall and fresh grasses that are symbols of wealth and new hope; and according to the tradition, the bunch of grasses have to be placed on the ground where the festival is organized.

Rituals and festivals attached to Gadaa system

- The ritual is performed on a mountain in order to be closer to *Waaqaa* under an *Odaa* tree (the sacred sycamore tree), which is a symbol of integrity and truth.
- Some of the major Gadaa ritual centers were:
 - Odaa Nabee (East Shewa),
 - Odaa Roobaa(in Bale),
 - Madda Walaabuu (South-Western Bale),
 - Odaa Bisil (West Shewa),
 - Odaa Bultum(West Hararge),
 - Odaa Bulluq (Horo Guduru) and
 - Odaa Eldaloo (Liban).
 - Odaa Adoolaa(Adoolaa)

Socio-economic aspects of Gadaa system

- Gadaa values and practices have many relevant contributions for societal development.
- Gadaa discourage early marriage, ban social evils like corruption and rape and encourage good governance, work and to be self-reliant which in turn promote societal development.
- People prefer more to practice their own local life style and their own philosophies of life.

Socio-economic aspects of Gadaa system

- The community used to guide and orient their children through socializing in a way that their children should conform the local social values and norms.
- The total comprehension of these social values and norms perceived as quality of maturity.
- However, there is few part of the community who tend to borrow alien social values and customary practices.

Socio-economic aspects of Gadaa system

- The Oromos resource utilization and resource management highly interlinked with social values and custom.
- Moreover, social values and custom of the society appreciate cooperation and coordination among themselves.

Socio-economic aspects of Gadaa system



Overview of Gadaa System and Nature

Chapter Three

Objective of the chapter:

Dear learners, at the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

- learn the embedment of Gadaa system in natural environment
- understand the nexus between physical environment and traditions in Gadaa system
- comprehend the role of Gadaa system in environmental conservations
- understand the conception of peace in Gadaa system

Chapter Three

Gadaa System and Natural Environment

- Gadaa system is not only complex institutional organization that embraced the Oromo peoples' political, social, economic and religious life in entirety, but also highly embedded in natural environment in one way or another.

Chapter Three

- Practically, the link and embedment of Gadaa system to natural features can be understood in different dimensions and contexts.
- For instance, the practices and rituals in Gadaa system are interlinked with natural features such as land, forests, tree, domestic animals and wild animals in one way or another.
- The details are discussed as the following:

Chapter Three

Gada System and Land

- According to Oromo Gadaa system, land is a mother of all creatures that have been living on it.
- Land is respected and treated in due respect since it gives livelihoods for survival of human kinds and animals.
- As a result, land is seen as the most precious and sacred gift that Waaqaa gave to human societies so that they would carefully utilize and manage it.

Chapter Three

- According to Oromo narrations in Gadaa system “Waaqaafi latti angafa waan hundaati” meaning God and land are senior of all things in the universe.
- Oromo people believe that this elder hood can philosophically be understood in terms of infinite age, powerful grace and everlasting nature of land and God.

Chapter Three

- On the other hand, even though land is perceived as a great gift for human kinds from Waaqaa, there are some areas of land that are set aside for special practices and rituals of Gadaa system since the time immemorial.
- The process of setting some natural areas aside for cultural purposes in Gadaa system is known as *Woyyoonsuu*, meaning **sacralization**.

Chapter Three

- The land sacralised in this way is usually known as *Ardaalee Jilee or lafa Woyyuu* that its meaning may go beyond sacred natural sites and sometimes termed as sacred shrines.
- In Oromo worldviews, the land once sacralised and indentified for rituals and traditions of Gadaa system can never be utilized for other purposes like farm and other activities except for grazing.

Chapter Three

- Numerous sacred shrines of Oromo community exist in various parts of Oromo land, even though it is relatively being preserved and sustained in Gujii and Booranaa Oromo than other areas.
- For instance, in Gujii case, various rituals and events of Gadaa system are organized as per the tradition in more than three hundred seventy six sacred shrines.
- The major sacred shrine of Guji Oromo where Gadaa power transition is peacefully performed in every eight year is known as **Me'ee Bokkoo**.

Chapter Three

- This land is found nearby main Asphalt road stretches from Hawaasaa town to Adoolaa Woyyuu Town, in Annaa Sorraa district.
- In Guji Oromo, this area is not only Gadaa power handover site, but also it is the sacred site for performance of different traditional rituals.

Chapter Three

- The ritual like thanks giving, supplications, formulation of customary laws and making oral declarations are made at Oromo sacred shrines.
- Because, Oromo people believe that “*Ardaaleen Jilaa kan namaafi kan waaqaati*” meaning, sacred shrine are commonly belonged to human kinds and God.

Chapter Three

- According to this belief system, Waaqaa attentively listens to the supplication made in sacred shrines since the supplication in the place is accompanied by thanks giving and sacrifices rituals.
- Based on the traditional values attached to these sacred natural sites/shrines, the Oromo people highly revere and respect them.

Chapter Three

- Concerning the future fate of Oromo sacred land, there have been customary laws, oral declarations and taboos that mainly govern it.
- For instance the activities like urinating, defecating, having sexual intercourse particularly dis-virgining the girl, farming, burning the area, spitting, burying dead body, quarrelling with someone and crying for dead person are strictly forbidden at Oromo sacred land

Chapter Three

- Because, the Oromo sacred lands are believed as hallowed natural sites, which are merely, set aside for rituals and practices of Gadaa system.
- In general, Gadaa system is highly embedded and interlinked with land in one way or another.

■ Gadaa system Versus Trees and Forests

Chapter Three

- In Oromo Gadaa system, single trees as well as dense forests are deemed as a wear of land that was given by Waaqaa to cover its nakedness.
- In Oromo people, there is belief system that perceives God and Earth as having husband and wife relationship respectively.

Chapter Three

- In this sense, God is responsible to protect and safely keep the land from unwanted degradation and damage by sprouting trees and dense forests on it.
- Based on this belief, Gadaa system usually underpins the conservation of forests through customary practices, belief systems, taboos and traditional laws.

Chapter Three

- Basically, in Gadaa system, forests are conserved for different economical and socio-cultural importance.
- Economically, the forests are protected for sheltering of livestock and serving as source of fodder during drought.
- The Oromo pastoral communities move their livestock through the forest areas during long dry season and drought to save their livestock from drought driven problems.

Chapter Three

- Not only forests, but also single trees have special values in Gadaa system.
- Some of the trees are considered as sacred due to their traditional importance.
- For instance, Odaa (Ficus Sycamore) tree is believed as sacred and respected in Oromo Gadaa system, due the mythical backgrounds and cultural significances it entails.

Chapter Three

- The shadow of Odaa is considered as both central government hall where Gadaa assembly met and sacred place where ritual activities are organized.

Chapter Three

■ Gadaa System and Water

Chapter Three

- Water has cultural values in Oromo Gadaa system.
- The Oromo people believe that water and its courses are among the highly respected areas in the Gadaa system.
- The respect for the water is emanated from the valuable functions it offers to human societies and animals in multidimensional ways

Chapter Three

- For instance, while Gadaa power transferring at Me'ee Bokko, Yuubaas (senior elders who have already transferred power to the next Gadaa party and work as mentors, lawmakers and declarers) of Guji Oromo declare the customary laws regarding protection and management of Malkaa (water points and its courses).

Chapter Three

- They say *Malkaan Woyyuu santi seera*: meaning Malkaa is sacred, that is a law.
- This law is declared in the moment of power transition at sacred natural sites.
- Not only water, but also trees and forests around the water areas are treated as integral part of Malkaa in Oromo Gadaa system, because the forests and trees serve as shadow for bushes and grasses as well as place where livestock stay for some times after drinking a water well particularly in pastoral community context

Chapter Three

- On the other hand, Malkaa is a center for different rituals such as *Dhibaaayyuu* (libation) and *Irreechaa* (thanks giving ritual) in Gadaa system.
- *Dhibaaayyuu* is a ritual of Oromo whereby Milk, Honey, Barley and Coffee beans are poured down at the sacred place and watercourses while Yaa'aa (Gadaa councilors) cross the Malkaa.

Chapter Three

- Similarly, the Irrechaa is thanks giving annual festival of Oromo people.
- This ritual is marked in at Hora Arsadii and Hora Finfiinnee in the beginning of October every year.
- The main purpose of this ritual is offering thanks and propitiating Waaqaa who keeps and protects people in the time of heavy rain season before October, as Oromo believe.
- Generally, water is not only source of human survival, but also cultural hotspot in Oromo Gadaa system.

Chapter Three

■ Gadaa System and Animals

Chapter Three

- Gadaa system is connected to either domestic or wild animals in multiple ways. The rituals in Gadaa system such as slaughtering for sacrifice (qalmaa), supplication (hariirtii), libation (dhibaaayyuu), foretelling what would happen in the future (Faroo Himuu), giving back sacred power to Waaqaa (Haaganaa galchuu) and others rituals are linked to animals in one way or another.

Chapter Three

- In Gadaa system, the councillors perform slaughtering ritual to thank and propitiate Waaqaa under the sacred trees that are set aside for this purpose.
- Usually, they slaughter a bull or Billy goat for different ritual purposes.
- The rituals are performed for different purposes in Gadaa system, even though it is broadly categorized as thanks giving and supplication oriented rituals.

Chapter Three

- The Hariirtii (supplication) ritual is similar with slaughtering one, but it is performed before slaughtering a given bull or Billy goat for particular cultural purpose.

Chapter Three

- For instance, the Gadaa elders who are authorized to perform the ritual can slightly move the scepter stick over the back of the bull between its head and tail by blessing Waaqaa for his care and praying to him to escape from the potential evil.

Chapter Three

- After the Hariitii ritual is conducted, the slaughtering of the prepared bull will take place.
- This shows that the Hariirtii and Qalmaa rituals are interconnected with one another and both are similarly performed by slaughtering the domestic animals particularly the bulls.

Chapter Three

- Libation (dhibaaayyuu) ritual is also performed by products of cattle, particularly, by milk.
- The milk is typical element used for libation ritual in Oromo Gadaa system.
- While crossing the Malkaa, Gadaa councils pour down fresh milk in the water and bless Waaqa.
- This ritual is usually connected with cattle milk in the manner that demonstrate inextricable link between Gadaa system and cattle.

Chapter Three

- Another important element is knowledge of forecasting the happenings of something based on symbols attached to wrestling of harbinger birds, and appearing of other wild animals in some occasions.
- If Gadaa councillors observe some wild animals during their journey and sojourn across sacred sites or move for particular events, there will be implication for something to happen

Chapter Three

- This means Oromo people have been practicing the knowledge of foretelling to identify the potential threats like drought, war, prosperity, peace, and abundance and so on.
- This does not necessarily mean the so-called superstitions as the westerners imposed stereotyped connotations for some African traditions and practices, but it is a science of the people that clearly indicates the link that Oromo people have with their physical environments in general and living things on in it in particular.
- Generally, practices and rituals in Gadaa system are directly or indirectly associated with various animals for different cases.

Chapter Three

■ Sacred Natural Site (Ardaa Jilaa) and Its Practices

Chapter Three

- Sacred natural site implies a part of physical environment, which is identified for socio-cultural practices and rituals across the globe.
- Even though the rituals and other cultural events attached to sacred natural sites are varied across the space and through the time, the concept of setting aside the sites is common global culture.
- This means different sacred natural sites serve different functions as indicated in experience of the world communities.

Chapter Three

- For instance, sacred natural sites could serve as historical and cultural heritage, centre of ancestral commemorations, centre of worship, center for purification traditions as well as center for rituals.

Chapter Three

- In case of Oromo Gadaa system, sacred natural sites are understood as landraces or any physical feature identified and ordained for practices and rituals of Gadaa system.
- There are numerous sacred natural sites locally known as *Ardaalee Jilaa* or *Lafa Woyyuu* in Oromiya region.
- For instance as early discussed even in two Guji zones, more than three hundred seventy six sacred natural sites have been registered by zonal culture and tourism offices.

Chapter Three

- The Oromo sacred natural sites are very respected and treated as the shrines, because over all traditions and rituals in Gadaa system are performed at these sites.
- For instance, the Guji Oromo Gadaa power transitions is conducted at Me'ee Bokkoo in Annaa Sorraa district in every eight years, whereas the Boorana Oromo Gadaa power transition is made at Ardaa Badhaasaa in Areeroo district.

Chapter Three

- The customary laws are formulated and declared at these sacred sites. In additions, different rituals in Gadaa system are performed in the sites.
- Similarly, in all zones of Oromiya region Oromo people have the sacred natural sites where Gadaa practices are performed since the time immemorial.

Chapter Three

- **Law of Protecting the Environments**
- In Gadaa system, the customary laws are formulated and amended by Gumii – Gadaa assemble at sacred sites.
- The laws are formulated by Yuubaa- senior and advisory board of Gadaa ruling party in every eight years at ritual sites.
- These laws regulate the human-environmental, human-to-human as well as human to supernatural relations.
- For the focus of this session, law of protecting the environment is selected among the customary laws made by Gadaa councils at sacred sites.

Chapter Three

- **Law of Protecting the Environments**
- According to this law, natural environment in general and natural features on it in particular are sacred and belonged to Waaqaa, so that everyone should protect and preserve the environment.
- Particularly, degrading the forest, cutting down big trees, closing the ways to water points (Daandii Malkaa), killing wild animals are few examples among highly forbidden actions in Gadaa system.

Chapter Three

- The violation of this law is punishable as stated in Gadaa system.
- In case if someone settled in sacred natural sites or negligently degrade the natural forests, Gadaa bring the violator to the customary court (Hayyuu) to deal the issue and pass the decision.
- Generally, these all information indicates that Gadaa system is embedded in physical environment through its practices and rituals on one hand and plays conservational role as well.

Chapter Three

- **Sacredness of Gadaa Leaders and Symbolic Materials**
- Based on the sacred philosophies of Gadaa system, the Gadaa leaders are considered sacred.
- In Gadaa structure, Abbaa Gadaas and Yaa'aa (Gadaa councils) are the most sacred individuals who owe special respect.
- Abbaa Gadaa is usually approached respectfully in humble approach; no one is expected to disdain or disrespect him. He is considered as the man who has mystical power that can make curses and blesses effective.
- Polite and modest mood are the best approaching ways to Abbaa Gadaa and other Gadaa leaders.

Chapter Three

■ **Gadaa and Peace**

- Gadaa system is system of peace, peace sustaining and peace building.
- In Oromo Gadaa system, peace is not lack of war, but it is a holistic harmony of people with the local fellows, natural environments and Waaqaa.
- The conception of peace in Oromo people is quite different from the mainstream definition and understanding about the peace.
- In Oromo Gadaa system peace is not a free gift rather there must be a continuous aspiration and prayer for existence and sustainability of peace by the community.

Chapter Three

■ **Gadaa and Peace**

- Some rituals are made to supplicate Waaqaa for prevalence of human beings peace, livestock peace, and environmental peace.
- Human being peace is the peace that exists in family setting, among neighbours and local context, whereas livestock peace is prosperity and fertility of livestock, abundant pastureland with safe grazing system and availability of milks and butter in the expected manner.

Chapter Three

■ **Gadaa and Peace**

- The environmental peace indicates the absence of damaging locust, absence of wildfire that damage niches, absence or farness of wild carnivores' animals that would eat cattle, goat, sheep, donkey and other domestic animals.
- In Gadaa system, Oromo believe that people as individual person and groups have to build and sustain peace with Waaqaa, to propitiate him so that Waaqaa would offer them healthy life, abundant properties, fertility of person and peaceful life. Generally, Oromo Gadaa system entails peace and gives priorities to it all the time.

Chapter Four

■ THE PLURALISM

GADAA

THE GADAA PLURALISM

- History has shown that Westminster or American democratic models are **not divine** edicts but very few of the many possible successful models.
- According to Mclean (1986)“democracy disappeared with Greek and Roman civilization, when it appeared, it was in representative form”.

THE GADAA PLURALISM

- According to American anthropologist Holcombe (1991) “Gada democracy organized the Oromo people in all-encompassing democratic republic even before the few European pilgrims arrived from England on the shores of North America and only late built a democracy”.

THE GADAA PLURALISM

- This means Oromo had been ruled by a democratic system even **BEFORE** discovery of America.
- According to history, the foundation of democracy was:
 - United States of America (1789 GC)
 - Swiss Constitution (Basic Laws) dated back to 1489 (Revised 1874 GC)
 - West Germany to 1948 GC

- Watson (1974) wrote “In many European countries after 1918, the system had no roots, and the people have little experience of such a system”.
- Among the earlier democratic systems of administration found the *Gadaa* multi-*luba* politics vis-à-vis the Western multi-party.

- However indeed, democracy has been conceived within the Oromo indigenous institutions where people have **centuries-old experience of working together within a sophisticated form of government far before the westerns started exercising multi-party politics.**

- Therefore, it can be summarized that, as far as democracy is concerned, Gadaa System is **unprecedented and unparalleled multi-party politics that has been practiced by the Oromo nation for centuries.**
- Among other Oromo nations, Guji alone, has been ruled by **74 Abbaa Gadaas** from **5 luba** (rotative governance system by five parties).

- These also includes the years of delays in *baallii* transfer, especially due to the previous negative influences of central politics of the country, it has been 660 years since Guji alone started ruling under the Gadaa System as people of separate territory.

- This refers us back to **1355 (GC) (mid of 14th century)**, and also proofs the history that Gadaa System of administration must have been **initiated far before Oromo expansion movement in the 16th century.**

- The mythology of Guji traces back the genesis of formal administration to a matrilineal society before which there was unorganized life of human kind as a social animal where only the fittest can survive.
- Gradually the community started to lead themselves under one man leadership (the most powerful among themselves) who finally called *MOOTII*.

- That was the era of men's dominance in the society. According to Guji elders, the last five *mooties* in those eras were: **Duri Dulo, Buraqo Doyo, Bule Adala, Babalo Bade, and Babo Basu.**
- Then the matriclan society came after with tyranny of women, called **Bara Akkoo (the era of Queens).** There were five *akkoos*, namely, **Hoyoyo Hoyo, Hoya Garo, Lali Laso, Qadho Qaso, Ako Mano.**

- The tyranny of women was too harsh, and punishments were so impractical and unaffordable.
- Then the people arranged ways for strategic overthrow of the women's era and return to men (*mootii*).
- But the *mootis* were still too oppressive: the name *mootii* came from verb *mooyee* – the winner, meaning there must be a struggle for a power where the winner comes to the leadership (as it is currently *mootummaa* for modern government too).

- A proverb says “*mi’eessaan jimaa fakkaata; mi’eessanii qoranii dubbiin worra dhiiraa dharuma’dhugaa fakkaata*”;
- **it is likely to say, ‘a plant called *mi’essaa* looks like *jimaa* plant; a dispute with the powerful always ends up in his favour because even his false evidences presumed true’.**

Chapter Four

The Gadaa: A Real Multi-Party System of Administration

- Therefore, the ***maltuus*** – subtle consultants, created an organized and decentralized administration system of power sharing among confederacies and parties which was first exercised by joint administration of **Annaa Sorraa and Girjaa Biilaa in Guji tribe.**

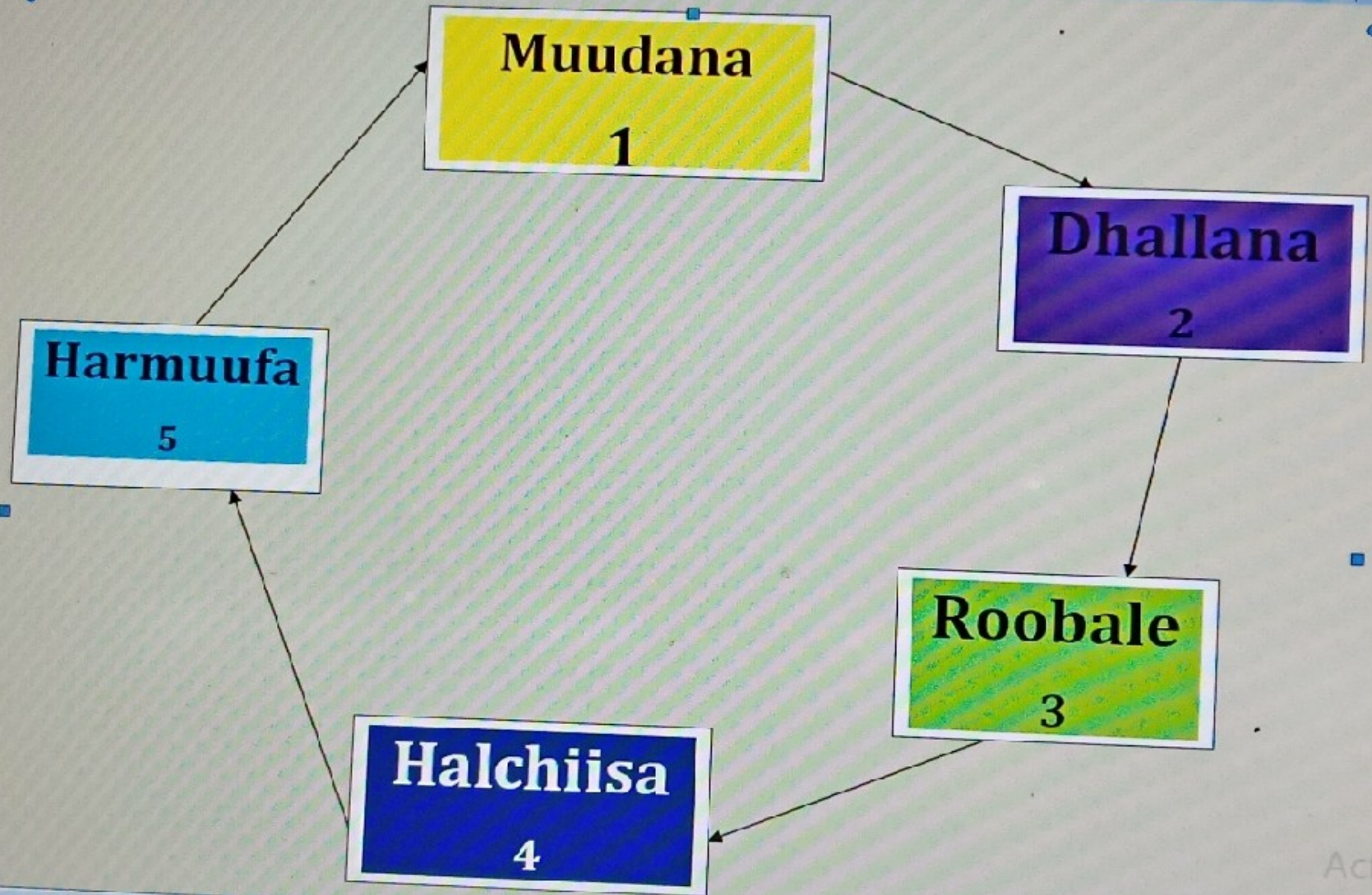
- According to the Guji tradition, concomitant with the formation of the Gadaa power sharing among *baallii-shanan* also came into scene the *qaalluu* institution, created as an aegis (fair guidance) for the political power, the constitution that provides the **people with guarantees against the disorder of anarchism and the oppression and trend of tyranny (dictatorship).**

- **Chapter Four**
- **Inception of Loyal
Opposition & a
Fixed Rotative
Office**

Chapter Four

Inception of Loyal Opposition & a Fixed Rotative Office

- In the first instance, three ***lubas*** (**Muudana, Dhallana and Roobalee**) were created, which was so difficult to establish power balance. Then, later on, **Halchiisa and Harmuufa** were established.



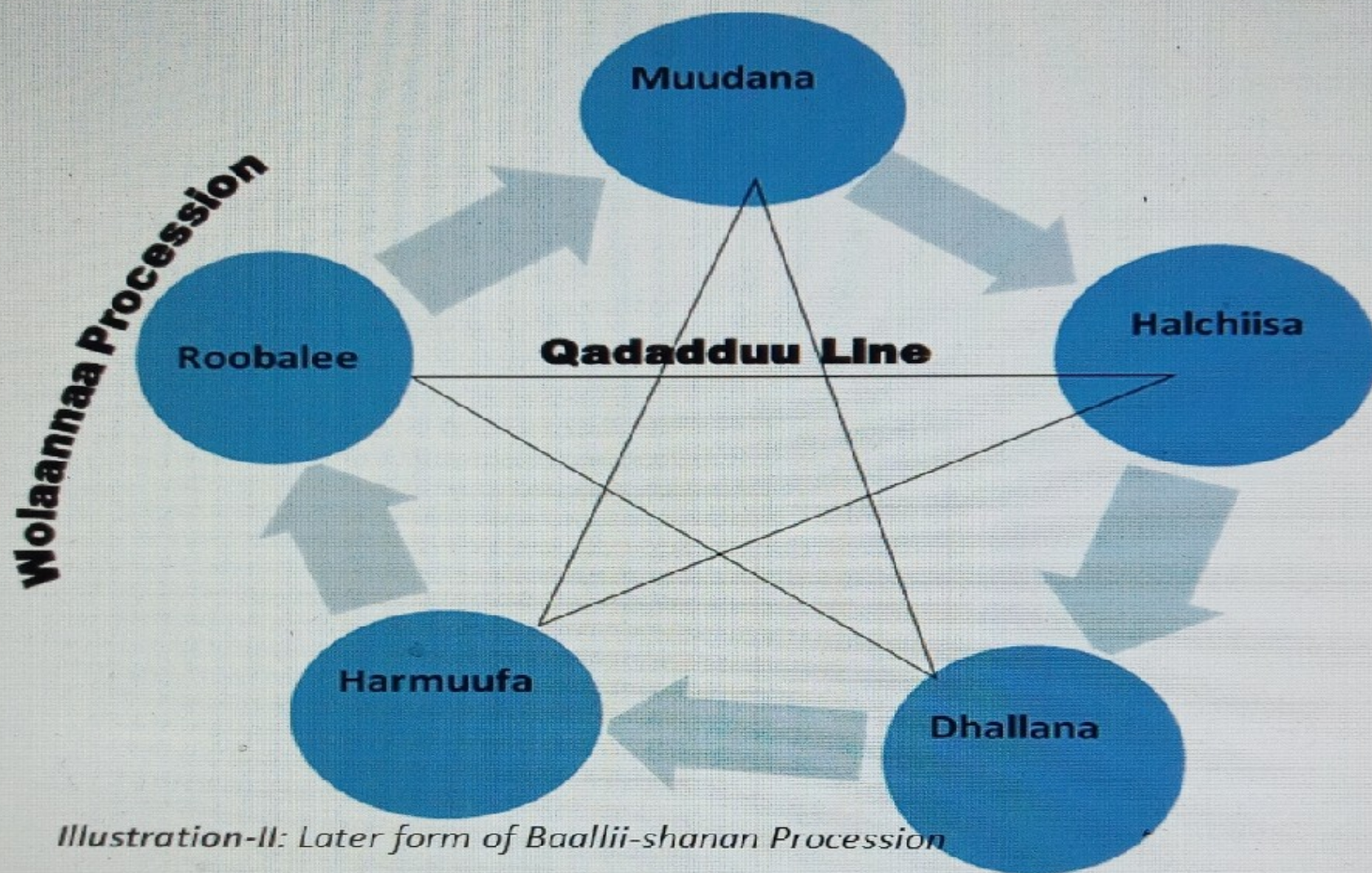
Chapter Four

Inception of

Wolaannaa-

Qadadduu

- As traditionally handed down to us, we are getting at a conception that the former three were formed under same roof and the latter two at another.
- But since they were seen supporting each other, the latter two inclusions were put in between others, therefore, the procession took the following form:



**Inception of
Wolaannaa-Qadadduu
The Gadaa: A
Governance with Real
Power Balances**

- The final form of *luba* relationship created the *wolaannaa-qadadduu* procession, which is the major **stabilizing factor in the Guji Gadaa System**
- That is, on one hand, among the *baallii-shanan*, Muudana is *wolaannaa* to Halchiisa and Roobalee; Halchiisa to Dhallana and Muudana; Dhallana to Harmuufa and Halchiisa; Harmuufa to Roobalee and Dhallana; and Roobalee to Muudana and Harmuufa.

Chapter Four

- The two *wolaannaas* have one *qadadduu* in common.
- The two *wolaannaa* of a *luba* are *qadadduu* to one another.
- The two *qadadduu* of a *luba* are *wolaannaa* to one another.
- One *luba* always stands against two *wolaannaas* and with two *qadadduus*, therefore, there is always a real power balance in a real opposition.

The Gadaa: A Real Federal System of Administration

- In socio-political perspectives, wrote Haberland (1963) “to the north of the Borana, we find the great confederation of the Guji who are called by their neighbours **Jamjam**”, divided into “**the northern Guji or Alladu**” constituting **Hallo, Ottu, Sheillo, Wessittu**; “and the southern Guji consisting of **Uraga, Maatti and Hookkuu**”.

- Each tribe divided into different *gosa/fira* (clans) the social formation and functioning of which have to form the *gosa/fira* system.
- The *gosa/fira* itself again divided into lineages (*miiloo*) each of which comprises several family (*worra*).

- All tribes of the Guji people have their own territory not only as a cradle of life, work, pains, passions, dreams etc... but a territorial area of power, administration, formal norms and order.
- “Guji is a federation of tribes or phratries which have centre of influence with politico-jurisdictional structures as rational form of administration.

- In other words, the socio-tribal formation of the Guji people, the *fira* system, does not exhibit the structural form alone, but it further stands as one of the major parts of the Guji political entity.
- Each section or phratry has its own territory of political leadership in the form of the Gadaa system of administration”.

- Dr Hinnant clearly stated, One of the vital roles of the Gadaa system in the past was to provide a legitimate political, legal and ritual leadership.
- The largest territorial units ... in southern Guji are the three tribes each of which contains the homeland of seven clans [with exception to Matti].

- Over each tribe, there is an *Abbaa Gadaa* who has the number of advisers and assistants [*Hayyuu*]. The formal influence of each *Abba Gada* is limited to his own people and territory.
- The tribes and their *Abbaa Gadaa* are ranked in terms of their fictive birth order. Only the great *Qaalluu* stands above these nearly equivalent leaders.

- However, by virtue of being an elder in the birth order, the **Abbaa Gadaa of Uraagaa tribe is by default taken as the prime** in the context of Gujii tribe in general, although he doesn't interfere in the regional issues of other tribes (which may be termed as regional states).

- In general context, the *qaalluu* is a hereditary but symbolic head of the state, while the Abbaa Gadaa's of tribes which are the actual regional presidents, that of Uraagaa being the prime.
- The *qaalluu* as central authority has the power of legitimizing secular authorities and furnishing religious leadership, the practical aspects of which fall under the superintendence of the Uraagaa's Abbaa Gadaa.

- The Uraagaa's triumvir followed by that of Maattii and Hookkuu controls the timing of the entire *luba* cycle, both in secular and ritual activities.

- At the top, the Guji confederacy was headed under the *qaalluu* and the Gumii Bokkoo legislative where all tribes are considered one people among whom interspersions in terms of life and intermarriage are common.

- “Each tribe has its own clearly defined territory but anyone who wishes may move and settle in the territory of his neighbour, provided that he does not trespass on the grazing or watering rights of others.
- Usually, such immigrants become absorbed after one or more generations into the clan among whom they have settled.

The Gadaa: An Administration with Full Check and Balance Systems The *Doromaa*

- *Doromaa* means the rivalry and fraternity inherent in the Gadaa system of administration. Putting in another way, it is the coexistence of opposing and supporting political groups *luba* as the unity and conflict of the opposites without which the system would have been not functioning in its present form.
- *Doromaa* is thus a mechanism to counterbalance power among the *baallii-shanan* through guaranteeing successive rotation of turn for assuming *baallii*. This is made possible through interaction of the two faces of the *doromaa* called *wolaannaa* and *qadadduu*

- In the Gadaa system of administration, the *baallii-shanan* seize leadership in a device of successive rotation the lives of which play on an endless circular but rival tradition. In the first place, any *luba* is rival of both *lubas* those come before and the one after it. In other words, each *luba* is the opponent of the *luba* from which it takes office or stage and to which it passes over its place. These two *lubas* are known as *wolaannaa*, the opposing political units, of the middle *luba*. Among the *baallii-shanan* of Guji, two are *woalaannaa* to a party while that party in turn has two *qadadduu*.

- On the contrary to *wolaannaa*, the two remaining *luba* are fraternal one's which support each other. With this respect, the *luba* which come second before and after one *luba* in the cycle of power seizure are *qadadduu* to it (see illustration of the Gadaa cycle). Put another way, the *luba* from which the preceding *wolaannaa* of a *luba* and also a *luba* to which its next *wolaannaa* leaves its place is fraternal to it.

The Gadaa: In Comparative View Versus Multi-Party Systems

- With particular reference to the Gadaa System of Guji Oromo, there is both similarities and differences clearly seen in comparative view with the multi-party system of administration.
 - **Similarities**
- **Recognition is the basic ethics and code (*gadaan woyyuu*):** both systems give due recognition to the party on power as a government
- **Forming the Government (Legislature, Judiciary & Executive):** *gumii* - the legislative, Gadaa - the judiciary and *gosa/fira* - the executive
- **Taking Care of National Matters instead of Party Matters:** once on power, the *luba* on power performs national duties; *luba* issues are not major focuses for the *luba* on power

- **Securing Social Ethics and Law Enforcement:** the party on power is responsible to maintain social ethics and enforcement of the laws
- **Membership to Parties:** there is membership in both systems, however, the membership in *luba* system is not by recruitment, rather, it is the birth right of citizens
- **Leadership Always Endures Critics (*Doromaa*):** the party on power must always entertain or maintain critics and criticism from oppositions (*wolaannaa*'s)

- also facilitates *gumii* to gather and review public opinions and to rehears proclamations
- **Ensuring Security and Support to Members:** the party on power is responsible to maintain peace and security of the nation in general and citizens in particular
- **Facilitating Effective Means of Changing a Government:** the party on power is responsible to facilitate effective ground and means of power transition ceremonies

■ Differences

- As far as Guji Gadaa System is concerned, there is a clear difference from the multi-party system that make Gadaa a system that has not only gone several steps beyond but also more advanced as compared to the modern democratic systems. These differences include:
 - **Age-set functional tabulation:** power exercise is not something offered spontaneously but every member of the community has a specific duty and job description exercised throughout life time from birth to death. Therefore, it can be said that there is neither childhood nor retirement in Gadaa System.

No .	Developmental Stages	Stage Duration		Government Phases	Phase Duration	
		In Year	In <i>Baallii</i>		In Year	In <i>Baallii</i>
1	Dabballee	1 - 8	1	Passive Power to	1- 24	3
2	Qarree-duraa (I)	9 - 16	1			
3	Qarree-duubaa (II)	17 - 24	1			
4	Kuusa	25 - 28	1½	Active Power in	25 - 48	3
5	Raaba	29 - 36	1			
6	Doorii	37 - 40	1½			
7	Gadaa	41 - 48	1			
8	Baatuu	49 - 56	1	Retired Power from	49 - 72	3
9	Yuuba	57 - 64	1			
1	Yuuba-guddaa	65 - 72	1			

N o.	Developme ntal Stages	Stage Duration		Government Phases	Phase Duration	
		In Year	In <i>Baallii</i>		In Year	In <i>Baallii</i>
1 1	Jaarsa- guduruu	73 - 80	1	Extinct from Power	73 - 96	3
1 2	Jaarsa- qululluu	81 - 88	1			
1 3	Jaarsa-raqeya	89 - 96	1			
1 4	Ginya	97- Death	-	Extinct	97- Death	-

- **Irreversible power cycle:** the *luba* system gives equal chance to all citizens to exercise leadership with stable and fixed rotative fashion
- **Wolaannaa qadadduu procession:** there is no chance of unnecessary power influence in *luba* system because one *luba* always stand with two *qadadduu*'s while at the same time facing two *wolaannaa*'s
- **Balbala-torba baallii-shanan operation:** there is high social bond because all seven clans (*gosa*) exist in one of the five *luba* & in vise-versa all five *luba* exist in one of the seven clans

- **Regional Autonomy:** there is *haaganaa-sadiin* administrative regions, however, there is inbuilt alliance between the regions to avoid imbalances and maintain social bondages.
- **Interregional *kontomaa-daarimuu* categories and intra-regional *fira* alliances:** whenever there is a movement from one region to another, a clan is treated in the way its affiliate is treated in that region; for instance, the Oborraa of the Hookkuu tribe is an affiliate of the Golla of Uraagaa so that its issues to be dealt under Golla tribe in Uraagaa region (acting as delegation or embassy in the modern admin)

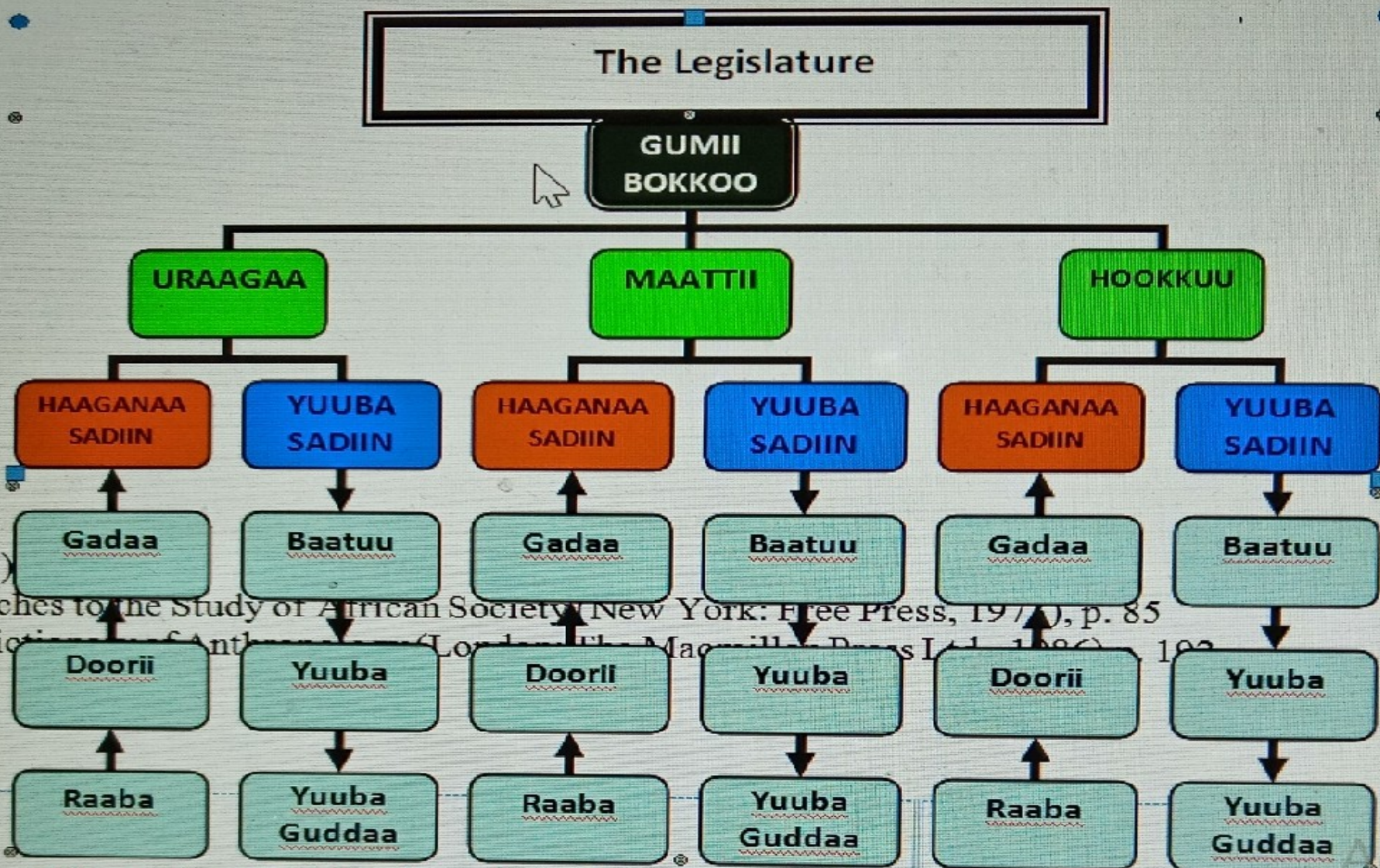
THE GADAA: A COMPLETE SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE

- Like the parliament of England, the *gumii* (equivalent to congress) is the junction which is shared by the three arms of the government. The case of England, for example, is where diluting the doctrine of separation of power among the three arms of the government in that the executive is not only present and active in the parliament, but the House of Lords, a judiciary organ, is also part of parliament.

■ **The Legislative Roles of Powers**

- The Gadaa power structure is a confederal decentralized and its “traditional democratic theory argues that the form of political activity within a polity would be reflected in the ways in which decisions are made. The implication is clear: the extent to which a political system is either liberal democratic or totalitarian will affect the ways in which policies are made in the system”.
- Charlotte Seymour Smith, Macmillan Dictionary of Anthropology (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1986) p. 192

- The law-making body of Guji is called *Gumii Bokkoo*, because, the delegates from every part of Gujilands are assembled at the place called Bokkoo in Guji, some 40kms north of Adola. Representatives of the Gadaa authorities in different regions and tribes brought into a squarely central *Gumii* Assembly causing the functioning of multi-*luba* parliament.



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- The *Gumii* authority is sovereign as independent all-round within and without the confederacy and thus free from foreign overbearing decision-making of the entity concerned on a wide range to matters of high policy doing to systematically and on a permanent basis.
- The *gumii* alone may assign limits and place to all other exercise of public power, and all forms of association of public nature are sanctioned by it. The division into tribes of self-ruling entities and their participation in the country's legislative process are permanent and immovable features of the constitution.

- The *Gumii Bokkoo* is a grand convention of the Guji Oromo confederacy where Gadaa and local *luba* authorities, called *haaganaa-sagal*, meaning the nine senates (who are the Gadaa, the *Doorii* and the *Raaba* from *Uraagaa*, *Maattii* and *Hookkuu* autonomous tribes – just like administrative regions) converge each eight years to make and rehearse laws, while all others comply to the *Gumii Bokkoo's* Law. Besides, the *yuuba-sagal*, meaning, the recognized nine counselors (who are *baatuu*, *yuuba* and *yuuba-guddaa* from the three tribes) again are required to be present to play the essential roles of advisorship in law-making and declaration activities both deliberative and the main session of the legislature.

- The head of the executive, the *Abbaa Gadaa* and his council members are members of the *Gumii Bokkoo* as opposed to the Presidential system. On the other hand, the executive has the capacity to determine the creation of the judiciary. Although the *Abbaa Gadaa* is an executive head of government, his office is shared by rank of *hayyuus* whose responsibilities constitute the functions of these organs both at the *Gadaa* authority and the Bokkoo Assembly levels.

- Therefore, *Gumii Bokkoo* is a supreme organ of the Guji legal institution which is bounded up with legislature, executive and courts of effective powers to ensure compulsory compliance, and hence, its members have dual functions: their government and the *gumii*.
- Like the multi-party parliament, in the multi-*luba* system too, the *Abbaa Murtii* corresponds to the opposition leader and his councilors occupy all the corresponding back-up positions in the *gumii* sitting assuming shared responsibility for the conduct of common life. For example, the *hayyicha-fooqaa*, the *faga*, the *waamura*, etc. of the Doorii always act with similar matters and functions with which those of the Gadaa are entrusted to. Those of the Gadaa (government) and of the *wolaannaa* (opposition) come into contact with each other regularly to sort out matters of common interests with a view to achieving mutual accommodation.

